

Biodiversity Values Broken Out by Conservation Framework Areas

Roach Pond Fee Area:

The most significant value of this area is connecting the eastern conserved lands to the easement areas and to one another and providing guaranteed forest cover for the watersheds and buffers of important stream tributaries and ponds.

- 29,300+ acres of habitat connecting existing large-scale conservation lands at Nahmakanta and Katahdin Ironworks and smaller DOC parcels around the Second Roach Pond, near Big Lyford and the Appalachian Trail.
- 14,126 acres of buffering forest for the Nahmakanta and Gulf Hags (KI) blocks of intact matrix-forming forested landscapes
- Critical watershed and stream buffer protection for the West Branch Pleasant River, Pollywog Stream, and the Roach Ponds and Roach River, all high value water bodies.
- Nine pond shorelines and watersheds protected from development including the Upper Roach Ponds, the western half of Penobscot Pond and the First and Second West Branch Ponds
- Habitat for one of the state's 5 A or B-ranked occurrences of pygmy water-lily. There are 10 other sites state-wide, but only three have protective buffering.
- 1,551 acres of high and moderate value Wading Bird and Waterfowl Habitat
- 3,422 acres of mapped wetlands

Legacy Easement Area:

Protecting the fabric of the vast matrix of forest that ties together surrounding and interior conservation lands, riparian areas of river tributaries, and reduces threats of development in the watersheds and area surrounding dozens of ponds that have immediate shoreline protection (500') from the Balance Easement.

- 265,600+ acres of habitat that ties the whole project together, forming the fabric that connects the Roach Pond Fee area to the east, Lily Bay and Mount Kineo to the west, and Big Spencer to the north and also connects the West Branch across the Moose and Kennebec Rivers to Big Moose Mountain reserve lands
- 105,170+ acres are parts of six Conservancy identified intact matrix-forming forest blocks (*Northern Appalachian/Acadian Ecoregional Plan*)
- Watershed and added, broader, shore buffering for 65 lakes and great ponds already buffered (500 feet) in the Balance Easement area
- Shoreline and watershed protection for five priority streams, Tomhegan, Socatean, Churchill, Wilson, and Parlin, and the Roach River.
- 17 sites for rare plants, animals, and exemplary documented natural communities. Socatean and Churchill Streams support rare species and natural community habitat not otherwise protected, including habitat for the Extra-striped snaketail dragonfly, Bog fritillary (butterfly) found in only three other sites state-wide. Bald eagle nesting sites surround the wetlands by Spencer Bay. Other significant sites include one of

two sites for slender rush in the state of Maine on the north shore of Long Pond and half of a 2,500-acre Subalpine spruce-fir forest on Baker and Lily Bay mountains. This forest type is critical habitat for Bicknell's thrush a species of concern throughout its range

- 23,000 acres of wetlands which in part include 1,870 acres of mapped high or moderate value wading bird and waterfowl habitat and include some of the 3,148 acres of mapped deer wintering area as forested wetlands

Balance Easement:

Key near shore riparian buffers provided by this easement will greatly reduce the threats associated with development on dozens of lakes and miles of major river shores. This easement will also protect many embedded rare species and natural community sites and significant wildlife habitat.

- 93,380+ acres of connective forest land that joins the Katahdin Ironworks lands to Moosehead shoreline, critical migration corridors in the stream valleys surrounding the Moose and Kennebec River
- 55,700+ acres within identified matrix forest blocks, including 8,270+ acres in the high priority Big Spencer Block as well as 27,000+ acres in the Gulf Hags (KI) block, and 19,400+ acres in the Indian Pond matrix forest block.
- 65 Ponds and lakes have buffered shorelines. In many cases 80 to 100% of the shoreline is buffered from development. This is extremely significant in an area where lakefront development is increasing in frequency and value. Shoreline development as well as roads pose threats of excess nutrients, introduction of invasive plants, and non-native fish and other animals, and disturbance to the shoreline habitat structure, and disturbance to wildlife. Eight of the ponds are top priority ponds (L1) for The Nature Conservancy due to biological and biophysical values. Another 12 are second tier priority (L2) for their biodiversity values. This also provides buffering to the Kennebec and Moose Rivers and the mouths of Parlin and Churchill Streams.
- Seven natural communities (six B-rank, one is C) ranging from 44 acres to the 2,056 acre Spruce-fir - Northern Hardwood forest on Big Moose Mountain and the west half of the 2,500-acre Subalpine Forest on Baker and Lily Bay Mountains. There are also eight sites for state rare plants including the slender rush on the shores on Long Pond. The other rare plants are either found in wetlands (blue-leaf sedge and swamp fly-honeysuckle) or on cliffs (fragrant cliff wood-fern). Rare animal habitat found in this zone includes the two rare dragonflies, bald eagle, and one of the rusty blackbird sites. Each of these animals is associated with wetlands. Wood turtle is expected to occur along the Moose River and Long Pond since they are found in similar habitat upstream and both to the north and south. Bald eagle nest sites are found throughout the Framework primarily in the compensatory easement area.
- 10,600+ acres of wetlands which may in-part include the 7,100+ acres of moderate and high-value wading bird and waterfowl habitat and potentially include some of the nearly 2,400 acres of mapped deer wintering area.

Moose River Fee and Easement Areas:

The most significant contribution of this area is the protection of the remaining shores of the Moose River (the Bow Trip area), currently unprotected parts of Number Five Bog, and staving off the threat of development for the surrounding high priority unfragmented forest landscape block.

- 45,190 acres of unfragmented forest (including 4,800+ acres of anticipated reserve) abuts over 37,000 acres of land protected by the state and Forest Society of Maine at Attean and Holeb units, Number 5 Bog and Jack Pine stand properties. This will effectively remove the threat of development for this entire block, the only highest priority (“Tier I”) block of its kind likely to be protected in Maine; most of the blocks of this landscape type are in the Adirondacks. Note that the edge of this area is only six well-forested miles from the Compensatory and Legacy Easements around Moosehead Lake. The intervening land is currently held by one landowner. If kept in forest this would link these 80,000 acres to the 1.7 million acres of contiguous conservation land that the Framework would knit together to the east and north.
- 13 Lakes and ponds >10 acres in size including the top priority (L1) Myrick Pond. This area also would protect 13 miles of the Moose River completing protection around the entire length of the Moose River Bow canoe trip and many supporting tributary streams ensuring increased protection for water quality.
- 10 documented rare or exemplary natural communities including the 4,300 acre Spruce-fir Northern hardwood forest on No. 5 and No. 6 Mountains¹ and the 1,500+ acre Number Five Bog. All but one of these communities are either A or B-rank quality. There are also two state-rare plant sites, and ample habitat for wood turtles which have been documented in four areas within ¼ mile upstream in the same river floodplain
- 6,500 acres of wetland including the floodplain wetlands around the Moose River and Number Five Bog, but also around a network of tributary streams and ponds to the south. These wetlands include most of the 5,500 acres of significant wading bird and waterfowl habitat and the 512 acres of deer wintering areas that have been mapped.

¹ Note this natural community may have been partially harvested in the last three years making it potentially smaller.