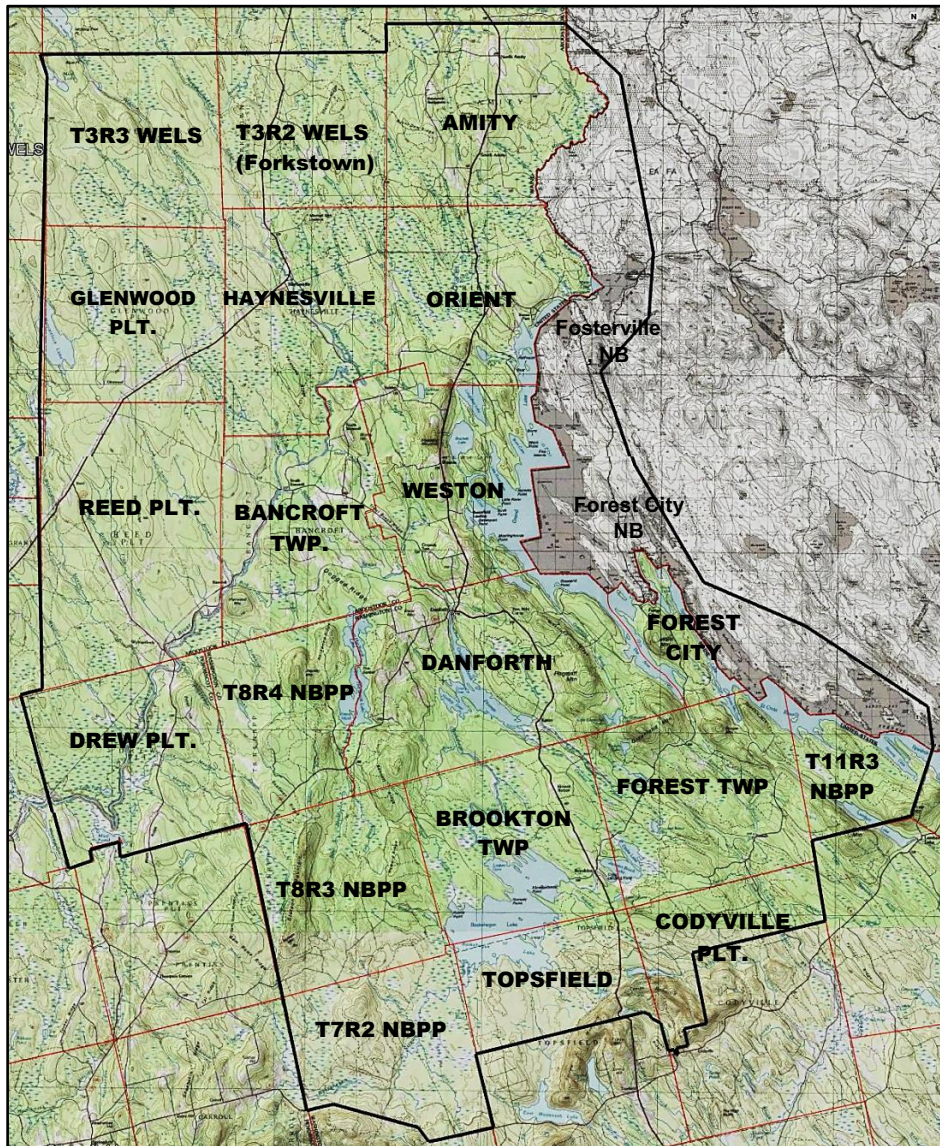


Greater East Grand Region Economic Development Plan: 2020 - 2030

*The communities of Amity, Orient, Haynesville, Bancroft, Weston
T3R3 Wels, T3R2 Forkstown, Glenwood Plantation, Reed Plantation, Drew Plantation
Danforth, Forest City, Brookton TWP, Forest TWP, Topsfield, Codyville Plantation
T11R3, T8R4, T8R3, T7R2,*

GREATER EAST GRAND REGION ECONOMIC PLANNING AREA



October 2020

Greater East Grand Region Economic Development Plan: 2020 - 2030

Table of Contents

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| I. Introduction | Page 3 |
| II. An Emerging Vision | Page 5 |
| III. The Region’s Assets | Page 7 |
| IV. The Region’s Challenges & Opportunities | Page 8 |
| V. A Pandemic Pivot | Page 10 |
| VI. The GEGR Economic Development Plan | Page 11 – 16 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2030 Vision• GEGR Economic Initiative Purpose• Success Looks Like• The Starting Gate with 2020-2021 Next Steps• 2030 Goals with Three-Year Priorities• Three-Year Priorities with 2020-2021 Next Steps | |
| VII. Exhibits | Page 17 – 41 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exhibit A: Draft List of Businesses and Organizations in GEGR to support• Exhibit B: Resources to develop GEGR Entrepreneur Program• Exhibit C: ConnectMaine Phase 1 Planning Grant to increase Broadband in GEGR• Exhibit D: A Regional Approach to Destination Branding, A Concept for Discussion• Exhibit E: Recreational Infrastructure Development: Water Trail• Exhibit F: Snowmobile & ATV Development Plan | |

Greater East Grand Region Economic Development Plan: 2020 - 2030

I. Introduction

Launched in April, 2019, the Greater East Grand Region (GEGR) economic planning initiative was designed from the beginning to be a citizen-led effort involving the towns and residents of a multi-jurisdictional territory of remote rural Maine. It soon became apparent that the people, heritage, and culture of the towns and communities which make up the Greater East Grand Region are each influenced by a broad, distinct and nearly independent landscape.

Thus, the true strengths and assets of the Greater East Grand Region are based on a compendium of diverse landscapes, combined to form a highly unique area of over 500,000 acres in size - a landscape which includes the eastern portions of the watersheds of the Middle and Lower Mattawamkeag River, nearly all of the Baskahegan River drainage and most of the Upper St. Croix River watershed including its internationally controlled waters and adjacent shore lands in western New Brunswick.

The specific Maine planning region includes the towns of Amity, Danforth, Haynesville, Orient and Weston; the plantations of Drew, Glenwood and Reed including the Village of Wytopitlock; the Unorganized Townships of Bancroft and Brookton Village, Forest City and Forest Twp., T11R3 NBPP, T7R2 NBPP, T8R3 NBPP, T3R3 Wels and T3R2 Forkstown, the forest lands in the northerly parts of Codyville Plantation and the Town of Topsfield. The landscape of western New Brunswick is included in the greater region because of the internationally controlled waters of the Upper St. Croix River including East Grand Lake and the associated shore land cottage owners who rely on the region's service center located in Danforth.

The project objectives from the beginning have been to:

1. Establish a credible economic development voice for the region;
2. Identify, through citizen input and participation, community and regional assets that have economic potential; and
3. Develop specific recommendations on how those assets and relationships can be used to foster economic growth.

The initial public meeting in May, 2019 introduced the planning effort and invited participation by all that were interested. A project steering committee was formed and topic-focused small work groups initiated to do more comprehensive planning on several key economic development opportunities. The strategy of asset-based economic planning for rural economies was chosen as the vehicle to help guide the process including conversations and formal meetings with dozens of individuals and groups including forestry business owners, snowmobile and ATV club leaders, local business owners, town leaders, private economic development corporations, and local and national conservation organizations.

The **Steering Committee** included Elbridge Cleaves, Judy Cleaves, Dwayne Young, Ardis Brown, Jackie Morse, Peggy White, Denise and Wayne Smith and Heather Zakupowsky.

The **Recreational Infrastructure** work group included Elbridge Cleaves, Colin Brown, Kyle Burdick, Dwayne Young, Dave Conley and Sue Swead. Snowmobile and ATV club leadership from the region provided important input.

The recently formed **GEGR Broadband Task Force** is co-chaired by Dwayne Young and Jennifer Fronczak and includes Ardis Brown, Elbridge Cleaves, Peggy White, Jessica Potter, Carolyn Fickett, Kyle Burdick and Susan Hatton.

With the publication of this draft plan, the next phase of community discussion begins. This is a work-in-progress and the most important step over the next two months is to seek input, expertise, and direction from a broader audience to the recommended goals and priorities outlined in this report.

The website link here will lead you to the GEGR Summary Plan, the project document library, and a simple survey to gather your ideas and comments about the draft plan. www.eastgrandregion.org

We look forward to moving the vision for our region's future forward together.

The Greater East Grand Region steering and work group members

Ardis Brown
Colin Brown
Kyle Burdick
Elbridge Cleaves
Judy Cleaves
Dave Conley
Carolyn Fickett
Mitch Lansky
Jackie Morse
Jessica Potter
Denise Smith
Wayne Smith
Sue Szwed
Peggy White
Dwayne Young
Heather Zakupowsky

Project Funders

Maine Community Foundation
Washington County Unorganized Territory TIF
Lakeville Shores, Inc.
Machias Savings Bank
Individual Donors

Project Management

Sarah Strickland, Strategic Wisdom Partners, Robbinston

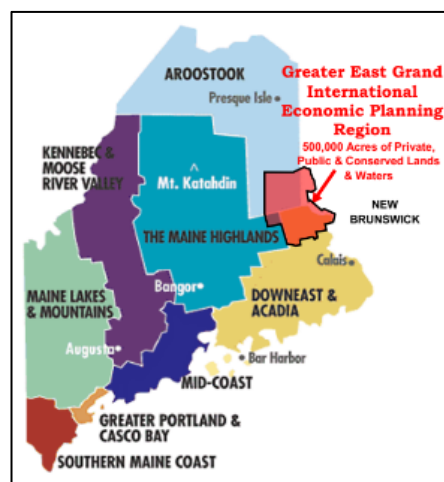
Greater East Grand Region “A Heritage Reclaimed”

II. An Emerging Vision

The phrase - “a heritage reclaimed” - speaks to the values, passion and vision of the hearty group of “locals” and the devoted influx of “summer folks,” twice our number, who all share a love for, and many a livelihood around the regions lakes, rivers, forests and farms; the natural beauty and quiet, outdoor lifestyle of rural living; and aspire to regain the region’s vitality by investing in its people and assets.

The **Greater East Grand Region economic planning initiative** was created because of the need to address regional economic decline, an aging population and lack of opportunity for area youth. The historical, business, health and educational connections to the cross-county area of Danforth and Weston and the initiatives associated with school district RSU84/MSAD 14 East Grand School located in Danforth provided much needed momentum.

The region has ten widely separated communities, four of which are municipalities, three are plantations and three are villages within the unorganized territory. The region is remote, is situated at the extremities of three counties, shares a forty-mile long international border with Canada, and is divided by two state legislative districts and three state tourism areas. To say the barriers to past collaborative and coordinated economic and community planning has been a challenge is a serious understatement.



We believe, however, that engaged residents inspired by a collaborative and coordinated economic development plan can turn the regional assets into opportunities.

The belief that out-migration, aging population, political and governmental divisions and a diminishing natural resource-based economy has destined this region to a declining quality of life is ever-present. Our demographics include some of the oldest towns in Maine and a total region-wide population of just under 1800 people -- a mark that is fifty percent of the region’s high point in 1920.

It is not by chance or without cause that we now embark on an economic plan for this remote region of Eastern Maine. Decades of decline, particularly from systemic changes in the forest products and farming industries have rendered havoc on our communities, some to the extreme. Other communities with substantial lake neighborhoods have been able to slow the impact of rural decline through hard work and perseverance.

Since 2014, citizen groups, key community leaders, civic-minded landowners, creative business people and outside sources of funding have helped foster huge investments of time, energy and

volunteerism in the well-being of some of our communities and in local education. These investments have produced returns, and we believe the hurdles the region has can be turned into strengths.

For many reasons, including the large size and diverse landscape of the of the Greater East Grand region, the area has been the recipient of millions of dollars of investments over the past several years. Those investors include foundations, government, conservation organizations (local and national), family owned timberland entities, private cottage owners, and local businesses and individuals. The combined capital from philanthropic to corporate, individual and public sources would total over 100 million dollars.

Investments include seed monies for innovations at the health clinic and school; a new federal rehab facility; nearly fifty thousand acres of newly conserved and publicly owned lands; many thousands of acres of former paper company lands now in the hands of family owned (many with roots in the region and in Maine), community minded, working forest landowners; private cottage owners who invested life savings in upgrading dozens of lakefront cottages on formerly “leased land”; local business people who put at risk capital to diversify into much needed hospitality services; logging contractors and farm families who in the face of a declining economy continue to upgrade equipment, improve land and seek opportunities to diversify; and new owners of long held sporting camps wishing to carry on a lifestyle legacy. These are but a sampling of the underlying, unsung and, to a great degree, unplanned recent investments in the well-being and fabric of the Greater East Grand Region.

It is with a sense of urgency that we capitalize on these recent developments and take full advantage of prior investments. Weaknesses and threats to the economic viability of the Region are real.

Confidence is high that our basic quality of life issues can be successfully sustained. It is such concerns as State and federal decisions about critically important infrastructure that we must have a credible local voice of economic advocacy backed by a publicly approved platform from which to act. No one can do this for us.

As citizens of once flourishing settlements of loggers, farmers and entrepreneurs, we are reclaiming our rural heritage and true sense of community. As new-found pioneers, we are striving to build local and far-reaching partnerships in education and economic vitality to advance towards our 2030 vision.

By 2030, the Greater East Grand Region is a stable, unified constellation of remote, rural, welcoming communities that collaborate to attract and retain people of all ages to live, work, visit and play.

This narrative and our regional planning effort entitled “*A Heritage Reclaimed*”, is about local citizens bringing renewed purpose to a rural way of life and to the communities upon which those lives depend.

III. The Region's Assets – Highlights from Asset Mapping

The People

- 1800 permanent residents
- 4000 seasonal residents
- 15 Lake neighborhoods
- 32 - 1220 camps/cottages

Businesses/Employers

- East Grand School
- East Grand Health Center
- Danforth Habilitation Center
- 9 natural resource-based businesses employing 100+
- 8 retail businesses
- 23 service-related businesses
- 10 independent trucking businesses
- 12 sporting camps and lodges

Cultural/Heritage

- Danforth History Center
- Danforth Union Hall
- Town histories and landmarks – Amity, Bancroft, Brookton, Forest City, Haynesville, Orient, Weston, UT communities
- Woodie Wheaton Land Trust
- Chiputneticook Lakes International Conservancy

Clubs/Social Networks & Services

- 8 faith communities
- Alumni Associations
- Food Pantries
- Baskahegan Masonic Lodge
- American Legion
- 3 ATV clubs
- 4 Snowmobile clubs

Built Infrastructure

- Town of Danforth – local service center
- Reliable utilities – US Cellular; Verizon; Eastern Maine Electric; Gillis Fuel; transfer stations
- Emergency Helipad
- Southern Pacific Rail
- Fiber-optic lines in place on Route 1
- Located in proximity to three larger service areas - Houlton, Lincoln, Calais

Financial & Investment

- Machias Savings Bank branch
- Significant community investment by foundations and donors since 2014
- Significant investment to conserve the region's forests
- 1000's of volunteer hours from individuals and businesses
- Committed Investors, Volunteers and Advisors
 - *Citizens Organization for Rural Education*
 - *Many private donors*
 - *Machias Savings Bank*
 - *The Conservation Fund*
 - *Sewall Foundation*
 - *Maine Community Foundation*
 - *Stephen & Tabitha King Foundation*
 - *Forest Society of Maine/Stetson Fund*
 - *Washington County Commissioners - UT*
 - *Baskahegan Company*
 - *Rural Aspirations*
 - *Sunrise County Economic Council*
 - *Northern Maine Development Commission*
 - *Lakeville Shores, Inc.*
 - *Southern Aroostook Development Corp*
 - *Pioneer Broadband*

Natural Resources

- 500,000 acres that are 85% in working forest with 60,000 acres conserved or in public ownership
- 2000 acres of fields with only 20% actively farmed
- 30,000 acres of lake and ponds
- 3 watersheds (the Baskahegan and Mattawamkeag as part of the Penobscot), and the St. Croix
- 200 miles of water trails - existing and under-development
- 200 miles of snowmobile and ATV trails
- 6 miles of hiking trails
- 28 access points to public water (3 in public ownership)
- Scenic Highway with Million Dollar Views to Mt. Katahdin and East Grand Lake

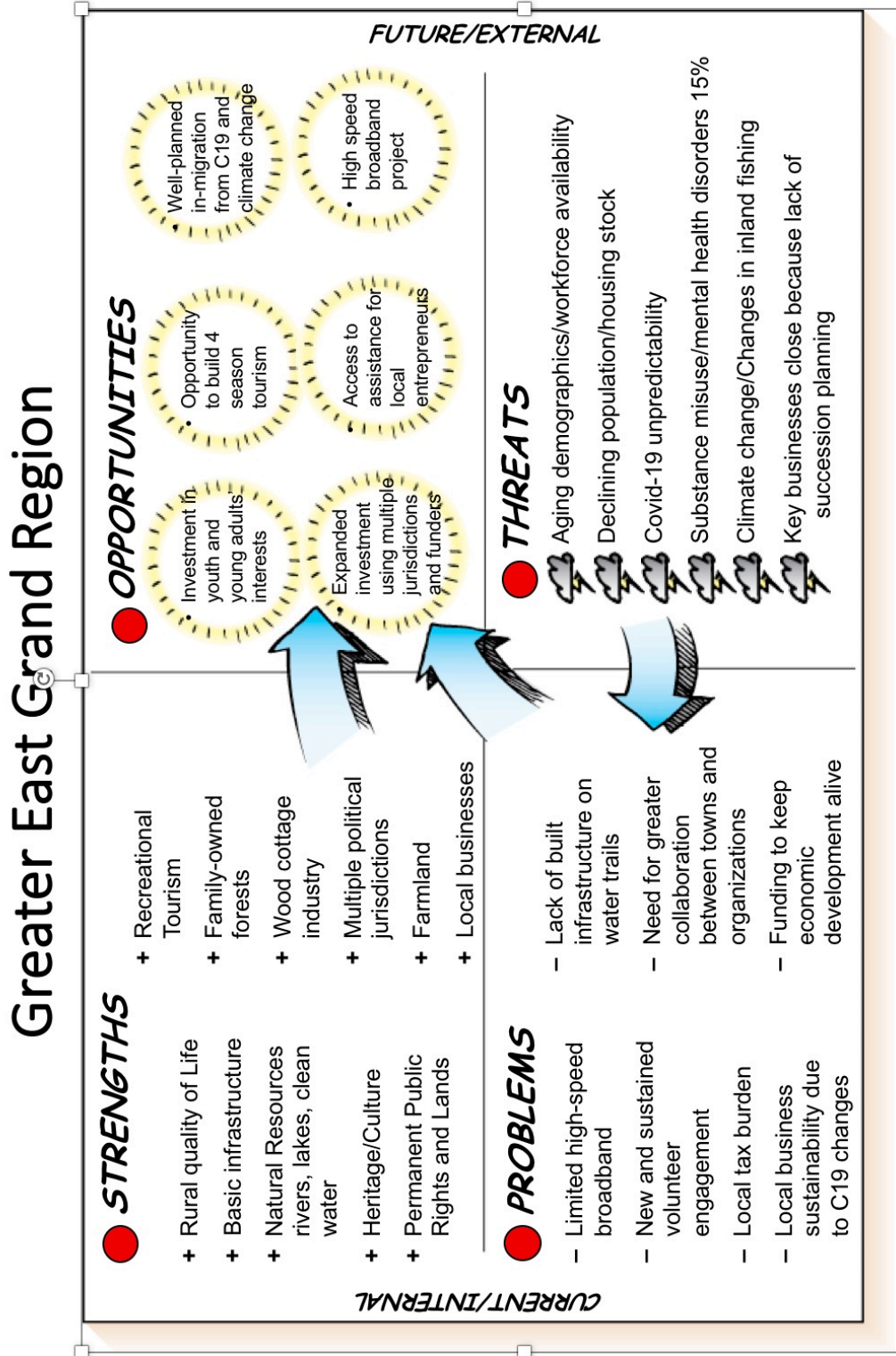
IV. The Region's Challenges

There are six major issues that are significant challenges over the next ten years.

1. The region is remote. This is a region that requires a destination brand and spirit to attract new visitors and residents. Many seasonal visitors have historical family connections. The Town of Danforth has basic services but is not an active “destination” community with tourist amenities and attractions.
2. The region is sparsely populated. This may have advantages during a pandemic, but undermines the need for a robust, reliable workforce for existing businesses, and a strong volunteer network to carry forward the economic and community development priorities.
3. The region's demographics are aging. This trend also impacts workforce availability and volunteer engagement. Most importantly, it underscores the requirement to invest in East Grand School and all the youth in the region. Providing opportunities to learn more about local careers, providing the means to apprentice, and investing in their entrepreneurial aspirations is essential to maintain their interest in becoming long-term residents.
4. The natural resource-based economy is declining. The value chain for lumber and other timber-based products continues to fluctuate. New product ideas are a priority in the Maine's economic development planning but if and how forestry businesses can remain viable remains an open question.
5. The region lacks high-speed communications and broadband infrastructure. This is a priority infrastructure need for services during pandemics and extreme weather events. It also is a requirement for attracting new residents interested in remote living and careers. Without this utility, future economic development in the region will be impossible to sustain.
6. Collaboration across the region is a work-in-progress. This plan is the first step to bring the residents and towns across the region to discuss a unified approach to improving the economic and community well-being for all. Continued investment by committed individuals and institutions is required to solidify the collaboration and begin demonstrating tangible outcomes.

These challenges and threats are the motivation to leverage the region's strengths and opportunities. The chart on the following page summarizes the relationship between the four variables. Together, they provide the backdrop for the goals outlined in the economic development plan.

V. Moving Strengths & Challenges into Opportunities



VI. A Pandemic Pivot

By January 2020, after nine months of work, a positive scenario began to emerge built on the region's natural resource economy, its resilient people, and its heritage. Optimism was high and the initial feedback from advisors was positive about the direction and comprehensive information that supported it.

However, by March, as Maine and the country shut down to combat the coronavirus/Covid-19, it became clear that the path forward was going to be more challenging because of the impact on people's employment and businesses, and the overall health and well-being of the region. The vulnerability of people, families and businesses became more evident than ever. A pause, and a step sidewise, was required to do everything possible to mitigate the harm to the existing economy and the business owners upon whom the region depends.

While the short and long-term impact of the pandemic remains unpredictable, the following planning assumptions remain constant and are the foundation for the region's plan:

- The Danforth service center, its essential services, and the major employers that make a livable community possible must be sustained. This includes East Grand School, East Grand Health Center, Machias Savings Bank, Danforth Habilitation Center, the natural resources businesses that employ over 100 people, and the businesses that provide food and fuel.
- Independent business owners, sole proprietors, and lodge/camp owners need public and private support to stay in business and reposition their business models during an economy in significant transition.
- Youth and young adults require resources, encouragement and mentoring to be able to build on their career interests and believe that there is a sustainable future for them in their community.
- The opportunity may emerge to be a community destination for people who decide to leave urban areas and go "rural" because of the pandemic, or because of climate change events.
- To attract new residents – families, young adults, recent retirees - investment properties, housing, health care, education and high-speed internet services are required.
- To attract new seasonal visitors, the region requires a reinforcement of its "destination identity" and a coordinated promotion plan that highlights the beauty, remoteness, and amenities expected by an urban market.
- Demonstrated coordination and collaboration across organizations and communities in the region will build confidence and continuity, and in turn, demonstrate to residents, investors and funders that the Greater East Grand Region has a path forward to sustainability and growth.

These planning assumptions, and the asset mapping information, inform the draft plan or preliminary "roadmap" that follows. Community-centered discussions will continue over the next few months to align goals, priorities and needs across the region. This will provide the opportunity to gain broad alignment and engage residents in the plan's ongoing implementation.

VII. The 2030 Economic Development Plan

Vision: In 2030, the Greater East Grand Region is an economically stable, unified constellation of remote, rural, welcoming communities that collaborate to attract and retain people of all ages to live, work, visit and play.

GEGR Economic Initiative Purpose: The GEGR Economic Initiative will promote actions to unify people, communities and organization to work together to support each other’s needs, efforts and successes across the region. We believe that engaged residents inspired by a collaborative and coordinated economic development plan can turn the regional assets into opportunities.

Success Looks Like:

- A sustainable, collaborative and trustworthy intermediary organization guides and coordinates economic development by supporting entrepreneurship, business succession and workforce development.
- Investment and peer-to-peer support for existing businesses, entrepreneurs and people have increased new business and employment opportunities.
- Four-season recreational tourism is a positive economic driver and supporter of existing businesses.
- Youth are involved in community, public service, stewardship and volunteer leadership roles.
- Young adults have chosen to remain or return “home” because of the region’s positive support and opportunities.
- New families have moved to the region because of the excellent education, welcoming community and job opportunities.
- Elders are able to successfully “thrive in place.”

Success Looks Like...

Our Vision

The Greater East Grand Region is a stable constellation of remote, rural communities that collaborate to attract and retain people of all ages to live, work, visit and play.



Our Communities

Amity
 Bancroft
 Brookton TWP
 Codyville Plantation
 Danforth
 Drew
 Forest TWP
 Forest City
 Glenwood Plantation
 Haynesville
 Orient
 Reed Plantation
 Topsfield
 Weston
 T3R3 Wels, T3R2 Forkstown
 T7R2, T8R3, T8R4, T11R3

The Starting Gate

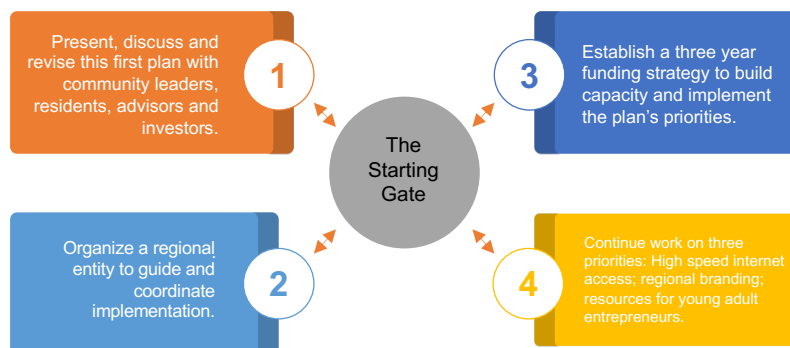
Regional Collaboration & Investment to Advance the Vision

Next Steps for 2020-2021

1. Present, discuss, and revise this first planning document with community leaders, residents, advisors and investors.
 - ▶ *Launch a website and provide materials that can be used to initiate community-wide discussions about this draft economic plan.*
2. Define and organize a regional entity to guide and manage the implementation of the economic/community development plan.
 - ▶ *Select an existing 501c3 entity to serve as the fiscal agent for the GEGR Economic Development office for three years.*
3. Establish a 3-year funding strategy for capacity building and project priorities.
 - ▶ *Prepare proposals to foundations and private donors for three years of funding to build local capacity to guide plan implementation at a sustainable level.*
4. Continue work on three regional priorities.
 - ▶ *Identify and provide resources to support aspiring and existing entrepreneurs in the region.*
 - ▶ *Complete all phases of infrastructure planning for high speed internet access across the region.*
 - ▶ *Initiate a “Branding & Marketing” task force to recommend destination marketing strategies for the region.*

The Starting Gate

Regional Collaboration & Investment



2030 Goals with Three-Year Priorities

Goal A: Economic Vitality – Stable local businesses and investment in entrepreneurs.

1. Support sustainability and successful business succession.
2. Invest in business opportunities for young adults and encore entrepreneurs.
3. Increase access to high-speed broadband services. Complete Phase 1 assessment and secure funding for Phase 2.
4. Expand recreational infrastructure to support a four-season tourism market especially in support of existing businesses.

Goal B: Workforce Development – an educated, reliable workforce for local businesses.

1. Continue to invest in East Grand School and its graduates.
2. Create incentives and internship opportunities for young adults to be a part of the economic and community development planning and activities across the region.
3. Partner with local non-profit service organizations to develop workforce development services in order to establish an increased pool of candidates for local jobs.

Goal C: Vibrant Communities – attract visitors, welcome newcomers, and support residents.

1. Identify and seek investment for community designated projects in Amity, Bancroft, Brookton, Codyville, Danforth, Drew, Forest City, Genwood, Haynesville, Orient, Reed, Topsfield and Weston
2. Complete a study on current and future housing needs across the region in collaboration with town leaders.
3. Coordinate economic development priorities and destination marketing efforts with the Town of Danforth's development plans.
4. Develop a sustainable volunteer network as current community leadership retires.

Goal A: Economic Vitality
2020 – 2021 Recommendations

| Three Year Priorities | 2020 – 2021 Recommendations |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1. Support Sustainability and Successful Business Succession (See Exhibit A)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite 1:1 conversation with individual local business owners about their current and long-term financial sustainability and succession plans. • Provide information about business planning and technical assistance programs available through regional and state economic development agencies. • Stay current on the financial vulnerability of local businesses as a result of C-19 in collaboration with the East Grand Chamber of Commerce. |
| <p>2. Invest in Business Opportunities for Young Adults and Encore Entrepreneurs (See Exhibit B)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet and interview young adults who live in the region to learn about their career aspirations. • Identify and interview young adults who would like to return to the region about their career aspirations. • Identify local people who have new small business ideas and link them to resources that can help with start-up operational and financial planning. • Work collaboratively with downtown Danforth’s plans for building rehabilitation to house new business start-ups. |
| <p>3. Increase access to high-speed broadband services. (See Exhibit C)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Phase 1 ConnectMaine planning project for expanded high-speed broadband service. • Seek funds for Phase 2 infrastructure grant in partnership with Pioneer Broadband. |
| <p>4. Expand recreational infrastructure to support a four-season tourism market (See Exhibits D, E, F)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and test <i>destination brand</i> concept. • Initiate the <i>Water Trails</i> infrastructure development plan beginning with the <i>Baskahegan</i> watershed. • Initiate the <i>Snowmobile and ATV Trails</i> development plan in collaboration with the 7 clubs in the region. • Complete a feasibility plan for added water access and vehicle/DIY <i>camping sites</i> in the region. |

**Goal B: Workforce Development & Investment in Youth
2020 – 2021 Recommendations**

| Three Year Priorities | 2020 – 2021 Recommendations |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Continue to invest in East Grand School. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate priorities with the Portrait of a Graduate Project. • Continue to invest in the Natural Resources Pathway and project learning strategies. • Identify program funding needs for the 2020-2022 school years. |
| 2. Create incentives and opportunities for young adults to be a part of the economic and community development planning and activities across the region. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate priorities with the Portrait of a Graduate Project. • Invite student and young adult participation on all economic development planning task forces. Identify specific projects related to Goal A for student participation. • Continue to build on volunteer activities through CORE and the EGS Outdoor Education curriculum. • Grow internship opportunities for students in the region. • Identify program funding needs for the 2020-2022 school years. |
| 3. Partner with local non-profit service organizations to establish an increased pool of candidates for local jobs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate priorities with East Grand Health Center and other social agencies supporting marginalized residents. • Build on existing services, invite collaboration with Community Caring Collaborative and other agencies to develop long-term strategies to mitigate poverty, trauma and addiction in the region. • Seek funding for a pilot project with East Grand Health Center, East Grand School, Maine Family Resource and local businesses to increase employee retention and support long-term employment. |

Goal C: Vibrant Community
2020 – 2021 Recommendations

| Three Year Priorities | 2020 – 2021 Recommendations |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Identify and seek investment for community designated projects in Amity, Bancroft, Brookton, Codyville, Danforth, Drew, Forest City, Glenwood, Haynesville, Orient, Reed, Topsfield and Weston. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Priorities to be developed with local town leaders, business owners, and community volunteers.</i> |
| 2. Complete a study on current and future housing needs in the region. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Priorities to be developed with local town leaders, business owners, and community volunteers.</i> |
| 3. Coordinate economic development priorities and destination marketing efforts with the Town of Danforth’s development plans. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Priorities to be developed with Danforth town leaders.</i> |
| 4. Develop a sustainable volunteer network as current community leadership retires. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Priorities to be developed with agencies and local leaders in the region.</i> |

VIII. Exhibits

Exhibit A: Draft List of Businesses and Organizations in GEGR to support

Exhibit B: Resources to Develop a GEGR Entrepreneur Training Program

Exhibit C: ConnectMaine Phase 1 Planning Grant to increase Broadband in GEGR

Exhibit D: A Regional Approach to Destination Branding, a Concept for Discussion

Exhibit E: Recreational Infrastructure Development Plan – Water Trails

Exhibit F: Recreational Infrastructure Development Plan: Snowmobile & ATV Trails

Exhibit A

Businesses, Municipalities and Organizations to work with on Goal A

| Anchor Organizations | Businesses/Services |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| East Grand School East Grand Health Center Danforth Habilitation Center Machias Savings Bank US Post Office | Allan Hanscom Construction Amor Yoga Paz B & R Bartlett Enterprises Baskahegan Company Canoe the Wild Maine Wilderness Carl's Self Storage Cary's Cars & Equipment Cary Brown Excavation Cecelia Rhoda Probate Paralegal Chan's Place Chris White Construction Colin Bartlett & Sons Community News Cowan's Recovery & Towing D.J. Campbell & Son, Inc D.J. Huff Auto Repairs Danforth Golf Range Danforth Guide Service Dave Smalley, Elves and Angels Dave's Maine Wreaths and Trees Davis Forest Products Farr & Associates Security Foss & Son Inc Furnace Doctor Gillis Fuel LLC Hanington Bros Gabrielle Lapointe Yoga Gilpatrick's Marina Grand Lake Hunt Park Ground Up Construction Independent Truck Drivers Jenkins Heights Apartments Little Cove Day Care Mark's Odd Jobs Magoon's Propane Michael Fawcett, SmartShoot Moose Maine-iah Nic's Auto Repair Our Maine Street LLC PFC Logging, Inc Richard Rhoda Attorney at Law Rising Sun Outfitters Rossignol Architecture Ground Up Construction Scuba Rog Seagrass Sean Beaudoin Plumbers Scott Hanington, Hanington Lumber Snowbird Travel The Snow Farm Whiting Small Engine Repair Trent Noyes & Son |
| Municipalities/UT | |
| Amity Bancroft Brookton TWP Codyville Plantation - North Danforth Drew Forest TWP Forest City Glenwood Plantation Haynesville Orient Reed Plantation Topsfield - North Weston Wytotitlock T3R3 Wels; T3R2 Forkstown; T11R3; T8R4; T8R3; T7R2 | |
| Retail | |
| Dave's Hardware Spring Valley Gift & Yarn Knight's Thriftway Down on the Farm Maine Wreaths Orient Gardens Gillis Gardens The Millyard Mem's Place Sunny Crest Maple Grove Farm Brookton General Store | |
| Lodging/Camps/Outfitters | |
| Paradise Cabins First Settlers Lodge Rideout's Birchwood Cottages Greenland Cove Campground Greenland Cove Cabins Cowger's Cabins Maine River Lodge Wheaton Lodge Village Camps Living Waters Christian Camp East Branch Lodge Birch Hill Camps Wilderness Escape Outfitters | |

Exhibit A

Businesses, Municipalities and Organizations to work with on Goal A

| Clubs | In-Region Non-Profits |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| East Grand Snowmobile Club Eastern Maine Snow Sports Grand Lakers ATV Club Haynesville Woods ATV Club Tomah ATV Club Quod County Snowmobile Club (Springfield) Linneus Sno Sports Aroostook Riders ATV Club | Chiputneticook Lakes International Conservancy (CLIC) Citizens Organization for Rural Education (CORE) The Maine Family Resource Center Woodie Wheaton Land Trust |
| Churches | Non-Profits Serving Region |
| Amity Baptist Church Brookton Baptist Church Brookton Pentecostal Church Danforth Apostolic Church Danforth Baptist Church Danforth Methodist Church Danforth Pentecostal Church Haynesville Baptist Church Saint Ann’s Catholic Church Weston Community Church (Summer Only) Wytopotlock Baptist Church | Sunrise County Economic Council Northern Maine Development Council Conservation Fund Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP) Downeast Community Partners (DCP) Healthy Acadia St Croix Regional Family Health Center Katahdin Valley Health Center Health Access Network Aroostook Mental Health Services, Inc The Northern Lighthouse, Inc Calais Regional Hospital Houlton Regional Hospital |

Exhibit B

Resources to Develop a GEGR Entrepreneur Training Program

New Ventures Maine

A new job, a new career, a new business, a new understanding of financial matters. We help people all over the state venture in new directions by offering tuition-free programs for career, business, and financial education. We have guided individuals through life changes every day for 40 years.

<https://newventuresmaine.org/class-schedules/>

Sunrise County Economic Council

The Sunrise County Economic Council (SCEC) initiates and facilitates the creation of jobs and prosperity in Washington County, Maine, by working with a consortium of community-minded businesses, not-for-profit organizations, municipalities and citizens. <http://sunrisecounty.org/business/education/>

- *Doing Business Now – Virtual Workshop Series for small business owners/entrepreneurs*
- https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=sunrise+county+economic+council

Washington County Community College – Entrepreneur course

<https://www.wccc.me.edu/academics/programs/programs-study/entrepreneurship/>

Northern Maine Development Commission

Brandon McDonald is entrepreneur program manager for Northern Maine Development Commission's new Entrepreneurial Technical Assistance Center.

<https://www.nmdc.org/entrepreneurial-technical-assistance-center/>

CEI www.ceimaine.org

CEI helps to grow good jobs, environmentally sustainable enterprises, and shared prosperity in Maine and other rural regions by integrating financing, business and industry expertise, and policy solutions

- *Covid 19 Resources for Businesses* <https://www.ceimaine.org/covid-19-resources-for-businesses/>
- *Women's Business Center* <https://www.ceimaine.org/advising/business-counseling-development/the-cei-womens-business-center/>
- *Small Business Development Center* <https://www.ceimaine.org/advising/business-counseling-development/small-business-development-center/>

SCORE: For over 50 years, SCORE has served as America's premier source of free business mentoring and education. As a resource partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), SCORE has helped more than 11 million entrepreneurs through mentoring, workshops and educational resources since 1964. <https://www.score.org/content/take-workshop>

Cooperative Development Institute (CDI)

Business Ownership Solutions (BOS) works with business owners and their employees to think through whether conversion to employee ownership is feasible and could meet their needs, whether as a succession plan or as a growth strategy. We provide expertise in cooperative design, financial analysis, business planning, transaction structure and financing, and education and training needed to execute a successful conversion to an employee-owned company. <https://cdi.coop/our-work/programs/business-ownership-solutions/>

Maine Small Business Development Centers www.mainesbdc.org

Maine SBDC is a statewide network of experienced business advisors and staff helping small Maine businesses succeed through one-on-one business advising and training.

Southern Aroostook Development Corporation <http://sadcaroostook.org/entrepreneur-challenge/>

Exhibit C

ConnectMaine Phase 1 Planning Grant to increase Broadband in GEGR

Significant upgrades to the available broadband in the GEGR communities is one of the most significant strategies to advance the region's goals and priorities. Its economic vitality, community vibrancy and workforce development will be possible only with increased broadband investment.

The Phase 1 Project will be led by the GEGR Broadband Task Force. The GEGR Broadband Task Force is a sub-committee of the GEGR Economic Planning Initiative and includes representatives from the communities, plantations and unorganized territories that will be part of this first assessment in the region, as well as the East Grand Chamber of Commerce, the RSU 84/MSAD school district and other anchor institutions and businesses.

GEGR Broadband Task Force

Co-Chair: Dwayne Young, Town of Weston, Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen

Co-Chair: Jennifer Gillman, East Grand School, Teacher

Ardis Brown, Town of Danforth, Town Manager

Denise Smith, East Grand Chamber of Commerce, President; Business Owner; Weston

Elbridge Cleaves, Citizens Organization for Rural Education, President; Weston

Peggy White, East Grand School, Superintendent and Principal; Danforth

Jessica Potter, East Grand Health Center, Administrator, Danforth

Carolyn Fickett, Maine Family Resource Center, Program Manager, Danforth

Kyle Burdick, Baskahegan Company, Woodlands Manager, Brookton

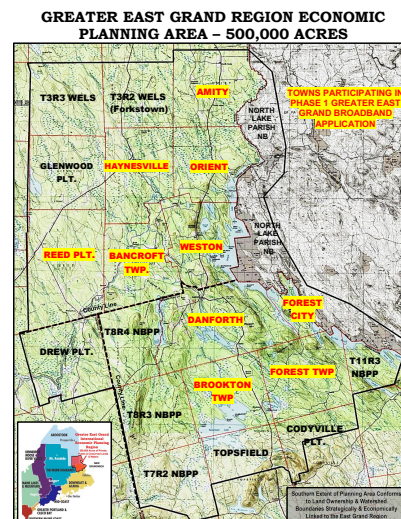
Susan Hatton, Sunrise County Economic Council, Program Manager, Sunrise Loan Fund

Project Consultants

- (1) Sarah Strickland, Project Consultant, will provide overall project management to complete the regional assessment, facilitate community and municipal meetings, conduct interviews, and complete the final written report for the Task Force. Sarah will provide guidance to task force members, selected residents, and students to assist with assessment activities.
- (2) Aly Cropley, Project Assistant, will provide local support to the Task Force and Sarah.
- (3) Tim McAfee, CEO and Don Flewelling, Director of Govt/Public Relations for Pioneer Broadband will provide engineering and infrastructure expertise for the inventory and gap analysis.

Communities to be included in this phase of Broadband Assessment

- Amity
- Orient
- Haynesville
- Weston
- Bancroft TWP
- Reed Plantation
- Danforth
- Forest City
- Forest TWP
- Brookton TWP



Project Deliverables per ConnectMaine Letter of Agreement

Planning projects that have received grant approval must be completed within one year of funding unless a waiver is granted by the Authority due to unforeseen circumstances; and upon the date of completion, the recipient must submit a report with sufficient detail to allow the authority to determine whether the Plan generated by the project complies with 35-A MRSA § 9217(1) as follows.

- Fully functioning Task Force that is oriented and prepared for the “marathon” ahead.
- Identified broadband needs and goals for each community in the region.
- Inventory mapping of existing broadband infrastructure.
- Gap analysis between community goals and existing infrastructure.
- Assessment of municipal procedures, rules and ordinances that will impact option and decisions.
- Digital inclusion plan informed by Covid-19 experience of families/students, health center patients and businesses.
- A final Phase 1 document that recommends next steps for Phase 2 planning and funding.

Project Metrics for Success

- Resident and business survey process results in necessary and sufficient participation.
- Towns are engaged and provide requested information in a timely manner.
- Consultant interim reports are delivered to the Task Force per the project schedule.
- Meetings with town leaders in each community are well attended with informed discussions.
- There is a clear path forward with priorities for the region to seek funding for Phase 2 planning.

Project Design - There are four project segments which will produce a final Phase 1 report.

(1) Task Force Orientation (Month 1)

- Review relevant information from the economic development asset mapping and plan – establish the larger context for this effort.
- Review, modify and finalize the community broadband assessment process and survey tools to maximize participation across the region.

(2) Assess Community and Business Needs (Months 2-5) - task force members and selected volunteers will assess community need with residents and businesses. **Sarah Strickland to lead.** Steps include:

- Implement a communications plan about the project and assessment survey to encourage participation region wide.
- Initiate and complete the on-line residential and business survey activities that will assess community concerns, costs of current services, and service gaps.

(3) Complete Inventory of Existing Infrastructure & Gaps (Months 2-5) - complete an inventory of existing broadband infrastructure and a gap analysis for all communities in the region. **Don Flewelling to lead.** Steps include:

- Municipal procedures, policies and ordinances will be requested and reviewed by the Task Force.
- Based on the recent school and health center experience with Covid-19, conduct a digital inclusion assessment that addresses affordable internet, equipment, digital literacy and public computer access in the region. Internet “deserts” will be identified in the region.

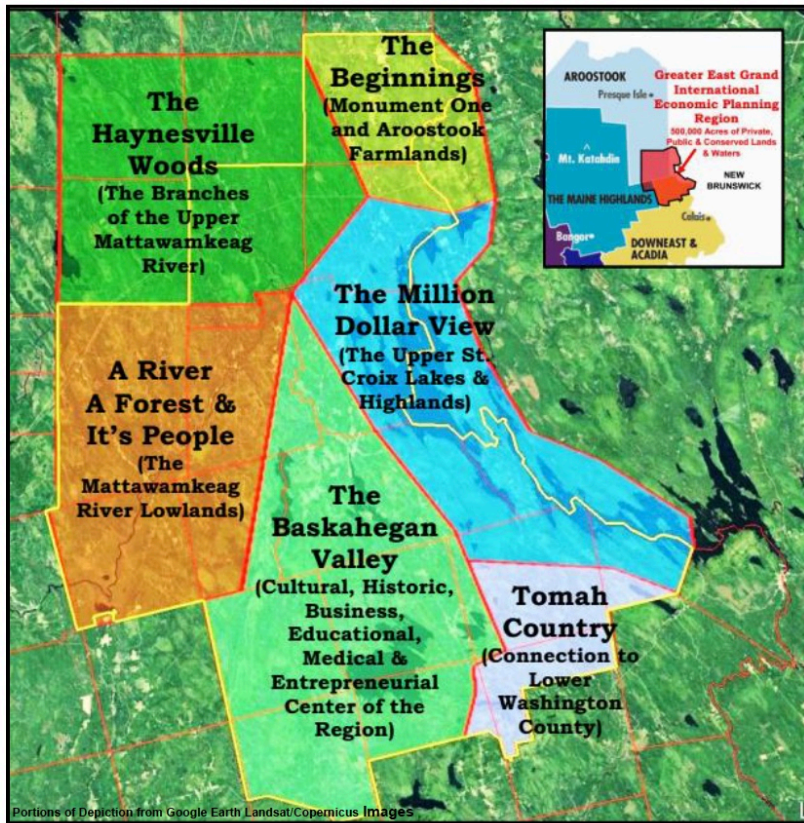
(4) Task Force Reporting (Month 6-8)

- When all the assessments and reports are complete, the task force will meet to review the findings and prepare a summary report outlining results and likely next steps.
- Conversations with town leaders and businesses in each community will be held to assess readiness to move into Phase 2 planning.
- Articles in the local paper will inform residents about the results and set the stage for the next phase.

Exhibit D

A Regional Approach to Destination Branding
Community Assets & Themes
A Concept for Discussion

**GREATER EAST GRAND REGION
SIX COMMUNITY AREAS - 500,000 ACRES**



500,000 acres of rural, remote landscape with 6 geographically distinct community areas and 10 small communities bordering New Brunswick, Canada

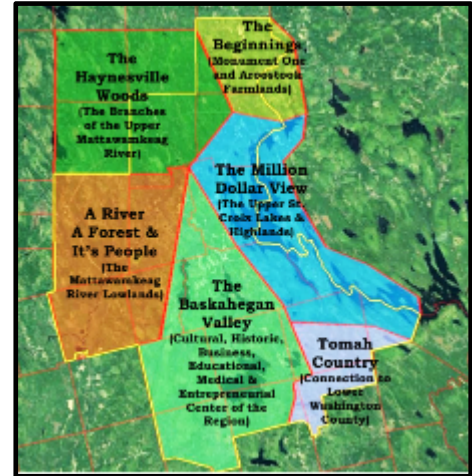
- 3 major watersheds – Baskahegan, Mattawamkeag, St Croix
- 60,000 acres public and conserved lands
- Highly forested – endowed with nearly 30,000 lakes and ponds and East Grand Lake
- Hundreds of thousands of acres of working forest open to the public for traditional outdoor recreation
- 400 miles of existing and planned recreational trails – Water, ATV, Snowmobile, Bike, Hiking
- Signature landmarks – Scenic Million Dollar View; Peak-a-boo Lookout, Danforth Town Hall
- A highly natural landscape with an embedded 32 lake neighborhoods; over 1200 cottages; 12 Lodges/Sporting Camps

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The Haynesville Woods – “The Woods” The Upper Mattawamkeag River – “The Branches”

The Haynesville Woods is the name given to a highly productive northern working forest within the GEGR of Eastern Maine. With few public roads and settled areas the “Woods” is a vast, 100,000 acres of privately owned (several large unrelated family entities) working forest available free of charge to the respectful use of the recreating public.

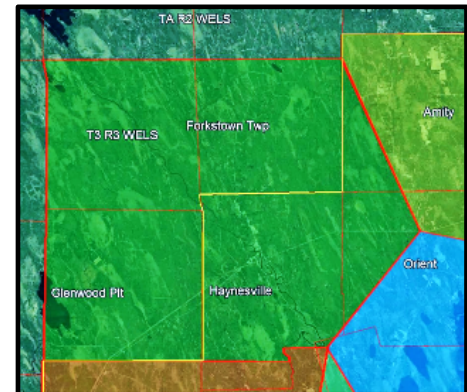
The seemingly unbroken forest is traversed by 45 miles of the free-flowing **East and West Branches of the Mattawamkeag River**. Cold water brook trout fisheries complement the Branches including names like Babcock, Beaver, Alder, Skagrock and Battle Brooks. The area has a long history of river driving, woods work, and private hunting camps including one cabin formerly owned by LL Bean. On the West Branch, a State-owned Historic Site at Bible Point, marks a place of contemplation used by Teddy Roosevelt. The 45 miles of The Branches Water Trails and over 100 miles of ATV and snowmobile trails provide key recreational connections to the adjacent Island Falls, Millinocket, Sherman and Linneus areas.



While the Haynesville Woods is comprised of little public land, the State of Maine owns Big Island (an old growth forest area) and Long Point in the adjacent Lower Mattawamkeag Lake. The State also holds a 3,000-acre conservation easement around the Lake and the West Branch below the outlet. The Route 2A bridge and river access site in Haynesville marks the take-out for the Branches Water Trails and the put-in for the Ferry Bridge segment of the Main Mattawamkeag River Trail.

Haynesville is a much smaller and quieter community than it was prior to the completion of I-95. It was then, the US Route 2A (Military Road) served as a busy transportation corridor thru the “Woods” linking Bangor with Aroostook County.

Haynesville, like many other small embedded forest communities was once the home of dozens of lumbermen and woods workers. Systemic changes in the forest products industry including mechanical harvesting and accompanying high rates of production have long since passed the need for an entire community of woods workers to be domiciled in close proximity to the forest. The only fatality during the Aroostook War is commemorated by a graveside marker on the easterly side of the “Military Road” in **Forkstown Twp**, formerly part of Haynesville.



Forkstown also has a roadside picnic area known as “Bells Field”, once a Maine Forest Service campsite in the 1930’s and 40’s. The landowners in the Haynesville Woods have long had a history of providing a “leased” wilderness-like setting to a number of widely distributed private hunting camps. These privately-owned camps are complemented by the commercially operated East Branch Lodge located in the north of Haynesville. Now, as for years, sports men and women continue to be drawn to

the area for fishing, big game and upland bird hunting. The **Haynesville Woods** remains the place in the GEG Region for those who truly want solitude in the great outdoors whether on foot, with the aid of a motor or in the company of a paddle.

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Glenwood Plantation, situated to the southwest of the Town of Haynesville was a boom town during the hay-days of the Military Road. The Roe & Colby Atlas of 1877 shows numerous homesteads and back streets of "Dixie", along with a settlement at "Cod Fish Ridge". Glenwood, with a population of 3 (2017), has seen nature reclaim almost all of the old homesteads; the Dixie and Wytopitlock Lake roads ending at a state-owned boat landing on the highly secluded **Wytopitlock Lake**. (The only lake in the Haynesville Woods proper) Cod Fish Ridge is now the home of several seasonal back woods hunting camps and private wood lots.

Any narrative about Glenwood would not be complete without the mention of **Wytopitlock Stream**, which flows from the outlet of Wytopitlock Lake to the Mattawamkeag River, 20 miles to the south near the **Village of Wytopitlock**. While much of the Stream is a challenge to far during times of low water, the paddler at all levels of water must keep an ever-ready eye for strainers; the quaint size and variety of quick and dead waters is a total in-woods experience with the one exception of the stream crossing of US Route 2A at the foot of Santa Clause Hill.

"A Tombstone Every Mile" is a song written by Dan Fulkerson and recorded by American country music artist Dick Curless. It was released in January 1965 as the lead single from the album of the same name. The song stayed at number five for two weeks and spent a total of seventeen weeks on the chart.^[1] The song refers to the "Haynesville Woods", an area around the small town of Haynesville in Aroostook County in northern Maine noted for many automobile crashes.^[2] Truck drivers would ship potatoes to market in Boston and a dangerous hairpin turn in the route through Haynesville was the inspiration for the song."

Example of Lyrics

*"When you're talking to a trucker that's been haulin' goods
Down that stretch of road in Maine they call the
Haynesville Woods.
He'll tell you that dying and going down below
Won't be half as bad as driving on that road of ice and
snow."*

Listen here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MF12F0AveHg>

“The River – The Forest – Its People”

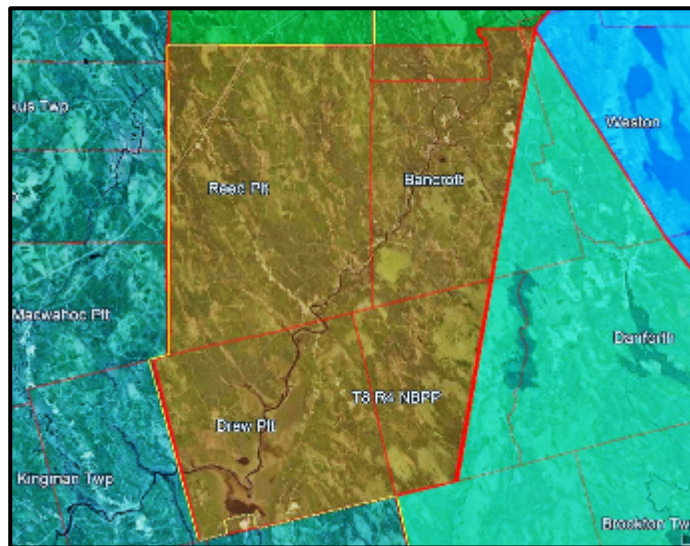
The Story of Wytopitlock and The Mattawamkeag River Lowlands

For the GEGR there may be no better example of a remote and once thriving logging community where it’s past and future is indelibly linked to the surrounding forest and to the **Mattawamkeag River**.



The **Village of Wytopitlock** it is a work-in-progress, truly “a heritage reclaimed.” With a population at 1/3rd of its high point, a number of its residents still have roots to the early loggers and lumbermen of the past. One young forestry school grad, born and raised in Wytopitlock, recently returned as a 3rd generation owner in the family logging business. Much of this 100,000 acre landscape resembles the productive soils and privately-owned forests of the Haynesville Woods. One major difference is the 32,000 acre “conserved” **Reed Forest**, a heavily forested landscape purchased by The Conservation Fund and funded by Apple Computer in 2015. Whoever is to be the future owner of this conserved landscape, the Reed Forest will forever be managed as a highly productive timber factory, ensured thru a working forest easement held by The Forest Society of Maine; an easement linking harvest volumes to specific levels of stocking - a first in the State of Maine.

“**The River**”, once the hub of activity, again the focus of efforts to reinvigorate community connectivity use. **Drew Deadwater**, which begins below the State Route 171 Bridge at entrance of Wytopitlock Stream, ends miles downstream at the Page Farm public landing. The **Page Farm** is an upland game habitat unit of the 12,000-Mattawamkeag River Wildlife Management Area which straddles the Deadwater section of the River. The watershed area of the Lower Mattawamkeag also supports cold brook trout habitat in tributary streams as Smith, Finn, Hawkins and Meadow Brooks. The State of Maine has agreed explore the siting and construction of a new boat access site near the Village of Wytopitlock.



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When the school closed in 2008 the Town of Reed retained ownership of the building and is now used as a municipal building and food pantry. Other community assets include a newly reinvented fish and game clubhouse as a privately-owned commercial lodge, a locally-owned sugar bush, organic and artistic growers of plant and nursery stock, several big game outfitters, hunting and recreational guides, rental cabins, an active snowmobile club and a small wood using cottage industry specializing in Northern White Cedar.

Upriver from Wytopitlock is the **Village of Bancroft**, now a part of the ten-million acre Unorganized Territory of Maine. The Township encompasses the historic and culturally significant **Confluence of**

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the Mattawamkeag and Baskahegan Rivers. Beans Falls on the Baskahegan, above the confluence, earns the distinction of the only class IV whitewater in the entire GEG Region. Plans for the confluence include an improved hand carry canoe and kayak launch and mini hiking trail highlighting the historic significance of these two rivers from Native American travel to the in-migration of European settlers. The confluence also marks the dividing point between the Ferry Bridge and **Reed-Drew Lowland Sections** of the Mattawamkeag River Water Trail. A short but safe distance upstream from Beans Falls is the takeout for the Lower Baskahegan River Water Trail.

Five miles upstream from the Confluence is the **Ferry Bridge** Mattawamkeg River access, soon to be an improved, state-owned boat access site on the road to Haynesville. Between the Ferry Bridge and the Confluence are two class II sections of water known as Ledge Falls and Scutaze.

Bancroft is home to a cottage business whose owner returned in retirement to restore the family farm raising ram Boulet sheep, and specializing in hand-dyed yarn. Most of the cleared lands in Bancroft once supported small dairy farms and some of these remaining cleared lands are used to grow hay and fodder. It has been said the soils in Bancroft may hold the best potential for local agriculture of any in the entire GEGR.

The train whistles of the former European and North American Railroad signaling its passage thru Reed and Bancroft now hail from a division of the Irving Corp of New Brunswick. To those unaccustomed to rural life, the railroad may seem to be the only sound of man regularly breaking the silence of this peaceful landscape. Even the quiet and scenic back roads that trek for miles along the River, thru the forests and widely distributed fields of the communities of Drew, Reed and Bancroft engender thoughts of a wide bike trail more than a public highway.

While this Lower Mattawamkeag River area contributes much to the, historic, cultural, and natural diversity of the Greater East Grand Region, it is science that may have revealed its ultimate importance to humanity. Some evidence suggests the lowlands of the Mattawamkeag River watershed contain the most resilient soils to climate change of any location in the lower 48.

“The Beginnings” Monument “One” Marker of the International Boundary The Farm Country of Aroostook



For the GEGR, this 35,000-acre rural area at the northern extremity of the Region is the home of International Boundary marker **Monument “One”** and the beginning of the agricultural region of Aroostook County.

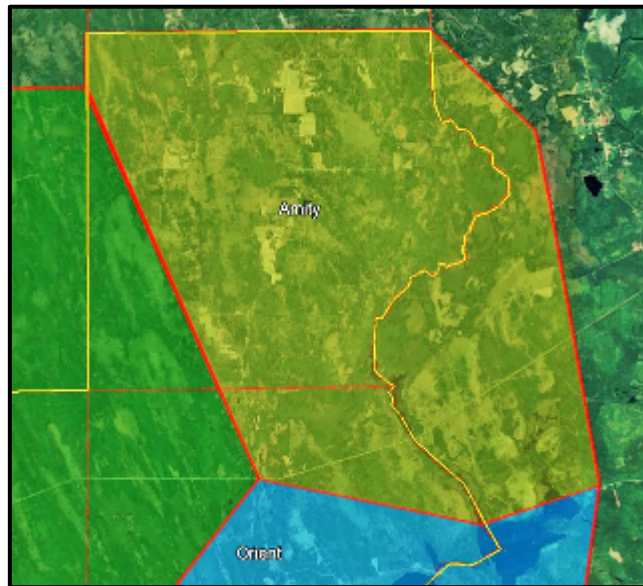
Monument “One”, is a large stone and concrete marker erected at the **very source of Monument Brook and the place of beginning of the St. Croix River**. From Monument One, the international boundary commences its southern trek along the meandering thread of the flat and flowing waters of the St. Croix River 125 miles to Passamaquoddy Bay.

Monument One also is the beginning of the **US-Canadian continental Boundary**, a marker that is only replicated in size at the location of where the 49th parallel intersects the Pacific

Ocean on the western coast of Washington State. This landscape, once more populated with small farms, is now home of a number of seasonal and year-round residences surrounded by the quiet and woody settings along the back roads of **Amity**, Maine.

This farming area of the GEGR is endowed with some of the more productive soils in the upper part of the St. Croix watershed. A natural fault, running in a northeasterly direction thru Monument divides the heavily granite based and glaciated soils of MDV – Lakes area from the agricultural soils the Southern Aroostook. Woodlot and commercial timberland owners enjoy a level timber growth not unlike those same lands in Mattawamkeag River sections of the Region.

The Beginnings has over 9,000 acres of conserved and publicly-owned forests and wetlands, the largest combined fee-owned conserved lands in the Region. Much of these conservation lands are managed for wildlife habitat including deer wintering areas. These lands are highly accessible internal road system and adjacency to US Route 1 and to the Boundary Road in **Orient**.



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Monument Brook is highly remote, water accessible and ecologically significant as a wetland complex, birding and wildlife viewing paradise. There are hundreds of acres of wading bird and waterfowl habitat, and expansive sedge meadows along both the Canadian and US shores. The **Gordon Manual State of Maine Game Management** area lies just to the north of this section of the GEGR.

“The Million Dollar View”

The Lakes & Highlands of the Upper St. Croix River

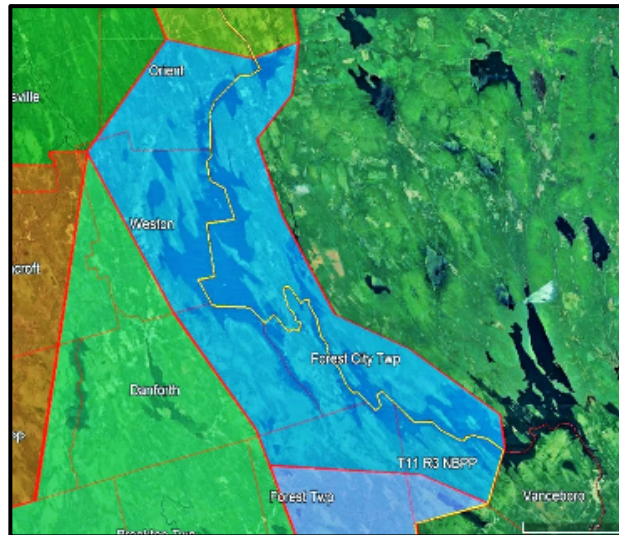


For the GEGR, this area establishes a name set apart from all others in the landscape of the State of Maine.

From scenic vistas to the highest land values in the Region, the **US Route 1 Million Dollar View Scenic Byway** overlooks the highlands, thousands of acres of water and hundreds of miles of shore front in the Upper St. Croix River watershed. Views extend westerly half way across the State of Maine to **Mount Katahdin** and the **Appalachian Mt. Range**, and easterly into the **Province of New Brunswick**.

For the more hands-on, a 56 mile long International circular route by vehicle or bike begins at Route 1 in **Weston** and continues clockwise thru the rural and lakeside settled areas and **Border Crossing of Orient**, passing thru the villages of **Fosterville**, **Green Mountain**, **Pemberton Ridge** and **Forest City NB**, to a re-crossing of the Border at the highly picturesque hamlet of **Forest City**, Maine; leaving 12 miles of additional travel thru an unbroken forest back to US Route 1 and the **Village of Brookton**. Twelve additional miles north along US Route 1 brings the traveler to **Danforth** and 3 more miles to the point of beginning. The 360-degree view from atop the refurbished former fire tower on **Peekaboo Mt. in Weston** reaches to nearly every corner of this 500,000 acre GEGR landscape.

The diverse distribution of developed, undeveloped and conserved shore lands on the 17,000-acre International **East Grand Lake** belies the 800 cottages situated in clusters along its shores. stark contrast to East Grand, **Spednic Lake**, remote international sister of similar size to south, remains much the same as nature provided, the results of a 30+ year history of conservation of its adjacent wildlands in both Maine and New Brunswick. Natural features abound in the Spednic Basin but none can the water accessible **Historic Booming Grounds**, now a 500 acre, publicly owned old growth reserve which includes **Mud Lake Falls**. Here, also are **two traditional Native American portages** connecting the St. Croix River waters of East Grand, Mud Lake and Spednic Lakes. This backdrop of lands and waters coupled with a fishery that has supported a robust sporting camp presence has been the major draw for years for visitors seeking respite from a busy life by coming to this Region.



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Region-wide efforts are underway to diversity, improve and expand outdoor recreational offerings while ensuring the future of the sporting camp and wilderness-like outdoor traditions. Such efforts include expansion of existing hiking trails and the development of water trails including those tailored toward nature-based interests and guided functions. Improving year-round motorized recreational trails to meet environmental and safety standards and to better connect communities throughout the region is a key priority. Outdoor recreation assets close to home are not only important to attract and keep youth, but for the health and quality of life for residents of all ages. Improvements in access to

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public water will not only provide more fishing, canoeing and kayaking opportunities, but also will fill a huge gap in vehicle accessible access to waterfront areas for swimming, picnicking and simply relaxing along the water's edge.

Additional focus is also being placed on the expansion and development of recreational related infrastructure for lodging, camping, guiding and availability of outdoor gear. While the development of the areas recreational assets is critically important to the Region, it is no less important to ensure their proper oversight and maintenance and to not compromise the stewardship and protection of the area's natural, cultural assets and resources.

The 1250+/- cottages and nearly three dozen seasonal and year-round neighborhoods around area lakes and waterways represent a highly valued part of the local real estate tax and service business customer base. A small portion of these cottages also provide short-term rentals for family vacationers. Seeking ways to expand services to this largest segment of the Region's population is one of the important components of a region-wide focus on entrepreneurship. This lake population is key in helping to sustain the presence of year-round service businesses such as grocery, hardware, lumber and building materials, energy and food as well as the more seasonal businesses such as wholesale assembly and distribution of greenery, plants and flowers, grounds keepers, landscaping, land and building construction.

No other section of the GEGR so clearly demonstrates the interconnectivity to the lands and people "across the Lake" in **western NB than the MDV-Lakes and Highlands area**. From families whose heritage began in nearby **Green Mountain** to those whose blood lines run throughout the Maritime Provinces of Canada, this rural Region of Eastern Maine is truly of an international origin.

Today, workers, cottage owners, recreationists, civic, conservation, and faith-based supporters continue to be sourced from the larger international community around the Lakes. Maybe, no other issue has so united the peoples of the Upper St Croix as the environmental and economic issues related to the regulation of the international waters and fisheries of the Region, neither of which recognize man-made boundaries. Maybe the best example of a two-country heritage is the historic small Church situated on the high land near the Town Office in Weston. This historic Church overlooks its place of origin in Green Mountain, NB, an immigrant of sorts, having been brought with horses across the international frozen surface of East Grand Lake many years ago.

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“The Baskahegan Valley”

The Region’s Historic, Cultural, Business, Education, Medical and Entrepreneurial Center

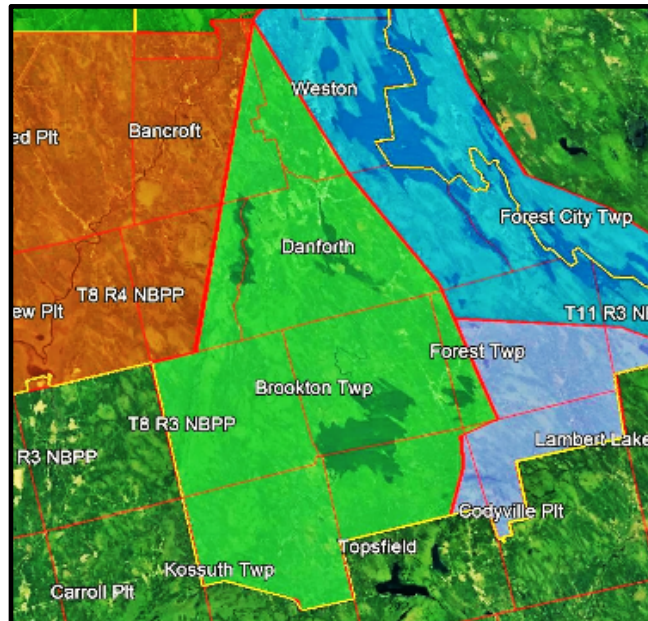
For the GEGR, the **Town of Danforth** owes its continued legacy as the largest community and regional service center to the early settlers who strategically chose a place downstream from the expansive forests of the **Baskahegan River Watershed**.



From the early days of settlement the Community of Danforth was endowed with sawmills, an east-west railroad, retail businesses, on-site electrical generation, doctors and lawyer offices, entertainment facilities, and a financial and farming supply center. Although much quieter and less populated now, the Town is striving to remake the downtown, invigorate community and to economically strengthen the entire Region. Local efforts include removal of blight, working independently and alongside the GEGR and its partners to sustain local education, health services, and banking. The Town is actively encouraging community service and support for all ages, and expanding cultural, historic and recreational offerings. Specific actions in the area include educational, community, non-profit,

individual, landowner and business partnerships to help fund and develop place- and project-based natural resource pathways education, outdoor learning, use of technology, an expanded 15 year-old outdoor educational program, workforce training and entrepreneurship with a focus on small business development and succession, keying on area related youth.

The benefits of rural life may be no more apparent than with the recent onset of a world-wide pandemic. Wide open spaces, social distancing, remote communication describe normal life, and travel between residences are sometimes measured in miles not feet. It may seem as a paradox that this remote and rural way of life for all is also home to broadband and tele-commuting for some. While broadband access is currently available and in use in the more settled areas of the Baskahegan Valley, along US Route 1 and the border communities of Orient and Forest City, recent efforts are underway to expand broadband to all communities and households within the Region.



Shortages in labor are no more acute than in the logging businesses. It is common for a logging firm to have 50's to near 60 year-old average age woods workers. Strategic moves by contractors to encourage and support independent owner-operators of equipment to augment employees, has brought a greater degree of entrepreneurship to the logging end of the forest products business. Much needs to be done to foster interest and involvement of area youth in job opportunities at home, including the woods. Landowners are not exempt in this effort as some highly support a working-circle concept and hire as much as possible

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local contractors and workers in the management of the millions of acres of surrounding working forests.

The **Town of Danforth** is nearly twice the size, geographically, as a standard township. **Greenland Cove**, a populated East Grand - St. Croix Lakes and Highlands neighborhood, is located in the eastern part of the Town, while Lower and Upper **Hot Brook Lakes** neighborhood lies near the western boundary in-common with **T8R4 NBPP**. These lake neighborhoods are critical to the Town's recreational, sporting camp, and real estate tax base as well as a welcomed source of volunteers to augment the local base. Much work is left to be done to accomplish the goals of the Town of Danforth and the GEGR economic development effort. The Danforth Town Hall, once the place of vaudeville and community plays now listed on the national historic register, houses a restored town clock. That clock continues, as it has for over 75 years, to toll every hour on the hour as a reminder of the theme of the efforts of the GEGR, "A Heritage Reclaimed".

Perhaps nowhere in the State of Maine has the combination of water, land and land ownership played such a prominent role in community than within the **Baskahegan River** watershed. One example of such influence was in the early days of Danforth when an entrepreneur associated with the timberlands now owned by the Baskahegan Company considered Danforth a site for a paper mill; a mill which was ultimately located on the Penobscot River in Millinocket. Some of the earliest evidence of human influence was the **ancient Maliseet Trail**, a Native American and First Nation portage of 3 miles in length connecting the waters, lands and peoples of the Penobscot with those of the St. Croix and St. John Rivers. It was this same Trail that early settlers and entrepreneurs used to come into the country, to carve out homesteads, build communities, and to tap the unspoiled natural resources of the Region. The kiosks found at the southern Scenic Turnout along US Route 1 in Weston display the history and story of the Maliseet Trail which is actually situated in the Baskahegan Watershed. **Crooked Brook Flowage**, a flat-water section of the Baskahegan River Water Trail, is one of the best examples of waterfowl and riparian habitat in the State of Maine.

Today, the influence of landownership and land use on the community of Danforth remains strong. Examples include the restored farmlands of west Danforth and the home of an active family farm which plays a significant role in local food and with the farmer's market. There are also a number of family entities and trusts who collectively own thousands of acres of timberlands in the Baskahegan Valley. These landowners not only provide a flow of timber and jobs for area loggers, allow free public use of their lands for traditional recreation, but also grant permission for commercial bear baiting, recreational trails including hiking, x-country skiing, snowmobiling, ATV, water trails, and related infrastructure of campsites and vehicle access points. The landowner influence also goes beyond recreation to helping support local community projects, TIF funding from UT generated tax assessments of leased wind power sites to global issues such as 100 year-long commitments of thousands of acres of timber to carbon sequestration.

Any narrative of the Baskahegan Valley must include the **Village of Brookton**, the only community within the thousands of acres of the wildlands of northern Washington County. Brookton, once called Jackson Brook during the tannery days, encompasses the lake neighborhoods of **Jackson Brook and Drake Lakes**. It is at the Brookton Corner Store where an old county road leading westerly from the Village to Baskahegan Landing enables access to the otherwise inaccessible, undeveloped and expansive Baskahegan Lake. This Lake is a premier bass and white perch fishery used extensively by guides and residents. Thanks to the long-standing tradition of the surrounding lands, Baskahegan Company, the Lake has several well-established and maintained primitive campsites along its shores and islands. The Lake's flat waters set apart the Upper and Middle segments of the Baskahegan River Water Trail.

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An easterly turn at the Corner Store onto the Forest City Road leads past the once populated mill and railroad town of **Forest Station**, and the former Eaton Brothers Sawmill. The mill, 100 years ago was one of the Region's largest. Today, nature has reclaimed all but the mill pond which lies adjacent to the north edge of the Forest City Road, beyond the tracks. Continuing easterly past an old logging road leading to **Little Tomah** and **Greenland Lakes**, soon reveals the **Arm of East Grand Lake**, a dirt road to a rare boat landing on Spednic Lake, the "main street" of the picturesque **Village of Forest City**, Maine. It is here the US and Canadian Customs straddle the St. Croix River and the International Boundary of Forest City, New Brunswick.

"Tomah Country"

Connection to the Lower St. Croix and the Remainder of Washington County



For the GEGR, **Tomah Country** denotes the significance of connecting the GEGR to the remainder of Washington County and to the communities along the Route 6 corridor directly to the south.

The southern planning boundary of the GEGR specifically follows the ownership boundary of the Baskahegan Company, always staying northerly of Route 6 and the peopled areas of **Topsfield**, **Codyville Plantation**, **Lambert Lake** and **Vanceboro**.

The purpose of locating the planning boundary, as above, is not to permanently avoid economic deliberations for this adjacent rural and remote area, but simply to utilize existing time and resources most efficiently. It is our belief many of the findings, the types of locally identified assets, and the

economic recommendations resulting from our work will have much validity for these communities and geographic directly to the south of our focused planning area.

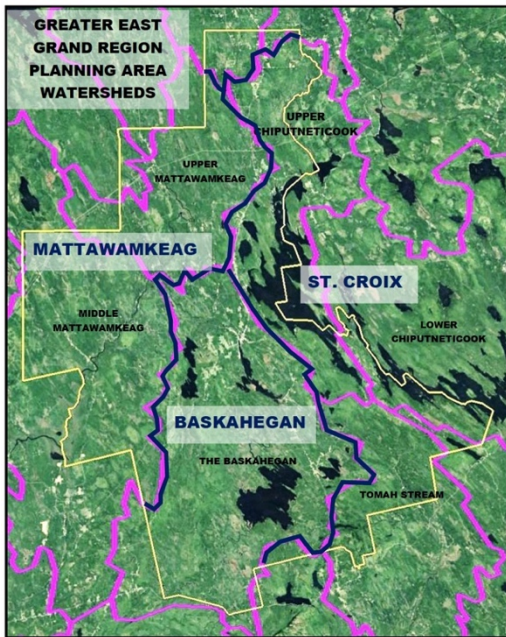
One thing is sure, there are no economic islands. If success is to be had in this entire remote and sparsely populated area of Eastern Maine it will depend upon a close working relationship with our neighbors, much larger service centers and people located far from the landscape of the Greater East Grand Region.

It is only fitting that the linkage to Lower Washington County by the naming of Tomah Lakes and Tomah Stream were in recognition of Chief Joseph Tomah who in 1777 helped save the Town of Machias from falling into the hands of the French and preserved the St. Croix River as the eventual boundary between the US and Canada.



Three Water Trails

The lowland forests and wetlands of the Mattawamkeag, the ridges overlooking the valley of the Baskahegan, and the highlands and lakes of the Upper St. Croix describes a geographic region rich in natural resources. This diverse landscape, favored for gain and sustenance by Native Americans became a similar draw for European settlers alike. One of the earliest written records of non-native Americans in the Region was the 1689 capture of John Gyles by the Micmac Indians.



Note: For planning purposes the Baskahegan is considered a separate watershed even though it is part of the Mattawamkeag River Basin

By the year 1820, early settlers, lumbermen by trade and farmers by necessity, began to carve homesteads from the forests and establish communities along the waterways. US Route 2A (the Military Road), was constructed along the western edge of the region as a stage and military supply route between Bangor and Houlton in 1832. US Route 1, following along the high land to the east, had been surveyed by 1826, but construction languished as per the recorded Washington County Petition of same date; “Nothing has been done by the proprietors to open the road which prevents communication with settlers of our northern part of the County”. The North American and European railroad was constructed thru the central part of the region in 1871, connecting the Maritimes with New England.

This landscape and people, nourished by rivers and lakes is now served by some of the State’s less traveled roadways. It is home to ten widely distributed small communities, linked through heritage and bounded by township-sized wildlands. Rural and remote, this area of nearly 300,000 acres in Eastern Maine shares a forty-mile long watery international boundary with western New Brunswick. This boundary, named an Imaginary Line, runs from Monument One down the meandering thread of the headwaters of the east branch of the St. Croix River on thru East Grand to Spednic Lake and beyond.

Priorities for Regional Recreational and Nature Tourism expansion

- Develop regional recreational tourism website with links to businesses, guides, lodges, etc.
- Improve generic website search engine information and links to local guides and businesses.
- Develop nature tourism brochure for fishing lodges, camps, state of Maine tourism offices.
- Invest in new and renovated infrastructure for (1) Baskahegan; (2) Lower Mattawamkeag (aka The Confluence Project); and (3) The East and West Branches of the Mattawamkeag
- Support Woodie Wheaton Land Trust in the further development of the Monument Water Trail.

Final Draft

#1 - The Baskahegan River

Features

- Mix of flat water, fast water, some rapids and lake
- 8 miles of flat water/lake navigable all seasonal
- Multiple maintained campsites
- East grand HS outdoor program/ Dave Conley worked on building and maintaining campsites with Stetson Fund/TIFF \$
- Paddle segment of East Grand Adventure Race held for 15 years on Baskahegan stream
- Baskahegan Co. is main land owner supportive of river use/ elevating stream to water trail designation
- Good bass fishing

Limitations

- Water above lake available only in spring high water
- Water below lake available only in spring high water
- Some rocky spots in low water sketchy/Hells Rips

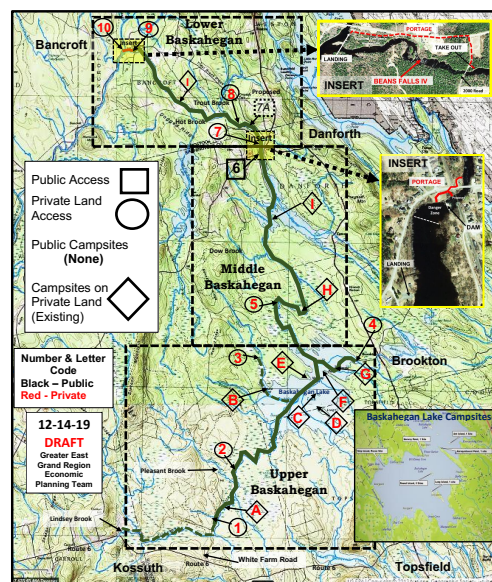
Benefit to Local Economy

- Regional waterway recognition will attract more interest
- Extends water trips for tri-county region for 1-3-day trips for guided or DIY trips
- Increases access for fishing and boating for local cabins/lodges
- local business grocery, gas, eating, hardware

Infrastructure Priorities

1. Signage
2. Identify organization and funding for ongoing support for maintenance
3. Add parking areas for canoe put-in sites + portage
4. Launch improvement
5. Improve launch in downtown Danforth - remove building blight near and around
6. Research historic site at confluence of Baskahegan and Mattawamkeag – opportunity?
7. Develop increased Website presence for the river

BASKAHEGAN RIVER WATER TRAIL MAP DEPICTION



Final Draft

#2 - The Lower Mattawamkeag River “The Confluence Project”

Features

- 33 miles Haynesville to Kingman
- Water level dependable for canoe travel though most season
- Some remote areas
- Unique wetland areas on river
- Large, unique MDIF&W wildlife habitat management area in Drew
- Good bass and seasonal trout fishing
- Rapids/Ledge Falls in Bancroft
- Small rips in Reed
- Extensive flatwater w/canoe or motor access
- IF&W maintained boat launch in Kingman
- IF&W has interest in buying and maintaining boat launch sites on Ferry bridge/Haynesville and Reed
- Drew bridge boat launch continued public use confirmed by owner
- Baskahegan Co. may be willing to let Island in Bancroft be used for a campsite
- Historic site possibility at confluence of Baskahegan stream and new campsite possible.

Limitations

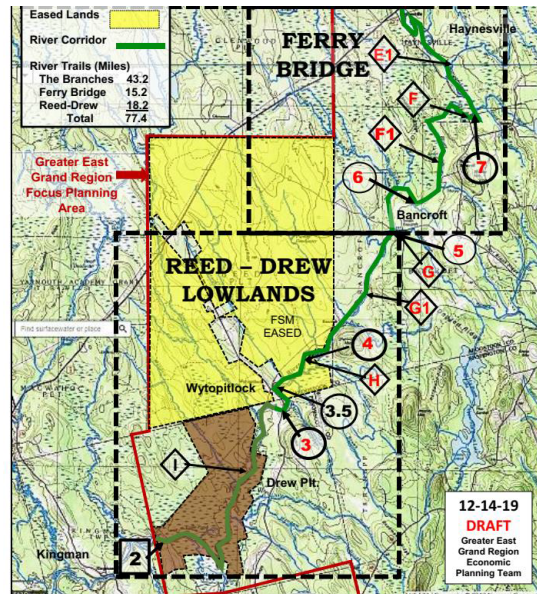
- Extreme drought may limit travel

Benefit to Local Economy

- Increase variety of Tri-county region day and multi day trips
- Good bass and seasonal trout fishing for local fishing, camps, lodges, stores

Infrastructure Priorities

- Develop at least 3 new campsites.
- Improve boat landings Haynesville, Reed, Drew near Drew bridge



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#3 - West/East Branches Mattawamkeag

West Branch Features

- 24 miles from Island Falls to Haynesville
- Remote/wild
- Good trout fishing
- Class 1-2 rips below lake and fast water seasonally
- West branch more dependable water level over summer season
- 2 town-maintained boat launches on Mattawamkeag lake
- (#) BPL campsites on Mattawamkeag lake
- Bible point historic site (?)

West Branch Limitations

- Low water may occur below lake outlet during extreme drought

East Branch Features

- 19.9 mi
- Remote/Wild
- Good fishing
- Spring fast water rapids at upper river below Red bridge and ledge drop
- 2 Campsites listed on ME Atlas

East Branch Limitations

- Can only paddle in spring or fall during high water
- Flat water at bottom of river

Benefit to Local Economy

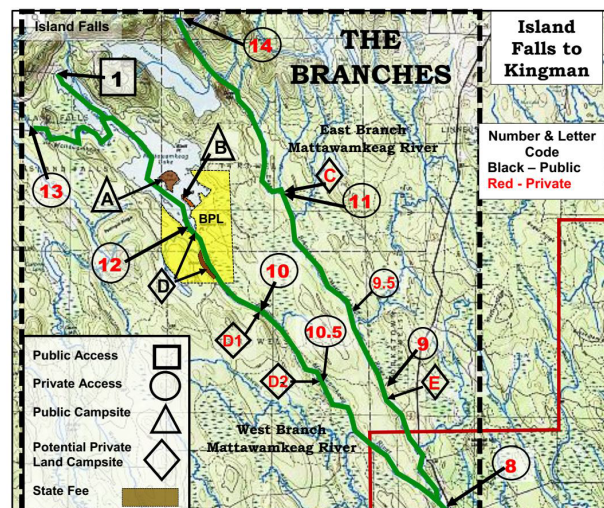
- Regional waterway recognition will attract more interest
- Extends spring water trips for tri-county region for 1-3 day trips for guided or DIY trips
- Increases access for fishing and boating for local cabins/lodges
- Good fishing

West Branch Infrastructure Priorities

- Site scouting needed to locate minimum of 2 new campsites on West Branch below lake.
- Haynesville – improve existing use take-out/put-in on Route 2A.
- Add new boat launch mid-way on branch.

East Branch Infrastructure Priorities

- Ground proof 2 campsites listed in Me. Atlas
- Evaluate put-in and take-out sites

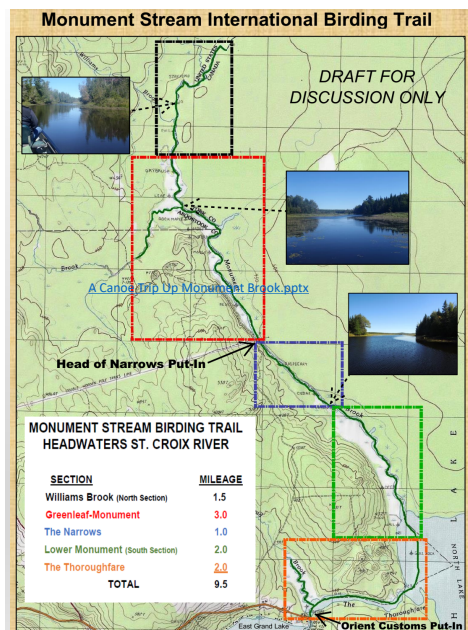
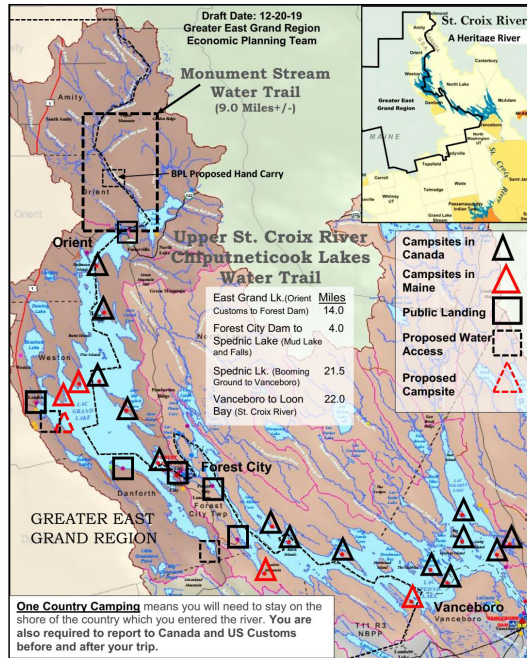


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Monument Stream International Birding Trail St. Croix River Water Trail Project of Woodie Wheaton Land Trust



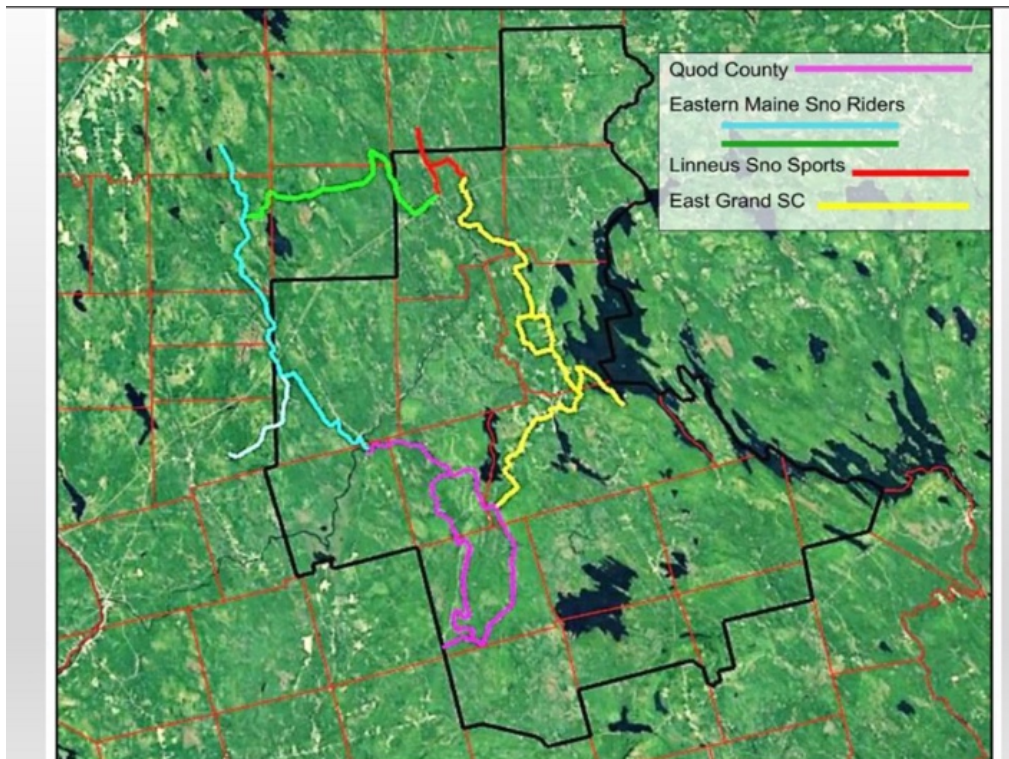
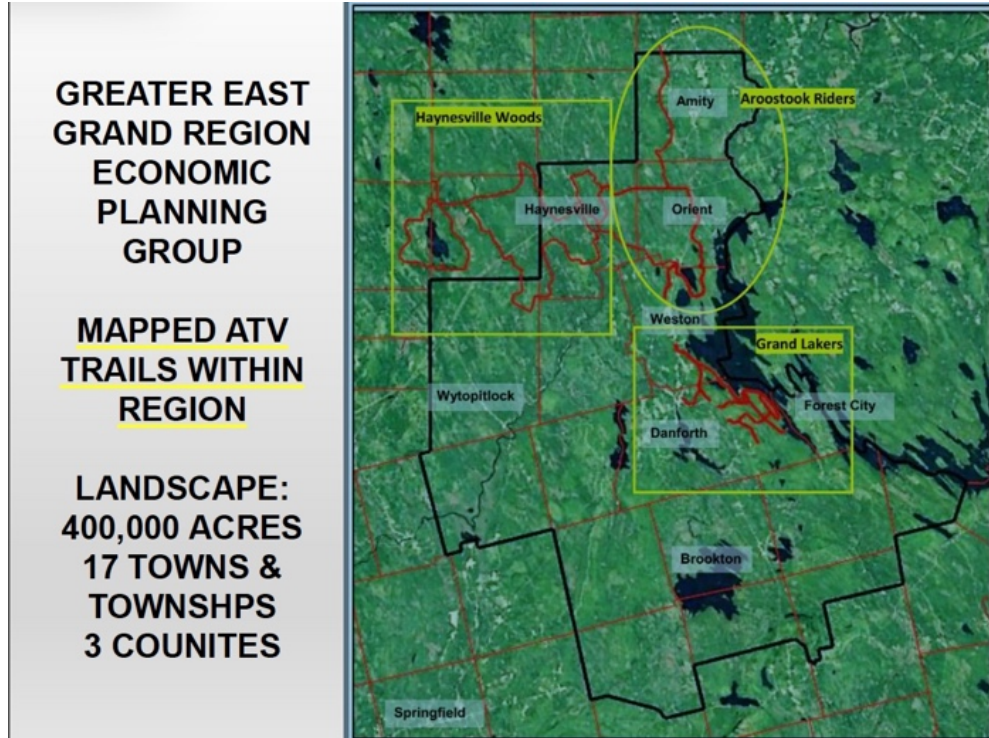
DRAFT DEPICTION - ST. CROIX RIVER WATER TRAILS



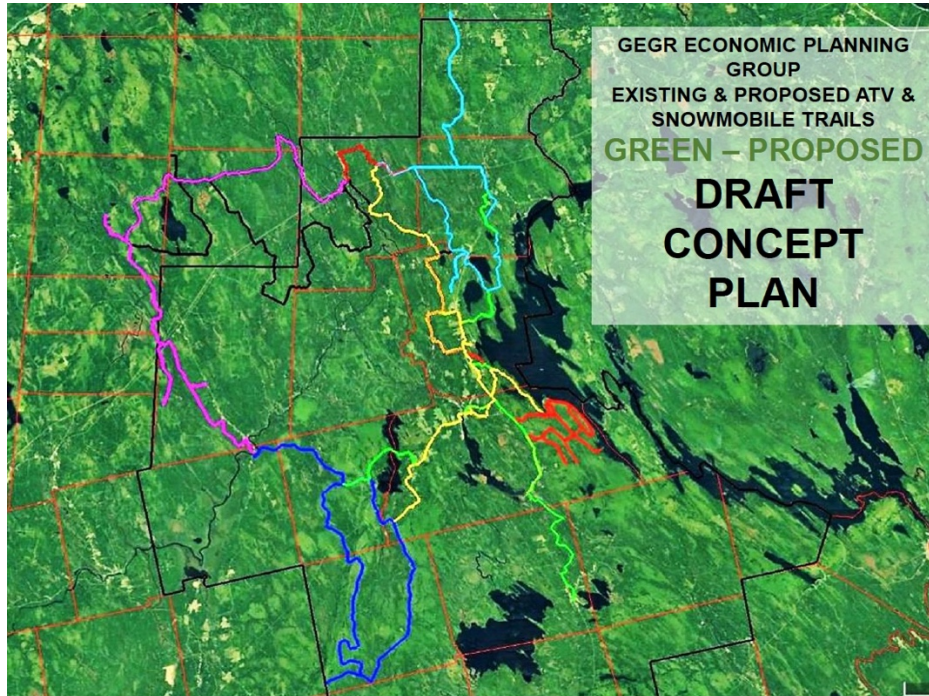
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Exhibit F

Recreational Infrastructure Development: ATV & Snowmobile Trails



Final Draft



DRAFT - FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

