

The Haynesville Woods - "The Woods" The Upper Mattawamkeag River - "The Branches"

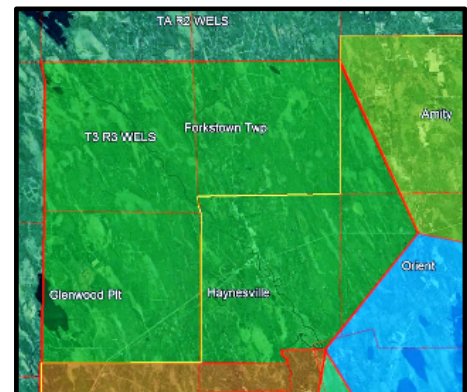
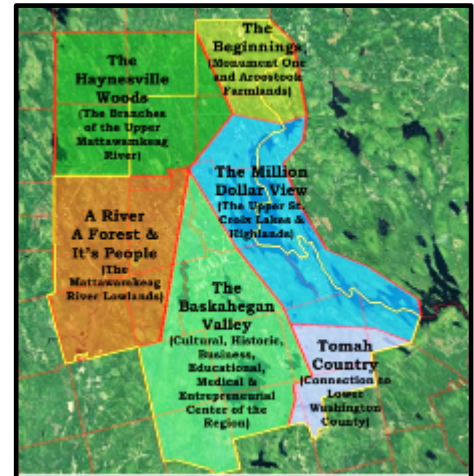
The Haynesville Woods is the name given to a highly productive northern working forest within the GEGR of Eastern Maine. With few public roads and settled areas **the "Woods"** is a vast, 100,000 acres of privately owned (several large unrelated family entities) working forest available free of charge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

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>