

# DRAFT MEMORANDUM

Date: February 4, 2020

To: GEGR Economic Planning Team

From: Elbridge

Re: Draft bulleted notes from trails et al Meeting – Baskahegan Office

Attending: Kyle B, Colin B, Sue S David C, Sarah S, Elbridge

A wide ranging 3 hour discussion with emphasis on linkage of recreational assets to economic development.

- Shared results of trails meeting in Weston and accompanying slide show
- General consensus with findings & notes from Weston Meeting
- Water trails
  - Uncertain water levels may dictate type of end use – DIY users, nature based trips serving existing and new outdoor oriented customer base
  - Need water trails caretaker/maintenance organization (s) -Landowners not an option
  - Need infrastructure development especially on Mattawamkeag - Baskahegan lacks designated parking areas, signage, and landowner approval to market
  - Push ahead under GEGR Planning Group with the development of the Baskahegan Water Trails as a pilot project
  - Similarly with the development of the Monument Brook “Birding Trail” but with WWLT in partnership with BPL and the adjacent state-owned Orient lands
  - Continue to engage all stakeholders including local citizens and public/NGO strategic planning assistance for pre-development planning of an overall strategic plan including phasing, landowner permission, funding, development and marketing including themes and narratives for each trail and major segment.
  - Ground truth existing and proposed access and campsites especially on Mattawamkeg
  - Consider envisioning a GEGR water trails project as part of a grand vision of all eastern Maine water trails- sort of a “Border Waters” version of “Boundary Waters”
  - Expect to develop “Confluence Heritage Site” on BCO lands at confluence of Baskahegan & Mattawamkeag Rivers in Bancroft. Seeking LUPC zone change – A CORE project with anticipated funding from Stetson Mtn.Fund at FSM
- Hiking Trails
  - A key DIY recreation activity in support of sporting camp & lodge customers/families
  - Expand EG Highlands to include loop around Sucker Lake – WWLT to continue to partner with Chamber on the project
  - WWLT also seeking to secure walking access and trail development to and on the Booming Grounds – a 500 acre IF&W reserve between Mud and Spednic Lakes (Mud lake falls, Native American Portages, Natural Communities)
  - Development of proposed hiking trails on TCF project lands in Weston on hold till conservation easement perfected in 2022 positioning trails for public funding (Proposed trail head at waterfront recreation area as part of Chadwick Pt. Project in Weston)
  - Confluence Project in Bancroft (above) has a has short hiking trail component
- Snowmobile Trails
  - Completed initial mapping and inventory of existing and proposed EGSC Trails teeing up a pending Club generated grant application to MCF for a “Phase 1” trails development project. (EGSC recently purchased a second trail groomer)
  - Heritage Loop proposal continues to show viability

- SCEC believes snowmobile trails are an asset that aligns best with outside tourism dollars –albeit as destination needs infrastructure such as lodging and other services
- Snowmobile trails can also benefit existing and/or proposed service businesses – trail location and ease of access to those services are key
- ATV Trails
  - Upcoming meeting – February 20<sup>th</sup> – strategic discussion about linkage of clubs and trails within GEGR. State people in attendance to discuss ATV Task Force recommendations to legislature – size of machines, lack of funding, focus on connections. (Draft proposal of a motorized trail in proximity of Greenland Lakes totally scrapped)
- Agreed to a GEGR recommendation for a feasibility study to explore the concept of a multi-use off-road trail connecting Brookton with the Danforth area. No specific location beyond utilizing in some way the excess area in the recently cleared EMMC powerline ROW.
- Bike trails
  - Little discussion of road bike trails as envisioned fall of 2019. Some discussion ensued about creating a mountain bike “park” as development could be on an isolated parcel of land avoiding active logging and land management roads. Existing off road bike trails in the NE are mostly situated on public lands.
- Birding
  - As an outdoor recreation received some discussion over and above assigning a birding trail to Monument Brook. Noted that birders are generally well funded and somewhat to the high end for lodging and meals. Bird walks and organized tours with bird watching organizations are especially attractive. There is decent potential to attract current coastal clients to northern Maine with an organized tour. Spring to early summer is peak time.
- Camping
  - Determined camping facilities go hand in hand with DIY recreational trails especially during warmer climates hiking and paddling.
  - Camping also a supporter of existing service businesses like the Brookton General Store.
  - Some discussion about whether a campground is best structured for expansion of an existing business or a new entrepreneur.
  - Discussed a GEGR recommendation for a feasibility study focusing on the UT – basically Brookton area. Thinking modest size and geared for small rv’s and tents.
  - Decided to craft a GEGR recommendation for campground feasibility for both the Brookton (Baskahegan) and Reed – Bancroft – Haynesville Mattawamkeag area
  - Post Meeting - Unanswered questions
    - Campground impacts on existing sporting lodges – probably different clientele?
    - Same as per impact on Greenland Cove Campground – probably not significant?
    - What’s optimum type and size for profitability – seems 60 site minimum if stand-alone operation at one location – If at multiple locations what’s impact on type and size?
    - Potentially consider amending GEGR recommendation to a feasibility study for additional camping/campground facilities for the entire Region???
    - See come camping “quick hits” attached??
- Other??

Note: 2-3-2020 Sarah S, Elbridge C 1.5 hour meeting with Buck Plummer pending separate Memo (Discussed campground idea, multi-use off-road trail feasibility study and boat landing at Arm of East Grand Lake)