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# Within Katahdin's Realm: Log Drives and Sporting Camps - Chapter 06: Nahmakanta Stream and Lake Watershed

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***Within Katahdin's Realm:  
Log Drives and Sporting Camps***

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## Chapter 6

### Nahmakanta Stream and Lake Watershed

#### Nahmakanta Drainage: Nahmakanta Stream to Nahmakanta Lake

The mouth of Nahmakanta Stream at Pemadumcook Lake has always been a hub of activity. Regardless of the lake level, loggers could navigate Nahmakanta Stream to the start of the oldest and current route to Nahmakanta Lake. The route left the stream's north bank on a portage to Third Debsconeag Lake, crossed it to the carry to Fourth Debsconeag Lake, and at the west end took the trail to Nahmakanta Lake. The cove at the mouth of Nahmakanta Stream was from the first to the last (1966) of the log driving years an ideal boom collection point for logs coming from an extensive watershed reaching north to Nahmakanta Lake that connected to an east-west axis of watersheds with Rainbow Lake at the east end and Penobscot Pond at the west end. The log landing area on the stream's south side extended from the mouth of Tumbledown Dick Brook to the point below the portage. Until 1894, supplies arrived at this location from the terminus of the Nahmakanta Tote Road on South Twin Lake. Once the railroad reached North Twin Dam, supplies came by boat, scow, or sled from the dam or Norcross. Who operated the first toting services to Nahmakanta Lake from the 1840s to the mid-1880s is unknown. H. L. Stinchfield and Fred Heath took over the operation by 1890 and ran it until the Great Northern Paper Company (GNP) moved into the area about 1910 and created a large depot camp.

#### **Logging Dams on Nahmakanta Stream**

Logging along Nahmakanta Stream began sometime after 1827 and certainly by 1836 when a crew under the direction of Colonel Eben Webster cleared the stream to enhance the flow of

Debsoneag Chain,  
Nahmakanta,  
West Branch

Nesowadnehunk Tote Road

floating bridge

Millinocket Tote Road

dam: red bar on waterway logging  
camp: unfilled red box  
major tote roads: red lines  
sporting camp: unfilled green box

White House

Michaud

Farquhar

Spencer

river ford

Millinocket Tote Road

1924 Rainbow fire boundary

sluice

McPheters

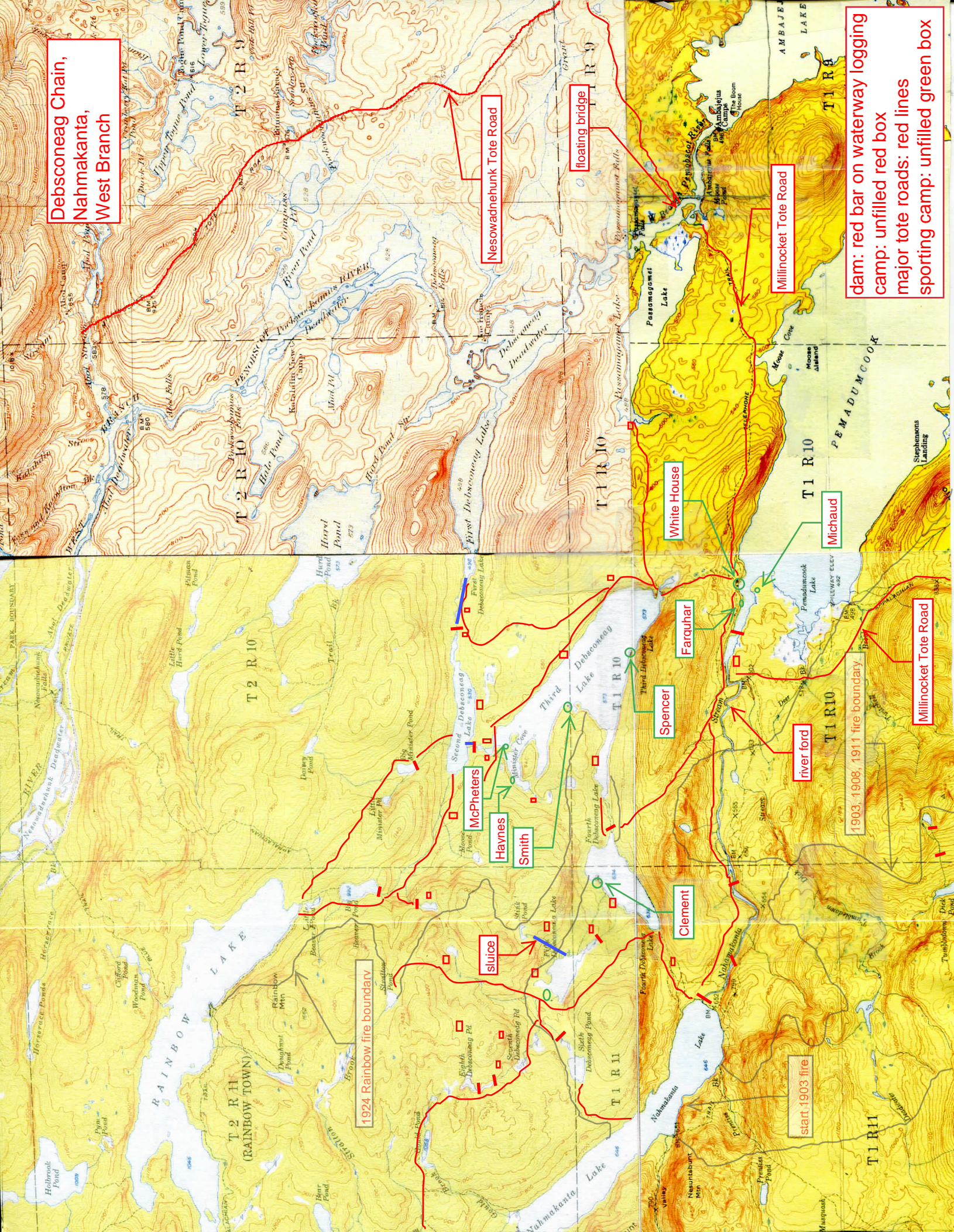
Haynes

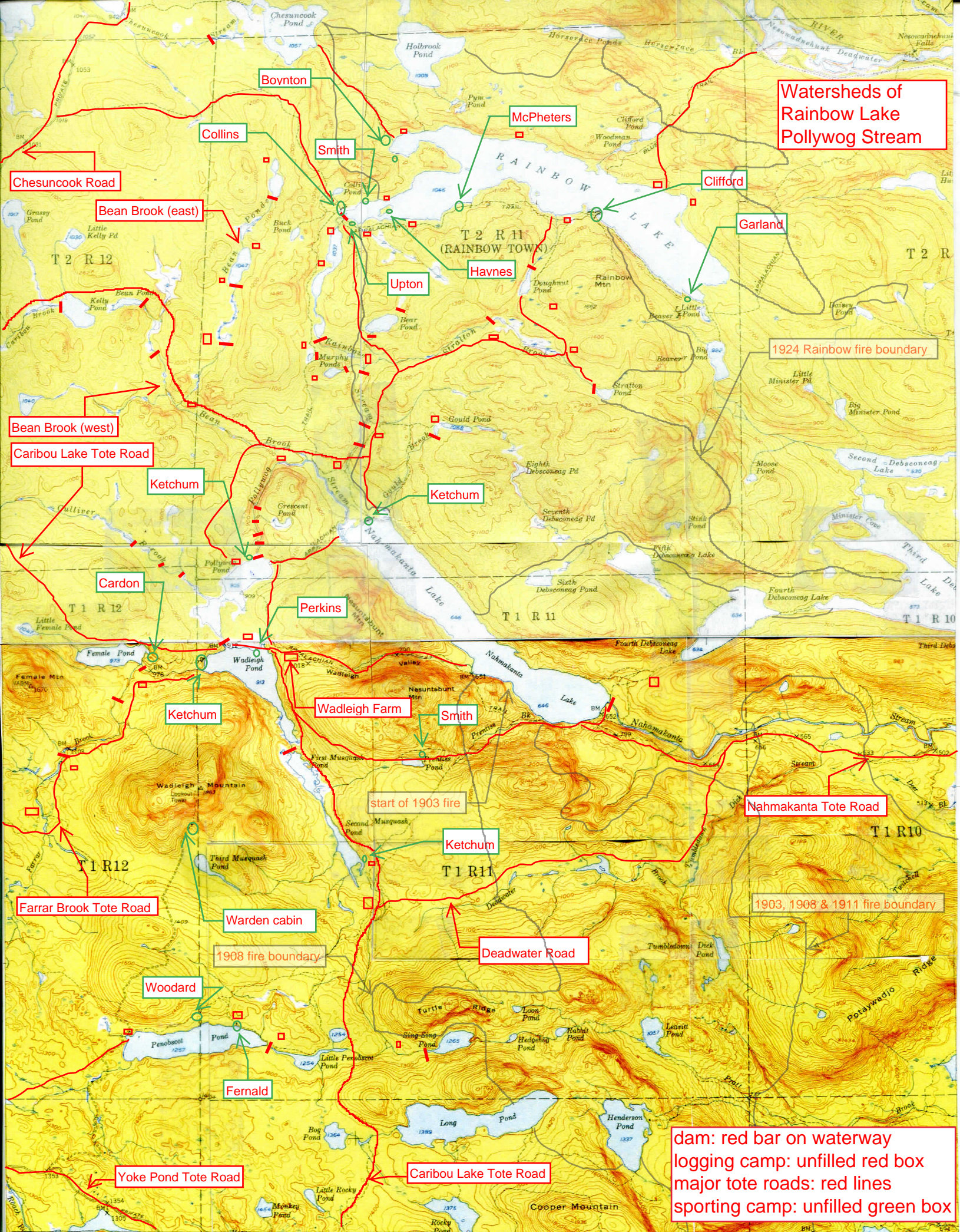
Smith

Clement

start, 1903 fire

1903, 1908, 1911 fire boundary





Watersheds of  
Rainbow Lake  
Pollywog Stream

1924 Rainbow fire boundary

Nahmakanta Tote Road

1903, 1908 & 1911 fire boundary

dam: red bar on waterway  
logging camp: unfilled red box  
major tote roads: red lines  
sporting camp: unfilled green box

Bovnton

Collins

McPheters

Smith

Clifford

Garland

Chesuncook Road

Bean Brook (east)

Upton

Havnes

Bean Brook (west)

Caribou Lake Tote Road

Ketchum

Ketchum

Cardon

Perkins

Ketchum

Wadleigh Farm

Smith

start of 1903 fire

Ketchum

Farrar Brook Tote Road

Warden cabin

1908 fire boundary

Deadwater Road

Woodard

Fernald

Yoke Pond Tote Road

Caribou Lake Tote Road

logs.<sup>1</sup> Eben Webster and his son, Eben Jr., were both successful lumbermen at the time. Eben Jr.'s two sons, J. Frederick and Eben C., continued the family lumbering interests by forming the Webster Paper Company in the late 1880s in the Bangor area. In 1899, Eben C. built the Necknoegan Ground Mill in Old Town, and the family sold it to E. B. Draper Company in 1920.

Loggers rolled logs off the valley's steep hillsides to Nahmakanta Stream's edge. The log volume was such that when piled on the ice or near the edge, the spring runoff flushed the logs to Pemadumcook Lake. Loggers worked their way along Nahmakanta Stream and up Nahmakanta Lake. Zebulon Bradley's T2R11 W.E.L.S. 1842 survey indicated that loggers reached the head of Nahmakanta Lake by 1841.<sup>2</sup> Rufus Philbrook, a trapper born about 1832, grew up at his parent's Philbrook shanty and remembered the teams coming through on their way to Nahmakanta Stream in the 1840s.<sup>3</sup>

At some point, the volume of logs being driven on Nahmakanta Stream became great enough to warrant dams. The Maine state legislature issued a charter in 1837 for a Nahmakanta Dam Company with the provision that dams at Nahmakanta Lake and at the First, Second, and Third Chain lakes be completed by January 1, 1838.<sup>4</sup> Which lakes the charter was actually referring to in listing *First, Second, and Third Chain lakes* is unknown, but lumbermen did not build dams on any of the Lower or Upper chain lakes, and they may not have constructed the

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<sup>1</sup> Jackson, Charles T. *Second Annual Report of the Geology of the Public Lands Belonging to the State of Maine and Massachusetts*. Boston: Dutton and Wentworth, State Printers, 1838.

<sup>2</sup> Bradley, Zebulon. Field Notes for Survey of August 15, 1842 of T2R11.

<sup>3</sup> Palmer, Ralph S. "Rufus Philbrook, Trapper." *New England Quarterly*, 22, no. 4 (December 1949): 452–474.

<sup>4</sup> Acts and Resolves and Special Laws of the State of Maine passed by the Legislature of the State of Maine, 1822–1945.

Nahmakanta Lake dam at the foot of Nahmakanta Lake because the legislature authorized no toll increases for a Nahmakanta Lake dam between 1837 and 1867, a period when cutting took place throughout the watershed.<sup>5</sup> Between 1835 and 1841, the region's lumbermen seemed primarily focused on dams at Chesuncook and North Twin lakes, but they did not build them until 1840–1841.

The 1867 Nahmakanta Dam Company charter contained the words “build and maintain” and provided for dams in the Rainbow and Pollywog watersheds; rights not granted in the 1837 charter.<sup>6</sup> The word *build* may have been an indicator that any previous dam was no longer useful or simply built as a temporary dam, as happened in the Cooper Brook watershed, and *maintain* may mean the previous owners abandoned it. Noted dam builder William Jasper Johnston visited the dam in 1869 when it was operating with an 8-foot head and he repaired it in 1880.<sup>7</sup> The legislature amended the charter in 1874 for an increase in toll, the charge per log going through the dam.<sup>8</sup> At some point, perhaps about 1870, the company also built a dam at the foot of each of Nahmakanta Stream's two deadwaters. In 1913, the lake dam was 917 feet long with a 6-foot head, four gates, and a 184-foot side dam.<sup>9</sup> The location of the side dam was perhaps at the dam's southeast corner where it would keep water from going around the east end of the dam. The old tote road to Fourth Debsconeag Lake crossed the top of the dam. At some point, the

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<sup>5</sup> Acts and Resolves and Special Laws of the State of Maine passed by the Legislature of the State of Maine, 1822–1945.

<sup>6</sup> see footnote 5

<sup>7</sup> William Jasper Johnston Family Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

<sup>8</sup> see footnote 5

<sup>9</sup> Hempstead, Alfred G., *The Penobscot Boom*. Orono: University of Maine Press, 1931.

Nahmakanta Dam Company became a subsidiary of GNP and GNP took over the dam company in 1953.<sup>10</sup>

In 1922, the Nahmakanta Dam Company rebuilt the deadwater and lake dams.<sup>11</sup> The repair increased the lake dam's head from 6 to 8 feet and held back enough water to send out 20,000 to 25,000 cords, if the drivers used the water efficiently.<sup>12</sup> The dam company was maintaining the dam in 1930, and loggers continued to drive cuts from the upper reaches of the watershed until the early 1950s. The passageway across the top of the dam to Fourth Debsconeag Lake was still usable in 1938, but GNP no longer listed the flowage on its small pond water storage inventory.<sup>13</sup> The dam company may have abandoned the deadwater dams by 1925 when most of the drives were of pulp-length wood, which did not need as much water. By 1952, GNP removed the bottom gates at the lake to allow the passage of fish. At that time, the bridge across the top was in ruins and only a fraction of the 917-foot dam and a few pier posts remained.

### **Operations at the Mouth of Nahmakanta Stream**

Sometime soon after 1894 when the railroad reached North Twin Dam, South Twin sawmill operator Francisco O. Estes built a mill on the point on the south side of the lake below the portage to Third Debsconeag Lake. The sawdust pile was on one side of the point and the structures were on the other. The mill may have made log-hauling sleds given a large current pile

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<sup>10</sup> McLeod, John E. *The Great Northern Paper Company*, vol. 1–6. Unpublished manuscript, 1978.

<sup>11</sup> Report TWP No.2 R11 W.E.L.S., Piscataquis County, Maine, March 1922, Penobscot Development Co.

<sup>12</sup> see footnote 11

<sup>13</sup> Prouty, E. W., Report on Storage Dams Particularly Small Ponds on West Branch Penobscot River, Summer 1936



of sled runners remains stacked in a manner that suggested they were new.<sup>14</sup> The mill ceased operations about 1911, perhaps because of that year's forest fire, which bypassed the point, but burned the nearby forest. The fire started at what the loggers called Howe Pitch, which is located just above the upper branch of Tumbledown Dick Brook at a high gravel bank and a 90-degree corner in Nahmakanta Stream, and covered three miles in the first hour. A second contributing factor causing the mill's ceasing of operations may have been a large GNP Debsconeag operation.

The landing areas on the south side of Nahmakanta Stream became known as Maher Landing beginning about 1901. Lower Maher Landing was at the mouth of Nahmakanta Stream and the upper landing was above the Maher logging camp that was just below the mouth of Tumbledown Dick Brook. George J. Maher was a lumberman and businessman. In 1900, he and his wife Eva also ran Millinocket's Mountain View Hotel, which probably catered to loggers.<sup>15</sup> At the expansive lower landing, teamsters hauled their loads onto the ice with the piles extending back to and up the gently sloping shores. The original upper landing was an extensive flat area behind the high stream banks from which men rolled the logs into the water. In the late 1950s, GNP bulldozers created a gentle slope to the stream and pushed the logs into the waterway.<sup>16</sup> At that time GNP, which had no roads from Millinocket to the site, had its truckers drive across the ice to Lower Maher Landing so they could handle the hauling. A gated road did reach the landing via the circuitous route of Millinocket, Ripogenus Dam, Kokadjo, Penobscot Pond, Deadwater Brook, Tumbledown Stream, and Nahmakanta Stream.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> conversation with Larry Ferguson

<sup>15</sup> advertising in *In the Maine Woods*

<sup>16</sup> conversation with Jack Farquhar

<sup>17</sup> conversation with Larry Ferguson

In 1910, GNP turned the former Stinchfield and Heath camp, which was at the water's edge, into a blacksmith shop as GNP began to develop its operations in the area.<sup>18</sup> A year later, the site had a storehouse and a large rock crib wharf. Over the ensuing three years, GNP built its Debsconeag depot camp, which included an office, housing for twelve to eighteen men, an artesian well, storehouse, potato house, stables, wagon shed for ten to twelve wagons, hen house, a 30-foot boathouse, icehouse, boarding house for sixty men, and stable for twenty-four horses and twenty-five tons of hay.<sup>19</sup> These structures supported an early GNP 4-foot wood operation in the Debsconeag lakes. The camp also supported loggers on Cooper Brook in 1915. The location's name, White House Landing, came from the large sixty-bed steam heated white boarding house. One of the clerks for the operations was Charles A. Hale of Norcross.<sup>20</sup>

A half-mile east of Debsconeag depot camp and the tote road to Third Debsconeag Lake, GNP built a temporary dam with logs and rocks to create a 4-foot head for the last drive (1966).<sup>21</sup> The water impoundment reached the front of a huge 40-foot high stacker-made log pile of about 21,000 cords that rose over the winter. Men picked the pile by hand on the waterside at water level. When they had nearly undercut the pile, bulldozers pushed from the backside to force the pile to collapse toward the water, and the picking resumed. Once the logs were in the water, other drivers moved the logs by hand to the dam and sluiced them through into boom bags. No logs came down Nahmakanta Stream for this operation. GNP removed the dam immediately after the drive, leaving only the large boulders that still dot the landscape.

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<sup>18</sup> Fred Gilbert Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections Penobscot Development Company. "Growth Plan of TWP 1R11 W.E.L.S. January 1922." Penobscot Development Company. "Growth Plan of TWP 2R11 W.E.L.S. January 1922."

<sup>19</sup> GNP Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections, buildings inventory

<sup>20</sup> conversation with Jack Hale

<sup>21</sup> conversation with Larry Ferguson

Larry Ferguson, who grew up in the area as a guide's assistant, worked this last drive sluicing the logs. The drive crew—which included twins Robert and Raymond Leet, whose mother had once lived on Passamagamet Lake circa 1910, the Isaacs whose father piloted the tow boat, Mortimer Skinner as straw boss, and Harold Kidney the operations boss—used the driver's camp, a sleeping cabin, a cook shack, and eating shack, up behind the White House Landing off the tote road to Third Debsconeag Lake. Supporting the operations was a large floating wharf of boom logs with double planking anchored to the shore at White House Landing. When this work finished, Larry and the others went to work at the Ambajejus Boom House.

### **Cutting along Nahmakanta Stream**

The Websters apparently cut on the stream in 1836. By 1840, loggers had culled any pine close to the stream. Cutting continued during the next sixty years as lumbermen had their crews return for second-growth and second-quality pine and then the spruce. Although loggers did not cut the stream every year, they likely drove it nearly every year.

The next documented cutting took place about 1900.<sup>22</sup> In 1901, George J. Maher headed crews that cut for GNP on public lots near the stream's mouth and in 1902 on nearby land of James F. Kimball. The 1903 scalars' report was for logs landed on the stream. James C. Rice and Company cut along the stream in 1904, others landed logs on the stream in 1908 and 1909. In 1909, someone's camp #4 operated at the mouth of the stream on the south side, camp #5 was at Howe Pitch, and camp #1 was at the carry to Third Debsconeag Lake. Francisco O. Estes had a logging camp at Howe Pitch on the north side in 1911. Loggers, who cut the public lot near the

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<sup>22</sup> GNP Paper University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections, scalar reports and mapped cuts found at Katahdin Forest Management Maine Division of Acadian Timber Archives. GNP Division of Forest Engineering, Township 1 Range 10, October 5, 1927 and September 18, 1940, and a color code sheet 1903-1939

mouth of Nahmakanta Stream in 1915, probably used the new depot camp and the landings named for Maher. By 1920, Maher had moved to Lewiston, Maine, and his camp on the south bank at the lower end of Nahmakanta Stream was in ruins by 1933.

On the south bank at Howe Pitch were the graves of three early river drivers; someone removed one later.<sup>23</sup> The teamsters of circa 1910 never knew they were hauling over the graves. Seven more graves were at the deadwater below the pitch, and three of those men died of smallpox, according to Lewey Ketchum. Those who frequented the area as kids such as Jack Farquhar and Larry Ferguson can remember seeing the graves. A 1950s-era bulldozer operator who was not aware of the site near upper Maher Landing opened at least one.

About 1906, the tote road on the south side of the stream began to predominate and became known as the Nahmakanta Stream Tote Road. Loggers cut along the lower end of the stream in 1911 and 1912.<sup>24</sup> C. E. Gilbert cut from this road in 1916. For the 1938–1943 operations, the loggers relocated the tote road a little farther away from the stream, and John Lagassey led a crew cutting the lower 1.5 miles of the road in 1941–1943.<sup>25</sup> In 1961–1963, a crew moved portions of the road away from the low wet areas. The 1963 cut extended from the east end of Nahmakanta Lake down the south side of Nahmakanta Stream. Given that the truckers used the full length of the road, most logs went to the Maher Landings, but some may have gone in the stream. The Nahmakanta Lake dam in 1960 still had a gate and was holding back some water that drivers may have used to flush the logs off the Nahmakanta streambed. The loggers in the 1960s did not enter the burn areas of the 1903 forest fire.

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<sup>23</sup> information on graves of the area from Fanny Hardy Eckstrom personal journal at University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections and conversations with Jack Farquhar and Larry Ferguson

<sup>24</sup> see footnote 22

<sup>25</sup> cuts mapped on GNP Division of Forest Engineering Township 1 Range 10, Sept. 18, 1940

Above the Estes camp and just below the first set of rapids was a river ford where tragedy struck one season when a number of horses broke through the ice and did not survive.<sup>26</sup> Following that circa 1930s incident, loggers built a bridge at the site for horses moving from one side of the stream to the other. Similar tragedies occurred on Pemadumcook Lake. One year, the ice suddenly softened and six teams of horses broke through and drowned. Another team of four horses and men drowned when they went through the ice in the late 1940s while plowing a road across the lake from what loggers called Stephenson's Landing, located on the south shore of Pemadumcook Lake a little over a mile west of Jo-Mary Stream.<sup>27</sup> About that same time, a teamster working for Ernest Ladd and toting supplies from Ambajejus dike went through the ice near the largest of the Porus Islands.<sup>28</sup> He managed to get the team out and continued on to White House Landing where he walked the horses back and forth across the road to Third Debsconeag Lake all night so they would stay warm enough to survive.

Area loggers continued to use horses into the 1960s. In the late 1940s or early 1950s, Dana Brown towed a logging crew and a raft of horses and hay to the mouth of Nahmakanta Stream for two logging camps of the Ladds, one at the head of Pemadumcook Lake and the other at Third Debsconeag Lake.<sup>29</sup> Brown picked up his loads at the old Ambajejus mill site, once owned by the Ladds. Ice had already begun to form, but the boat was able to break it, and he gave it little thought until he realized the ice also cut a hole in the boat. On another trip to Nahmakanta Stream, high waves, which nearly swamped the crew boat and horse barge he was

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<sup>26</sup> conversation with Doug Farquhar

<sup>27</sup> conversations with Dana Brown

<sup>28</sup> conversation with Dana Brown

<sup>29</sup> conversations with Dana Brown

towing, forced him to pull in behind an island, tie off and return later. He made several trips, often coming back in the dark with no lights, a challenge that made him apprehensive until he got clear of the narrows between Pemadumcook and Ambajejus lakes. In the early 1960s, Ferguson observed a crew using horses on the Nahmakanta and Jo-Mary sides of Potaywadjo Ridge.<sup>30</sup>

Horses were on my mind as my dad and I paddled across Pemadumcook Lake from Jo-Mary Stream into Nahmakanta Stream to White House Landing. We probably passed over where the horse teams and their teamsters went through the ice and drowned. The only solace was knowing that any logger or loggers close by would have done anything to try to save the horses and men. Our camping spot was in the Lower Maher Landing area, which is full of old metal spanning generations of loggers. Bill and Cindy Ware, White House proprietors, and Ferguson found the foundations of the Estes's sawmill, a big building and several small ones; an old pitcher pump, woodstove, and a cast iron lamp that served as light, cooker, and heater.<sup>31</sup>

A large broad flat rock, looking like an iceberg, is grounded in the stream's channel a couple hundred feet off shore. Perhaps loggers stood on it during booming operations. As I poled up the lower end of Nahmakanta Stream, I understood exactly why the old Native American canoe route bypassed these five miles of rapids. I could not find any remains of the dams at the two deadwaters, but a little of the old dam still exists at the outlet.

On another occasion, my father and I bushwhacked to the no-name pond on the ridge north of the midpoint of the stream. If it ever had a dam, then it was a horse dam at the tiny

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<sup>30</sup> conversations with Larry Ferguson

<sup>31</sup> conversations with Bill and Cindy Ware and Larry Ferguson

outlet. The streambed is almost invisible. The steep hillside probably made it easy for loggers to just let the logs slide the 400 yards down to the stream.

### **Tumbledown Dick Stream Drainage**

Logs came into the lower end of Nahmakanta Stream from Tumbledown Dick Stream, which enters through two branches. The one to the east came in at the edge of the old Maher camp after winding through a large alder bog. The other channel enters farther up Nahmakanta Stream.

Eugene Larlee, a beaver trapper since the late 1960s, found an old rock crib dam at the foot of the alder bog.<sup>32</sup> When loggers built the dam and for what years they used it are unknown.

Loggers, cutting on all sides of the Tumbledown Dick drainage, eventually reached both its headwaters, the small no-name ponds high on Potaywadjo Ridge east of Tumbledown Dick Pond and the swamps of Deadwater Brook. Loggers probably began cutting the lower end about 1840 when they first started up Nahmakanta Stream. They reached Tumbledown Dick Pond area by at least 1875 when a tote road ran southeast from the foot of Nahmakanta Lake to the first ridge where it angled across to Deadwater Brook and to the pond.<sup>33</sup>

The 1903, 1908, and 1911 forest fires interrupted logging in this watershed until the 1920s. The 1903 fire started on the south side Nahmakanta Lake and burned southeast across the west side of Tumbledown Dick Pond. It was a clean burn in that it consumed even the earth. Another fire in May 1911, largely confined to the 1908 burn area, burned from Nahmakanta Stream through the Tumbledown Dick area and over Potaywadjo Ridge and around the east end of Lower Jo-Mary Lake.<sup>34</sup> The fire destroyed the 1911 Frank E. Tuck and Wilmont H. Davis

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<sup>32</sup> conversations with Eugene Larlee

<sup>33</sup> TWP. 1 R.11 W.E.L.S. as surveyed 1913, James W. Sewall

<sup>34</sup> GNP Division of Forest Engineering, Plan of T.1 R.10, August 20, 1913, mapped burns

camp about a mile up Tumbledown Dick Stream and a logging camp on Twitchell Brook at the base of Potaywadjo Ridge.

By the mid-1920s, loggers were cutting again in the Tumbledown Dick Pond area, but they did not follow the recommendation of the April 1922 Penobscot Development Company report suggesting they haul from Tumbledown Dick Pond to Nahmakanta Stream.<sup>35</sup> A 1924 report by the same company assessed Tumbledown Dick Stream as drivable for 4-foot wood, and loggers drove it.<sup>36</sup> Whether they used any dams to support the drive from the pond is unknown. However, they did use at least three horse dams on the highest no-name pond and its outlet stream that flows into Tumbledown Dick Pond at about the midpoint on its north side. Glen Perkins, a game warden, found remnants of them in the 1980s.<sup>37</sup>

The loggers had a camp on the east side at the midpoint of the stream from the no-name pond, another of three buildings about halfway down Tumbledown Dick Pond on the south side, a third on high ground about a half-mile west of the junction of Deadwater Brook and Tumbledown Dick Stream, and a fourth about two miles above the confluence on Deadwater Brook.<sup>38</sup> Teamsters associated with this fourth camp could have hauled westerly to Second Musquash Pond. The last drives from Tumbledown Dick Pond and on Deadwater Brook were probably before World War II.

From about 1900 to 1938, the supplies for loggers working in this area came across Pemadumcook Lake from Norcross. Before that, loggers brought in supplies via the shortest and most economical route, which for the headwaters of Deadwater Brook was from the west, via the

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<sup>35</sup> Report Twp. No.1 R.11 W.E.L.S. Piscataquis County, Maine, April 1922

<sup>36</sup> Report Twp. No.1 R.11 W.E.L.S. Piscataquis County, Maine, April 1924

<sup>37</sup> conversations with Glen Perkins

<sup>38</sup> Penobscot Development Company, TWP 1 – Range 11 – WELS, September-October 1924



Caribou Tote Road. In 1920, Hollingsworth and Whitney Paper Company (H&W), which operated in the Kennebec watershed, and GNP, which operated in the West Branch watershed, agreed to build the Yoke Pond Tote Road that connected Greenville to Yoke Ponds.<sup>39</sup>

Connections to the Nahmakanta and Pollywog waterways followed.

When the loggers returned in 1938 to log on Tumbledown Dick Stream and Deadwater Brook, their supplies came from Greenville. Loggers reopened a 1913 tote road that went west from Nahmakanta Stream along the north side of Deadwater Brook to the old Caribou Lake Tote Road near the head of Second Musquash Pond. From this junction, the road went to Penobscot Pond's west end where it connected to the Yoke Pond Tote Road with access to Greenville.

Loggers of the 1938 cut may have hauled wood on this reopened road by truck or tractor sled to the Maher Landings. GNP began to use trucks for short hauls to water in 1936. In 1953, GNP reopened this route again as a tractor road to bring in supplies.<sup>40</sup> GNP also used the road in support of the 1960 to 1963 cutting around Wadleigh and all of the Musquash ponds, and along both Deadwater Brook and Nahmakanta Stream.<sup>41</sup> Trucks hauled the logs on the road to the Maher Landings into the mid-1960s from as far away as the Penobscot Pond area.

My Tumbledown Dick Stream research left me with a number of unanswered questions so I followed it from its headwaters to and through the great alder swamp just short of Nahmakanta Stream. For the headwater pond, I had Perkins's information and no need to verify it, but could I find the same thing more than thirty years later in an area logged since his visit? The forge was gone as were indicators of the horse dams, but other evidence of the logging camp

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<sup>39</sup> *The Northern*, September 1925

<sup>40</sup> TWP. 1 – Range 11 – W.E.L.S., Piscataquis County Maine September – October 1924 and Bureau of Taxation, State of Maine, Property Plan of Township 1 Range 11 W.E.L.S., Winter 1969

<sup>41</sup> cuts mapped on: GNP Division Forest Engineering TWP.1 Range 11, April 9, 1956

remained in among new-growth beech. I also learned a valuable lesson that morning when I paid close attention to the impact of erosion from horse dams and driving. The outlet brook has been eroded by water far stronger than spring runoff. The channel is deep with two distinct levels. The first level down from the top bank, perhaps 6 to 8 feet, has sizable trees. The next level is the current course with the markings of the spring runoff. The high water washed a considerable amount of soil downstream to the pond where a sizable delta formed. The trees on the delta are similar in size to those growing on the uppermost portions of the banks.

No evidence of rock cribs or logs cut by both ax and saw was evident on Tumbledown Dick Stream in the area of the pond's outlet. Between the outlet and Deadwater Brook, loggers apparently did not alter the stream in a major way; it lacks major obstructions and is relatively straight. A search of Deadwater Brook above its confluence with Tumbledown Dick Brook contains no evidence of dams at likely sites as identified on a topographical map.

Below the confluence of Deadwater Brook and Tumbledown Dick Brook is a brook that flows in from the north, and this area was a possible dam site, but the beaver workings hide any possible remains. Less than a half-mile above Tumbledown Dick Falls is another possible dam site—a natural granite barrier with flat water behind it—but no evidence of man-made dams remains. The full length of the stream above Tumbledown Dick Falls has good current and an open channel so dams may not have been needed.

At Tumbledown Dick Falls, I tried to fathom how loggers minimized log jams in its narrow shaft. Once over the falls, logs passed through a deep ravine into an open beaver meadow where the stream splits into two channels, each of which leads to Nahmakanta Stream. Currently beaver work the site, and no dam evidence is visible. Both channels were driven at one time or

another. I may have been too focused on getting out of the alders on the east channel at Nahmakanta Stream for I missed finding the old rock cribs Larlee waded through.

### **Logging around Nahmakanta Lake**

Upstream at Nahmakanta Lake in 1832, Hiram Rockwood, timber cruiser, found that no cutting had taken place and substantial pines of considerable value were at the head of the lake.<sup>42</sup> The first loggers reached the lake from two opposite directions during the same general time, about 1840. One group worked westerly from Pemadumcook Lake. The other group worked south from Caribou Lake through Kelly Pond and into the Bean Brook watershed that flowed south to the head of Nahmakanta Lake. By 1841, loggers had culled the best pine from within a mile or so of the shores on all sides of the lake and worked partway up Rainbow and Pollywog streams.<sup>43</sup>

Logs spilled into Nahmakanta Lake through Bean Brook from about 1840 to about 1930, through Pollywog Stream from about 1840 to about 1930, and through Rainbow Stream from about 1840 to about 1950. At some point, loggers cut some hardwood logs that they buoyed with soft woods on the lake. Enough of the hardwood sank off the cliffs of Nesuntabunt Mountain to warrant a salvage operation in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The earliest roads in the area reached the lake at the dam.<sup>44</sup> From there, one went east across the top of the dam to a horse hovel where it dropped down the hillside to Fourth Debsconeag Lake to get into the middle portion of the Debsconeag watershed. Another went south to Tumbledown Dick Pond by the mid-1870s. A third followed the shore of the lake, entered Prentiss valley (pre-1890), passed a logging camp (c. 1913) on the south side of the first

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<sup>42</sup> Rockwood, Hiram. Timber Survey Notes, T.2 R.11 W.E.L.S., 1832.

<sup>43</sup> Bradley, Zebulon. Field Notes for Survey of August 15, 1842 of T2R11.

<sup>44</sup> TWP. 1 R.11 W.E.L.S. as surveyed 1913, James W. Sewall

beaver bog, crossed to the north side of Prentiss Pond, and ended at Wadleigh Pond. Below Prentiss Pond on the Nahmakanta side was a horse hovel and perhaps blacksmith shop. The oxen shoes found in the area by Doug Farquhar Sr. and his son in the late 1950s indicated loggers cut the area before 1890.<sup>45</sup> The pond has no evidence of any dam and was probably not driven. A minimal amount of water flows out of both ends of the pond given the pond's position in the valley's saddle. The pond is within hauling distance of Nahmakanta Lake. No eye pins that might have held booms at the mouth of the brook at Nahmakanta are present.

By 1882, a tote road went from the west shore of Nahmakanta Lake through Wadleigh valley to Wadleigh farm near the edge of Wadleigh Pond. This tote road and the Prentiss Valley Tote Road were ideal in that they each had a gentle slope to the lake where crews piled logs on the ice awaiting the spring thaw. Loggers cut in these valleys and the adjacent lakeside in the early 1920s, 1939, and 1943 seasons.<sup>46</sup> The last logging in that portion of the valleys draining to Nahmakanta was in 1961–1963 when truckers hauled to the Maher Landings.

On the opposite side of the lake, crews began hauling to the lake from the area around Sixth Debsconeag Lake as early as 1840 and that same haul road was still in use in 1913.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, teamsters hauled logs cut between the lake and Gould Pond to the lake at the mouth of Rainbow Stream in 1841. The cutting on this side stopped after the 1924 forest fire burned across the ridgeline above the lake. With the exception of an area south of Sixth Debsconeag Lake, loggers have never returned to the east side of the lake.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> conversations with Doug Farquhar

<sup>46</sup> the succession of publications of the *Guide to the Maine Appalachian Trail in Maine* and their supplements

<sup>47</sup> TWP. 1 R.11 W.E.L.S. as surveyed 1913, James W. Sewall

<sup>48</sup> "Nahmakanta Unit Management Plan," Department of Conservation, State of Maine, November 1995.

Elsewhere around the lake, loggers hauled, sluiced, or drove logs to the lake. Loggers built sluices on Nesuntabunt Mountain's northeast face, but some virgin timber remains in a couple places. Cornelius (Con) Murphy landed a cut on the lake in the 1886 season.<sup>49</sup> In the late 1890s, Lewey Ketchum's daughters liked to watch the loaded log sleds pass their camp near the mouth of Rainbow Stream and the men unload them on the lake.<sup>50</sup> James C. Rice and Company cut on the lake in 1902 and 1903.<sup>51</sup> The scalars measured logs on the lake in 1907, 1908, and 1909. J. A. Lobley's exploration map of 1910 marks the Gredess camp at the head of the lake.<sup>52</sup> In 1916, the W. Getchell operation landed logs on the lake's north end near Pollywog Stream, sometimes referred to as Bean Brook. A July 1924 water report listed a drive still on the lake with a sufficient 7-foot head.<sup>53</sup>

When GNP began cutting at the lake around 1910, it added infrastructure.<sup>54</sup> GNP continued to use the buildings that had always been at the dam. One set of buildings was close to the dam's east side. River drivers, dam tenders, logging crews, and teamsters hauling supplies also used them. In 1911, GNP built a canvas storage shed probably located near the dam where it had a wharf and two piers the company built in 1913. The piers were rock cribs with blasted rocks and topped with planking. One pier was 24 feet by 24 feet and 13 feet high, and the second was of similar size and 16.5 feet high. The capacity of both was 60 tons. The lake had one headworks operating in 1921–1922. Whether any logging crew or GNP used anything other than

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<sup>49</sup> *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, June 17, 1886, p. 3, and December 9, 1886, p. 3

<sup>50</sup> conversation of Mimi Ketchum with Paul Nevel

<sup>51</sup> *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, April 2, 1902 and GNP Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections, scalar reports

<sup>52</sup> Lobley, J. A. Plan of Township No.1 R.11, June 1910.

<sup>53</sup> July 1924 water report, GNP Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

<sup>54</sup> GNP structures inventory, GNP Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

headworks on the lake is unknown. The last use of a camp at the dam was in 1961–1963 when loggers used the one to the east of the dam and trucked the cut to the Maher Landings.<sup>55</sup> In the late 1960s, Paul Nevel and his sons salvaged some lumber from the structures and reused it at their Nahmakanta Lake Camps.<sup>56</sup>

From the earliest days, loggers reached the Nahmakanta Dam from Fourth Debsconeag Lake via the old canoe route turned tote road. The Nahmakanta Lake Dam also provided a bridge crossing beginning in at least 1922. It was passable in 1938, but with the dam's further deterioration, GNP replaced it in the late 1940s with a two-span bridge immediately below the dam. The loggers cutting east of the bridge after World War II probably hauled by truck to Nahmakanta Stream and either unloaded at the lake or at one of the Maher Landings rather than at one of the Debsconeag Lakes. Following the early 1960s cuts at the lake, GNP did not maintain the tote road along Nahmakanta Stream. When GNP returned to log about 1975, the company built the current road to the dam from the west in support of logging east toward Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Debsconeag lakes. The bridge washed out again in 1978 and was immediately rebuilt in its current location.

The dam area and foot of Nahmakanta Lake offer a curious puzzle I perhaps pieced together after numerous trips to do so. My last trip was in early May 2015 with no tree leaves so I could see the whole area. Although the foot of the lake is now shallow, the dam's head put the water over the heads of most people standing on the current beach. Portions of the dam's rock cribs at the outlet are still visible, but the remains of the other 800 feet of side dams that helped hold an 8-foot head are less obvious. The two most perplexing pieces are the locations of the two

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<sup>55</sup> GNP abandoned the camps after this operation and never rebuilt

<sup>56</sup> conversations with Paul Nevel

60-ton capacity wharfs. I assumed they would be at the foot of the lake and the terminus of the supply route, but there is no substantial collection of blasted rocks scattered along the foot of the lake.

The southernmost end of the lake is nearly a straight line, and the western half of it is a sand and gravel beach that is hundred feet in depth. At the midpoint is a protrusion of rocky land that extends into the beach. On the east side of the protrusion, scrub has grown into the sands and the depth of the beach is less than 50 feet and narrows to the dam. With an 8-foot head of water, the protrusion had water on its east side. Looking through the scrub, the dam's west wing is visible and at its west end is the rear of the protrusion. The old tote road, still visible, runs along the top of the side dam from the back end of the protrusion. The earth to its immediate west is all sand and gravel with no rocks. The protrusion has mostly large rocks. Workers mined the sand area and the protrusion from the lakeside. The overgrown beach on the east side of the protrusion reveals an older beach created by an intermediate head of water. The protrusion was probably part of the wharf system.

#### Pollywog Pond Drainage: Pollywog Stream to Penobscot Pond

The Pollywog watershed drains into the northwest corner of Nahmakanta Lake. Immediately above the lake, the Bean Brook watershed flows into Pollywog Stream. The stream continues on through Pollywog Gorge, where Crescent Pond empties into the stream. At the head of the gorge is Pollywog Pond with Gulliver Brook entering its west side. A short connecting stream leads to Wadleigh Pond where the Farrar Brook watershed, which includes the Farrar Brook deadwater and Female and Little Female ponds, terminates. Beyond Wadleigh Pond is First Musquash Pond followed by Second Musquash Pond, above which the stream splits with one branch going

easterly to Sing Sing and Hedgehog ponds and the other westerly to Little Penobscot Pond and then Penobscot Pond. Draining north into Little Penobscot Pond is Long Pond via Bog Pond.

The first loggers, entering from multiple directions, cut in the watershed about 1840. Some worked south from Caribou Lake into the headwaters of Bean Brook. The Caribou Lake Tote Road, which was their likely supply line, brought other loggers into the middle of the watershed as its route passed below Penobscot Pond and exited the watershed at Wadleigh Pond. Other loggers came north via the Nahmakanta Tote Road to the Lower Chain Lakes and up the Nahmakanta waterway to reach the lower end of Pollywog Stream and Bean Brook. Later, others came into the west end of the Farrar Brook watershed from the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road near the Farrar Mountain farm on the Farrar Brook Tote Road that ended at Wadleigh Pond outlet.<sup>57</sup>

At some unknown time before 1900, loggers using the Kennebec watersheds moved east from Second Roach Pond to cut the western half of Penobscot Pond and haul the logs to the Roach River system. By 1910, GNP controlled cutting within the watershed and the supply lines shrank to two, the Norcross to Nahmakanta waterway and Greenville to Caribou Lake. Upon the completion of the 1920 Great Northern Paper Company (GNP) and Hollingsworth and Whitney Paper Company (H&W) agreement to connect their tote roads, supplies for most of the watershed came from Greenville via Kokadjo.

### **Bean Brook Drainage**

Zebulon Bradley's 1842 survey noted that in 1841 the first loggers moved east from the Caribou Lake area culling the pine and reached Bean Pond.<sup>58</sup> The loggers hauled pine north to Kelly

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<sup>57</sup> Township 1 Range 12, State Ass. Report 1914

<sup>58</sup> Bradley, Zebulon. Field Notes for Survey of August 15, 1842 of T2R11.



Pond and drove logs down Caribou Brook to Caribou Lake. Other loggers culled the pines around the confluence of Bean Brook and Pollywog Stream and drove the cut through Nahmakanta Lake. In subsequent years, loggers likely continued through the watershed in search of pines. Lumbermen did not build their supporting dams until sometime between 1868 and 1879. The names of those who logged for the first forty years are unknown.

The watershed's earliest documented tote road (c. 1880) came from the southernmost point of Caribou Lake along the north side of Caribou Brook to Kelly Pond, over the height of land, across the north side of Bean Pond, past its outlet dam, down Bean Brook to the dam at the bottom of the deadwater and on to the logging camp two miles above Nahmakanta Lake.<sup>59</sup> Just below the confluence of Bean Brook and Pollywog Stream, the tote road turned easterly to cross Rainbow Stream 100 yards below Emerald Pool.

In 1882, Cornelius (Con) Murphy's crew cut on Bean Brook.<sup>60</sup> The Morrison lumber camp managed by Robert C. Darling was operating 3.5 miles above Nahmakanta Lake in 1895. Another crew logged the area again in 1905 for spruce saw logs.<sup>61</sup> Given the rock crib dams, it is likely logging took place during other years between 1880 and 1910 or certainly in three-year time blocks around the documented cutting dates. Such dam construction supported more than a one-year operation.

In his 1889 guidebook, *Guide to Moosehead Lake and Northern Maine*, Lucius Hubbard described a route coming through Kelly Pond to Bean Pond and its dam, down the deadwater to

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<sup>59</sup> Eastman, Ira D., Township No. 2. R.11 (W.E.L.S.) as explored in Oct. 1900

<sup>60</sup> *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, January 25, 1883, p. 3, cutting in various locations

<sup>61</sup> GNP scalars' reports, GNP Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

the dam with a portage on the tote road to where Bean Brook (east branch) comes in from the north.<sup>62</sup> Hubbard made no reference to logging on Bean Brook (east branch), but did describe substantial spruce stands on the hills. Ira Eastman's 1900 cruiser's map indicates loggers cut on this flowage five years later.<sup>63</sup>

A new road on Hubbard's 1897 map went up along Bean Brook (east branch), crossed to the west at the foot of the lower of the Bean Ponds chain (three ponds) to a logging camp and from there angled off westerly to Chesuncook Lake.<sup>64</sup> Loggers cut the area to the east about 1898.

A tote road (c. 1900) from Rainbow Lake dam reached the upper pond of the Bean Ponds at a camp in the northwest corner in 1908.<sup>65</sup> At the middle pond's northernmost east side was a single camp in 1921.<sup>66</sup> To whom it belonged or what purpose it served for how long is not known. Some believe it was a trapper's camp.

Bean Brook (east branch) links the Bean Ponds and connects them to Bean Brook. Each of the lower two ponds had a rock crib dam that loggers may have built between 1888 and 1897 based on Hubbard's maps. The dam at the foot of the upper pond may not have been of rock crib construction. When loggers last used them is unknown, but given activity on Bean Brook, it was perhaps in the 1930s.

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<sup>62</sup> Hubbard, Lucius L. *Hubbard's Guide to Moosehead Lake and Northern Maine*. Cambridge, MA: Author, 1889 and 1893.

<sup>63</sup> T2R11, cruise map by Ira Eastman, October 1900

<sup>64</sup> Hubbard, Lucius L. *Map of Northern Maine Specially for Sports and Lumbermen*, 1879, 1883, 1897, 1899, 1900, 1906.

<sup>65</sup> T2R11, cruise map by Ira Eastman, October 1900

<sup>66</sup> Operating Plan of TWP 2 R11 W.E.L.S., estimated January 1922

From 1840 to the late 1920s, loggers frequently worked on Bean Brook. They kept the two dams functional for more than fifty years, picked the waterway clean of large rocks, cleared obstructions, and straightened and widened its small gorges.<sup>67</sup> In 1884, a logging camp was on the north side of the stream below its confluence with the east branch. In 1913, Ira Wadleigh had a camp close by at the foot of the lower pond on Bean Brook (east branch).<sup>68</sup> A Penobscot Development Company March 1922 report indicated that loggers could drive Bean Brook with a couple dams.<sup>69</sup> GNP built dams about 1923, but the report made no mention of their location or if they rebuilt the old dams.<sup>70</sup> In 1925, crews rebuilt the dam at the foot of Bean Pond and the one at the foot of the deadwater on Bean Brook.<sup>71</sup> The Bean Pond dam was 300 feet long with a 7-foot head. The deadwater dam was 175 feet long with a 5-foot head. The 1929 and 1934 James W. Sewall Company surveys indicated the area was very tough for logging, the stream was drivable, and a crew needed to rebuild the dams.<sup>72</sup> They probably rebuilt and logged about 1930. Whether loggers moved back into the area soon after 1934 is unknown. A 1969 Sewall report indicated the forest was “fully stocked,” suggesting no one had logged for a substantial number of years, perhaps since the mid- to late-1930s, which would have been the last drive on the

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<sup>67</sup> evidence collected on a Geller exploration

<sup>68</sup> McLeod, John E. *The Great Northern Paper Company*, vol. 1–6. Unpublished manuscript, 1978.

<sup>69</sup> Penobscot Development Company. “Growth Plan of TWP 2R11 W.E.L.S. January 1922.”

<sup>70</sup> Report on Inspection on cutting on township No. 2 Range 11, February 17, 1923

<sup>71</sup> Hempstead, Alfred G., *The Penobscot Boom*. Orono: University of Maine Press, 1931.

<sup>72</sup> Sewall, James W. Field Explorations for Township T2R12, 1929 and Sewall, James W., TWP.2 R.12 W.E.L.S. Piscataquis County Maine. 1934.

brook.<sup>73</sup> No trucking roads reached the north end of Nahmakanta Lake and the lower portions of Bean Brook until 1979 when loggers built the bridge at Pollywog Stream.<sup>74</sup>

I found little information on Bean Brook (east branch), so I made two trips into it coming west from Rainbow Stream. On one trip, I walked the stream from its headwaters to Pollywog Stream. The outlet of the uppermost pond is a picturesque granite funnel that the loggers blocked. The stream to the next pond had no large rocks; in places, it looked like a graveled road. The rock cribs of the dam at the foot of the next pond, hidden in the alders, were well preserved under the water. Immediately below the dam was the beginning of a half-mile-long golden meadow. The stream channel is wide and open, inviting to a canoer. Its old rock crib dam looked like the one above it; the dams' state of deterioration in 2011 suggested loggers rebuilt them in the late 1920s. Not far from this site on the east bank, I crossed an old corduroy road that entered the waterway. The contour lines on my map suggested to me that another dam might have been at the foot of another set of tiny ponds, but I did not find one. At the lowest one, a rock face forced me up on a ledge with a wonderful view toward White Cap Mountain.

I was soon at the junction with Bean Brook. As I moved down the brook, the results of the years of work I read about were still evident. The stream was clear of any large rocks. In one place, loggers had blasted so much to smooth the way that the water flowed underground through the worked area. I stopped for a snack at one large pool kept full from a pitcher lip. I could envision the logs shooting over the lip and splashing into the pool on a drive. The nature of the forest on the east side of the three-pond chain and partway down Bean Brook suggests loggers have been absent since the 1930s.

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<sup>73</sup> Sewall, James W. Township 2 Range 12 W.E.L.S. Piscataquis County Maine. 1969

<sup>74</sup> conversation with Paul Nevel

## Pollywog Stream and Pond

By 1841, loggers had worked up Pollywog Stream culling out the first-quality pine to some point below Pollywog Pond. Cutting likely continued up the stream in 1842 and in subsequent years reached Pollywog Pond, Wadleigh Pond, and First and Second Musquash ponds. By the 1860s, loggers had probably cut all the pine and began cutting spruce. Neither the cutting plots nor the crews were large in these early years and that meant someone was working someplace in the watershed nearly every year.

The early tote roads from Nahmakanta Lake to Pollywog Pond did not follow Pollywog Stream. One early road (c. 1860) headed directly west from the mouth of Pollywog Stream at Nahmakanta Lake and went over the steep ridge to the dam at Pollywog Pond.<sup>75</sup> The second tote road (c. 1894) started about a half-mile north of the lake where single camps were on both sides of the stream.<sup>76</sup> These camps may have supported the 1899 cut of the hillside between the camps and the ridge above Pollywog Pond. From the camps, the road arched westerly to a logging camp on Pollywog Pond between the dam and Gulliver Brook. The camp supported cutting west of the tote road in 1894, 1898, and 1899.

Sometime between 1869 and 1880, the Nahmakanta Dam Company built the first Pollywog Pond dam to drive the volume of logs that landed on the pond and flowed into it from Wadleigh Pond and Gulliver Brook. The company also built dams on Gulliver Brook about 1880.<sup>77</sup> In 1883, Cornelius (Con) Murphy had a crew of thirty men and twelve horses cutting and hauling onto Pollywog.<sup>78</sup> He also landed his 1887 cut on the pond.<sup>79</sup> Two years later, both

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<sup>75</sup> Plan of Township 2 Range 11 W.E.L.S., Piscataquis County, December 19, 1908

<sup>76</sup> Ira D. Eastman, Township No. 2 R.11 (W.E.L.S.) as explored in Oct. 1900

<sup>77</sup> Plan of No. 2 R 12, copy of an older plan by I. G. Rawson, 1884

<sup>78</sup> *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, January 25, 1883, p. 3, cutting in various locations

Murphy and H. L. Stinchfield cut in the area.<sup>80</sup> John Morrison and Son's two camps of sixty-five men with twenty-six horses cut a million board feet of logs, which they hauled to Pollywog Stream in 1892.<sup>81</sup> Lobley's 1900 map shows the area west of the dam as logged in 1899.<sup>82</sup>

The Gulliver Brook dam was 1.5 miles upstream in 1881. Halfway to the lake was another dam and below that a roll dam built by 1884. In 1892, Murphy and Ira Wadleigh cut on the brook. A year later Murphy and perhaps Noah E. Gould hauled their cuts from the brook area onto the ice at Pollywog Pond. Gould used twenty-five men and ten horses to cut both spruce and pine. Wadleigh had a logging camp some place on Gulliver Brook in 1912 and drove logs down Pollywog Stream. Chief Fire Warden Bert Haynes stored firefighting tools at his camp given its centrality to this remote area.<sup>83</sup>

Scalar's reports of 1905 and 1909 indicate loggers rolled logs into Pollywog Gorge from its cliffs and high banks.<sup>84</sup> About 1914, with the advent of pulp-length wood, six sluices, still visible in 1927, carried wood into the gorge at unknown locations.<sup>85</sup>

Loggers followed a March 1922 report that recommended a rebuilt dam at Pollywog Pond with a sluice instead of an apron and a 9- or 10-foot head.<sup>86</sup> A small island in the middle of the dam helped keep it in position, and the single gate was on the east end in direct line with the

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<sup>79</sup> Prentiss & Carlisle Company ledger, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

<sup>80</sup> Prentiss & Carlisle Company ledger, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

<sup>81</sup> *The Bangor Commercial*, February 1892

<sup>82</sup> T2R11, cut map, December 19, 1900

<sup>83</sup> Maine Forest Commissioner. *Reports of the Forest Commissioner of the State of Maine*, issue 8, 1910. Augusta, ME: Kennebec Journal Printing, 1910.

<sup>84</sup> GNP Paper University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections, scalar reports

<sup>85</sup> Hempstead, Alfred G., *The Penobscot Boom*. Orono: University of Maine Press, 1931.

<sup>86</sup> Report Twp. No.2 R11 WELS Piscataquis County, Maine, March 1922

stream below. The dam supported the short log drives through at least 1938 when loggers drove pulp through from Penobscot Pond.

Until 1938, GNP listed Pollywog Pond's water storage capacity as a key "small pond storage."<sup>87</sup> After this date, the company apparently did not maintain the dam, and in the late 1940s removed its bottom gate to allow the passage of fish.<sup>88</sup> By the late 1940s, GNP eliminated most stream drives and was using trucks to haul pulp logs to larger bodies of water. The company was also finding ways to conserve considerable quantities of water so GNP would not have to maintain so many small pond storage areas.

Driving the stream in Pollywog Gorge, which starts immediately below the dam, was always a challenge. To help ease the effort, loggers built four roll dams before 1900 and rebuilt them about 1914. Three were above Crescent Pond's outlet brook, and one was immediately below it.<sup>89</sup> During the drive, men stationed within sight of each other along the rim of the gorge used various signaling strategies when jams formed.<sup>90</sup> With the flag system, a red flag meant "stop the logs," a black flag meant "stop the water," a single white flag meant "let the water flow," and a second white flag meant "let the logs come." The available telephone technology for communicating with the dam from key points along the top of the gorge was not in place until after 1913.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Prouty, E. W., Report on Storage Dams Particularly Small Ponds on West Branch Penobscot River, Summer 1936

<sup>88</sup> no longer listed as a storage pond in such documents

<sup>89</sup> Ira D. Eastman, Township No. 2 R.11 (W.E.L.S.) as explored in Oct. 1900

<sup>90</sup> Pike, Robert E. *Tall Trees Tough Men*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1967.

<sup>91</sup> One source of information about the phone system appeared in *The Northern* of June 1925

More than a dozen men lost their lives tending the drive in the gorge. A member of a drive crew carved the names of five men in the north wall of the gorge at what loggers referred to as Owls Head, which is at the second falls downstream from the falls at the dam.<sup>92</sup> Glen Perkins, former game warden in the area, looked for the names (c. 1976), but was not able to find them. Near the confluence of Bean and Pollywog streams, loggers followed tradition and nailed the driving boots of J. P. (“Brownie”) Brown to a tree.<sup>93</sup> He died in the gorge in either 1912 or 1913 when, contrary to his drive boss’s directions, he approached the jam with another dynamite stick. His actions were, however, part of the unwritten driver’s rules: take risks to free jams quickly to get the drive through and do all possible to save any driver fallen into the river. Bill Boyington, whose family managed the Nahmakanta Lake Camps in 1945, saw Brownie’s shoes and a watch. Lana Nevel saw them on the tree when she was a young girl and her family owned Nahmakanta Lake Camps (c. 1970). The sole of one of the boots is at Nahmakanta Lake Camps.<sup>94</sup>

A drive crew of about 1922 buried two of their drivers near the confluence of Pollywog Stream and Bean Brook and marked the graves. An old Appalachian Trail guidebook mentioned them. According to Lewey Ketchum, loggers buried two drivers in the same area sometime before 1904. Another grave, one of a teamster, is some place nearby. He died when a snubbing rope broke on a difficult pitch. Instead of jumping, he quickly unhitched the horses from the sled. The horses survived.

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<sup>92</sup> conversations with Glen Perkins

<sup>93</sup> Pike, Robert E. *Tall Trees Tough Men*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1967.

<sup>94</sup> conversations with Bill Boyington, Lana Fyrbush, Don Hibbs



Death also came through sickness. In 1913, a number of men in one of the Pollywog camps died of pneumonia. Another account indicates that a few men buried in the area were accidentally poisoned by tea water boiled with a spotted salamander. Loggers also died from typhoid fever. In another unknown year, the death of everyone in a camp remains a mystery.<sup>95</sup> The loggers had gone in for the winter. When they did not come out in the spring, others went in to find them. The men and their animals had all died; the animals from starvation and the men from illness. The searchers buried these fourteen men in a flat area on the hillside overlooking Pollywog Pond at the corner where the oldest tote road turned to Nahmakanta Lake. Boyington visited the unmarked graves, denoted by humps in the ground, when his family managed Nahmakanta Lake Camps. About 1970, Paul Nevel visited the site when he owned the same camps.<sup>96</sup>

Perhaps another version of the above is an account recorded by Fanny Hardy Eckstorm (February 13, 1904) in a conversation with Ketchum who told her that loggers buried eight men close together on a knoll above the pond and near the tote road from Nahmakanta Lake.<sup>97</sup> The deaths appear to have been before 1904. Most of the men, including an African American, drowned at what at the time was known to loggers as “Nigger Pitch.” Her same notes record a conversation with Murphy in June 1891 in which he corroborates yearly deaths in Pollywog Gorge and four graves between Female Pond and Pollywog Stream, but her notes did not provide the locations of these graves.

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<sup>95</sup> these are all verbal local folklore

<sup>96</sup> conversations with Bill Boyington and Paul Nevel, and Fanny Hardy Eckstrom personal journal at University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

<sup>97</sup> Fanny Hardy Eckstrom Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special collections, personal journal

I made a number of trips into this area to try to find the old camps, sluices, dams, and graves. My success list includes lessons learned in searching. On one trip, I was perplexed as to why I found no artifacts as I walked the shores of Pollywog Pond and up along Gulliver Brook. At lunch on a ledge overlooking a Gulliver Brook swamp, I realized I had not accounted for Pollywog Pond dam having a head of 10 feet. That meant any old logging camps were not near the current shoreline. I moved back away from the shore and found the old west side camp halfway between Gulliver Brook and the dam.

In walking the Pollywog Gorge rim on the east side, I hoped I might find evidence of at least one of the seven sluices. I was looking for a line of decayed wood or gouged hillside running straight down the steep gorge wall, but I did not find anything even at the two sites I thought might be locations, Crescent Pond outlet stream, and the cut in the gorge's east sidewall a third of a mile farther downstream.

The roll dams and signaling system suggested to me that jams formed easily in the gorge. The two times I climbed down through the boulders and over one waterfall after another, I could not fathom how men climbed into the gorge to break the jams. When I went back one May, the water volume, the wet slippery rocks from the spray, and the water's turbulence terrified me—to fall in meant death, but men did work in the gorge.

The graves I heard about from those in their eighties were unknown to those of younger generations. The old Maine Appalachian Trail (AT) guides used to mention a couple of them, but the content is not in more recent updates. Could I find some of the lost sites? It took me a couple hours to figure out where the old tote roads were near Pollywog Stream and Bean Brook, but once I did the task was simply a matter of careful looking. Two oblong stones stood upright and looked unnatural, so they caught my attention. These marked circa 1922 graves are on the right

side of the original west side Rainbow Lake tote road and the AT, which followed the north side of Pollywog Stream. A short distance upstream from the Bean Brook junction, the road bears away from the stream, and within 200 feet, the stones are visible on the right.

Given the information from Ketchum, Boyington, and Paul Nevel, it seemed pretty clear to me that some loggers' graves were on a knoll above the pond on the 1800s tote road from Nahmakanta Lake to Pollywog Pond dam. I knew logging in that area had taken place since 1970 and hoped it had not accidentally destroyed the site. Coffins of the backcountry were two pork barrels placed end to end, which would explain the lumps in the ground still showing in 1970. On my first search, I worked down the hillside toward the pond and I found nothing. After more thought and map study, I returned and worked from the pond up the hillside. I knew the old tote road would go straight up the contour, so the sleds would not slip sideways. After much thrashing about in alders and young spruce growth, I found only one possible route to the knoll that overlooks the pond. On the knoll, I quickly eliminated a wet rocky area and an area of all ledges. In between was a huge pine and a line of trees that looked like they may have at one time outlined an area. Within the area, the ground had many oblong non-rocky lumps. I believe this is the old graveyard.

### **Wadleigh Pond**

The Wadleigh Pond area logging activity commenced perhaps as early as the mid-1840s as loggers made their way to it from Nahmakanta Lake. Loggers may also have come into the area about 1840 via the Caribou Lake Tote Road, which is thought to have had a shanty stop at the pond. In the late 1860s, the Nahmakanta Dam Company built a dam 200 yards upstream from the head of Pollywog Pond. By 1882, tote roads ran between Nahmakanta Lake and the shanty via

both Wadleigh valley and Prentiss valley.<sup>98</sup> These two roads opened and closed during the next one hundred years. The company rebuilt the dam in 1913 in preparation for the short wood drive from Farrar Brook.<sup>99</sup> By 1927, drivers no longer needed the dam; pulp-length logs had sufficient water without it. The last drive through the area was in the late 1930s, and by 1938, a supply road connected the pond to Kokadjo. The loggers hauled the cut around Wadleigh Pond in 1961 to Nahmakanta Stream at Maher Landing.<sup>100</sup>

The names of the loggers who preceded those of the late 1800s—Ira Wadleigh, Cornelius (Con) Murphy, Noah E. Gould, and James C. Rice—are unknown. Murphy cut near the pond in 1886 and 1888 as did Rice in 1905.<sup>101</sup> A 1908 forest fire on Wadleigh Mountain may have interrupted the logging cycle in some nearby areas.<sup>102</sup> Loggers had a circa 1910 camp at the pond's westernmost corner north of Farrar Brook.<sup>103</sup> A 1913 map shows a number of logging camp buildings below the dam's west side.<sup>104</sup> Another forest fire burned parts of the mountain in 1921. A 1922 map shows a camp at the dam.<sup>105</sup> The strategic locations of these sites suggest they may have been used well before their documented dates.

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<sup>98</sup> James W. Sewall, Twp. 1 R. 11 W.E.L.S., 1913

<sup>99</sup> William Jasper Johnson Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections, Schedule of lumber cut for Farrar Brook dams

<sup>100</sup> mapped cuttings, Great Northern Paper Company Woodlands Department, TWP. 1 Range 11, April 9, 1956, Katahdin Forest Management Maine Division of Acadian Timber Archives

<sup>101</sup> *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, September 28, 1886, November 3, 1887, p. 3 and Farrar Brook cutting, Prentiss & Carlisle Company ledger, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

<sup>102</sup> J.A. Lobley, Exploring Township No.1 R.11, June 1910

<sup>103</sup> James W. Sewall, Twp.1 R.11. W.E.L.S., 1913

<sup>104</sup> see note 103

<sup>105</sup> Penobscot Development Company, Growth Plan of TWP 1R11 W.E.L.S., January 1922

The Wadleigh shanty may have also been what loggers knew as the Wadleigh farm site. Wadleigh of Old Town was an early lumberman and landowner in this region. After 1883, when the railroad reached Greenville, the tote road north of this point fell into disuse, but the Wadleigh farm remained as a key supporting operation for the area's loggers. It may have been used into the early 1930s, as the field was still open in 1936.<sup>106</sup>

I had not found any recorded information about the specific operations of the farm or when the farm ceased operations, so I wondered if I could learn anything by walking around the old farm site. I found the farm a 100 yards east of the northeast corner of the pond on a relatively flat triangular area leading into Wadleigh Valley. The outline of one building was still evident in 2013 on the west edge of the field. Another possible building, also on the west edge, is less than 200 feet away to the north. Even though the old field is long overgrown, its boundary lines can still be detected by the contrast between its surface and that beyond its edges.

### **The Musquash Ponds**

From the Wadleigh farm, the Caribou Tote Road followed the east side of the pond southeasterly to First Musquash Pond dam, which increased the water level on both First and Second Musquash ponds. Logs sluiced through the dam pitched down a 200-yard natural granite sluice into Wadleigh Pond. Loggers probably started cutting about the same time they were logging on Wadleigh Pond and before the Nahmakanta Dam Company constructed the dam between 1867 and 1869. Murphy cut around First Musquash Pond in 1886.<sup>107</sup> James C. Rice and Company landed logs on the pond in 1902, 1903, 1904, and 1905.<sup>108</sup> Loggers located a logging camp (c.

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<sup>106</sup> *The Guide to the Maine Appalachian Trail in Maine 1936*

<sup>107</sup> Prentiss & Carlisle Company ledger, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

<sup>108</sup> Scalars' reports by location 1901-1913, GNP Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

1910) east of the brook at the head of Second Musquash Pond.<sup>109</sup> A 1922 Penobscot Development Company report stated that loggers drove from the head of Second Musquash, and if they cleared the stream, long logs could be driven from much farther away.<sup>110</sup> By 1927, the dam was no longer functional; short logs passed through on the natural water flow. The date of the last cut landed on the lake is unknown but presumed to be before 1940. Loggers cut to the south of Second Musquash Pond and east of the stream that connects it to Penobscot Pond in 1961 and 1962.<sup>111</sup> Truckers hauled the logs to Pemadumcook Lake's Maher Landings using the tote road that led along the north side of Deadwater Brook to Nahmakanta Stream where it turned southeast to the landings.

Draining into the west side of Second Musquash Pond is the stream from Third Musquash Pond. Kenneth McRuer Clark's 1913 cruiser's map shows "old cutting" around the pond and stream.<sup>112</sup> Teamsters probably hauled the logs cut in the immediate area of the pond and west of it west across the plateau, which had a horse hovel, and down to the Farrar Brook flowage. Loggers cutting the steep downhill to the east of the pond probably hauled directly to Second Musquash Pond.

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<sup>109</sup> J.A. Lobley, Exploring Township No.1 R.11, June 1910

<sup>110</sup> Report Twp. No.1 R.11 W.E.L.S. Piscataquis County, Maine, April 1922 and Township 1 R11 Tree Growth Plan Map, 1922

<sup>111</sup> mapped cuttings, Great Northern Paper Company Woodlands Department, TWP. 1 Range 11, April 9, 1956, Katahdin Forest Management Maine Division of Acadian Timber Archives

<sup>112</sup> Clark, Kenneth McRuer. "Growth Plan of TWP 1R11 W.E.L.S. 1913." (Sewall Co.)

The last cut at Second Musquash Pond that reached market via a waterway was in 1937. The next harvest was the area between the pond and Third Musquash Pond in 1960, 1961, and 1962, and GNP trucked it to the Maher Landings on Pemadumcook Lake.<sup>113</sup>

Knowing loggers dammed just about every body of water in the Maine woods, I took a journey along the stream to Third Musquash Pond. A falls and small gorge with a 90-degree turn would have made driving short or long logs difficult and no evidence of blasting existed in the un-cleared gorge. The waterway might have been used below this point during a first cut.

### **Upstream from Second Musquash Pond**

At the head of Second Musquash Pond the old Caribou Tote Road crossed the stream from Penobscot Pond, referred to by some woodsmen as Penobscot Pond Stream and by others as Musquash Stream, and stayed on its west side. About a mile above Second Musquash Pond, the road forked with the westerly branch going to the dam at Penobscot Pond. The main road continued south to cross Penobscot Pond Stream west of its confluence with the drainage from Sing Sing Pond.

When logging started and ended above Second Musquash Pond is unclear. The Caribou Lake Tote Road provided access from Brownville about 1840, but the logging and stream infrastructure had only reached as far as the head of Nahmakanta Lake. At some unknown time and place, loggers built two dams on Penobscot Pond Stream, but by 1922, they needed repairs.<sup>114</sup> A 1924 Penobscot Development Company report assessed the driving from Penobscot

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<sup>113</sup> mapped cuttings, Great Northern Paper Company Woodlands Department, TWP. 1 Range 11, April 9, 1956, Katahdin Forest Management Maine Division of Acadian Timber Archives

<sup>114</sup> Penobscot Development Company, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections: Report Twp. No.1 R.11 W.E.L.S. Piscataquis County, Maine, April 1922, and Penobscot Development Company, Growth Plan of TWP 1R11 W.E.L.S. January 1922

Pond on Penobscot Pond Stream to be good for 4-foot wood—the implication being no need for dams other than at the pond.<sup>115</sup>

About a half-mile up the stream from the head of Second Musquash Pond was a large logging camp at what became known as Musquash Field. The camp may date back to 1888 when Murphy logged the area between here and Penobscot Pond.<sup>116</sup> A later camp at the site included a large log barn that was near collapse in the 1960s.

A mile upstream from Second Musquash Pond is the confluence of water from Hedgehog and Sing Sing ponds to the east and Penobscot and Little Penobscot ponds to the west. The 1908 forest fire that burned easterly from the Sing Sing area to Henderson Pond interrupted the logging cycle in parts of the area.<sup>117</sup> A logging camp of three buildings circa 1913 that were just north of the confluence was in an unburned area.<sup>118</sup>

When loggers cut after 1915 is unknown, but the next recorded cut is 1960. A year later, they cut along the edge on the north side of Sing Sing Pond and both sides of the brook between Penobscot and Little Penobscot ponds. A crew cut the east side of Sing Sing outlet stream in 1962. Truckers hauled the logs in the winter to the Maher Landings via the Deadwater Road that GNP reopened in 1960 by blasting away the rocks so the trucks could get through.

The western drainage, Penobscot Pond Stream, leads to Little Penobscot Pond then to Penobscot Pond. The first loggers in the Penobscot Pond area came from both east and west. Crews worked westerly via Pollywog Stream. Others cut from the pond's west end to the north—

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<sup>115</sup> Penobscot Development Company, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections, Report Twp. No.1 R.11 W.E.L.S. Piscataquis County, Maine, April 1924

<sup>116</sup> Prentiss & Carlisle Company ledger, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

<sup>117</sup> mapped burn on undated map titled, Township 1 Range 11 Piscataquis County

<sup>118</sup> TWP. 1 R.11 W.E.L.S. as surveyed 1913, James W. Sewall



south town line that divides it. Their supply line came from either Katahdin Iron Works (KIW) via the Chamberlain Lake Supply Road or the Greenville, Lily Bay, and Roach River system. At Second Roach Pond, the circa 1870 road went straight across the ice to the pond's northeast corner and took a straight line to the large logging camp at Penobscot Pond's west end. The years of this camp's operations are unknown.

Penobscot Pond, one of the headwater sources of the stream, had a dam the Nahmakanta Dam Company built sometime between 1869 and 1896. Little is known about the logging that took place before 1911 other than Kenneth McRuer Clark's 1913 map that had the label "old cuttings" around Little Penobscot and nearby Harding ponds.<sup>119</sup> A 1911 forest fire on the Penobscot Pond's south side interrupted the cutting cycle.

An early lumber camp and mill (c. 1911) were at the east end of Penobscot Pond on the north side just above the dam. This mill cut cedar to length for railroad ties that men shaped by hand. To avoid the rough ride through Pollywog Gorge, the ties went west into the Roach River system where a crew rafted them to Greenville. Loggers used this route in 1928 for ties cut in the headwaters of nearby Farrar Brook.<sup>120</sup>

In 1938, GNP loggers worked the Penobscot Pond area and landed their cut on the pond.<sup>121</sup> Their camp, which served one hundred men, was about a half-mile above the north shore's midpoint. This cut was most likely the last one driven from the pond. In the early 1950s,

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<sup>119</sup> Clark, Kenneth McRuer. "Growth Plan of TWP 1R11 W.E.L.S. 1913." (Sewall Co.)

<sup>120</sup> conversations with Richard Fernald

<sup>121</sup> conversations with Richard Fernald

John Skillin and his dad visited the logging operations at the east end of the pond where loggers were yarding with horses, which John loved seeing.<sup>122</sup> Truckers hauled the logs.

Little Penobscot Pond receives the outlet stream from Long Pond. None of the recorded information found indicated that loggers drove from Long Pond. Roads to the logging camps at Long Pond and nearby Bog Pond stemmed from the Cooper Brook Tote Road network.<sup>123</sup>

Twice I went in search of the reported two dams on Penobscot Stream and found nothing. Small dams, as these were, do totally disintegrate and leave no clues. However, in thinking more about the report and what I had seen in the landscape, perhaps the two dams were the ones at Sing Sing and Penobscot ponds.

I had been through the Sing Sing area with Bob Kimber in 1996, and we found what looked to be a significant dam behind Hedgehog Pond. To get to the spot, I went in via Sing Sing Pond where I found the barrow pits of a horse dam that, as I later discovered, loggers used before 1915. The Hedgehog outlet had no evidence of anything other than beaver works, which the three distinct small bogs between Sing Sing and Hedgehog ponds also have. Loggers cut the area, but given the flat nature of the terrain between the ponds and the current trees' similar sizes, the waterway was probably cleared and the logs hauled through it to Sing Sing Pond, a distance of less than a half-mile. What I originally thought was a dam behind Hedgehog Pond turned out to be a berm. Its western end does not abut against anything, and any water level increase behind the berm would flow around this open end.

In an attempt to confirm my conclusion that loggers did not drive logs from Long and Bog ponds, I slogged through the outlet area of Long Pond and found no evidence of a dam or

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<sup>122</sup> conversations with John Skillin

<sup>123</sup> James W. Sewall, T. A R. 11 – W.E.L.S. Piscataquis County, Maine, September 17, 1920

driving at or near the pond. At the other end, I beat my way through the head-high fir and spruce to where the outlet stream enters Little Penobscot Pond. The last two hundred yards of the stream above the pond is a narrow and shallow channel with no signs of erosion that results from water releases from a dam or even spring runoff. I was convinced that logs cut around Bog and Long ponds went out through the Cooper Brook watershed.

### **Farrar Brook Drainage**

Farrar Brook, which flows into Wadleigh Pond's west side, drains the area west of Wadleigh Mountain, south of Female Mountain and east of Farrar Mountain. Loggers likely worked their way into this area, which includes Female and Little Female ponds, after they reached Wadleigh Pond in the late 1840s.

Isaac Farrar, a Bangor lumberman and early landowner in the area, may have been the earliest lumberman operating on Farrar Brook. In support of his loggers, he built his Farrar Mountain farm about 1872, the year his contemporary Milton Shaw built his farm at Second Roach Pond on the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road.<sup>124</sup> The Farrar farm was near the junction of the Chamberlain Lake Tote Road and the Farrar Brook Tote Road that ran easterly to Wadleigh Pond. Farrar probably cut the area up through about 1905 when GNP moved in. H&W eventually bought his farm and used it to support its logging in drainages that flowed west into the Kennebec watershed.

When the Nahmakanta Dam Company built the three dams on the waterway is unknown, but it was probably between 1867 and 1887. One rock crib dam was on the brook below the outlet of Female Pond, another was at the foot of Farrar Brook deadwater, and the third, a roll dam, was in between the other two. In 1906, Percy Johnston rebuilt the three dams for the

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<sup>124</sup> Duplessis, Shirley. *Hidden in the Woods: The Story of Kokad-jo*. Greenville, Me: Moosehead Communications, 1977.

Nahmakanta Dam Company, and the company rebuilt them again seven years later.<sup>125</sup> How many times the dams may have been rebuilt since is unknown. A James Sewall Company survey in 1943 indicated that for crews to drive Farrar Brook, they would have to rebuild the dams.<sup>126</sup>

At the far end of the Farrar Brook valley where the land flattens and begins to fall away to the Roach River system, loggers built a log sluice (date unknown) on the steep-sided Farrar Mountain. A logging camp was nearby, and the route to the camp was probably not up Farrar Brook. The sluice was still standing in 1937 and used during that year's cut.<sup>127</sup> Teamsters could have hauled downstream more than two miles to the deadwater on the south branch of Farrar Brook or a mile and a half over the slight rise into the Roach and Kennebec watershed. Which route loggers used depended whether the cut was for a mill on the Penobscot River or the Kennebec River. A 1928 cedar harvest for railroad ties in the area went out through the Kennebec watershed.

Loggers had at least three camps on Farrar Brook. Whether they built, rebuilt, or used them repeatedly is unknown. One was about a half-mile upstream from the Female Pond dam; another, Clark's camp, was near the dam at the foot of the deadwater; and a third, a depot camp, was where the Farrar Brook Tote Road crossed the Farrar Brook deadwater at the head of the deadwater dam's impoundment where the brook splits into its south and northwest branches.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> William Jasper Johnston Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

<sup>126</sup> Sewall, James W. Field Explorations for Township T1R12, 1943

<sup>127</sup> Timber Map N 2/3 1 R12, K.P.A. 1938

<sup>128</sup> Geller explorations with one guided by George Young

Murphy's crews cutting on Female Pond and along Farrar Brook did the earliest documented logging in 1886 and 1888.<sup>129</sup> A cut took place in the area in 1907.<sup>130</sup> The West Branch Driving and Reservoir Dam Company sent supplies into the area in 1909.<sup>131</sup> W. Getchell's crew cut about 1910 and had a camp at the head of Female Pond near Little Female Pond's connecting brook.<sup>132</sup>

A forest fire in 1911 burned a previously cut triangle-shaped area between the south side of Female Mountain and the east end of Black Pond. Two years later, GNP began one of its first 4-foot log-cutting operations.<sup>133</sup> The logging and driving of Farrar Brook continued in 1914 with Samuel Fitzherbert as foreman at camp #1 cutting in "the burn."<sup>134</sup> Much of this same area burned again in 1921.<sup>135</sup> A cruiser for GNP assessed the area in early 1937 and found poplar and white birch, which loggers cut late that fall.<sup>136</sup> Some of the cut went into the Farrar Brook drainage. The 1943 Sewall assessment of the Farrar Brook area suggested the last operation was some years earlier.<sup>137</sup> Given the GNP cutting strategies used during World War II, it seems

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<sup>129</sup> *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, November 3, 1887 and Prentiss & Carlisle Company ledger, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

<sup>130</sup> Scalars' reports by location 1901-1913, GNP Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

<sup>131</sup> Millinocket Historical Society, West Branch Driving and Reservoir Company 1903-1912, ledger 1

<sup>132</sup> Plan of Township 1 Range 12 W.E.L.S. May 18, 1911.

<sup>133</sup> Township 1 Range 12, State Ass. Report, 1914 and McLeod, John E. *The Great Northern Paper Company*, vol. 1-6. Unpublished manuscript, 1978.

<sup>134</sup> McLeod, John E. *The Great Northern Paper Company*, vol. 1-6. Unpublished manuscript, 1978.

<sup>135</sup> Timber Map N 2/3 1 R12, K.P.A. 1938

<sup>136</sup> GNP, T1R12, cruise map, 1937

<sup>137</sup> Sewall, James W. TWP.1 R.12 W.E.L.S. Piscataquis County Maine. 1943.

doubtful that the company logged the watershed during the war. If GNP followed the Sewell recommendations, then the company would have done so before their crew removed the gate at Pollywog Pond dam in the late 1940s.

When I first explored the lower portion of Farrar Brook, I only knew loggers cut the area. The length and size of the stream suggested to me a drive needed water from a dam. I picked two likely spots for dams from my topographical maps. One was just below the foot of Female Pond where the stream narrowed into a small gorge. The other was at a similar spot at the foot of the first and largest deadwater. Remains of rock crib dams existed at both sites. The dam at the deadwater had perhaps a 15-foot head and its impoundment extended about two miles into the watershed. I found this dam by looking for the remains under the water in the stream. I thought another possibility for a dam was on the deadwater's south branch about a mile above the head of the first deadwater flowage, but I found no evidence indicating that. Considerable water flows out of this upper deadwater and down the stream, which has no large obstacles to impede a potential flow of logs.

Lacking information on nearby Little Female Pond, I walked a non-definitive channel to Female Pond. Water has flowed heavily through the drainage, as evidenced by lack of soil among the many rocks. Given the trees are all relatively the same sizes, the half-mile between the two ponds was perhaps clear-cut so loggers could either drive or haul their cut to Female Pond. At Little Female Pond, I found some old cut logs, and the channel appears to be scooped out. I could not determine whether it had a dam.

George (Skip) Young took me to the logging camp at the head of the Farrar Brook deadwater dam impoundment. Here, we were able to detect some of the old Farrar Brook Tote Road. Given that the dimensions of one building were 22-feet wide by 50 to 60 feet long and

near it was an apparent blacksmith building, the camp likely served as the depot for the area. The area was littered with many axe heads, peavey ends, metal rasps, different styles of horseshoes, and more. One-half of an 18-inch cast-iron fry pan rests on the ground nearby. This also might have been the location of a storehouse that GNP had someplace on Farrar Brook about 1915.

Some spruces in the yard were 65 inches in circumference, which suggested an age of well over 125 years. This confirms loggers were here in the latter part of the 1800s. The main clearing of the camp was still an open field in 2012. Such fields remain open for years because of the thick grasses, a result of the horse manure that collected. South of the camp is an old swale that Young believes they hayed. Becky Pease, who worked at Yoke Pond Camps and other area camps, recalls once seeing the remains of an old field of oats in this same general area in the 1980s.<sup>138</sup>

The headwaters of the northwest branch of the Farrar deadwater are within a half-mile of Black Pond whose outlet had a dam. Most logs cut around Black Pond went down Black Brook to Ragged Stream and on to Caribou Lake and into the West Branch. Some cutting in the area southeast of Black Pond may have gone into the northwest branch of Farrar Brook drainage at what area people now refer to as Lost Pond, an open body of water, less than a mile away from the depot camp.

### Rainbow Drainage: Rainbow Stream to Rainbow Lake

Rainbow Stream flows from Rainbow Lake to Nahmakanta Lake's northeast corner, a distance of about four miles. Just above Nahmakanta Lake, Gould Brook enters from the northeast. About two miles upstream is the confluence with Stratton Brook that drains westerly from Stratton

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<sup>138</sup> conversations with Becky Pease

Pond and the area around Bear Pond. Not much farther upstream on its west side, the Murphy ponds' outlet stream enters. The small stream from Buck Pond drains easterly into the first deadwater below Rainbow Lake dam; loggers knew it as the First Deadwater.

### **Rainbow Stream**

By 1842, the first loggers had reached up Rainbow Stream to nearly what they referred to as the Third Deadwater.<sup>139</sup> They culled the top-quality pine within about a mile of both sides of it and hauled some of the logs to the stream and others as far as two miles to Nahmakanta Lake. The culling extended a half-mile east of Gould Pond and partway up Stratton Brook. Loggers continued to work their way up the stream and into Rainbow Lake in the ensuing years. Lumbermen used the stream to drive logs until about 1952.

Two years after the chartering of the Nahmakanta Dam Company in 1867, a dam with a 4- to 6-foot head was in place at the mouth of Rainbow Lake.<sup>140</sup> Whether and where they built other dams on the stream at that same time is unknown. During the next eighty-five years, loggers built and rebuilt dams along the stream, made sluices in the stream, created side dams, constructed side walls, and cleared rocks. Nahmakanta Dam Company rebuilt three dams out of an unknown number on the stream about 1894 in support of the spruce harvest around Rainbow Lake.<sup>141</sup> For that operation, the loggers blasted to open the straight chute extending downstream to Emerald Pool. To further minimize the risks of logjams, loggers floored the chute and lined its walls with logs. Ira Eastman's 1900 cruiser's map shows the locations of four dams.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Bradley, Zebulon. Field Notes for Survey of August 15, 1842 of T2R11.

<sup>140</sup> Based in part on an 1894 newspaper account that Hempstead cites

<sup>141</sup> Hempstead, Alfred G., *The Penobscot Boom*. Orono: University of Maine Press, 1931.

<sup>142</sup> T2R11, cruise map by Ira Eastman, October 1900 and Eastman, Ira D. "Township No.2.R.11 (W.E.L.S.) As Explored in October 1900."



A 1913 Penobscot Development Company assessment of dams on Rainbow Stream and its tributaries concluded that loggers had not driven the stream in a good many years and the Rainbow Lake dam, which had a 5-foot head, needed some minor repairs if loggers were to drive it hard.<sup>143</sup> The Nahmakanta Dam Company rebuilt the dam with a 9-foot head that necessitated the lengthy side dams. The report recommended building a second dam at the foot of what the loggers labeled as the Second Deadwater, the second deadwater below the dam, with an 8-foot head and enlarging the one at the foot of the Third Deadwater with a 7- to 8-foot head. Below this point, the report advised another three dams. One was just above the Stratton Brook confluence where the stream makes a big turn to the south. This roll dam, rebuilt about 1918 with a sluice in the middle, prevented logs from getting hung up on the ledges in the area. Below the Stratton Brook junction was a fifth dam whose purpose was to hold back water to cover large rocks and ensure a smooth flow. The next dam was at a sharp turn in the stream where the report suggested a 180-foot sluice built in the stream to cut the acuteness of the turn. A little farther downstream, a proposed two-gate dam would have flooded out another rough section. The report also noted that crews needed to rebuild the 6,100 feet of abutments to avoid logjams. Given what appears on J. A. Lobley's 1915 map, the loggers implemented the recommendations.<sup>144</sup> The 1900 Eastman map shows dams at the foot of Rainbow Lake, the Second Deadwater, above and below Stratton Brook below the last stream from the east.<sup>145</sup> A 1923 Great Northern Paper Company (GNP) map shows a dam at the head of Rainbow Lake, one at the foot of the Third

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<sup>143</sup> Sewall, James W. Report TWP.2R.11W.E.L.S., 1913.

<sup>144</sup> Lobley, J. A. Plan for Exploring Township No.2 R.11, June 1915.

<sup>145</sup> T2R11, cruise map by Ira Eastman, October 1900

Deadwater, one just below the confluence of Stratton Brook and above the flume, and one below the stream coming in from the east above Gould Pond.

The need for the sequence of dams likely diminished after 1924 when a large forest fire burned a good deal of the area. Additionally, by the mid-1920s, GNP had shifted to pulp-length logs that required less water. What work, if any, loggers did on the dams during the next twenty years is unknown. GNP's next to last rebuilding of Rainbow Dam was in the mid-1940s, and it supported pulp drives, which ended by 1952.<sup>146</sup>

Tote roads ran along both sides of Rainbow Stream.<sup>147</sup> An early logger's camp, used periodically over many years, was north of Nahmakanta Lake halfway between Pollywog Stream and Rainbow Stream. East of the logging camp the earliest tote road crossed Rainbow Stream to connect with the tote road coming from Nahmakanta Lake on the east side of Rainbow Stream. This road went via Bear Pond to Rainbow Lake dam and was the portage path from 1889 through at least 1908. A second camp was where the tote road turned away from Rainbow Stream above the chute to Emerald Pool and the lowest dam on the stream. Wentworth Maxfield's logging operations of eighty men used the camp around 1920 and perhaps around 1900 when he was farther up the watershed on Rainbow Lake.<sup>148</sup> Maxfield was a longtime Bangor lumberman who started his business about 1885 and was still operating in 1932.

From the Maxfield camp, the road swung up the hillside, cut north, crossed Stratton Brook, went up the hill, and crossed at the outlet of Bear Pond where there was another camp on

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<sup>146</sup> Based on the fact that Rainbow Lake dam remained on the water storage dam list post 1938 as cited by McLeod. Nelson Levasseur directed the rebuilding in the mid-1940's based on information from Rainbow Lake Camps. Last drive based on logging activity west of the west end of the lake.

<sup>147</sup> T2R11, cruise map by Ira Eastman, October 1900 and *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, January 4, 1900

<sup>148</sup> Clark, Kenneth McRuer. "Growth Plan of TWP 2R11 W.E.L.S. June-July 1913." (Sewall Co.) and footnote 147

the little knoll near the west side cove above Bear Pond dam. Partway between it and Rainbow Lake dam was another camp that was on the flat hilltop on the tote road's west side.

A third camp on Rainbow Stream was at the roll dam above Stratton Brook, and the fourth camp was on the east side of Rainbow Lake dam. How many times these camps or a camp on these sites may have been used over the years is unknown, but men probably occupied those on the stream during the drives.

The tote road on the west side of the stream supported cutting after about 1890 and soon became the main route between the two lakes. The 1903 crews cutting on this side landed their logs on the stream.<sup>149</sup> Loggers had camps near the backside of Big Murphy Pond, the foot of the Third Deadwater, the narrows between the First and the Second deadwaters, and the northwest corner of the First Deadwater in 1921.<sup>150</sup>

Loggers referred to the overall area as a *spruce town*, indicating it initially had a substantial spruce forest. The James W. Sewall Company 1913 assessment of the area's standing timber stated that the hemlock had never been cut whereas the pine had, and there was a substantial harvestable second growth.<sup>151</sup> Loggers had selectively cut some spruce, but large uncut areas remained. The area covered by the assessment included that around the Murphy Ponds and Bear, Buck, Collins, Gould, and Stratton ponds. A 1918 GNP report recommended

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<sup>149</sup> GNP scalars' reports, GNP Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

<sup>150</sup> GNP Division Forest Engineering, Township 2, Range 11, October 1922; Plan of Township 2 Range 11 W.E.L.S. December 19, 1908; Eastman, Ira D. "Township No.2.R.11 (W.E.L.S.) As Explored in October 1900."

<sup>151</sup> Sewall, James W. Report TWP.2R.11W.E.L.S., 1913.

cutting to salvage the spruce given the infestation of spruce bud moth.<sup>152</sup> The 1919 Penobscot Development Company report indicated a tremendous amount of standing dead spruce.<sup>153</sup>

In 1922, the two-year budworm salvage operation began with two-dozen crews cutting all but the very eastern edge of the T2R11 W.E.L.S.<sup>154</sup> The crews' camps were at the west side of Holbrook Pond, the southernmost point of Chesuncook Pond, Bean Pond drainage (six camps), Bear Pond, Stratton Brook drainage (two camps), Gould Pond, and the south, north and east end of Rainbow Lake. Perhaps the residue from this operation and tinder-dry conditions helped fuel the June 1924 Rainbow fire. The lack of rain during the fire and high winds helped it spread. On June 6, the fire jumped Rainbow Lake in twelve places while more than 300 men helped fight the blaze and worked to save dams, camps, and piled wood. *The Northern* reported in August 1924 that everything in the area had been cut, so the fire did not destroy anything of value.<sup>155</sup>

The 1924 fire started about where Big Murphy Pond outlet stream enters Rainbow Stream.<sup>156</sup> It burned all but the western edge of Big Murphy Pond and south along both sides of Rainbow Stream to just below Emerald Pool where it circled to the southeast and moved down the east edge of Nahmakanta Lake to at least the drainage from west of Sixth Debsconeag Lake. North of Big Murphy Pond, the fire burned east of the Rainbow deadwaters to the edge of

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<sup>152</sup> Cut of Great Northern Paper Company Season 1917–1918.

<sup>153</sup> Penobscot Development Company, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections, Report on Township No. 2 Range 11. July 21, 1919

<sup>154</sup> Penobscot Development Company, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections, Report Twp. No.2 R11 WELS Piscataquis County, Maine, March 1922 and Report on Insect Damage of Lands of Penobscot Development Company in T2 R11.

<sup>155</sup> *The Northern*, a GNP monthly publication 1922-1928 and GNP Division of Forest Engineering, "Estimates of Uncut areas on T2 R11 left after 1923–24 cuttings," April 26, 1924

<sup>156</sup> map of fire line, Great Northern Paper Company Division of Forest Engineering, Township 2 Range 11, July 14, 1950, mapped 1924 burn

Rainbow Lake near the dam. Here, the fire swept down the south side of the lake to about the midpoint before moving away from the shore and heading south-southeast, passing west of Big Beaver Pond, the no-name pond to its south, Moose Pond, and ending at the northern end of Third Debsconeag Lake. The fire burned the totality of the Gould, Stratton, Bear, and Doughnut ponds' watersheds. On the north shore of Rainbow Lake, the fire burned the point that forms the northwest cove and north of there to nearly Chesuncook Pond, partway around Holbrook Pond, stayed south of Rocky Pond, and engulfed Pyn, Clifford, and Woodman ponds at its eastern terminus. Small pockets of unburned forest remained throughout the area. The fire was still smoldering a month later. Loggers have never returned to these burned areas.

### **Gould Pond Drainage**

In the Gould Pond drainage, loggers cut regularly, between 1841 and the 1924 fire. Tote roads came into the drainage from the head of Nahmakanta Lake and from the logging camp between Pollywog and Rainbow streams.<sup>157</sup> As early as the 1880s, loggers used a camp of two buildings at the northwest corner of the pond. The 1900 Eastman cruiser map noted that loggers cut most of the area south of Gould Pond to Nahmakanta Lake many years ago, starting about 1841 and likely a couple more times before 1900 when loggers cut the headwaters to the east and northeast of Gould Pond.<sup>158</sup> They harvested the hillside north of Gould Pond in 1908, 1911, and 1924.<sup>159</sup> Open barren ledge, a result of the 1924 fire, still covers much of the nearby area.

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<sup>157</sup> J.A. Lobley and Son, Plan of Township No.2 R 11 W.E.L.S. 1915 and Operating Plan of TWP 2 R11 W.E.L.S. Piscataquis County, January 1922

<sup>158</sup> Eastman, Ira D. "Township No.2.R.11 (W.E.L.S.) As Explored in October 1900."

<sup>159</sup> GNP scalars' reports, GNP Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections, and cut mapped on GNP Division of Forest Engineering Township 2 Range 11, October 1922

The 1913 Sewall report and a 1922 Penobscot Development Company assessment of the drainage did not recommend driving Gould Brook, but, rather, suggested hauling the 2.75 miles from the mouth of the pond to Nahmakanta Lake.<sup>160</sup> In 1841 and the years of large pine cutting, the teamsters hauled with oxen, no more than three logs at a time, to Nahmakanta Lake. To haul the spruce logs from north and east to Gould Pond was feasible, but to go all the way to Nahmakanta Lake exceeded the general hauling distance for horses. Teamsters may have hauled a more reasonable distance from the pond's west end to Rainbow Stream and dumped logs in the water. No information source mentions a dam at Gould Pond and an inspection of the outlet and stream was inconclusive.

### **Stratton Pond Drainage**

Another two miles up Rainbow Stream at the confluence of Stratton Brook, loggers began to move easterly toward Stratton Pond in 1841. They worked farther into the watershed and, at some point after 1867, built two dams, one of which was at Stratton Pond and the other at the foot of the extensive deadwater below the pond. With a shift to short wood, a 1922 Penobscot Development Company assessment indicated dams were not necessary.<sup>161</sup> However, loggers rebuilt the 200-foot-long, 6-foot head Stratton deadwater dam again in 1924, probably before the June fire.<sup>162</sup> They may have rebuilt the dam at Stratton Pond at the same time.

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<sup>160</sup> Sewall, James W. Report TWP.2 R.11W.E.L.S., 1913 and Penobscot Development Company, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections, Report Twp. No.2 R11 WELS Piscataquis County, Maine, March 1922

<sup>161</sup> see note 160

<sup>162</sup> Hempstead, Alfred G., *The Penobscot Boom*. Orono: University of Maine Press, 1931.

Two tote roads reached into the watershed from the Rainbow Lake Tote Road.<sup>163</sup> One road, which loggers used in 1900, left the Rainbow Lake Tote Road passed over the height of land south of Stratton Brook, angled easterly to the brook, followed its south side to the head of the deadwater, crossed to a logging camp, and went north past Doughnut Pond to Rainbow Lake. At the point where the tote road crossed at the head of the deadwater, another tote road went on to Stratton Pond. The lumber camp at the northeast corner of the deadwater had six buildings that supported pre-1900 logging west of Stratton Pond, but the area to the east remained uncut until 1915 and 1916.<sup>164</sup> The camp had a farm of unknown size, given the implements found in the area by Doug Farquhar.<sup>165</sup> The 1924 fire consumed the buildings.

The second tote road, as mapped in 1913, started at Rainbow Stream and followed the north bank of Stratton Brook to a logging camp at about its midpoint before continuing on to the camp at Stratton deadwater. At the foot of Stratton deadwater, where the watershed shifts from a northwest to a southwest flow, was an old logging camp on the high south bank. Loggers cut the hillside on the south side of Stratton Brook below the deadwater in 1912.

### **Other Drainages Entering Rainbow Stream**

These few recorded logging historical facts on Rainbow Stream and Gould Pond and Stratton Pond drainages left me wondering about logging activities around the other ponds, Murphy, Bear, Buck, and Collins, that also empty into Rainbow Stream. I also did not have all the information I wanted on both Rainbow Stream and Stratton Brook. Where was the dam on Stratton Brook deadwater and did loggers rebuild the dam at Stratton Pond? Did they build all

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<sup>163</sup> T2R11, cruise map by Ira Eastman, October 1900

<sup>164</sup> Ira D. Eastman, Township no.2 R.11 (W.E.L.S.) as explored in Oct. 1900

<sup>165</sup> conversations with Doug Farquhar and Operating Plan of TWP 2 R11 WELS, January 1922

those dams on Rainbow Stream, and if so, could I find remnants? What was the lay of the land in these drainages and what implications did it have for loggers?

To satisfy my curiosity about Rainbow Stream, I walked its banks four times and paddled its deadwaters once. No evidence remains to suggest a dam was ever built at the foot of the First Deadwater; the land around it and the bottom of the water passage look undisturbed. The barrow pits and rock crib logs with spikes spanning the stream were at the foot of the Second and Third deadwaters. That portion of the roll dam above the mouth of Stratton Brook that is still underwater is in place.

I could find no remains of the dam below Stratton Brook or of the 180-foot sluice. However, the dam's location helped me understand that the impoundment extended into Stratton Brook, and a trip boom at the mouth of that stream would have enabled loggers to collect the logs before they entered Rainbow Stream. Furthermore, the dam could have stopped the log flow while drivers cleared a jam downstream. The next two dam sites still had rock crib logs with spikes. Abutment work along the stream is still visible in multiple places, especially between Stratton Brook and the head of the flume above Emerald Pool.

Flowing into the impoundment of the dam below Stratton Brook are the outlet streams of Murphy ponds. I had assumed they would have no dams because of their proximity to Rainbow Stream, less than 400 yards away. I was wrong. An old peavey head was on the ground above Big Murphy Pond's dam's south side. The dams at Big Murphy and Little Murphy ponds were both at the head of the easily blocked ravines below their current open bodies of water. At Little Murphy Pond, cut logs are still underwater at the outlet that has barrow pits on both sides of the channel. I cannot date when Nahmakanta Dam Company built the dams other than probably post-1870. Before then, the loggers used oxen and hauled from the general area. The area around



Big Murphy Pond still bears the effects of the 1924 Rainbow fire that started nearby. No loggers have cut and driven from the ponds since then.

Flowing into the same impoundment at the confluence of Stratton Brook and Rainbow Stream is the stream from Bear Pond. I followed the stream, clear of obstruction, to the mouth of a finger-like ravine where I thought I had previously seen a dam, but I was mistaken. Perhaps loggers once had a horse dam here. Instead of crawling through the alders that fill the floor of the ravine, I worked up the hillside to walk above it before swinging back to the stream at the foot of the long granite drop, a natural sluice, from Bear Pond. The most likely dam site was between the two granite outcrops at the pond's outlet. I found no remains, but thought if they drove from this pond, then they had a horse dam here. I continued around the north side of the pond to the outlet of a substantial bog and followed it 100 yards to the bog. The remains of a dam surprised me, as did some piled wood. Loggers drove logs from here and that added to the probability of a horse dam at Bear Pond outlet. When the company built the dam and how often and when they used it is unknown, but no logger has cut the area since the 1924 fire.

Instead of working my way from the impoundment up Stratton Brook Stream, I came in from Doughnut Pond on one occasion and from Stratton Pond on another. My topographical maps suggested the 200-foot dam was at the foot of the deadwater where it makes a 90-degree shift to the southwest. I headed directly to that spot through the notch from Doughnut Pond, and there was the dam. I knew the other dam was at Stratton Pond, but not exactly where. I found a small dam with a small head downstream in the alders perhaps 100 yards from the current open water of the pond. Given the decay level in 2012, it was probably rebuilt about 1920.

I continued down along the south edge of Stratton Brook. The first time I was here, the deadwater was a sea of golden grasses. This time beaver had flooded it. I noticed a rock that did

not look quite right and went to investigate. It was the bow of an aluminum canoe; the rest buried in debris. I slid it down the bank, struggled through the alders, and explored the deadwater with it. My paddle travels with me.

Below the deadwater dam, the Stratton Brook drops over natural granite sluice to a flat bog area of alders. At the foot of this deadwater, the stream narrows to a chute that might have been dammed, but no evidence is visible now. The stream takes another drop through rocks and small falls to another long deadwater that again narrows to a smaller drop and the impoundment from Rainbow Stream. The drive below the dam looked like it would be uncomplicated.

Less than two miles above the impoundment at Stratton Brook and Rainbow Stream are outlet streams of Collins and Buck ponds. Collins Pond is tiny and has little water flowing into it and only a trickle flowing from its outlet. Given its close proximity to Rainbow Lake, teamsters probably hauled directly to the lake on the tote road that went west from the dam.

I followed the straight and unobstructed Buck Pond outlet stream up a steep hillside into a bowl immediately south of the pond. The bowl could have been dammed, but nothing suggested a dam. About 150 yards farther up the hillside at the outlet, an old, large ax-cut log and an abandoned beaver dam greeted me. Loggers could have easily had a horse dam here. Given the steepness of the hillside, loggers did not haul on it. I looked for the old tote road from Rainbow Lake dam, but could not find it. During the log-driving era, crews drove this stream.

I have not yet spent enough time to claim I really looked for either of two sawmills on Rainbow Stream. Two individuals who spent considerable time on Rainbow Stream each believe they discovered a sawmill on the stream. Paul Nevel, a Nahmakanta Lake Camps owner, found evidence of a mill well back from the head of the lake, just below the end of Rainbow Stream's rocky rapids. The sawmill may have been for hardwood logs. At some point, loggers cut

hardwood in the area, hauled it to Nahmakanta Lake, and put it on rafts made of pine or spruce (hardwood logs do not float). Some of the rafts apparently broke apart, and the hardwood logs sank near the foot of Nesuntabunt Mountain on the west side of Nahmakanta Lake. Keith Hasty, longtime area camp owner, found the site of a portable mill near the stream on the west side about halfway to Rainbow Lake while exploring in the 1960s. How the sawed lumber from either mill may have reached a market is unknown. It might have been rafted down Nahmakanta Lake and Stream or, if it was sawed after the mid-1920s, it might have been hauled westerly from Rainbow Lake dam to Moosehead Lake. The sawdust from the mill that Hasty found may have been what Fred Clifford and another man from the New Rainbow Lakes Sporting Camps had in 1945 when they transported sawdust across Rainbow Lake.

### **Rainbow Lake**

Rainbow Lake is 6.5 miles long with four small ponds and an extensive bog draining into it. These waters include Doughnut, Little Beaver, Clifford, and Woodman ponds, and the no-name bog extending southeast from the cove at the dam.

Zebulon Bradley's 1842 survey found that no loggers had yet reached the lake, but they did soon after. In 1841, loggers cut below the deadwaters on Rainbow Stream and on the north side of the ridges immediately north of Rainbow Lake. They built the lake's first dam soon after 1867 and rebuilt it about 1890, perhaps again in 1913, and again in 1922 with a 5-foot head.<sup>166</sup> In 1935, when loggers replaced the gate section with creosoted square timber, the dam had a 7-foot

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<sup>166</sup> Hempstead, Alfred G., *The Penobscot Boom*. Orono: University of Maine Press, 1931 and Report TWP. 2 R11 W.E.L.S., 1913, James W. Sewall; Report on Township No. 2 Range 11. July 21, 1919; Report Twp. No.2 R11 WELS Piscataquis County, Maine, March 1922; Report on Inspection on cutting on township No. 2 Range 11, February 17, 1923; Township 2 R11 Tree Growth Plan Map, 1922; "Estimates of Uncut Areas on T2R11 left after 1923-24 Cuttings, April 26, 1924

head.<sup>167</sup> Three years later, GNP listed the dam's impoundment as a key water storage pond.<sup>168</sup> GNP's Nelson Levasseur rebuilt the dam sometime after 1941 to support subsequent drives with the last being before 1952. He rebuilt it again in 1957 to ensure water storage.<sup>169</sup>

Several tote roads terminated at the dam.<sup>170</sup> The earliest road came up along Rainbow Stream from Nahmakanta Lake. The second road (c. 1883) started at Ripogenus Dam and reached the dam via Chesuncook Pond and a connecting corduroy road to the lake's northwest cove where the road swung due south across the peninsula to the lake's north shore, which it followed to the outlet. The third road (c. 1890) left Nahmakanta Lake and followed the streams to the head of the Stratton Brook deadwater, where it turned north to pass by Doughnut Pond and reach the lake's south edge, which it followed west to the dam. A short side road entered the bog that flows into the lake just east of the dam. A fourth major road came east to the dam from the Chesuncook Road a couple miles south of Chesuncook Stream (c. 1920).

Loggers reached other areas of the lake via three routes.<sup>171</sup> One tote road connected the lake's southeast cove to Minister Cove on Third Debsconeag Lake (c. 1912). Another tote road that reached that corner came from Pockwockamus Deadwater on the West Branch via either Hurd or Big Minister and Daisey ponds (pre-1900). This route had a horse hovel at the halfway point between Hurd Pond and Rainbow Lake. Farther up the West Branch at Horserace Brook, a

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<sup>167</sup> Prouty, E. W., Report on Storage Dams Particularly Small Ponds on West Branch Penobscot River, Summer 1936

<sup>168</sup> McLeod, John E. *The Great Northern Paper Company*, vol. 1–6. Unpublished manuscript, 1978.

<sup>169</sup> conversations with Jim Sullivan and Peter Bartley

<sup>170</sup> T2R11, cruise map by Ira Eastman, October 1900

<sup>171</sup> Township 2 Range 11, State Ass. Report, 1912; GNP, Division Forest Engineering, Township 2 Range 10, February 12, 1915; Katahdin to East Branch, Pleasant River (October 1935), Appalachian Trail map appearing in the 1936 issue of the *Guide to the Appalachian Trail in Maine*

tote road left the river and went southerly over the steep ridge past Woodman and Clifford ponds where it angled southeasterly to a cove on the north shore (c. 1900).

Cruisers' maps placed logging camps at different points on the lake's shores.<sup>172</sup> Exactly when loggers used each one is unknown, but specific documentation details early operations in the mid-1890s, 1905, 1913, 1914, 1916, and into the 1920s, ending with the cut in 1924.<sup>173</sup> About a mile east of the dam on the north shore was an early camp from which loggers cut the peninsula of the northwest cove. Another camp was at the head of the northwest cove, and it may have been connected to the cutting in the late 1880s between Rainbow Lake and Holbrook Pond. It was perhaps used again in support of a 1924 cut, if loggers sluiced the cut on the ridge between the lake and Holbrook Pond as recommended in a March 1922 Penobscot Development Company report.<sup>174</sup> The next camp on the north side was a half-mile east of the Woodman Pond outlet stream at the end of the tote road from the mouth of Horserace Brook on the West Branch. This camp served loggers after 1885 and again in 1913. In the small cove at the easternmost prominent point on the north shore was another camp.

Kenneth McRuer Clark's 1913 cruiser's map indicates substantial second growth at the east end of Rainbow Lake.<sup>175</sup> At the southeastern most cove was a logging camp for the 1914 cut. Whether this logging camp was different from or used Charles Garland's Debsconeag Outing Club's branch camp is unknown. Eugene O. Hale, who operated both logging and sporting camps on the lake (c. 1924), may have used Garland's old place for both enterprises

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<sup>172</sup> maps: T2R11, cruise map by Ira Eastman, October 1900; Township 2 Range 11, State Ass. Report, 1912; Clark, Kenneth McRuer. Growth Plan of TWP 2R11 W.E.L.S. June–July 1913 (Sewall Co.)

<sup>173</sup> mapped cuttings GNP, Division of Forest Engineering, Township 2 Range 11 October 1922

<sup>174</sup> Penobscot Development Company, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections, Report Twp. No.2 R11 WELS Piscataquis County, Maine, March 1922

<sup>175</sup> Clark, Kenneth McRuer. Growth Plan of TWP 2R11 W.E.L.S. June–July 1913. (Sewall Co.)

because they operate in different seasons.<sup>176</sup> What looks to be stacked cordwood rests on the lake bottom in the north cove at this end of the lake.<sup>177</sup> Because the 1924 fire missed this area of the lake, loggers may have cut the area in the early 1930s using the tote road from Katahdin View Camps at Pockwockamus Deadwater. Alta Boyington Peters, who grew up on Hurd Pond (1930s) liked the jingle of the horse harnesses echoing across the lake, and Roy Douglas (Doug) Nelson Jr., who lived at Pockwockamus deadwater (c. 1930), as a young boy, liked the teamster who used the hovel halfway to Rainbow Lake.<sup>178</sup>

On the south side of the lake, a 1913 logging camp was in the cove east of the mouth of the stream from Doughnut Pond. Another logging camp, Wentworth Maxfield's camp, was at what loggers, and later hikers on the Appalachian Trail (AT), refer to as Rainbow Spring, which is due south of the point that forms the northwest cove.<sup>179</sup> Maxfield used the camp in the 1900 cutting season and perhaps other years. Another camp was halfway between Maxfield's camp and the dam.

At the dam, loggers used two sets of camps. They likely built the first camps on the east side before the dam was built. GNP removed the consistently used camps in the mid-1930s. The camp was the site of the University of Maine January 1924 forestry camp program.<sup>180</sup> Participants in the program walked in on a very rough tote road from the Chesuncook Road. Loggers were cutting at the time and drove the logs from the lake that spring. This camp may

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<sup>176</sup> more information in chapter 8 about Garland's camp

<sup>177</sup> conversation with Jim Sullivan

<sup>178</sup> conversations with Roy Douglas Nelson

<sup>179</sup> T2R11, cruise map by Ira Eastman, October 1900 and Clark, Kenneth McRuer. Growth Plan of TWP 2R11 W.E.L.S. June–July 1913. (Sewall Co.)

<sup>180</sup> *The Northern*, vol. IV, 5 (August 1924). (Millinocket, ME: Great Northern Paper Co., 1921–1928, a monthly magazine). University of Maine Forestry Program hosted at Rainbow Lake.

also have been the location of a 30-foot boathouse that GNP built in 1915.<sup>181</sup> The camp had a wharf that would have been the likely docking site for the two headworks that were still operational in 1921–1922.<sup>182</sup> The sporting camps at Rainbow Dam were on the west side and may have been used by loggers at times in the 1940s and very early 1950s, the last years of logging at the west end of the lake, which was untouched by the 1924 fire.<sup>183</sup>

Loggers and teamsters headed from Rainbow Lake dam to Doughnut Pond followed the tote road east along the edge of the lake for nearly three miles east to the camp at the mouth of the stream from Doughnut Pond. Loggers cut the first tote road to Doughnut Pond along the brook. When they came back for a subsequent operation (c. 1890), they cut the road farther up the hillside and built a logging camp (c. 1912) on a flat area away from the pond. Eventually they connected the tote road to Stratton Pond.<sup>184</sup> The loggers used a gentle smooth slope to the water on the dam's east side for a landing area. No loggers returned to the area after the 1924 forest fire.

Almost directly across the lake from the mouth of the Doughnut Pond outlet stream is the mouth of the Clifford and Woodman ponds outlet stream. In September 1885, George Witherle and a companion hiked into the ponds from the West Branch.<sup>185</sup> His journal made no mention of either a logging road or trail, but he did note areas of clear walking and others of large blowdowns. They returned on a more circuitous route and made no mention of logging any place along the way. Logging did take place soon after Witherle's visit and again about 1913 with the

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<sup>181</sup> GNP structures inventory, GNP Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

<sup>182</sup> GNP headworks inventory, GNP Papers, University of Maine Fogler Library Special Collections

<sup>183</sup> mapped 1924 burn, GNP Division of Forest Engineering, Township 2 Range 11, July 14, 1950

<sup>184</sup> T2R11, cruise map by Ira Eastman, October 1900

<sup>185</sup> Witherle, George H. "Explorations West and Northwest of Katahdin in the Late Nineteenth Century." Boston: Reprinted by the Appalachian Mountain Club, 1950.

supporting tote road coming from the West Branch. A James W. Sewall Company 1913 report recommended a sluice on the hillside to the west of the ponds' outlet stream, but whether loggers built it is unknown.<sup>186</sup> The statement suggested the stream was not drivable, and the ponds did not have a dam. No one has cut on the north side of the lake since the 1924 fire.

I was curious about the sluice, the nature of the stream from Clifford and Woodman Ponds, and several other places on or near the lake, so I walked its perimeter to see what I might find and learn. I had limited information on the Doughnut, Clifford, and Woodman ponds areas, and all I knew about the southeast bog was a road ran into it and Clark's 1913 cruiser's report stated that loggers cut the area.

At the west end of the dam, I cut through the alders to the edge of the woods and worked my way easterly. I soon found the remains of a 1903 trapper's camp, but I did not find the logging camp farther down the shore. Through the open woods, I could see a rock outcrop so I swung away from the water and headed to the top where I had a great view of the west end of the lake. From there, I headed across the point into the northwest cove where I discovered three tent platforms. Two were unused, but someone was using the other. At the head of the cove, I found remnants of an old camp.

I left the lake on the century-old tote road to Chesuncook Pond. The road's last half-mile was corduroy and must have meant a very bumpy ride in the Ford Model A that traveled it. At the height of land on my way back, I left the road and headed northeast through the still-obvious old burn to Holbrook Pond and the Horserace ponds. Between the two, I found an old trapper's camp near the edge of the burn. Spanning the height of land between the ponds is a notch with a

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<sup>186</sup> Sewall, James W. Report TWP.2 R.11W.E.L.S., 1913.



moss carpet that covers the packed-in huge rocks, among which are big softwoods. The fire did not reach in here, and it looks like Eden.

The following morning I was back in the burn and explored around Pyn Pond and then walked easterly in the old burn on the ridge above Rainbow Lake within sight of the water. I dropped off the ridge a short distance from the stream from Clifford and Woodman ponds. I saw no remains of a sluice, but the stream is buried under huge boulders and not drivable. On my way to explore the ponds, I discovered where the old tote road from the West Branch forked away from the current trail. A quarter-mile north of Clifford Pond, I found old phone wire, but could not follow it very far.

Early the next morning, I was exploring the northeasternmost cove of the lake trying to find where the end of the telephone line from a camp on Pockwockamus Deadwater on West Branch touched the lake. I assumed there would be camp remains at the site, but I found nothing that time or the next time I explored here. The third time I made the attempt, I started well away from the lake and eventually discovered with the help of an oriented map and compass that the line went to the southeasternmost cove.

I looked for remains of the old logging camp in the southeast cove, but did not find anything other than an old clearing. My next stop was the top of Rainbow Mountain, still relatively clear as a result of the 1924 fire, where I once again found old shovel blades and telephone wire on poles put in place after the fire because the poles are set in rock cairns.

Beyond the side trail to Rainbow Lake camps, I passed through what had been the edge of an old field. On a subsequent trip, I explored that area, which was originally a logging camp—its rock-lined boat landing is still obvious. The nearby sporting camp turned the site into a huge garden about 1928; the rocks had been removed and bits of barbed and other wire were at the

edges. From there, I went into Doughnut Pond to inspect the outlet. The large amount of cord wood still in the swamp near the outlet suggested to me that when they dynamited a horse dam, the water flow was insufficient for the volume of wood.

The next site on the lake I was curious about, and located on another trip, was the Maxfield logging camp. The camp was near the shore to the east of the dam and due south of the northwest point. Bob Kimber and I pulled the canoe in and started looking. Soon we were staring into a large spring hole, and I realized we were at Rainbow Spring on the AT. The old map placed the camp here, but did not mark a spring. Then I remembered an old Walter McPheters's ad, "Camp Cody at Rainbow Spring," which the publication listed as on First Debsconeag Lake. I think it should have been listed for Rainbow Lake.<sup>187</sup>

The last area of interest on my circumnavigation of the lake was the southeast bog. I found nothing to suggest a dam where the bog narrowed before entering the lake and soon lost the road from the lake dam in the alders. The teamsters probably hauled the less than a mile up the frozen meandering channel of the swamp to the large no-name pond at the upper end. No dam or logging camp or log-driving evidence rests in this outlet area. Evidence of the 1924 fire abounds all around.

I exited the swamp and continued on the old tote road to Rainbow Lake dam. As I approached it, I passed through the clearing that most recently hosted an AT shelter and previously a logging camp. Nearly opposite was an old barrow pit where people store their boats. Loggers had a wharf and a boathouse here. I presumed the wharf was what looks to be the man-made rock and earth extension from the dam's west side dam to a rock outcrop in the lake.

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<sup>187</sup> appeared in *In the Maine Woods* the yearly advertising publication of the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad

### **Post-1924 Rainbow Fire**

The great Rainbow fire of 1924 swept through most of the area east from Rainbow Stream to nearly the west end of Third Debsconeag Lake and north from Nahmakanta Lake to the ridge north of Rainbow Lake. For years, the result of the fire kept loggers away from this area. More recently, two large land purchases have sustained the absence. In 1990, the Maine Bureau of Public Lands purchased its Nahmakanta Unit, the lands south of the Stratton Brook flowage to Penobscot Pond and east from Bean Brook (east branch) to a north–south property line near the outlet of Fourth Debsconeag Lake. In 2002, the Nature Conservancy bought what it refers to as the Debsconeag Lake’s Wilderness Area, a 46,271-acre parcel of land that includes the land from the north boundary of the Nahmakanta Unit to the West Branch and the remainder of the Debsconeag lakes chain. These two organizations have so far not allowed cutting in the old burn and in the Bean Brook (east branch) watershed.