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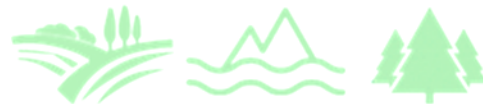
Matt LaRoche Photo

Allagash Wilderness Waterway 2020 Annual Report

March 1, 2021



In 2020, the Allagash Wilderness Waterway celebrated 50 years as a designated component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System



Amanda E. Beal
Commissioner

Randy Charette
Deputy Commissioner

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Report Required

The Allagash Wilderness Waterway (AWW) is administered by the Bureau of Parks and Lands (BPL) within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF). A seven-member Advisory Council works with the Waterway Superintendent in developing and maintaining a strategic plan for the Waterway and advancing its mission and goals. The Council is required to report annually to the Director of BPL on the state of the Waterway. Similarly, the Commissioner of the Department is required to report annually by March 1st to the Legislature’s joint standing committee on conservation matters regarding the state of the Waterway, including its mission and goals, administration, education and interpretive programs, historic preservation efforts, visitor use and evaluation, ecological conditions and any natural character enhancements, general finances, income, expenditures and balance of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway Permanent Endowment Fund, the Department’s annual budget request for the Waterway operation in the coming fiscal year and current challenges and prospects for the Waterway (12 MRSA §1890 A-C). This report is submitted to meet both reporting requirements.

MISSION AND GOALS

AWW Mission Statement: Preserve, protect and develop the maximum wilderness character of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway by ensuring its ecological integrity and optimum public use through careful management as a wilderness area in the historic and modern context of a working forest. (AWW Strategic Plan, 2010)

In support of this mission, the following documents provide principal guidance for managing the Waterway:

- Maine Statutes: 12 MRSA Chapter 220, Subchapter 6 Allagash Wilderness Waterway, §1871-§1891-B
- Rules and Regulations for the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, as amended February 22, 2017
- Memorandum of Agreement between the Maine Department of Conservation (now DACF) and the US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, February 2002
- Allagash Wilderness Waterway Strategic Plan, AWW Advisory Council, October 2010
- Allagash Wilderness Waterway Management Plan, Bureau of Parks and Lands, December 2012

The 2010 Strategic Plan and the 2012 AWW Management Plan include several goals and objectives, guiding principles, policies and strategies toward accomplishing the mission. The plans are available online under the “Featured Links” at www.maine.gov/allagash. For the Strategic Plan, click on **AWW Advisory Council**. For the Management Plan, click on **AWW Management Plan**.

AWW Advisory Council Report

January 18, 2021

To: Andy Cutko, Director of Parks and Lands

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Allagash Wilderness Waterway Council met onsite in the legislature's Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry Committee Room in the Cross Building a single time in 2020. A second meeting in December was held virtually using Microsoft Teams. It was well-received and will be the "normal" practice for as long as COVID-19 remains a critical health threat.

People seeking vacations free from threat of COVID-19 re-discovered what the North Maine Woods region and the Allagash Wilderness Waterway have to offer for natural beauty and cultural history. Hopefully, this new found interest in the Waterway will create a resurgence of a new generation of visitors that will continue long into the future. A new Allagash Explorer Guidebook produced by the Allagash Waterway Foundation is now available to aid visitors in understanding the history within the 92-mile waterway. North Maine Woods is also preparing a brochure that will include information on the history of the trains and tramway at Eagle Lake. New fire tower cabs were installed by the Bureau of Public Lands on Allagash Mountain and Round Pond Mountain. These new structures will be welcomed attributes for Waterway visitors.

The Boarding House and Storehouse at Churchill Depot are now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These large wooden structures as well as the timber crib Telos Dam require constant attention to sustain their functionality. Financing maintenance of these structures is expensive and will require adequate funding for our State Parks to ensure that they endure for future generations. I would like to congratulate the Allagash Waterway Supervisor and Rangers for the many building, maintenance and improvement projects undertaken this year. Ruth LaRoche made masks and homemade hand sanitizer and put together do it yourself Corona virus PPE kits. Not a single case of COVID-19 was reported among field staff in all of the interactions with visitors. In closing I would like to thank Melford Pelletier for his several years of service as the historical/cultural member of the Council. I would also mention our appreciation for the knowledge and assistance of former staff member Cindy Bastey in preparing information for the Council.

Submitted per Maine Statutes

David J. Basley, AWW Advisory Council

Do It Yourself Corona Virus PPE



Ruth LaRoche Photo



Matt LaRoche Photos

FY 2021 Allagash Wilderness Waterway Budget

Allotment Source	FY-21 Q1	FY-21 Q2	FY-21 Q3	FY-21 Q4	Total
General Fund (All Other)	\$73,000	\$30,300	\$10,593	\$13,101	\$126,994
AWW Account (All Other)	\$53,067	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$53,067
AWW Account (Capital)	\$40,000	\$30,000	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$100,000
Total	\$166,067	\$60,300	\$20,593	\$33,101	\$280,061

Revenue from Fees

The Bureau of Parks and Lands collects fees for the following in the Waterway: camping, portage services, sporting camp leases and tolls to cross Churchill Dam. Fiscal year reporting is July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. Revenue from fees for FY20 totaled \$140,739.12

Fiscal Year	Revenues from Fees
2015	\$101,261.23
2016	\$131,502.11
2017	\$193,508.24
2018	\$137,062.31
2019	\$180,914.32
2020	\$140,739.12

AWW Endowment Fund: \$11,247.72 is in the Allagash Wilderness Waterway endowment fund. This is an interest bearing trust account at the Department of Treasury.

AWW Donations Account: \$8,693.41 was in the Allagash Wilderness Waterway donations account as of June 30, 2020.

Revenue to AWW Capital Improvement Fund

Maine law requires that a portion of revenues received from AWW camping fees be set aside in a non-lapsing account to be used for capital improvements in the AWW. The calculated revenue to this account for FY 20 was \$91,315.01.

Fiscal Year	Revenue to AWW Account
2015	\$45,562.28
2016	\$52,155.00
2017*	\$127,095.88
2018	\$108,604.34
2019	\$121,804.61
2020	\$91,315.01

*Note that the FY 2017 increase to the Capital Improvement Fund resulted from increased AWW fees that went into effect in May 2016 .



Allagash Wilderness Waterway Fiscal Year 20 Expenditure Report (July 1, 2019—June 30, 2020)

Expenses - FY20	AWW Account (dedicated revenue)	General Fund (general operations)	Consolidated Account (dedicated revenue)	TOTAL
Salary and Benefits		553,014.71		553,014.71
Professional Services		2,510.00		2,510.00
Water tests		321.00		321.00
Gas (for equipment)		640.73		640.73
Lodging, Meals, Mileage		511.42		511.42
Electric				0.00
Other utilities		114.15		114.15
Misc. Rents				0.00
Rent - Buildings and Office		2,058.00		2,058.00
Rental of State Vehicle		36,524.01		36,524.01
State Vehicle Operations				0.00
Rental of Private Equipment				0.00
Repair - Equipment		6,190.77	204.79	6,395.56
Repair - Boats		3,270.81		3,270.81
Repair - Roads and Grounds		8,706.99		8,706.99
Repair - Buildings		3,209.92		3,209.92
Repair - Misc.		1,020.54		1,020.54
Trash Removal		184.10		184.10
Snow plowing				0.00
General Operations		875.79		875.79
Non-Employee Settlement				0.00
Occupational Health/Rehab				0.00
Employee Training		149.00		149.00
Food		24.37		24.37
L.P. Gas		6,874.86		6,874.86
Natural Gas		309.22		309.22
Fuel Oil		397.41		397.41
Firewood		700.00		700.00
Misc. Supplies (Industrial, ect.)		17,048.90	64.06	17,112.96
Technology (Radios, ect.)		5,259.47	414.72	5,674.19
Clothing		919.68		919.68
Printing and Publishing		812.42		812.42
Equipment		14,597.92		14,597.92
Grants to Public/Private Organiz.				0.00
Administrative Charges*			68.74	68.74
Material Purchases for Resale			496.27	496.27
CAP Land	4,000.00			4,000.00
CAP Equipment				0.00
CAP Buildings & Improvements				0.00
CAP Structures & Improvements				0.00
CAP Infrastructures & Improvements				0.00
TOTAL EXPENSES*	4,000.00	666,246.19	1,248.58	671,494.77

*Includes total of STA-CAP and DI-CAP on all expenditures and late fees.

CASH BALANCE IN AWW ACCT AS OF 7/01/20 was \$100,127.88

Recreation & Visitor Use

Total public use for the waterway decreased by 4% in 2020. Day use increased by 19%, sporting camp use decreased by 7% and total camping nights decreased by 20%.

The AWW was closed for most of May due to COVID-19 concerns. Subsequently, camping nights for May were down by 59%. In June camping nights were down by 15%, this was primarily due to a decrease in use by nonresidents. Traditionally, July and the first two weeks of August are very busy with youth groups paddling the waterway. Most of these groups did not come this year because of COVID-19. Youth groups usually visit the waterway with larger groups and stay longer than groups of family and friends. Consequently, July camper nights were down by 27% and August was down 14%. September camping nights were actually up by 37%. This increase in use can only be attributed to the desire of people to get out in the great outdoors and an easing of COVID restrictions on people visiting from other states.

It is interesting to note that the number of camping parties actually increased in 2020. This indicates that the waterway had smaller parties that did not stay as long as in previous years. This is indicative of a change in use from youth groups to parties consisting of family and friends.

The Tramway Historic District was the Waterway's most visited day use destination - at 3754 people, an increase of 98% from 2019. This number is probably still under reported because many people visit the trains/tramway while staying in the North Maine Woods for other reported destinations.

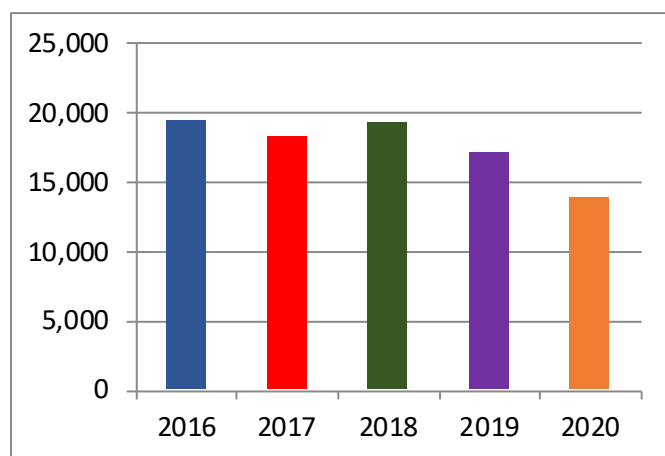
The May 5th ice out date on the waterway headwater lakes was normal. Good spring fishing lasted until late-June. The AWW had low use by nonresident anglers during the spring as noted above.

The waterway had low water levels for canoeing from early July through the remainder of the canoeing season.

Year	Parties	Persons	Camping Nights	Sporting Camp Days	Day Use	Total Visitor Days
2015	1,137	4,196	19,658	3,737	8,547	31,942
2016	1,276	4,262	19,459	3,919	9,530	32,908
2017	1,070	4,132	18,379	3,829	11,130	33,335
2018	1,046	4,347	19,305	3,547	11,437	34,289
2019	946	3,869	17,207	3,562	11,865	32,634
2020	980	3,231	13,845	3,314	14,151	31,310

Day use destinations were reported by visitors to North Maine Woods checkpoint attendants.

Five-Year Camping Use Comparison



Number of Camping Nights per Year

Oversize Group Permits

Group camping on the AWW is limited to 12 people. In the past, several organizations were allowed an exemption to this limit. These groups have been grandfathered and are given a permit to allow more than 12 people. Due to COVID-19 concerns in 2020, only one exempt organization requested permission to use an oversized group permit. Two oversized group permits were issued to 1-exempt organization.

Year	Exempt Organizations	Permits Issued
2017	4	8
2018	3	6
2019	3	8
2020	1	2

Education, Interpretation & Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation

AWW staff continues to support and promote the historical aspects of the Allagash Waterway by collecting, interpreting, and displaying artifacts found by themselves, as well as, park visitors. The artifacts are on display at the Churchill Depot History Center. The History Center is a very popular stop for fishermen and canoeists visiting the Waterway as well as visitors to the North Maine Woods and camp owners in the area. Retired Regional Forest Ranger, Alan Johnston has put together a wildland firefighter tool display for the History Center that will be on display during the 2021 season.

Outreach

Superintendent Matt LaRoche writes a monthly column about the Allagash Wilderness Waterway for the Northwoods Sporting Journal. The journal is a monthly outdoor magazine with a wide distribution in New England. After his monthly columns have been published these articles are released to the media for publication by any newspaper. Matt's articles are often published in the Bangor Daily News and other newspapers in northern Maine.

Chief Ranger Kevin Brown provides current water and ice condition information to interested people who have signed up for the AWW conditions and alerts page. The conditions and alerts page is linked to the Bureau of Parks and Lands website. These conditions and alerts go out to 3490 subscribers.

Education

The AWW video series that came out in May of 2014 has had over 21,000 views. This has been a tremendous tool for educating potential visitors to the Waterway. Bob Johnston, Allagash Ranger at Allagash Lake led a geology field trip for high school students in Baxter State Park. The Allagash Wilderness Waterway Foundation published the Allagash Explorer, a take-along companion guide for Waterway visitors. The intention is to provide connections between the user and the abundant historic, cultural, and natural resources of the Waterway; and to encourage visitors to record their own thoughts and observations of the Waterway and its impact.



Matt LaRoche Photo

Low water at Allagash Stream

September 16th, 2020

2020 AWW Crew



Left to Right: Trevor O'Leary, Roger Lawrence, Ed Palys, Alissa Lutz, , Kevin Brown, Jay Young, Bob Johnston and Matt LaRoche
Missing: Ben Hall, Ethan Cooley, Caleb Lewis and Ruth LaRoche

Ruth LaRoche photo

Staff Training

Because of COVID-19 concerns Kevin Brown and Matt LaRoche took their annual spring staff meeting update/training to Chamberlain Bridge, Churchill Dam, and Michaud Farm ranger stations. Other training is listed below :

- Chainsaw training:
 - Alissa Lutz
 - Ethan Cooley
 - Roger Lawrence
 - Caleb Lewis
- S-190 MFS wildland fire training – Roger Lawrence
- Windows online course – Jay Young
- Coast Guard Power Squadron boating course – Roger Lawrence, Ethan Cooley
- Water quality training with MFS – Trevor O'Leary, Jay Young, Bob Johnston
- BPL Ranger Academy – Ben Hall
- Cyber Security training – Matt LaRoche, Kevin Brown, Jay Young, Trevor O'Leary
- InReach training – Matt LaRoche, Jay Young
- EMT course – Matt LaRoche

Forest Harvest Notifications

In 2020, there were a total of 17 active forest harvest notifications (FONS) within the mile zone of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway (AWW).

One notification was for a harvest within a mapped visual area of the AWW. The visual area harvest application was inspected prior to harvest activity by the AWW Superintendent, Ranger O'Leary and two Bureau of Parks and Lands Foresters. The visual area harvest application was approved with conditions to minimize the visual impact of the harvest area, associated skid trails, and log landings.

Six notifications were received for road construction within the AWW mile zone. All roads were located in areas not visible from the watercourse. All roads were associated with timber harvests adjacent to the AWW. Most roads will be blocked at or beyond the mile zone after harvest activities have ended.

There were no applications for road construction within the ¼ mile new construction zone.

There were two applications for the use of herbicide within the AWW mile zone. Both applications were for roadside brush control. All applications for herbicide use within the mile zone were approved.

Neither of the two primary landowners on the northern end of the Waterway submitted harvest notifications for timber harvest within the mile zone in 2020.

Projects Accomplished by Staff, Volunteers, and Contactors in 2020

Chamberlain Lake District:

- Replaced the decking on the snowmobile bridge between the parking lot and Chamberlain Lake.
- Replaced the sills and floor in the bunk house at Lock Dam.
- Jacked and leveled the Round Pond Camp (T6 R11).
- Replaced the old PVC plumbing with PEX tubing at the Round Pond Camp.
- Installed new flooring in the bedroom of the Kellogg Brook Camp.
- Stained the following buildings in the Chamberlain Lake District:
 - Shop at ranger station.
 - Round Pond Camp.
 - Lock Dam Camp.
 - Woodshed and generator shed at ranger station.
- Cleared and blazed 13,600 feet of AWW/BPL boundary line in T6 R11.
- Roadsides were mowed on the Telos Dam and Lock Dam access roads.
- Cut, split and stacked 8- cord of firewood.
- Mowed the field at Telos Dam.

Eagle Lake District:

- Removed ¼ round at the ranger station and replaced with perma chink.
- Built a new canoe slip at ranger station.
- Built a new set of bunk beds at ranger station.

Churchill Dam District:

- Actuator on the deep gate at Churchill Dam was rebuilt and reinstalled on the dam.
- Decking on the dam was removed and replaced with new decking.
- New door and lock set were installed at ranger station shop.
- Cut and peeled several new logs for Camp Pleasant, replaced all rotten logs on the west side of the camp.
- Roadsides were mowed on the Bissonette Bridge and Jaws Roads.
- Mowed the field near the ranger station.

Michaud Farm District:

- Roadsides were mowed between Findley Bogan and Ramsay Ledge Campsite.
- Rotten bog bridging was replaced on the Round Pond fire tower trail.

Umsaskis District:

- Replaced several courses of rotten siding on the back of the ranger station.

Allagash Wilderness Waterway:

- A visitor survey was completed in cooperation with the University of Maine.
- Staff installed 13 new picnic tables with tarp poles.
- Bog bridging was replaced on the outhouse trails at the following campsites:

- East Twin Brook on the river (40')
- Sam's on Umsaskis Lake (50')
- Smith Brook on Eagle Lake
- Breezy Point on Eagle Lake

Cleared the following trails:

- Churchill Dam to Big Eddy
- Round Pond Mountain Trail
- Allagash Mountain Trail
- Second Ridge Trail (Eagle Lake)
- Indian Stream Trail
- Tramway Portage Trail
- The 19-designated snowmobile trails.



Marc Deschene Photo

New Fire Tower Cabs Being
Placed at Round Pond

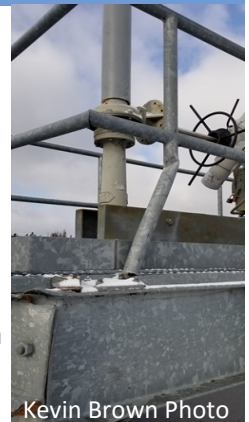


Bob Johnston Photo

Ranger on platform atop
Allagash Mountain

Dam Reports

Churchill Dam – rebuilt in 1997, it is a 24 ft. high by 460 ft. long earthen and concrete structure. It is used to store water to provide recreational flows in the Allagash River. It is also managed to provide optimal fisheries habitat for the native fishes of the Waterway. The dam has significant cracks in the right upstream retaining wall and a discernable deflection in that same wall. AWW staff placed pins in the above retaining wall to monitor movement in 2012. There has been no movement in the retaining wall since the pins were placed. The deep gate supporting structure received significant damage from a passing logging truck or similar equipment in 2018. An engineer was hired to draft plans to repair that damage in 2020. Those plans went out to bid in August with no contractor bidding on the repair. The Bureau of Parks and Lands will seek new bids for those repairs in the spring of 2021. The dam was hit again in the fall of 2020 by another piece of logging equipment. This time the galvanized railing on the downstream side of the deep gate was damaged. Repair of the railing will be added to the contract for repair of the deep gate and sent out for bid in the spring of 2021. None of the logging equipment damage was reported to Waterway staff. Management is considering placing steel posts to protect the dam from further damage from logging equipment.



Kevin Brown Photo

This dam was inspected by John Skelly from the Maine Emergency Management Agency on September 4, 2020. He recommended the following:

1. Continue to monitor and record any cracking and bowing in the fishway wall abutting the road. In the event of new cracking, please let MEMA know before repairing damage;
2. All vegetation on the dam and 10-20 feet beyond the footprint should be removed and/or managed to prevent any embankment seepage;
3. Any operation and maintenance procedures for the dam, including but not limited to vegetation removal and gate mechanism operation and exercising, should be drafted and incorporated into normal operations; and,
4. As mentioned in 2014, review operations to prevent potential overtopping of the dam, and when practicable, consider dewatering upstream and downstream faces of the dam to inspect for any signs of seepage and degradation;

Lock Dam – is a historic dam that changed the course of water that originally flowed down the Allagash and into the St. John River; this water now flows south down the East Branch of the Penobscot. The structure is a 179-year old earthen dam; 15 ft. high X 280 ft. long. The timber facing on the dam was replaced with riprap during the winter of 2008–2009. The 3-foot diameter spillway gate and outlet pipe installed in 1961 was replaced with a new outlet structure in 2018. The new outlet structure was constructed using precast concrete sections. Exposed sections were faced with wood timbers. The dam has a timber crib spillway with a three-foot drop to protect against the upstream migration of invasive fish species. This dam was inspected by John Skelly from the Maine Emergency Management Agency on September 4, 2020. He recommended the following:

1. All vegetation on the dam and 10-20 feet beyond the footprint should be removed and/or managed to prevent any further embankment seepage.

Telos Dam – is a remnant of the timber crib dams that were once common in Maine's Northwoods. During the log driving days, these dams were used to move logs and pulpwood to downstream mills. The structure is a 20 ft. high by 240 ft. long rock filled, timber crib dam. The entire structure above the sill was replaced in 1982 using the original plans. There is some documented movement of the rock-filled piers and misalignment of both the upstream and downstream surfaces of the dam. There is significant leakage under the north end of the dam. The wooden timbers are weathered and show some signs of rot. The Bureau has been monitoring pier movement since 2012. Significant movement has been documented in the piers on the north end of the dam (piers #4 and 5). AWW staff will continue to monitor pier movement in the future. The four primary gates were replaced and lifting mechanisms rebuilt over a five-year period with the last gate being replaced in 2012. In 2017, Waterway staff applied a layer of rock to the upstream face and below the spillways of the dam. This effort was a stop-gap repair to reduce leakage under the dam. The Bureau of Parks and Lands issued a contract to Baker Design Consultants in 2015 for a condition assessment and repair recommendations at Lock and Telos Dams. The team of engineers visited the dams in September 2015, and again in October, during the normal low water period. A dam assessment report was issued on August 25, 2016. The report recommendations are to reconstruct upstream face and channel aprons to correct leaks associated with structural deterioration. This will require the construction of a coffer dam and pipe to maintain water flow during the repair work. The above repairs will be a significant expense, estimated at over \$1,000,000. The Bureau does not have the funds identified to make these repairs. The repairs at Lock Dam were deemed to be more critical and were undertaken first. This dam was inspected by John Skelly from the Maine Emergency Management Agency on September 4, 2020. He recommended the following:

1. Continue to monitor and record any settlement, leakage and boils in the gate channels and piers.
2. All vegetation on the dam and 10-20 feet beyond the footprint should be removed and/or managed to prevent any embankment seepage;
3. Consider dewatering upstream and downstream faces of the dam to inspect for signs of seepage and degradation; and,
4. Consider replacing any damaged timbers and following guidance on repairs outlined in the 2016 independent consultant report.

Waterway staff will continue to make on-going repairs at Telos Dam to extend the life as long as possible. Waterway management is committed to seeking the necessary funds for repair or replacement of Telos Dam in the near future.

Volunteers

During 2020, we had 14 individuals donate 475 hours to the Allagash Wilderness Waterway. This is a considerably lower number of volunteer hours than 2019. The lower number of volunteer hours is primarily due to the fact that use by youth groups was way down in 2020. Youth groups are normally very active in volunteering in the Waterway and they were the major visitor group that did not take trips on the AWW this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Volunteers helped Waterway staff accomplish the following tasks during 2020:

- Creation of a miniature tramway display
- Repairs to the Lock Dam Camp
- Campsite maintenance
- Clearing trails
- Removal of hazardous trees
- Restoration work at the tramway
- Blowdown removal
- Shoveling roofs
- Winter deliveries

The value of these volunteer hours is over \$5700.00!

Incidents

The most serious incident of the year was two ice fishermen who drove their snowmobiles from a harvest operation near Allagash Lake all the way down to Cove Campsite. They damaged several sapling and pole sized trees within the restricted zone with their snowmobiles. Ranger O'Leary and Warden Franklin investigated the incident and turned the case over to Superintendent LaRoche who summoned the two for resource damage. Both fishermen plead guilty and paid a substantial fine for this violation of AWW rules.

2020 Incidents

- 6 – Medical emergency/evacuations
- 3 – Canoe rescues, Chase Rapids
- 1 – Lake rescue, swamped canoe Churchill Lake
- 1 – Theft
- 1 – Resource damage (AWW issued 2- summonses)
- 1 – Illegal campfire
- 1 – Vandalism (Warden Service issued a summons)
- 1 – Missing person
- 2 – Assist MFS with wildfire suppression
- 1 – Dog bite
- 1 – Verbal altercation
- 1 – Unattended fire
- 1 – Cutting live trees
- 1 – Littering
- 1 – Unauthorized camping

Special Activity Permits Issued

- Can Am Sled Dog Race to cross the Waterway at Round Pond
- Two permits issued for use of a drone for photography purposes.



Trevor O'Leary Photo

Camp Pleasant Repair



Steve Day Photo

New Table with Tarp Poles at Umsaskis Lake

Superintendent's Report

The winter season began with the annual winter campground registration at Chamberlain Bridge. We sold 32 of the 40 available sites, and all were leased for the entire winter season.

The ice fishing was very good for brook trout on the waterway headwater lakes during the first three weeks of January with several fish over 20 inches taken. After that, the fishing was reported as only fair, with the exception of Allagash Lake, which remained good for brook trout and togue for the entire season.

The Waterway was closed to camping use for almost the entire month of May because of concerns related to COVID-19. There was a lot of concern about the virus and uncertainty about how it was spread. Personal protective equipment was difficult to procure. Waterway staff met the challenge by making: cloth masks, DIY disinfectant wipes, and hand sanitizer.

To date, no Waterway staff have been known to contract COVID-19. Sadly, retired Allagash Ranger Tom Coon died from the virus in May. Tom was known as the "rogue ranger", but he was very helpful to me during my first couple years on the AWW; RIP Tom.

The ice was out on most of the waterway headwater lakes by May 4th and 5th - with Allagash Lake being the last lake to become clear of ice on May 7th.

We had a normal spring, with most runoff occurring in late April. We filled our reservoirs behind Churchill and Telos Dams in early May and we had good waterflow in the river through early July. The water stayed low for the rest of the canoeing season. We did not have an all-day rain event for the entire summer. The flow stayed below 500 cfs at the river gauge in the Town of Allagash, except for a one-day spike to 700 cfs on August 19th.

The spring fishing was excellent. On one evening of fishing below Churchill Dam in May, I caught 19", 18", 14" and 12" brook trout! Good fishing continued well into June.

The Waterway initiated a visiting artist program this year. The first artist selected was Michael Vermette from Old Town, Maine. He painted 51 paintings in his two week stay at Lock Dam. His AWW collection will be on display at the Gleason Gallery in Boothbay Harbor for the entire month of August 2021, and a video interview of his experience as the first AWW visiting artist can be found at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kW4i717N16I&feature=emb_imp_woyt.

Major accomplishments of the year were: re-decking of Churchill Dam, replacement of the fire tower cabs on Allagash and Round Pond Mountains and keeping the Waterway staff safe from COVID-19.

Waterway management worked with the University of Maine on

the development and administration of a visitor survey. That survey replicated a similar survey completed in 2003. The final report of the survey is due out soon and will be available online at www.maine.gov/allagash.

I will be retiring from the AWW on March 31st, 2021- after 44 years of state service. All of my years of service have been spent on the Allagash Wilderness Waterway and Penobscot River Corridor. It has been a very exciting and fulfilling career. I feel that I have left both of these iconic rivers better than I found them and made many friends along the way.

Many thanks to all the people who have supported me during my 12-years as Superintendent of the waterway. Special thanks to the dedicated staff of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway who meet and greet the public and do the work of keeping the AWW clean, safe and well maintained for our visitors to enjoy.

We continue to receive several letters a year praising Waterway staff for going out of their way to provide quality, professional and friendly service to visitors of the Waterway.

A huge thank you to the support staff in Bangor and Augusta who help with funding, administrative and political support for the Waterway.

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew LaRoche
 Superintendent
 Allagash Wilderness
 Waterway



To plan a trip or learn about the Allagash Wilderness Waterway:

Visit www.Maine.gov/Allagash for the following:



See 9-part Allagash video
Also on YouTube



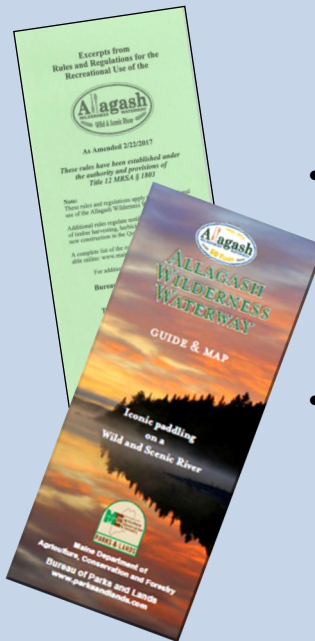
See campsites on Google Earth



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Bureau of Parks and Lands
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www.maine.gov/allagash
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Matt LaRoche next to leaving sign

Ruth LaRoche Photo



Loon

Steve Day Photo

Additional Credits:

- Many report photos are the work of Steve Day, Allagash Ranger, in the Umsaskis District of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway. See more of Steve's striking photography on the AWW website at www.maine.gov/allagash.
- **AWW Logo Credit:** Jocelyn Hubbell at DACF's Bureau of Parks and Lands adapted the AWW logo to reflect its status as a National Wild and Scenic River. In 2020, the Allagash Wilderness Waterway reached its 50th anniversary as the first state-administered component of the National Wild and Scenic River System.



Matt LaRoche Photo

Spring fishing at Churchill Dam



Bob Johnston Photo

View from Allagash Mountain

THE Allagash WILDERNESS WATERWAY

Allagash Wilderness Waterway Administration 2020

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Amanda E. Beal, Commissioner



Bureau of Parks and Lands:
Andy Cutko, Director
Ron Hunt, Director of Operations
Matthew LaRoche, AWW Superintendent



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