



DIF&W staffers get an earful at 15-year plan meetings



ASHLEY L. CONTI | BDN

Mike Brown (from left), director of Fisheries, and regional fisheries biologist Gregory Burr, Gordon Kramer and Tim Obrey listen and take notes during the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife public meeting on its management plan for fish at the Black Bear Inn in Orono on Thursday. The Maine DIFW held a series of public meetings seeking input on its next 15-year management plan for fish, moose, bear, deer and wild turkeys.

Over three days and nine hours of meetings, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife staffers met with more than 130 people last week in order to gather information that can help form long-term management plans the department is working on.

Following meetings held in Portland and Presque Isle, three forums were held in Orono. One focused on bear management. Another on fisheries. A third focused on "big game" species other than bears: moose, deer and wild turkeys.

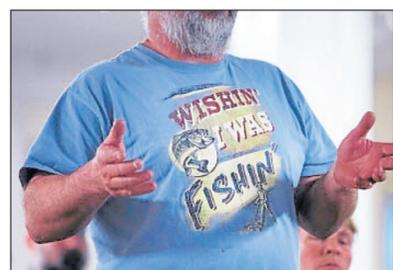
I attended all three Orono meetings and came away with several impressions I'll share here. But first, an important thing to consider. The meetings were set up to be nonconfrontational, and the facilitator made it a point to remind attendees they were not going to be allowed to debate with each other.

After attendees shared their thoughts, a second part of the meeting allowed DIF&W staffers to respond to questions they'd heard or to explain things they thought needed further attention.

Summarize hours of meetings in one column? Impossible, of course. Here, though, are several interesting points from each of those forums:



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Harold Hatch speaks during the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife public meeting on its management plan for fish at the Black Bear Inn in Orono Thursday.

Bears, attended by about 70 people: Back in 2014, Maine voters defeated a referendum that would have outlawed the use of hounds, traps and bait while hunting bears. The topic remains contentious, as this forum proved yet again. Among the attendees were two well-known proponents of that referendum: Daryl DeJoy of the Wildlife Alliance of Maine and Katie Hansberry of the Humane Society of the United States.

At the March 9 meeting in Orono,



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Matt Whitegiver speaks during the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife public meeting on its management plan for fish at the Black Bear Inn in Orono Thursday.

DeJoy was the lone attendee who spoke against current management methods. He stood twice and spoke for nearly 12 minutes.

Among his contentions: Maine's bears are going into their dens heavier because baiting takes place, and because of that state-sanctioned baiting policy those mother bears are more likely to give birth to cubs and expand the existing population. It is irresponsible, DeJoy said, for the department to allow baiting in the face of a bear population that state wildlife officials maintain is expanding well beyond management goals.

Hank Goodman, a Mainer who also owns an outfitting firm in Ontario, disputed many of DeJoy's claims. Goodman said that when that Canadian province ended baiting 15 years ago, it led to a slow increase in the bear population that culminated with bears frequently visiting his hunting camps because they were hungry and didn't fear humans.

"If you end baiting in the state of Maine, you'll have more bears than you can believe," Goodman said. His proclamation was met with applause from the crowd, which seemed to be dominated by bear hunting guides and hunters.

The boisterous crowd was not entirely respectful, however. DeJoy contributed to that atmosphere when he engaged in debate with Goodman and others, even after the facilitator warned him to stop. About 75 minutes into the three-hour session, after being warned that further outbursts may result in the expulsion of some mem-

bers of the audience, DeJoy apparently decided he had said what he had come to say.

"That's all right," DeJoy said. "I'll leave soon."

He did. Later, state Rep. Peter Lyford, R-Edington, who serves on the Joint Standing Committee of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, cautioned the group about topics that had arisen in that committee.

When it came to finding ways to reduce the bear population, Lyford said, "they're using the word 'sterilization,'" he said.

Several attendees, who clearly favored hunting as a population management tool, shook their heads.

Fisheries, attended by about 35 people: Before people were invited to speak, the meeting facilitator showed attendees the results of a survey conducted by Responsive Management, a public opinion survey firm based in Virginia. The survey process, which lasted several weeks, was recently completed and is intended help decision-makers judge approval and disapproval of different management strategies, as well as public opinion on the perception of various species in the state.

One of those questions asked how people rate the open-water fishing in the state: 70 percent of respondents said it either was "excellent" or "good." When it came to ice fishing, 62 percent responded the same way.

In addition, 85 percent of respondents responded strongly or moderately favorably to question asking ably to question

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Who is George Dorr?

Discovering the 'Father of Acadia'

BY AISLINN SARNACKI
BDN STAFF

To view stunning vistas and breathe fresh ocean air, Ronald Epp and his wife Elizabeth first visited Acadia National Park in 1985. Traveling from their home in Hartford, Connecticut, the Epps planned to walk the park's historic carriage roads and trails and drive to the top of Cadillac Mountain.



Epp

Their Acadia story begins without much flourish. They were the typical tourists, excited to experience the wildness and beauty that is Acadia. Little did they know how much the park would come to mean to the both of them.

"We were both wowed," Ronald Epp said of their first visit. "And we made repeat visits almost every year after."

Over the years, the Epps explored the villages of MDI and hiked its many mountains, becoming more acquainted with the oldest national park east of the Mississippi River and the surrounding island communities.

"Being trained as a philosopher, I ask questions," Ronald Epp said. "And when I asked questions about the beginning of the park, the phrase that came out again and again was, 'Oh, that was George Dorr.'"

But no one could tell Epp much about this mysterious "Father of Acadia," the co-founder and first superintendent of Acadia National Park, a man whose namesake graces one of the park's highest peaks and is memorialized in island granite at the park's famous Sieur de Monts Spring.

"I became interested in Dorr from the very beginning because his name was the name that kept coming back to me when I asked questions," Epp explained. "It was, 'Well, this was done because Dorr wanted it that way' or 'This was named such-and-such because Mr. Dorr named it' or 'This path came into being because Mr. Dorr led the trail crew that made it.'"

"People knew about what Dorr did here, but they didn't know about Dorr before he came here,"

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Ellsworth author returns with 'Angler's Logbook'

BY JOHN HOLYOKE
BDN STAFF

When the weather's inclement or a busy day afield has come to an end, there's nothing like sitting down in a comfy chair, opening a good outdoor book and tagging along on the adventures that fill those pages.

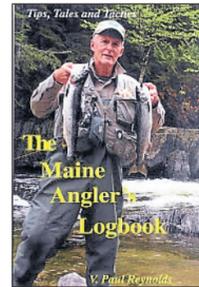
If that's your idea of a relaxing time, Ellsworth writer V. Paul Reynolds has released a book that just might fill the bill. Reynolds' latest offering, "The Maine Angler's Logbook," is a collection of 52 essays that take readers on journeys across North America in search of fish.

But the book's not all about fishing, no matter what the title says. Reynolds also introduces the reader to a number of friends who've made his time on the water more enjoyable over the years.

Reynolds is no stranger to the writing game, having served as editor and co-publisher of the Northwoods Sporting Journal after working at the BDN for 23 years as editorial writer and managing editor.

Previous books by Reynolds include

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1-Minute Hike: Fuller Farm in Scarborough

BY AISLINN SARNACKI
BDN STAFF

Difficulty: Easy. The trails in the network total 2.5 miles and are surfaced with grass, gravel and a forest floor that is fairly smooth. Expect a few exposed tree roots and gradual hills in the woods, and exercise extra caution on the Brook Trail, which runs along the side of a steep hill. The trails will be muddy in spots in the springtime, so wearing water-



AISLINN SARNACKI

proof boots during that time would be a good idea.

How to get there: From Route 1 in Scarborough, turn onto Broadturn Road and drive 4.1 miles and the gravel parking area for Fuller Farm will be on your right, marked with a kiosk and a large green sign.

Information: Formerly the site of a homestead, the 220-acre Fuller Farm in Scarborough is now a preserve featuring nearly 3 miles of intersecting trails that travel around fields, through a lovely old forest to a small waterfall and along the sandy banks of Nonesuch River.

The property was acquired by Scarborough Land Trust in 2001

with the support of the Town of Scarborough, Land for Maine's Future Fund, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and The Trust for Public Land.

Watch the video
bangordailynews.com

"The property has out longest trail system," Kathy Mills, executive director of Scarborough Land Trust, said in a recent phone interview about Fuller Farm.

"We're in the middle of improving bog bridges on the trails. We've improved about half of them so far. We've got a great group of volunteers who are working really

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Signs posted to trees help walkers stay on trail at Fuller Farm preserve in Scarborough.