

3-1-2001

"A Last Chance for Wilderness": Defining The Allagash Wilderness Waterway, 1959-1966

Richard W. Judd
University of Maine

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mainehistoryjournal>

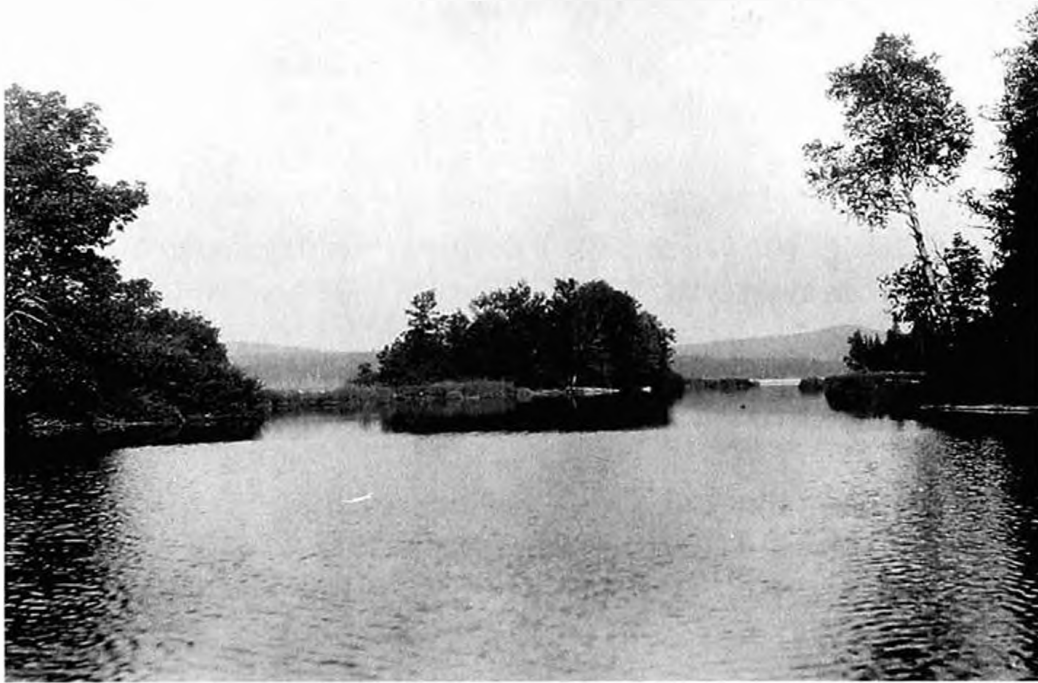


Part of the [Natural Resources and Conservation Commons](#), [Natural Resources Management and Policy Commons](#), [United States History Commons](#), and the [Water Resource Management Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Judd, Richard W.. "A Last Chance for Wilderness": Defining The Allagash Wilderness Waterway, 1959-1966." *Maine History* 40, 1 (2001). <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mainehistoryjournal/vol40/iss1/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine History by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.



While the natural beauty of the Allagash waterway spurred conservationists to argue for preserving it as a wilderness area, developers saw Maine's north woods as a potential site for hydroelectric power and mass-recreational activities. Scenes like this one of Round Pond inspired those who viewed the Allagash as a surviving piece of eastern wilderness.

Courtesy Maine Historical Society.

“A LAST CHANCE FOR
WILDERNESS”:
DEFINING THE ALLAGASH
WILDERNESS WATERWAY,
1959-1966

BY RICHARD W. JUDD

Seen in national perspective, the Allagash Wilderness Waterway is arguably Maine's most dramatic environmental accomplishment. The waterway resulted from an extended debate over several mutually exclusive proposals for the north Maine woods—dams to flood it; national parks to preserve it; and recreational schemes to transform it into a Coney Island of the North. In the mid-1960s, a coalition of land owners and conservationists cobbled together a preservation plan that conformed to the 1968 Federal Wild and Scenic River Act but pioneered several unique features that gave the wilderness idea a decidedly “eastern” twist. As a result, the waterway became a model not only for Maine, but for the entire eastern United States, where rivers are far less “pristine” than those in the West. Richard W. Judd, professor of history at the University of Maine, is author of Common Lands, Common People: The Origins of Conservation in Northern New England (1997) and co-editor of Maine History. He is currently working with Christopher S. Beach on a study of environmental thought and action in Maine and Oregon, 1945-1975.

ON a misty fall morning in 1960 Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas and Maine guide Willard Jalbert put their canoe into the Allagash River and set out for Rankin Rapids, site of a proposed dam on the St. John River near its confluence with the Allagash. As they passed downriver, elements of a grander scheme—banks of sweet grass, water willows, ducks, moose—emerged and disappeared in the morning mist, and when the skies brightened and the land became more distinct, Douglas's thoughts turned to the proposed dam and the huge reservoir that would annihilate the lower St. John and the Allagash and its fabled landscape. He and his party resolved to do what they could to preserve the river, knowing that their struggle would be a “chance to redeem . . . some of the values” they had lost to civilization.¹

Douglas's hope for wilderness redemption in the Allagash mirrored the pressures on remote rural places all across North America as they fell under the umbra of an expanding metropolitan culture. Maine's northwestern uplands embrace around ten million acres of forest land, flecked with 2,500 glacial lakes and "more moose, bear, and deer than people." This was the "last natural frontier" of New England, and while Douglas stressed its value as a spiritual and recreational preserve, others saw this as a virgin field for investment in hydropower, paper mills, or mass-recreational services. These contrasting visions reflected a difficult choice that Maine people would face in the coming decade. For generations, they had used these woods and waters casually for both work and recreation. "Maine natives," according to journalist Richard Saltonstall, "have taken their rural backyard . . . pretty much for granted, enjoying it any old time without necessarily looking at it as something special. Yet like all of America, Maine's rural backyard was changing. As preservers and developers converged on the Allagash, the people of Maine were forced to sort out the incongruous meanings of hydropower, wood fiber, mass recreation, and wilderness—to rethink the various meanings of New England's "last frontier."²

In the mid-1960s artificial reservoirs created by dams like the Rankin Rapids project represented a shoreline longer than that of the mainland United States, and federal agencies proposed to double this capacity.³ The "wild river" concept began with the mounting public reaction to this massive federal program in the interwar years, when statewide affiliates of the Izaak Walton League and the National Wildlife Federation challenged several Bureau of Reclamation projects. Initially, this was a debate over how best to "improve" the river: as a water-delivery system or as fish and game habitat. If both were possible, this merely confirmed the applicability of the traditional multiple-use conservation concept. A darkening view of the city in the 1960s altered the symbolism of free-flowing waters, emphasizing the natural purity and elemental human freedom absent from the standard perception of metropolitan life. The modern wilderness movement, which began in the 1920s, mobilized national conservation organizations in the 1950s and altered popular ideas about the liberating effect of wildness on the human spirit. The fight to protect wild rivers paralleled this campaign. Like western wilderness, river preservation politicized the idea of pristine nature. For urban Americans, reaching out to the countryside to affirm their sense of authenticity rivers too, embodied the spirit of unfettered nature.

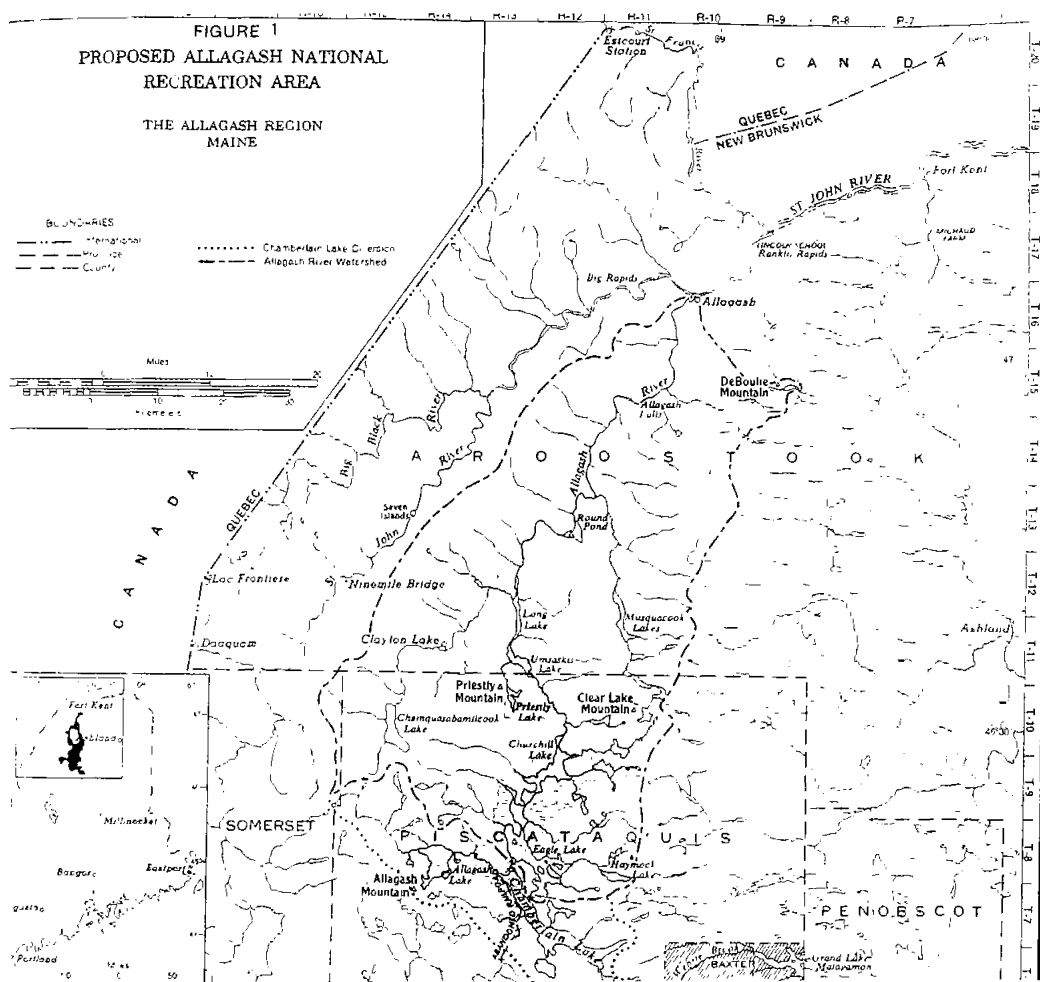
By the mid-1960s this symbolic freight precluded heavy river engi-



William O. Douglas, Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, 1939-1975, wrote of the Allagash as New England's "last chance for wilderness." Portrait of Douglas by Elek Kanarek from *The Supreme Court of the United States: Its Beginnings & Its Justices, 1790-1991* (Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution, n.d.)

neering, and as the federal dam program expanded, opposition mounted. Rivers, according to Pennsylvania congressman John Saylor, were important sources of "redemptive outdoor activity . . . closer to God's wonderland and further from the grinds and the strains of large cities." Like remote rivers all across America, the Allagash absorbed the idealistic rhetoric of urban preservationists who couched their desperate struggle against dams in spiritual terms. To them, the Allagash was by definition wild, a condition defined as "untrammelled by man" in the Wilderness Act, passed in 1964 to provide similar protections for portions of the vast roadless areas in the western federal domain.⁴

In fact, though, most of the fabled "wild" rivers of the East—the Shenandoah, Eleven Point, Ausable, Big Fork, French Broad, Manistee, Cheat, Cache, La Poudre—were far from pristine. The Allagash, for in-



In 1961 the National Park Service proposed a “national riverway” for the Allagash which would open up the area to vast numbers of hikers, canoeists, campers and boaters. From *Report on the Allagash to the National Resources Council of Maine* (NY: Conservation Foundation, 1961).

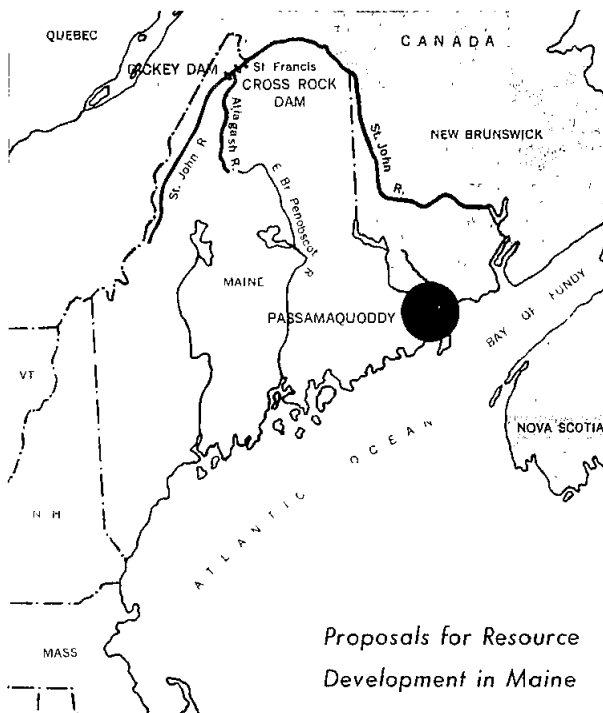
Courtesy Special Collections, Fogler Library, University of Maine.

stance, coursed through a working woods that had served the needs of loggers, hunters, and fishers for over a century. Logging activity, beginning in the 1840s, littered the terrain with woods camps, dams, abandoned equipment, and other evidence of a rich cultural history. Justice Douglas saw this in negative terms: rusty spikes menaced canoes in the old sluiceways, and “ugly remnants of the old structures” defaced the lakeshores. Nonetheless, in Douglas’s eyes this was New England’s “last chance for wilderness,” and his views helped invest the Allagash with all the deep symbolic meanings associated with urban America’s burgeoning love affair with wild nature.⁵ The ensuing fight for the Allagash helped redefine an essentially western notion of untrammled wilder-

ness for the heavily used and sharply contested woods and rivers of the East.⁶

The idea of wild river preservation crystallized in the early 1960s in a series of congressional reports that resulted in the national Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in 1968. Two years earlier, Maine had designated the Allagash a wilderness river. Events leading up to this state mandate helped pioneer a new definition of wildness adapted to conditions vastly different from those covered in the Wilderness Act. Like the Wilderness Act, the Wild and Scenic River Act established the basic principle that certain landscapes were to be protected in their “natural, wild, and primitive condition essentially unaltered by the effects of man.” But just what these words meant, in a narrow riparian context, was never really clear.⁷ Some saw the wild river as an extension of the Wilderness System; others, simply as a recreational park. The bill accommodated these various meanings by accepting existing uses on each river and then sheathing the river in a thin protected buffer of “untrammelled” land.⁸ As Bureau of Outdoor Recreation Director Edward C. Crafts explained, the system would preserve a “narrow strip along the shore so that as you travel the river, you *appear* to be in a natural environment.”⁹ Wilderness, in the 1968 act, became a carefully constructed illusion that blended metropolitan dreams of untrammelled nature, freedom, and solitude with local traditions of useful, familiar, flowing waters.

The Allagash pioneered this, and three other wilderness river ideas.



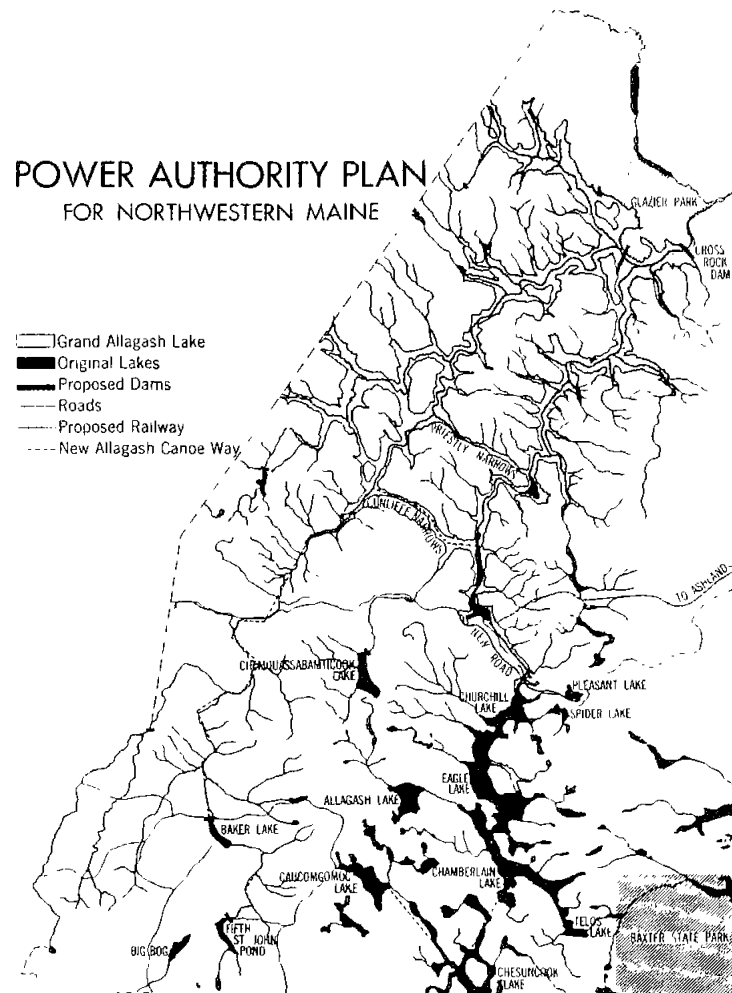
Proposals for Resource
Development in Maine

Plans for two dams—the Dickey-Lincoln and the Cross Rock—emerged to compete with the national park proposal, state management plan, and the paper industry-sponsored “working wilderness” idea. Map of the area showing location of proposed dams from *New England Business Review* (Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, February 1965). *Courtesy Special Collections, Fogler Library, University of Maine.*

First, unlike classic “wild” rivers in the West, the Allagash flowed through private commercial timberlands. As in many parts of the country, private timberlands in Maine were considered part of a recreational public domain. Legal traditions dating from the early colonial period secured this public access, and these rights were sustained by what one federal report called a “kind of cold war [policy] in which the landowners make concessions so that the public will not confiscate a much larger area under the right of eminent domain.” Still, the suggestion of de jure public control over a portion of this huge private landholding—several million forested acres held by some two dozen firms—was an untested proposition in wilderness legislation.¹⁰ Thus the traditional working rural landscape was buttressed by a strident defense of corporate property rights that was much more subdued in the western river story. Second, the Allagash debate was shaped by a preoccupation with state sovereignty that was far less evident in the West, where federal domain bordered most wild rivers. The perception of the federal government as a common enemy was a powerful catalyst for Allagash protection, a bridge between traditional forest users and the new environmental community. And third, the idea of wilderness itself required rethinking as it was applied to the East. Western wilderness involved vast natural ecosystems that had been spared almost all human impact. The East had no such “pristine” environments; nor did ecological succession fit the western wilderness ideal, where severe climate, altitude, and competition for soil moisture created open, parklike forests of relatively stable composition. A “recovering” eastern wilderness could become virtually impassable due to explosive pioneer growth, and later forest succession tended toward shade-tolerant trees that were, at least according to some, aesthetically monotonous.¹¹

Yet uninhabited eastern lands seemed wild in their own right. Eastern forests were much more resilient than those in the arid West. The woods rebounded vigorously after each wave of cutting, closing a canopy of “primeval” trees within a generation or two. Thus, despite a history of hard use, the Allagash looked pristine to travelers like Justice Douglas, and was fully capable of eliciting the fierce defense of wilderness that shaped management policy in the West. By the 1960s the Allagash had become an icon of the dawning eastern wilderness movement, combining the literary imagery of Henry Thoreau’s *Maine Woods* with the ageless mystery of the deep north woods.¹²

Federal interest in Maine’s woodlands developed during the Great Depression, when Congress, as mandated by the 1911 Weeks Law, of-



Promoters of Cross Rock dam proposed a massive re-engineering of the Allagash waterway resulting in the creation of Grand Allagash Lake as a large-scale recreation site including an “Allagash Canoe Way” to compensate for the loss of the river. Map from *Power Plus: More Power to Maine; How the Maine Power Authority Plan Serves the Cause of Recreation through Power Development* (n.p., Citizens Committee for the Maine Power Authority, c. 1964).
Courtesy Special Collections, Fogler Library, University of Maine.

ferred to buy up tax-delinquent timberlands for a national forest, as was happening throughout the East. The Maine legislature turned down the offer, a move heartily encouraged by paper company officials who understood that federal purchases would drive up the price of land and labor.¹³ Similar national forest, national park, and national wildlife refuge proposals succumbed to Maine antifederalism in the 1940s, a legislative legacy that highlights Maine’s obsession with state sovereignty. Imbued with a powerful sense of place and an exaggerated faith in Maine politics as the “last citadel of democracy,” state legislators were deeply suspicious

of federal proposals. “The people of Maine are . . . honest people,” one proclaimed, and “the waters of the State are ours.”¹⁴

Where some federal agencies offered national forests and parks, others proposed hydropower dams. In 1955 the Corps of Engineers identified Rankin Rapids on the St. John River as the best option for a dam to complement a long-deferred dream of harnessing the twenty-foot tides at Passamaquoddy Bay for hydropower development. The Rankin Rapids dam, more than a mile long, would inundate the upper St. John and Allagash rivers.¹⁵ The following year the Maine Fish and Game Association proposed, as a way of protecting the Allagash, a “wilderness” corridor running the length of the river—a “primitive national park” without the usual “highways . . . motels . . . [and] hot-dog stands.” In 1959 a coalition of fish and game clubs, garden clubs, and other statewide groups formed the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM) to challenge the prevailing political viewpoint that the woods “existed for the pulp and paper industry, and the lakes and streams for developers.” The organization adopted the 1956 Allagash plan as its primary concern.¹⁶ Well-known Maine outdoor enthusiast James Carr urged congressional leaders to designate a “primitive” park as an alternative to flooding the Allagash, but he stopped short of endorsing a National Park System unit, with its inevitable crowds and commercial development. Maine’s park, as he envisioned it, would be a fishing and canoeing sanctuary with “small country roads leading into wilderness areas” and “no feather beds.”¹⁷ The National Park Service responded with a \$2.8 million proposal for a “national riverway” with interpretive centers, camp sites, trails, and access facilities that would, they promised, draw up to a million visitors to the river annually. The federal dam and park proposals were contradictory, but one thing was clear: Americans were beginning to see Maine’s rural backyard as a symbol of the “wilderness which once covered the entire eastern part of the United States.”¹⁸

In Maine, confusion over various federal proposals forced a sustained debate about the relative benefits of wilderness and mass recreation—perhaps the first such discourse in the East. Journalist Gene Letourneau noted that only a few canoeists used the Allagash each year, “but those who do would rather have it that way.” Make it easy, he cautioned, “and you’ll destroy it.”¹⁹

Paper company officials, as it turns out, were eager to enter this dialogue. Maine’s forest landowners enjoyed some of the lowest tax rates in the nation, and these owners understood that federal activity would bring more homes and services to the north woods, increasing the tax

burden and expanding the metropolitan recreational hinterland, with unpredictable results. Moreover, the companies would face a labor market in which “people used to minimum-wage jobs in the forest will have the chance to make three times that” on a federal dam or park project. Shortly after the federal proposals surfaced, landowners proposed a “working wilderness” concept, consisting of a six-point voluntary plan to maintain the natural character of the river and the public access that had become a tradition in the north woods. In the close-quartered commercial woodlands of Maine, they insisted, wilderness and timber harvesting could exist side-by-side.²⁰

In this context, the wilderness idea served the needs of the paper industry admirably. By the 1960s, problems of campfire control, traffic on private logging roads, lost hunters, litter, and general safety had grown beyond the scope of company management and company liability.²¹ At the same time, canoeists were beginning to complain about the “Coney Island” atmosphere on the waterway. Recoiling from the Park Service’s estimate of a million canoeists per year, company foresters insisted that the Allagash remain “a sort of retreat for those willing and ready to do the more rugged job of using it.”²² Tacking wilderness onto the industry’s traditional multiple-use slogans, officials found common ground with conservationists who feared that national park management would bring more commercial clutter. In 1961 State Senator Edward Cyr of Madawaska offered a bill sanctioning the landowners’ “working wilderness” proposal, primarily, as he explained, to assert state sovereignty in response to the NPS proposals, and the legislature created a subcommittee to explore “cooperative agreements” with landowners.²³

In addition to the overlapping wilderness proposals, plans for two more dams emerged in 1963. The first, a modified version of the Rankin Rapids proposal, involved a dam on the St. John River above the Allagash. The Dickey-Lincoln dam, as it was later called, would inundate most of the upper St. John, but it would leave the Allagash intact. The second, a state rather than federal proposal, called for a mile-long dam at Cross Rock on the St. John below the Allagash. This proposal offered a better cost-benefit ratio and revenues directed to state, rather than federal coffers, but it threatened to turn the entire Allagash, as one environmentalist put it, into a “vast deadwater reservoir with stinking mud flats and barren gravel bars.”²⁴

The 1963 legislature faced a complicated decision involving three dam projects, a national park, a state management plan, and the private “working wilderness” concept. When the Allagash bill finally reached the

floor of the legislature, it had the unmistakable impress of industry lobbying, trading broad tax concessions for a vague “wilderness” easement along the river.²⁵ And to bring Cross Rock dam supporters on board, legislators carefully defined wilderness so as *not* to prohibit “the cutting and harvesting of timber . . . [the removal] of minerals . . . [or] the exercise of those rights commonly known as flowage”—that is, the building of dams.²⁶ Some worried, however, that the ridiculously weak bill would fail in its primary purpose: “What you are doing by passing a bill such as this is . . . just asking the federal government to come in. They are not stupid down there.” And indeed they weren’t: Interior Secretary Stewart Udall promptly informed Governor John Reed that if the bill passed, Maine could expect federal intervention.²⁷

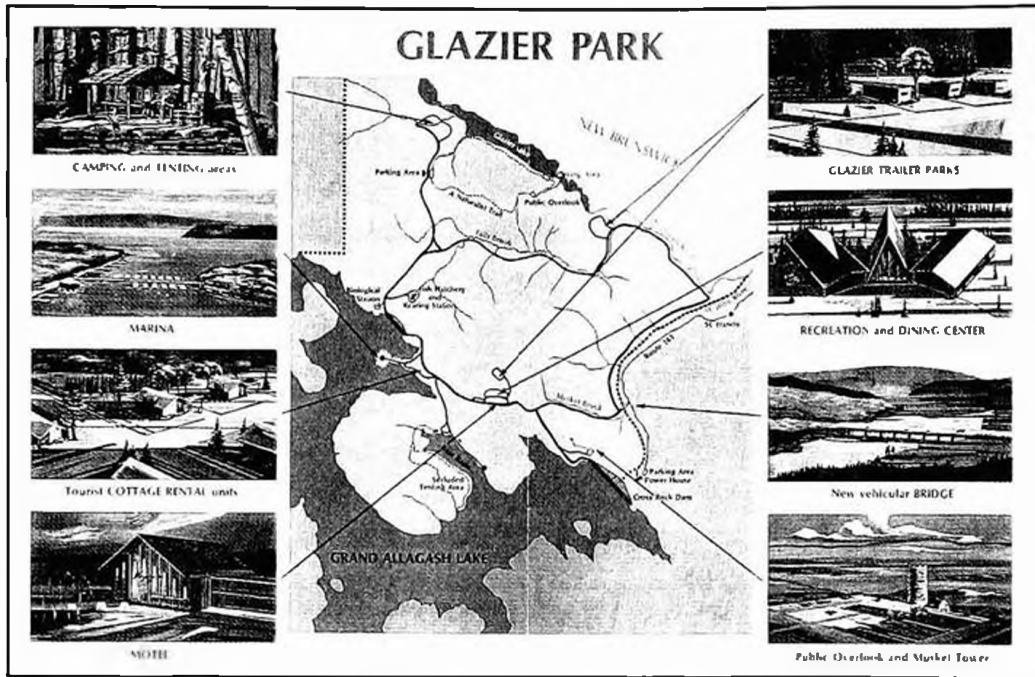
By this time, the Allagash had garnered national attention. On one hand, the Maine woods was the American forest industry’s finest example of privately owned multiple-use forests, and maintaining its status was an important matter of principle. On the other hand, the Allagash had gained the allegiance of wilderness lovers everywhere. “To hundreds of thousands of people in all parts of the country,” NRCM’s Robert Patterson warned, “it only needs to be said that the Allagash is gone, and they will believe that Maine canoeing has gone with it.” Editorials favoring wilderness designation appeared in the *New York Times*, *Reader’s Digest*, and in sporting magazines across the country.²⁸ And finally, to boost interest in the Cross Rock dam, its promoters concocted a new mass-recreational vision of Maine’s north woods destined to appeal to campers and boaters from across the nation. The dam would create a new Grand Allagash Lake, lying over most of the Allagash and St. John drainages, and a new 20,000 acre recreation park north of the dam site would draw hundreds of thousands of vacationers to the Maine woods. The complex—virtually an entire township—would offer marinas, viewing towers, boat-launches, campsites, nature trails, trailer parks, cottages, lodges, and fish-propagation facilities. To replace the drowned Allagash, Cross Rock advocates proposed damming the headwater ponds on the St. John to provide all-summer flowage for a new “Allagash Canoe Way” running from the ponds to Grand Allagash Lake.²⁹ Maine people, in short, confronted a series of choices that cut to the heart of the wilderness dilemma: to foster mass recreation by engineering a watershed on a scale never before attempted in New England, or to maintain thousands of acres of forest and stream in their natural state, available to a few intrepid outdoor enthusiasts during a short, three-month canoeing season.

The choices fractured Maine politics along several fault lines. Dismissing the wilderness idea as a Boy Scout fantasy, northern Maine representatives pushed for the Cross Rock dam. Southern Maine supported the federal park proposal—having lost an important recreational destination for Maine in the 1947 Bar Harbor fire—and landowners and conservationists together defended Maine’s sovereignty against Washington schemes for a “honky-tonk, candy wrapper paradise up there in the Allagash.”³⁰ Perplexed by these mutually exclusive demands, the legislature again referred the river question to a study group charged with collecting public opinion.³¹

In spring 1965 Maine people moved toward consensus on the Allagash. When Congress authorized funding for the less-destructive Dickey-Lincoln project, dam supporters dropped the Cross Rock proposal. In January 1966 the legislature endorsed a plan calling for a bond issue to purchase, with matching federal funds, a wilderness corridor along the waterway, and in November voters decisively endorsed the bond issue, making Maine the first state in the nation to specify rules protecting the natural character of a river.³² After a lengthy delay to survey and appraise the lands and negotiate purchases, the Wilderness Waterway was dedicated in July 1970. Ironically, the ceremony took place on the site of a newly rebuilt dam near the head of the Allagash. The Churchill (or Huron) Lake dam, designed to provide even all-summer flowage for canoeists on the river, was reportedly the first ever built purely for recreational purposes.³³

The subsequent story of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway is not an altogether happy one. The state spent far less on management than the National Park Service plan called for, and its wilderness regulations were far from stringent. National publicity boosted canoe traffic from a few hundred yearly to around 10,000, and Maine’s minimalist approach to wilderness protection provided neither the means to discourage mass recreation, nor the facilities to accommodate it.³⁴ In 1977 the *Kennebec Journal* published an article titled “Allagash: An Outdoor Slum,” pointing to the overcrowded and littered campsites and the encroaching logging activity. Maine guide Sam Jalbert complained that the river had been “wilder” before it was designated a wilderness.³⁵

Further solutions were not at all clear, in part because the idea of wilderness had been so inclusive from the beginning. Leonard Pelletier, another guide, recalled the time when his canoe became immobilized on a rock in the river. He walked back to the Churchill dam, asked the warden to “turn off the water,” and returned to a canoe lying in a half-dry



Along with hydroelectric power and the “Allagash Canoe Way,” Cross Rock dam supporters envisioned that the project would support a 20,000 acre recreational park complete with camping areas, marinas, cottages, motels, and trailer parks. Plan and designs for the park from *Power Plus . . . How the Maine Power Authority Plan Serves the Cause of Recreation through Power Development, c. 1964*.
Courtesy Special Collections, Fogler Library, University of Maine.

riverbed. He righted the craft, and when the water level rose, he and his clients were “once again on our way down the Allagash Wilderness Waterway.”³⁶ Responding to public complaints, the Allagash Authority restricted access into the corridor from the expanding network of woods roads and mapped out line-of-sight “visual zones” with stricter standards for timber harvesting. Yet at the same time state officials proposed building a shed over two steam locomotives abandoned in the woods in the 1930s to preserve this “sharp reminder that the waterway is not the pristine wilderness that people think it is.”³⁷ Given this ambiguous mandate, officials never completely resolved the conflicting demands of commercial, recreational, and wilderness use.³⁸

Still, the halting effort to preserve the Allagash left an important legacy. Nationally, it helped refine the wilderness idea for a more complex world in which the boundaries between nature and civilization were indistinct. The controversy came during a sustained debate over extending wilderness designation to portions of the eastern national forests, and when the Eastern Wilderness Act passed in 1974, it acknowl-

edged “recovering wilderness” conditions inclusively, much as the Allagash waterway did.³⁹

In Maine, the legacy of the Allagash became evident when the upper Penobscot River came under federal review for wild and scenic status.⁴⁰ A federal corridor along the West Branch, linked to the Allagash Waterway and Baxter State Park, would have created the largest block of protected wild country in the East.⁴¹ Yet state officials balked at the concept of “another Allagash-type river system,” and many environmentalists were inclined to agree, arguing that a federal “green strip . . . across [the] map of northern Maine” would bring “too much publicity”; the West Branch, like the Allagash, would become a “bumper to bumper” river. Activist Burton Packwood spoke forcefully against the federal plan, and thousands of Maine citizens signed petitions expressing a similar sentiment. Maine was torn by the implications of creating another national wilderness icon in its rural backyard.⁴²

Given this ambivalence, Maine’s largest environmental organizations delayed taking a stand on the Penobscot. But in 1977, immediately after the federal proposal was set aside, Great Northern Paper Company announced plans for a dam at Big Ambejackmockamus Falls that would flood the wildest section of the river. Packwood fumed that Great Northern had “used” conservationists to help defeat the federal proposal, “so that [the company] . . . could destroy the river itself.” By this time dam proposals were afoot for the Kennebec, Aroostook, Fish, Carrabasset, Kennebago, Sheepscot, Rapid, and Sandy rivers as well.⁴³ But the “Big A” controversy, which raged for eight years before the dam permit was finally turned down in 1985, highlighted more than any other issue the risk of protecting rivers without benefit of Congressional wilderness designation.

In 1983, in the midst of the Big A controversy, the legislature passed a Maine Rivers bill that mandated scenic protection for over a thousand miles of river throughout the state.⁴⁴ Following the minimalist wilderness approach devised for the Allagash, the state Land-Use Regulation Commission would apply protective river zoning to the upper watersheds, and downriver towns would pass shoreland ordinances to protect the lower, more urbanized sections. Visually, the rivers would be buffered from logging and residential development, and again the strategy avoided federal designation—but at some risk: without federal protection, as Conservation Commissioner Richard Barringer pointed out, the rivers could be dammed under the Federal Power Act. “Everything we’re doing here today could be superseded by federal action.”⁴⁵

While the Maine Rivers Act offered a vague blueprint for preservation, in truth Maine opted to protect its remote rivers through a curious policy of wilderness management by obscurity. To keep mass recreation at bay, Maine counted on distance from the metropolis and logistical disadvantage, black flies and mosquitoes, and the careful avoidance of federal wilderness designations that would draw national attention to Maine's priceless wilderness rivers. Hidden away behind a confusion of poorly maintained state highways and dusty logging roads, access to Maine's real wilderness rivers was safely sequestered from the burgeoning recreational hinterland.

The solution is not ideal, but it illustrates the possibility—and the necessity, perhaps—of flexible approaches to wilderness that reconcile urban dreams of untrammelled nature and local perspectives on a much more familiar “working” woods. That wilderness waterway management continues to generate statewide controversy shows the limits of this particular reconciliation, but perhaps the tradition of public scrapping about the meaning of wilderness is itself a healthy one. It suggests that the definition of nature has not become static, and it stimulates an ongoing search for consensus about the uses of wild rivers. Drawn together to protect the beauty of this particular river, the various claimants to the mantle of wilderness may find it easier to forge alliances when other elements of their common natural heritage are threatened.

NOTES

1. William O. Douglas, “Allagash,” in *My Wilderness: East to Katahdin* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1961), 260, 262-63; Douglas, “Why We Must Save the Allagash,” *Field and Stream* 68 (July 1963): 25.

2. “New England’s Last Frontier,” *New England Business Review* (Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, September 1964), 4-6. See Mike Frome, “Questioning the Future of Woods in a Rapidly Changing Land,” *American Forests* 73 (May 1967): 5; Richard Saltonstall, Jr., *Maine Pilgrimage: The Search for an American Way of Life* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974), 255; Maine Legislature, *Legislative Record* (June 5, 1963), 2615; *Portland Sunday Telegram*, February 24, 1963; *Portland Press Herald*, April 30, 1965.

3. Luther J. Carter, “Dams and Wild Rivers: Looking Beyond the Pork Barrel,” *Science* 158 (October 13, 1967): 233-36; Donald J. Pisani, “Federal Water Policy and the Rural West,” in *The Rural West Since World War II*, edited by R. Douglas

Hurt (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1998), 119, 122-123; Mark W.T. Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness: Echo Park and the American Conservation Movement* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994), 25, 26.

4. John P. Saylor, "Once Along a Scenic River," *Parks and Recreation* 3 (August 1968): 58. See Kenneth Cmiel, "The Politics of Civility," in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, edited by David Farber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 270-71; Carter, "Dams and Wild Rivers"; Pisani, "Federal Water Policy and the Rural West," 119, 122-123; Harvey, *Symbol of Wilderness*, 25, 26, 51, 59; Michael McCloskey, "Wilderness Movement at the Crossroads, 1945-1970," *Pacific Historical Review* 41 (1972): 347; Richard Starnes, "Shall Our Wild Rivers be Eternally Dammed?" *Field and Stream* 69 (March 1965): 103; Paul Mason Tilden, "Washington Newsletter," *Natural History* 74 (August 1965):62.

5. Douglas, "Why We Must Save the Allagash," 28.

6 For an overview of the Allagash River and its environmental context and history, see Richard W. Judd, *Aroostook: A Century of Logging in Northern Maine* (Orono: University of Maine Press, 1989); Lew Dietz, *The Allagash* (Thorndike, Maine: North Country Press, 1968); Dean Bennett, *Allagash: Maine's Wild and Scenic River* (Camden, ME: Down East Books, 1994); Cheryl Seal, *Thoreau's Maine Woods: Yesterday and Today* (Emmaus, Pennsylvania: Yankee Books, 1992).

7. Tilden, "Washington Newsletter." See Starnes, "Shall Our Wild Rivers be Eternally Dammed?"; Charles H. Callison, "House Committee Must Choose Between Four Wild River Bills," *Audubon* 69 (November-December 1967): 70-71; Callison, "Saylor Bill Offers Real Protection," *Audubon* 68 (July-August 1966): 226-27; Callison, "Wild Rivers Bill Lacks Teeth," *Audubon* 67 (March 1966): 92. Frank Church, "Rivers, Recreation, and You," *Field and Stream* 71 (July 1966): 55; G. Douglas Hofe, Jr. in "Wild Rivers," *Parks and Recreation* 5 (February 1970): 23; Wild Rivers System—St. Croix Waterway: Hearings Before the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, 89 Cong., 1 ses., S. 1446, S.897 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1965), 24-25, 72; Orville Freeman in *ibid.*, 73. *National Scenic Rivers System: Hearings before the Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, House of Representatives*, 19th Cong., 2d sess., H.R. 8416, H.R. 90 (U.S. GPO, 1968), 20.

8. *Wild Rivers System*, 178, 205, 255, 335, 339-40.

9. Edward C. Crafts in *National Scenic Rivers System*, 152, 156-57.

10. John Shanklin, *Multiple Use of Land and Water Areas: Report to the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission*, ORRRC Study Report no. 17 (Washington, D.C., 1962), 28; Frome, "Questioning the Future of Woods," 5.

11. J.W. Penfold, "Wilderness East—a Dilemma," *American Forests* 78 (April 1972): 24; Fred C. Simmons, "Wilderness East?—No," *American Forests* 78 (July 1972): 3, 44-45.

12. Maine State Legislature *Legislative Record* (Augusta 1963), 2662. See *ibid.*, 2200, 2615; *ibid* (1959), 1237; Saltonstall, *Maine Pilgrimage*, 225; *Portland Sunday Telegram*, February 24, 1963; *Portland Press Herald*, April 30, 1965; E.

Melanie DuPuis, "In the Name of Nature: Ecology, Marginality, and Rural Land Use Planning During the New Deal," in *Creating the Countryside: The Politics of Rural and Environmental Discourse*, edited by DuPuis and Peter Vandergeest (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 100-01; Edwin H. Ketchledge, "Born-Again Forest," *Natural History* (May 1992): 34-39; Henry Clepper, "Waters of the Allagash," *American Forests* 70 (November 1964): 46.

13. According to *Bangor Daily News*, June 30, 1961, the idea of an Allagash national park was first broached in the *New York Times* as early as 1905. See Maine State Legislature, *Legislative Record* (Augusta 1933), 167, 20910; *ibid.* (1935), 845-46, 1023-25, 1032.

14. Maine State Legislature, *Legislative Record* (Augusta 1965), 2929. See *ibid.* (1935), 1023, 1027; *ibid.* (1951), 471; *The Enterprise* (Lisbon Falls), August 20, 1949; "Report on the Allagash," *Appalachia* 34 (June 1962): 153; James B. Craig, "The Allagash: A Pattern Emerges," *American Forests* (August 1966): 27; Margaret Hammel, "Maine Town Meeting," *Down East Magazine* 1 (April 1955): 15-17.

15. *Kennebec Journal*, May 2, 1961; January 7, 19, 1955; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, January 17, 1955, August 5, 1959; *Bangor Daily News*, August 26, 1958; *Portland Press Herald*, April 5, 1963; *Maine Times*, June 21, 1974.

16. *Lewiston Daily Sun*, December 30, 1959; *Kennebec Journal*, June 28, 1961; *Maine Sunday Telegram*, June 10, 1984; Clarence Roth in "Allagash Study Committee—1965-1966 Committee Minutes and Public Hearing Notes, August 17, 1965 to December 1, 1965," Legislative Committees, box 1, Maine State Archives (hereafter MSA), Augusta, Maine.

17. James Carr in *Lewiston Daily Sun*, December 30, 1959.

18. *Maine Sunday Telegram*, June 10, 1984; *Kennebec Journal*, June 28, 1961; U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, *Proposed Allagash National Recreation Area* (n.d., 1961); *Lewiston Daily Sun*, April 28, 1959; Clepper, "Waters of the Allagash," 49. See Arch Soutar, "Should the Allagash be Turned Into National Recreation Park Area?," *Lewiston Evening Journal Magazine*, May 5, 1962.

19. Gene L. Letourneau in *Portland Sunday Telegram*, May 15, 1960. See Bud Leavitt in *Bangor Daily News*, April 21, 1960; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, May 1, 1959; Soutar, "Should the Allagash be Turned Into National Recreation Park Area?"

20. Clepper, "Waters of the Allagash." See James B. Craig, "Maine Asks for a Chance on the Allagash," *American Forests* 69 (October 1963): 10; "New England's Last Frontier," 3; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, September 6, 1962; *Portland Telegram* July 9, 1961; *Kennebec Journal*, July 29, 1961; *Bangor Daily News*, June 26, 1960; John Shanklin, *Multiple Use of Land and Water Areas: Report to the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission*, ORRRC Study Report no. 17 (Washington, D.C., 1962), 7.

21. *Portland Evening Express*, Oct 26, 1965. See *Lewiston Daily Sun*, August 3, 1964; *Bangor Daily News*, January 12, 1962; July 30, 1965; *Kennebec Journal*, February 20, 1962; Brad Wellman and Ben Pike in "Allagash Study Commit-

tee—1965-1966 Committee Minutes and Public Hearing Notes, August 17, 1965 to December 1, 1965,” Legislative Committees, box 1, MSA.

22. *Portland Press Herald*, July 10, 1962. See *ibid.*, February 12, 1963; Craig, “The Allagash: A Pattern Emerges”; Clepper, “Waters of the Allagash”; Allagash River Authority, *Allagash Wilderness Waterway: A Proposal for State Control* (Augusta 1965): 3.

23. Maine State Legislature, *Legislative Record* (Augusta 1965), 2929; (1961), 3052-53.

24. *Bangor Daily News*, August 26, 1958; *Lewiston Daily Sun*, December 30, 1959; *Houlton Pioneer Times*, January 17, 1963; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, April 30, 1965; *Kennebec Journal*, January 9, April 4, 1963; *Portland Sunday Telegram*, December 15, 1963, February 28, 1965; *Portland Press Herald*, January 4, February 12, March 26, April 5, May 16, December 15, 1963, January 6, March 21, 1965; “New Threat to the Allagash,” *Audubon* 65 (July-August 1963): 211; Maine State Legislature *Legislative Record* (Augusta 1963), 2153, 2620.

25. Maine State Legislature, *Legislative Record* (Augusta 1963), 2155-56, 2614, 2610-21, 2986, 3061, 3155; *Kennebec Journal*, March 21, 1963.

26. Maine State Legislature, *Legislative Record* (Augusta 1963), 2155. See *Bangor Daily News*, May 23, 1963; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, May 24, 1963.

27. Maine State Legislature, *Legislative Record* (Augusta 1963), 3063. See *Lewiston Evening Journal*, June 7, 1963; Craig, “The Allagash: A Pattern Emerges.”

28. Maine State Legislature, *Legislative Record* (Augusta 1965), 2929, (1966), 2149, (Special Session, 1966), 227; Robert Patterson in *Kennebec Journal*, June 12, 1963. See *Portland Press Herald*, April 29, 1965; *Kennebec Journal*, June 15, 1963; Craig, “Maine Asks for a Chance,” 10.

29. *Portland Press Herald*, December 15, 1963; December 31, 1964; *Portland Sunday Telegram*, December 15, 1963; February 28, 1965; *Houlton Pioneer Times*, January 17, 1963; January 28, 1965; *Maine Times*, June 21, 1974; *Bangor Daily News*, February 5, 1965.

30. Maine State Legislature, *Legislative Record*, (Augusta 1963), 2150-51, (1965), 2982-85, 3054; *Kennebec Journal*, March 21, 1963, February 10, 1965; *Portland Press Herald*, February 12, April 1, 1965, 1965; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, April 30, 1965; *Sanford Tribune*, January 28, 1965; *Portland Sunday Telegram*, February 28, 1965; April 25, 1965; *Portland Evening Express*, March 29, 1960; *Boston Globe*, April 30, 1965.

31. *Kennebec Journal*, March 22, 1963; April 4, 26, 1963; *Houlton Pioneer Times*, April 18, 1963; *Portland Press Herald*, August 19, 20, 1963, June 4, 5, 1965; *Lewiston Evening Journal*, August 19, 1963, June 2, July 13, 1965; Robert Haskell, “Allagash Study Committee—1965-1966 Committee Minutes and Public Hearing Notes, August 17, 1965 to December 1, 1965,” Legislative Committees, box 1, MSA; William A. King, “Report on the Allagash,” *Appalachia* 30 (December 1963): 802-3; Craig, “The Allagash—A Pattern Emerges”; Maine State Legislature, *Legislative Record* (Augusta 1965), 2986; Maine State Legislature, *Findings*

and Recommendations for Preservation of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway (Augusta, January 1966), 4.

32. *Portland Press Herald*, November 27, 1965; January 17, 27, 1966; *Kennebec Journal*, January 14, 20, 1966; Maine State Legislature, *Legislative Record* (Augusta 1965), 2990; Allagash River Authority, *Proposal for State Control*; "Allagash Victory Appears Near," *Audubon* 68 (July-August 1966): 213.

33. *Bangor Daily News*, May 15, 1968. See *Maine Sunday Telegram*, August 25, 1968; *Maine Sunday Telegram* July 12, 19, 1970; *Kennebec Journal*, July 20, 1970; *Portland Press Herald*, July 11, 1970; Lawrence Stuart, "The Allagash: Three Years Later," *Parks and Recreation* 5 (April 1970): 22-24.

34. Maine State Legislature, *Legislative Record* (Augusta 1966), 327-28; *New York Times*, April 12, 1970; *Waterville Sentinel*, December 29, 1973; *Maine Sunday Telegram*, June 30, 1974; Aime Gauvin, "Rumble Rattle Clank Roar: You're on the Allagash Nonwilderness Waterway," *Audubon* 74 (July 1972): 46, 48; Saltonstall, *Maine Pilgrimage*, 162.

35. "Allagash—An Outdoor Slum?" *Kennebec Journal*, May 19, 1977; Sam Jalbert in Gauvin, "Rumble Rattle Clank Clatter Roar," 51. See Director Herb Hartman in John W. Forssen, "More Protection for the Allagash," *Maine Fish and Wildlife* (Fall 1985); *Portland Press Herald*, February 10, 1975.

36. Francois Leydet, "Autumn Flames Along the Allagash," *National Geographic Magazine* 145 (February 1974): 181.

37. Herb Hartman in Forssen, "More Protection for the Allagash"; Maine State Legislature, *Allagash Wilderness Waterway: Timber Harvesting and Sensitive Areas* (Augusta 1984): i, ii; *Bangor Daily News*, July 1, 1983, January 20, 1984, November 2-3, 1996; *Portland Press Herald*, March 29, 1973; *Waterville Sentinel*, December 29, 1973; *Maine Times*, September 13, 1974, June 30, 1978. Tim Caverly, personal correspondence to the author, 1 January 2001.

38. Herb Hartman in Forssen, "More Protection for the Allagash," *Allagash Wilderness Waterway: Timber Harvesting and Sensitive Areas*, i.

39. D.W. Scott, "Is Purity a Virtue?" *Living Wilderness* 36 (Winter 1972): 2; Dennis M. Roth, *The Wilderness Movement and the National Forests* (College Station, Texas: Intaglio Press, 1988), 39-45.

40. *Maine Times*, September 13, 1974, August 8, 1975; *Bangor Daily News*, May 24, 1977.

41. *Maine Sunday Telegram*, July 7, 1974; *Portland Press Herald*, December 17, 1976.

42. *Maine Times*, August 4, 1978. See *ibid.*, September 13, 1974; *Maine Sunday Telegram*, December 3, 1978; *Portland Press Herald*, December 17, 1976; *Waterville Sentinel*, November 21, 24, 1978; *Lewiston Sun*, September 10, 1974; Burton Packwood (President, Society to Protect the Penobscot and Kennebec Rivers, Inc.) in *Maine Times*, March 25, 1977. See *ibid.*, June 30, 1978; Herb Hartman in *Maine Times*, June 30, 1978. See *ibid.*, September 13, 1974.

43. *Maine Times*, March 25, 1977, June 30, 1978; *Maine Sunday Telegram*, December 6, 1973, August 3, 1975; Burton Packwood in *Maine Times*, March 25,

1977. See *ibid.*, August 4, 1978; *Bangor Daily News*, November 18-19, 1978; *Waterville Morning Sentinel*, January 17, 1982.

44. *Bangor Daily News*, February 3, 1982; *Waterville Sentinel*, April 7, 1983; *Portland Press Herald*, March 12, 1983; *Kennebec Journal*, June 18, 1984; *Maine Sunday Telegram*, December 26, 1982; May 29, 1983.

45. *Kennebec Journal*, March 28, 1986; *Portland Press Herald*, October 22, 1991; *Bangor Daily News*, July 12, 1984.