

## CONCEPTUAL MANAGEMENT PLAN #12

### SWIMMING HOLE (WESSERUNSETT STREAM)

**LOCATION:** Skowhegan (Town Map 5 Lot 52), easterly of Malbons Mills Rd., easterly of Skowhegan Sheet Metal Shop, Inc. Access via Prescott Lane. About 1.6 miles upstream by water from Kennebec River. Parcel #12 on SWT map.

**SIZE:** 8.50 acres.

**LAND COVER:** Wooded + Palustrine Wetland.

#### FEATURES/PUBLIC VALUES:

1. Frontage on Wesserunsett Stream, a major tributary of the Kennebec River.
2. Habitat for wood turtle (populations declining).
3. Hardwood seepage forest.
4. Partly within Skowhegan Shoreland Zoning Resource Protection District.
5. Important as wildlife habitat and for undeveloped shoreline.
6. Fishing.
7. Hunting.
8. On ancient Native American canoe route.
9. IF&W Beginning with Habitat Maps indicate parcel contains Riparian Buffer, High Value Plant and Animal Habitats, Undeveloped Habitat Blocks, and Large Areas of Interior Forest.

#### FOCUS SPECIES:

1. Wood turtle.

#### CONCERNS:

1. Threatened by MDOT proposed bridge/bypass alignment E3E(3).
2. Nearby timber harvesting threatens wood turtle habitat.
3. Wood turtle populations reportedly can be adversely impacted even by recreational trails just used for non-motorized purposes.
4. Lot reportedly has been used inappropriately by some people.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. As recommended by Andy Cutko, MNAP biologist, keep in undisturbed state and consider acquiring more land nearby.
2. Contact nearby landowners regarding possible property acquisitions or conservation easements.
3. As recommended in the scientific literature regarding wood turtles, do not encourage public access as such use can contribute to the further decline of wood turtle populations.
4. Do not allow any significant disturbance of ground without prior review and approval by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission or other accepted archaeological (prehistoric/historic) authority.
5. Work with MNAP, IF&W, Maine Audubon and MHPC regarding management.

6. Protect the hardwood seepage forest, which is shown on IF&W Beginning with Habitat Primary Map 2, High Value Plant & Animal Habitats, Town of Skowhegan, as Feature No. 2.
7. Control use by motorized vehicles; allow only snowmobiles.
8. Oppose any MDOT project alignment that would impact this parcel as its impacts on the wood turtle population and hardwood seepage forest could not be lessened by mitigation.