

Thurston Park Committee Findings and Recommendations

Submitted to China Selectboard, December 1, 2010



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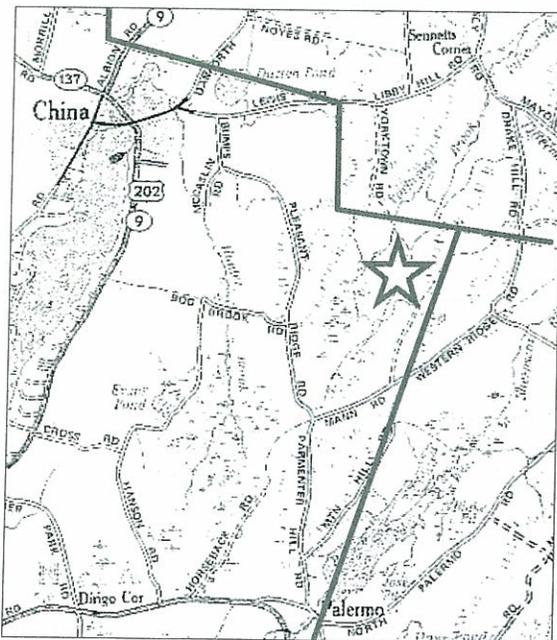
Thurston Park Committee Members:

Al Althenn, Joann Austin, Irene Belanger, Tess Carter, Peter Foote, Phillip deMaynadier, Paul MacDonald, Bill Seekins (Chair), Judy Stone

Introduction and Background

Location and accessibility

Thurston Park is a 387 acre parcel of land located in the northeastern corner of the Town of China (star in figure below). On the east, the park borders on Palermo and on the north it borders on Albion. The Yorktown Road runs from north to south through the park. The park can be accessed from the north by taking the Yorktown Road off from the Dutton Road and from the south by taking the Yorktown Road off from the Mann Road. Neither end of the road is passable by automobile, although 4 wheel drive pickups, snowmobiles and ATVs do travel into the park. The park is mostly wooded but has several open areas marking the location of the homes of some of the previous owners or the remains of logging yards. Much of the park has had logging activity in the last 20 years and is in the early successional growth stage. Some stands of older trees may be found in a few scattered locations.



In addition to the Yorktown Road, which acts as the backbone, there are several side roads, including a loop that encompasses nearly the entire eastern side of the park. The eastern side is dominated by a steep ridge that extends almost the length of the park (north to south). The western side is very different. It consists of a series of low ridges running northeast to southwest with low wetlands in between. One of these ridges is an excellent example of a gravel deposit known as a glacial esker. Old logging roads are found following the tops of these ridges and provide easy access to this part of the park for hikers, although they are all dead end trails due to the difficulty of crossing the intervening wetlands. Appendix 1 shows a topographic map of the park.

History

The Town of China acquired the various properties that now make up the park over a span of about 115 years beginning in 1879. Three of the parcels reverted to the town as a result of non-payment of taxes (June 1879, February 1922 & March 1932). One parcel was donated to the town by Everett Thurston in 1958 to be a recreation area for the citizens of China. In 1992, the citizens of the town

bought a square parcel along the Albion town line that completed the park as it is today.

The area was inhabited from the early 1800s until sometime in the 1950s. In addition to the Thurstons, there were families of Yorks, Pullens, Gilleys, Chamberlains, Dolleys and Wiggins who lived there at one time. One family of note who lived in the area was the Talbots. They were one of several black families who lived in this area of China in the 1800s. One of their descendants became the first black to be elected to the Maine legislature. In addition to the farms, there were two mills in the area at different times. The Talbots had a shingle mill on the south end near the old dam that remains to this day. Later, one of the Wiggins had a sawmill on the north end east of the Yorktown Road. One of the Pullens also built an impressive stone dam on the Yorktown Brook on the north end and cut ice from the pond in the 1850s. One of the last year-round residents was Alfred Thurston who lived in his one story clapboard house for many years until it burned in 1954. The Everett & John Thurston house that was still barely standing in the 1970s may have been occupied later than 1954, but records are not clear about this. The last standing building within the park boundaries is a hunting camp (built in the 1950s) that belongs to the Stearns family of Vassalboro.

The Thurston Park Committee

In January of 2010, the China Board of Selectmen appointed a Thurston Park Committee to evaluate the park's resources and to develop a park assessment and landuse plan to present to the Board. A detailed forest management plan focused on silviculture had already been developed for the park in 2007 and that served as the starting point for the Committee's assessment. In addition, soils and topographic maps were consulted to get a better sense of the suitability of specific areas of the park for different uses. Multiple visits have been made to the park by committee members to locate and record features with GPS units and photographs.

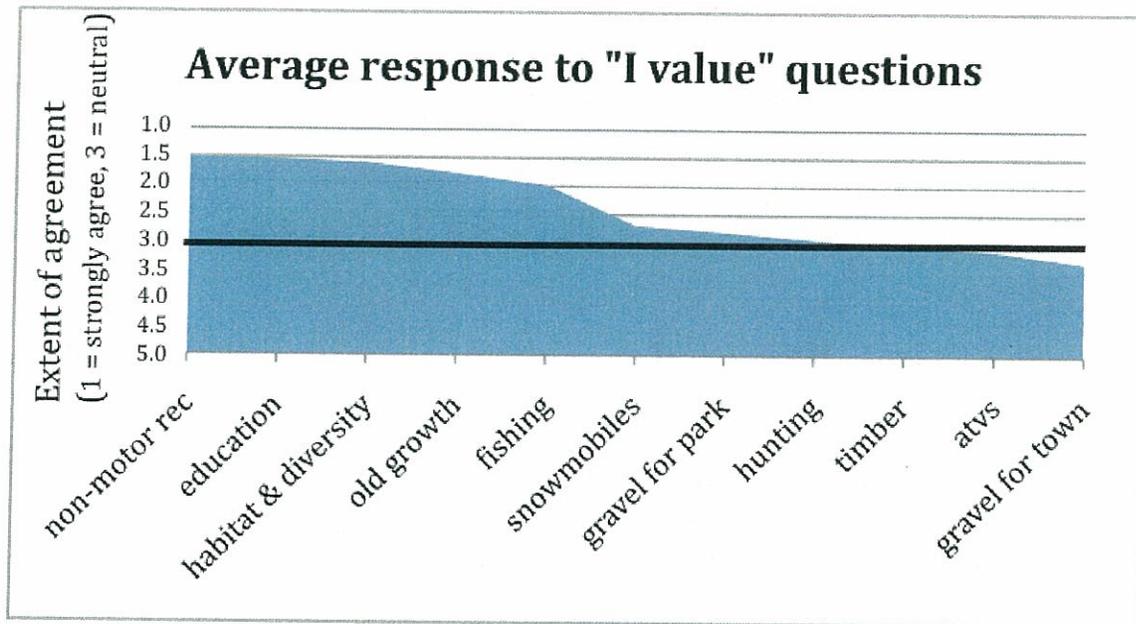
Results of Public Opinion Survey

The Thurston Park Committee devised a public opinion survey to learn about townspeople's views on the park (Appendix 2). The survey was included in the Town Line that was sent to every household in China at the end of May. In early June, Joann Austin met residents at the Town Office and asked them if they would complete a survey. Surveys were to be dropped off at the Town Office or at the Transfer Station by June 20, 2010. Names were requested, to ensure that only China residents completed the survey, and that multiple surveys were not completed by any one individual. Respondents were also asked whether or not they had visited the park. 312 surveys were returned; 101 of these were from those who had visited the park.

The survey asked residents to indicate how much they valued various services that the park can provide, including motorized and non-motorized recreation, hunting, fishing, biological diversity and wildlife, old growth forest, timber, sand/gravel, and outdoor education. The survey also asked two questions directly pertaining to management and access. For both value and management questions a score of 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree, and 5 = strongly disagree. Averaging across respondents, the lower the value, the more people agree with the statement.

Respondents' values for the park were very similar, whether they had visited the park or not, so all responses were combined for summary in the graph below (Figure 1). The horizontal line depicts the median, or neutral, rating. Respondents indicated that the services they most highly valued from the park were non-motorized recreation, outdoor education, biological diversity, the potential for mature forest, and the potential for fishing. The scores for snowmobiling and gravel extraction for use in the park were notably lower than the previous five, but on average, respondents also valued these uses. Hunting and timber use both received approximately median scores (2.8-3.1), indicating approximately half of the respondents supported these activities and half did not. Finally, ATV recreation and gravel

extraction for use by the town received below median scores, indicating that most respondents placed a lower value on these items than on other services.



Regarding park management, a majority of respondents agreed that it is a good idea to designate areas for specific activities to avoid incompatible land uses. Most respondents also agreed that improved access to the park would make it more likely that they would visit; this was true especially among those who had never visited the park. See Appendices 3-5 for more detailed survey results.

A Multiple Use Management Proposal

Background

The forest management plan prepared by Vit Vitale in 2007 provides an excellent baseline of the forest stand conditions (composition, age, condition) and silvicultural options at Thurston Park. While the forest management plan should serve as a framework for informing future land management decisions, it is not in itself a management plan for the park since it does not provide a comprehensive review and assessment of other legitimate land uses including gravel extraction, outdoor recreation, wildlife habitat restoration, wetland protection, historic feature preservation, and landscape aesthetics.

The forest management plan divides the property into 13 forest stands based on soils, forest type, and stocking level, and it provides management recommendations for each forest stand designed to permit long-term sustained yield of forest products (Figure 2). Of the 384-acre property, 330 acres (86%) are currently forested. Recent harvesting operations were conducted in 1992-1994 and again in 1997-1998, leaving an average basal area of 72 square feet per acre and an average volume of 1477 board feet of sawtimber per acre (Vitale, p. 44). The park's volume of standing timber is low, about half of the 2003 state average of 2880 board feet per acre (USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Forest Inventory and Analysis, <http://www.fs.fed.us/ne/fia/states/index.html>), reflecting a relatively intensive logging history. Given the low stocking of the park, the forest management plan recommends that most stands enter a growth period until at least 2012, with pre-commercial thinning and single tree selection harvest an appropriate option for some stands (Vitale, pp. 42-43).

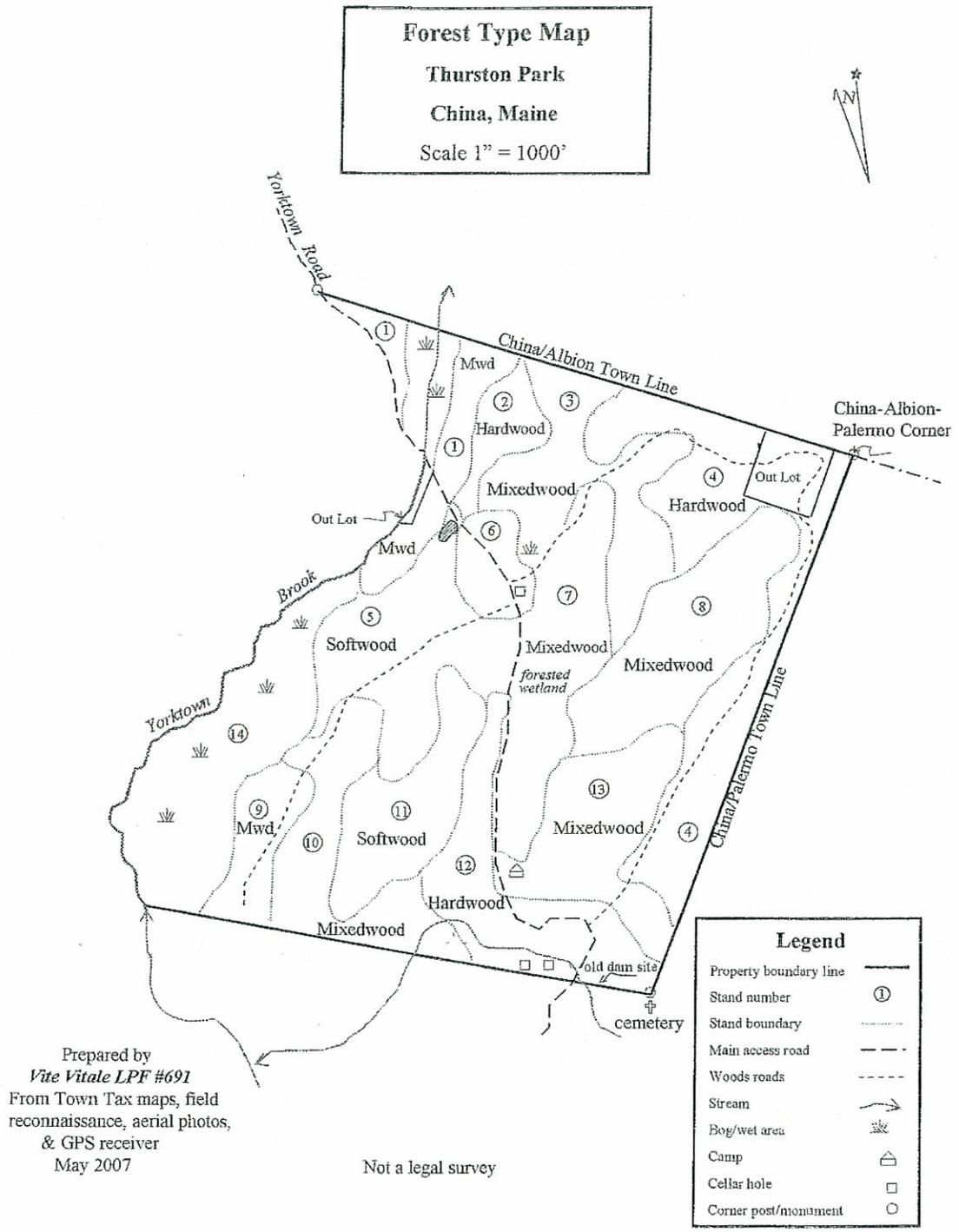


Figure 2. Forest Type Map of Thurston Park Prepared in 2007

Managing for Multiple Use

The public opinion survey of China residents confirms that Thurston Park is valued both as a forest managed for timber production and as a forest that can provide aesthetic, recreational, and wildlife values, the latter often best achieved by leaving some areas of the forest in a mature condition. The forest management plan prepared by Vitale provides suggestions for restoring individual forest stands to a stocking level and age that can support a sustainable commercial harvest. However, the plan also provides documentation that there is currently little or no late successional or unmanaged forest in the park. The experience of hikers, picnickers, photographers, and bird-watchers is generally enhanced by the inclusion of some areas of tall, closed canopy forest. Furthermore, restoring some late successional age-structure to the forest in Thurston Park will benefit wildlife species associated with large blocks of unfragmented, closed canopy forest, including for example several species of wood warblers, wood thrushes, forest hawks, American marten, and vernal pool-breeding amphibians. The majority of the committee has concluded that Thurston Park is large enough to provide both sustainable forest products and older-growth forest, if certain stands are thoughtfully designated to fulfill each of these functions. One committee member disagrees, concluding that no resource extraction should take place in the park (Appendix 7).

In an effort to complement Vitale's previous efforts at documenting areas of commercial stand value, the Thurston Park Committee considered which of the forest stands should be left in a natural state to develop larger trees for aesthetic, recreational, and wildlife value. To enhance biodiversity function for species requiring large territories comprised of closed canopy forests, such stands should ideally form a contiguous block. We also considered aesthetic and historic features such as view-scapes, early settlements and current vegetation and disturbance patterns. Finally, we considered soil type, because soils influence the composition and size of forest that will develop over the long term.

The three major soil types of the property run roughly north-south (Appendix 6). On the west side, adjacent to Yorktown Brook, and encompassing Stands 1, 9, and western Stand 5, the soils are gravelly sand, which was sorted by size as it was deposited by rapidly moving glacial streams. These landforms are called eskers, which provide attractive vantage points and trail locations on the top, above sloping sides. The south central part of the property, encompassing much of Stands 5, 11, and the western part of Stand 10, are dominated by very fine sandy loams and silt loams. These are the soil types that provide the best habitat for wild herbaceous plants and woodland wildlife (Vitale, p. 59). Moose activity appears to be concentrated in the southwestern portion of the park. The soil on the remainder of the site, encompassing most of Stands 2, 4, 6, 8, 13, and parts of 7 and 12, is sandy loam over bedrock, the dominant soil type of Kennebec County. These soils are well-suited for forest management, although care must be taken around wetlands and steep slopes.

A Multiple-Use Recommendation

To avoid conflicts between incompatible land uses, the majority of the Thurston Park committee endorses a multiple use management framework by which specific areas of the park are designated for certain land-uses – mainly forest management, recreation, and wildland protection. Toward this end, it is recommended that Stands 1, 5, 7, 9, 10, and 11 (Figure 1) be left to mature to a mostly unmanaged, natural state -- an area totaling 147 (45%) of the 330 forested acres. These stands were chosen because of their current or future potential to provide exceptional forest wildlife habitat, riparian corridor and buffer functions and aesthetic hiking conditions. It is recommended that the remaining stands, totaling approximately 183 acres, be managed for sustained yield of forest products, following the silvicultural guidelines prescribed in the 2007 Forest Management Plan. Selecting stands that are mostly contiguous and largely separated by the existing northwest-southeast running access road helps to minimize the potential for conflicts that might arise by attempting multiple use management on an individual stand basis. In short, the Committee's plan is designed to capture the exceptional blend of working and wild forests that are emblematic of the Maine landscape.

Special Features and First Step Recommendations

Communications and oversight

1. Populate the web page devoted to Thurston Park on the town website. The web page should include links to Vit Vitale's 2007 forest management plan and this report.
2. Create and distribute an updated brochure.
3. Appoint a Thurston Park Stewardship Committee to help with implementation and oversight of specific recommendations in this report.
4. Communicate regularly with the Recreation Committee and other relevant town committees.

Boundaries

1. Place boundary signs at all points where trails enter and leave the park including:
 - *036 Big log on East boundary N44 27.625 W69 26.821
 - *341 North trail out of park at N44 27.874 W69 27.007
 - *076 Park boundary on Jason's pit access road N44 27.957 W69 27.375
 - *085 North Boundary on Yorktown rd at N44 28.025 W69 27.662
 - 201 Trail leading to Balbo's on Mann Rd at N44 27.208 W69 27.611
 - *A71 South Boundary on Yorktown Rd at N44 27.148 W69 27.251
 - 082 Logging trail & corner of J.Esler Property? at N44 27.896 W69 27.111

* Indicates higher priority.

2. Find and mark the north boundary of the 'out lot'.
3. Paint the north, east and south boundaries between markers.

Access

1. Prioritize and obtain cost estimates for creating improved access and parking from north and/or south ends.
2. Limit access by road vehicles to entrance areas at north and south ends, with interior roads accessible only to off road recreational vehicles and emergency vehicles.
3. Recommend no vehicles except emergency vehicles on trails west of Yorktown Road.

Trails

1. Develop an overall trail plan.
2. Start by developing connector trails in the southwestern part of the park that would create a loop and provide access by foot into an area that is difficult to traverse at present.
3. Consider trails to specific features such as waterfalls.
4. Identify improvements needed to Yorktown Road and the eastern loop for motorized trails.

Specific aesthetic and historical features for protection consideration

1. Establish buffers around the two dams in the park.
SE dam at (N44 27.150 W69 27.202); NW dam at (N44 27.724 W69 27.553)
2. Establish buffers around all historical sites including all cellar holes (one on Eastern loop and seven along Yorktown Road), the Talbot cemetery, the three town marker stones, and the gravity-fed water system.
3. Protect and clear around the old orchard in SE corner at N44 27.207 W69 27.150
4. Protect and open clear path to three large pines on eastern loop at:
N44 27.352 W69 27.051
N44 27.382 W69 27.040
N44 27.411 W69 27.022

- and large pine near burned hunting camp at: N44 27.291 W69 27.301
5. Protect hemlock marked "SW 98?" N44 27.339 W69 27.132
 6. Protect the 'owl tree' on the Eastern loop N44 27.794 W69 26.929
 7. Establish buffers around two waterfalls just off the eastern loop rd at N44 27.505 W69 27.072 and N44 27.643 W69 26.965

Note 1: No sensitive features were identified on the west side of Yorktown road since that area is recommended as off-limits to forest management.

Note 2: The buffers referred to above should be areas of unmanaged forest at least 50-75 ft. in width.

Potential sources of funding and other support

Identify funding sources, develop grant proposals, identify matching funds, and work with local groups and businesses on fundraising activities.

Possible funding sources

Maine Trails Funding Association

<http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/programs/community/trailsfund.html>

Funds available on an annual basis. In 2010, the deadline for site visits was August 5th, and the deadline for proposals was November 5th.

Project Canopy

<http://www.maine.gov/doc/mfs/projectcanopy/>

Project Canopy Assistance Grants are available for developing and implementing community forestry projects and programs in planning, education, and tree planting and maintenance.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program

<http://www.me.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/>

The EQIP program reimburses landowners for activities that preserve water or soil quality or improve plant productivity. Covered activities include pre-commercial thinning, construction of forest trails and landings, access roads, and installation of access barriers. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Municipalities are not directly eligible for EQIP funding; however, land trusts are eligible, and it is possible that funds could be obtained from this source through partnering with Sebasticook Regional Land Trust.

Potential logistical support and partners

Sebasticook Regional Land Trust

<http://www.sebasticookrlt.org/>

Night Roadrunners Snowmobile Club, 32 Hussey Rd, Albion ME 04910

China Four Season Club, PO Box 474, South China ME 04358

Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine

<http://www.swoam.org/>

Other recommendations with respect to funding

1. Create a separate account for revenues brought in from grants or timber harvesting activities, to be tapped only for park use.
2. Ask interested residents to establish a 'Friends of Thurston Park Association'.

Extractive Resource Use Recommendations

Within the multiple-use framework recommended above, the Town recommends specific cautionary management practices associated with gravel extraction and improving the park as follows.

Gravel/sand extraction

1. Gravel/sand extraction should be limited to the amount needed for use on the property.
2. Gravel/sand extraction should be restricted to deposits on the northeast side of the road. Preference should be given to the deposit closest to the property line adjacent to the road.
3. Visual buffers should be maintained around any areas used for gravel/sand extraction. Areas used for gravel/sand extraction should be restored and re-vegetated with native plant seed or stock when the area is no longer used for gravel/sand extraction.

Timber harvesting

1. Preference should be given to a local, independent logger who will work to meet the town's goals that are compatible with the park's multiple use plan (Thurston Park Management Plan) and the stand management recommendations provided in the latest approved forest management plan (currently Vit Vitale 2007).
2. Logging should be done during frozen or dry ground conditions with skidders, motor-manual ground crews, or other low impact equipment. Skidders should be avoided due to the potential for forest floor and standing timber damage. All harvest practices should follow the Forest Service published Best Management Practices (http://www.maine.gov/doc/mfs/pubs/bmp_manual.htm).
3. A new forest management plan should be developed or reviewed every 10 years (or more frequently necessary to meet changing town needs). The town can seek funds from the State for the management plan.

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Revenue

All revenue generated from timber sales should be earmarked for use in the park. The Town should seek to secure resources from the State and other sources.

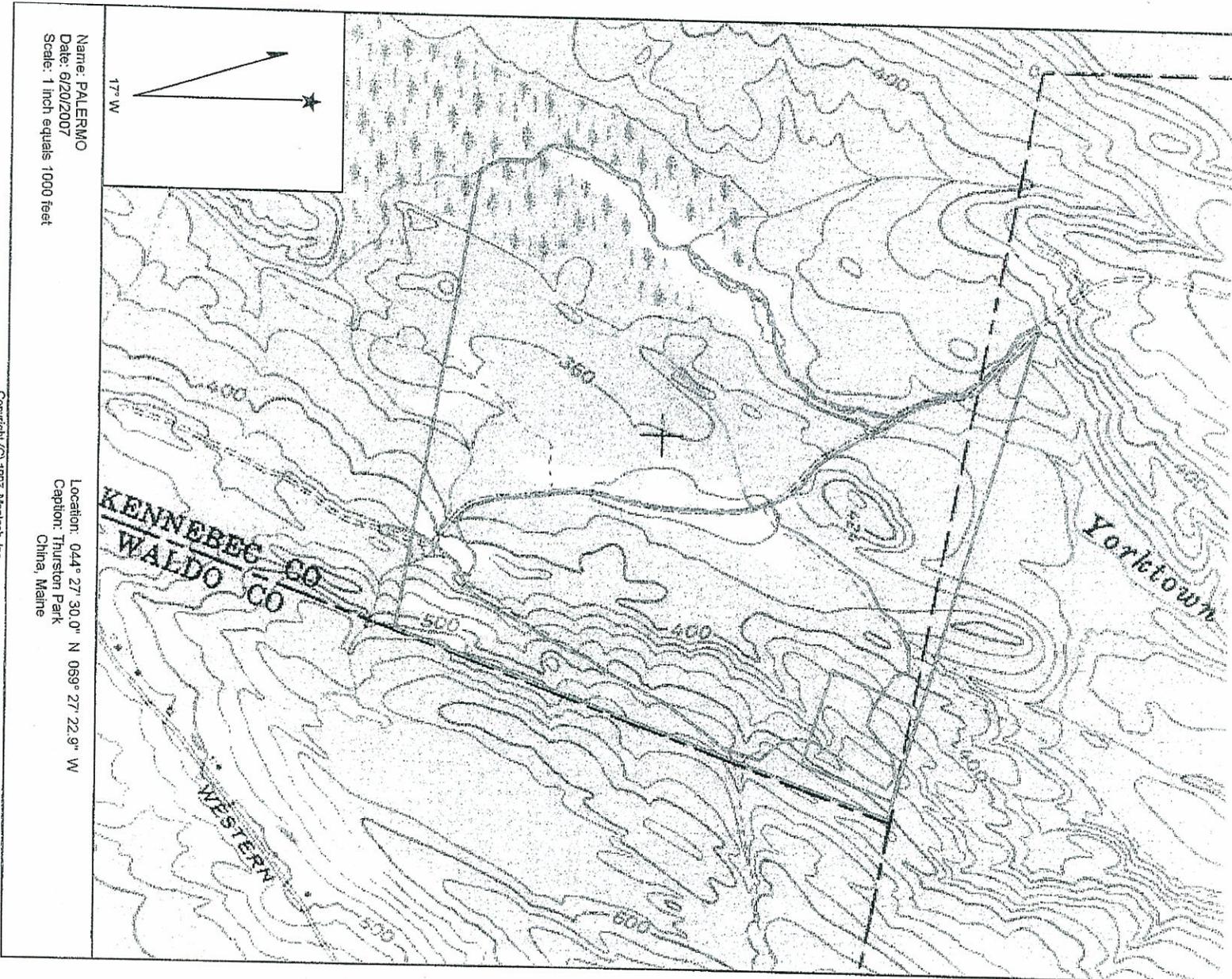
itself.

Yorktown Road.
in Esler's pit.

on and these areas
is complete.

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gement plan

r tractors, horses,
used due to the
nform to Maine



Name: PALERMO
Date: 6/20/2007
Scale: 1 inch equals 1000 feet

Location: 044° 27' 30.0" N 069° 27' 22.9" W
Caption: Thurston Park
China, Maine

Copyright (C) 1997, Maptech, Inc.

Appendix 1. Topographic map of Thurston Park.

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

Were you aware of Thurston Park prior to this survey?

Have you ever visited Thurston Park? _____ If so, how many times in the last 24 months?

PLEASE ANSWER BY PLACING CHECK MARK IN THE COLUMN SHOWING YOUR RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION.

1 = STRONGLY AGREE; 2 = AGREE; 3= NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE; 4 = DISAGREE; 5 = STRONGLY DISAGREE

QUESTION	1	2	3	4	5	COMMENTS
I value Thurston Park's potential to provide recreational experiences for snowmobiles						
I value Thurston Park's potential to provide recreational experiences for ATVs						
I value Thurston Park's potential to provide recreational experiences for hikers, picnickers, snowshoers, skiers, horseback riders, and/or bird watchers						
I value Thurston Park's potential as a forest reserve for fish, wildlife, and biological diversity						
I value Thurston Park's potential to provide hunting opportunities						
I value Thurston Park's potential to provide fishing opportunities						
I value Thurston Park's potential to provide timber and/or timber revenue						
I value Thurston Park's potential to provide sand/gravel for park needs						
I value Thurston Park's potential to provide sand/gravel for town needs						
I value Thurston Park's potential to provide outdoor education opportunities						
I value leaving some areas of the park uncut to develop older, mature forest						
I am in favor of designating areas for specific activities to help avoid incompatible land-uses.						

Appendix 2. Public Opinion Survey. This survey has been printed in vertical format for ease of reading in the report. The survey used was printed in horizontal format to give more room for comments.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

	Snow mobiles	ATVs	Non-motorized	Habitat Biodiversity	Hunting	Fishing	Timber	Gravel for Park	Gravel for Town	Education	Old growth/mature	
ALL RESPONSES												
1's	100	75	225	203	86	141	69	76	45	210	195	
2's	40	29	38	50	34	63	37	61	41	53	44	
3's	72	64	19	22	59	54	71	61	63	18	26	
4's	31	41	9	15	37	12	42	39	53	8	12	
5's	29	46	4	3	43	9	36	29	45	7	11	
blank	11	14	9	13	22	23	21	18	21	11	12	
Total	810	934	454	474	849	572	884	822	973	462	530	
blank	11	14	9	13	22	23	21	18	21	11	12	
Answers	301	298	303	299	290	289	291	294	291	301	300	
MEAN	2.69	3.13	1.5	1.59	2.93	1.98	3.04	2.8	3.34	1.53	1.77	

Rank by % of support

	6	10	1	3	8	5	9	7	11	2	4
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	Snow mobiles	ATVs	Non-motorized	Habitat Biodiversity	Hunting	Fishing	Timber	Gravel for Park	Gravel for Town	Education	Old growth/mature	
RESPONSES FROM THOSE WHO HAD VISITED THE PARK												
1's	38	27	82	71	34	45	27	22	16	72	72	
2's	11	8	8	9	10	16	10	22	13	15	8	
3's	20	17	3	8	19	22	16	13	18	6	6	
4's	7	7	1	5	9	3	13	16	11	0	6	
5's	23	40	6	4	26	8	32	24	39	5	7	
blank	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	
Total	263	322	141	153	277	195	307	289	335	145	165	
blank	2	2	1	4	3	7	3	4	4	3	2	
Answers	99	99	100	97	98	94	98	97	97	98	99	
MEAN	2.66	3.25	1.41	1.58	2.83	2.07	3.13	2.98	3.45	1.48	1.67	

Rank by % of support

	6	10	1	3	7	5	9	8	11	2	4
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RESPONSES FROM THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR NAMES

	Snow mobiles	ATVs	Non-motorized	Habitat Biodiversity	Hunting	Fishing	Timber	Gravel for Park	Gravel for Town	Education	Old growth/mature
1's	81	58	193	177	72	118	55	60	34	184	171
2's	34	24	28	39	28	57	30	56	37	40	34
3's	61	52	17	17	48	44	57	46	50	13	17
4's	24	36	6	12	31	9	37	35	45	6	10
5's	53	81	10	8	67	18	68	52	79	11	19
blank	9	11	8	9	16	16	15	13	17	8	10
Total	693	811	374	394	731	490	774	710	833	382	436
blank	9	11	8	9	16	16	15	13	17	8	10
Answers	253	251	254	253	246	246	247	249	245	254	252
MEAN	2.74	3.23	1.47	1.56	2.97	1.99	3.13	2.85	3.4	1.5	1.73

Rank by % of support

	6	10	1	3	8	5	9	7	11	2	4
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Appendix 3. Summary of responses to park values questions on public opinion survey.

MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS

	Vehicle Access	Designated areas
ALL RESPONSES		
1's	136	154
2's	45	65
3's	73	42
4's	13	8
5's	18	16
blank	18	14
Total	632	587
blank	18	14
Answers	294	298
MEAN	2.15	1.97

THOSE WHO HAD VISITED

1's	36	53
2's	14	14
3's	29	15
4's	6	2
5's	14	15
blank	0	0
Total	245	209
blank	2	2
Answers	99	99
MEAN	2.47	2.11

GAVE THEIR NAMES

1's	121	133
2's	37	52
3's	57	33
4's	11	7
5's	23	27
blank	13	10
Total	525	499
blank	13	10
Answers	249	252
MEAN	2.11	1.98

Appendix 4. Summary of responses to park management questions on public opinion survey.

COMMENTS FROM THURSTON PARK SURVEY

Vague (designating areas for specific activities)

Keep jeeps and trucks out of the area

Keep jeeps and trucks out of the area

no firearms!

hunting vs recreation = safety?, (timber) - ?, (gravel for town) - ?, (better vehicle access) - ?

What a shame not to preserve it for recreation, wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation; I had never heard of Thurston Park before these discussions.

(ATVs - 5) - destructive by history; (hunting - 5) - public safety; (older, mature forest) - let it grow with generations

(education - 1) more than strongly agree

mark the boundaries so people will know if they are in the park

(better vehicle access) - ?

(non-motorized activities - 1) - and dog walkers

(Gravel for park) - for park imp (improvements?)

have not gone because road there is poor access by car

(timber revenue 2) for the town

(ATVs - 4) My experience is destructive to land; Bicycle paths would be nice

(timber) I agree if and only if timber harvest used sustainable forestry practice.; (older mature forest - 2) for variety of landscape

It is not always possible to be all things to all people. We value quiet, peaceful activities over noisy activities that are disruptive.

(ATVs - 5) too hard on environment & esp. erosion; horseback can also be hard on environment; (designated areas - 3) would want to see proposal before forming opinion

(timber - 2) if done right!

(vehicle access - 3) my children would; (designated areas - blank) none of these suits, You can't please everybody.

(snowmobiles & ATVs - 3) Neutral but lean towards 4; (fishing, timber, gravel - 3) Don't know enuf Name should not be on the survey

(timber - 5) Leave as old growth; (Older, mature forest - 1) most if not all areas; (vehicle access - 1) but only at the entrance; (designated areas - 5) Preserve as is with perhaps a parking area

I know nothing about it. Where it is, how large it is, what is available there, or if it is in use.

(snowmobiles & ATVs - 3) Matter of control and respect; (Hunting - ?) safety issue; (timber - 2) if carefully managed; (gravel for town - blank) question of management; (older mature forest - 2) proper management

(snowmobiles - 5) sled trail is not too bad; (ATVs - 5) ATV do too much damage; Horse riding - hard to pick up trappings.; (timber - 2) damage, rotten trees, thinning trees. Only when needed. (gravel for town - 3) when in need; (vehicle access - 2) 1 entrance and parking.

(ATVs - 3) must stop abuse- monitored; (older, mature forest - 5) proper harvesting and maintenance a must

(timber - 1) For park improvement

(vehicle access - 3) Parking but let it be only for non motorized vehicles; Having quiet places where people can be quiet is important.

(Designated areas - blank) what??

(snowmobiles, ATVs, non-motorized – blank) Don't know what the trails look like; (older mature forest – blank) get a forestry audit, need more data
(snowmobiles, ATVs – 1) in designated areas
(hunting -1) areas away from walking trails; Clean up blown over trees only; (gravel for park – 1) for park needs only; (designated areas – 1) such as for hunting
It's foolish to keep increasing taxes for this kind of activity – Sell the park, lower taxes!! With all the hungry people in China...I can't believe your spending our tax \$ on a Park?
(vehicle access – 3) and also knew where it was!!; (designated areas – 5) I think it would create an 'we own this piece' type of mentality.
(snowmobiles & ATVs – 1) for marked maintained trail; (Hunting – 1) Monday – Friday; (timber – 1) small scale harvests; (gravel for park – 1) on small scale; 9designated areas -1) with public input.
(vehicle access – blank) Where is it. Is this park open to the public free of charge?
(hunting – 5) I think it should be a safe place for families without worrying about hunters; (timber – 4) unless it is going to help the existing forest there; (gravel for park – 3) depends on the seriousness of the need; I have read a lot about Thurston park in the Townline but don't know how to get there; It would be great to have walking trails available.
(ATVs – 3) confined area OK; (timber – 3) long range plan needed
no ATVs here ever; allow trapping also
noise issues(snowmobiles);some destructive & noise (ATVs)
0' (potential as a forest reserve)
(to snowmobiles & ATVs) If separate trails from hiking trails – i.e. separate motorized & non-motorized trails
(timber & gravel for park – 2) for park improvement
not as a 'preserve' – open to hunting
(snowmobiles – 5) But I don't mind if they are used.
(fishing – 2) No Stocking. (Older mature forest) could be a treasure in 50 years.
(ATVs- 2) & (hunting - 3) needs evaluation in the future; (timber – 2) limited to small scale harvest operations; (gravel for park – 2) area limited so as not to impact other values; (designated areas – 1) need 'no-cut' buffers around trails and features of interest.
(snowmobiles & ATVs) they have enough other places, noisy & smelly; (hunting & fishing) local small scale, no professional guides please; (timber & gravel for park) carefully according to a management plan; (gravel for town) not while we have other sources; (education) less accessible than school forest; (better vehicle access – 4) people unwilling to make the effort can use Church Park
(non-motorized activities – 1)I would like to have a place to walk;(hunting – 5) no hunters please. Parks are not for hunters.
(timber – 5) Only as needed; (gravel for park & town) No gravel/sand
(Snowmobiles – 3) On a few designated trails only;(gravel- 4,5)I'm concerned that gravel extraction will be incompatible with many other uses; (mature forest- 1) Mature, older forest is currently one of the least represented age classes of forest on the landscape.
I need to know exactly how to find it. I went there years ago with Mary Grow and have never been able to locate it since!
This is a great monster truck playground; (non-motorized – 3) too many ruts from monster trucks;
(biological diversity – 3) +/- value all of Maine; (education _ 3) Just use school woodlot; (older mature forest- blank) What age class are you looking for on what soil?; (designated areas – 3) need more details

Appendix 5. Comments from public opinion survey, page 2 of 3.

(Older, mature forest – 1) All areas.; Our hope is to keep this park Natural and undisturbed. ATVs damage the quality of the land & disturb nature observers. This land should be used for education & conservation.

(gravel for town – 1) Can collect taxes on the land sale; I think Thurston Park should be sold at auction to the highest bidder, reserving all rights to sand and gravel and right a ways to be given to the town for road use.

Thurston Park should be sold! All sand and gravel could be used for road work. The town could collect 'taxes' on this property.

(timber, gravel, gravel – 5) no no no; (older mature forest – 1) leave all areas uncut; On 5/22/10 we were ATVing at the park and found the 3 remaining buildings burned to the ground. We called the police and the fire marshall also came. Can't believe someone would do that.

(vehicle access – 3) I would visit more often if the park itself was better developed.

Multiple use development is a good idea for large public spaces. The key is in assessing potential related to size of area, then skillfully allotting activity areas based on compatibility and sustainability.

(gravel for park – 5) If town owns it, why buy it elsewhere; (older, mature forest – 5) horrible idea; It makes good sense to cut the wood & earn the town money

I would like to see a map of thurston park so my hiking experience would be enhanced. My family and I very much enjoy excursions through the park!

(older, mature forest – 1) All – poorly worded question, suggests cutting some
Non-motorized vehicles only; no motorized vehicles
prefer no motorized vehicles

Any money taken out of the park should be used to improve the park & access the park
Trash barrels and picnic tables; and possibly a mud run for monster trucks; (older, mature forest – 1) how many are actually there? (designated areas – 1) Good idea; Involved 4 Seasons Club and Recreation Committee

Needs wheelchair access
Needs wheelchair access

(timber – 1) money to stay in future of park; (gravel for park – 1) and town use revenues to stay with park

Thurston Park should be available to all, not just the nature lovers.If this is a survey why do you need my name?.

(ATVs - 5)ATV use destroys natural areas; (timber – 5) tell the timber harvesters to go elsewhere.;

(gravel, gravel -5) We already have Kempton Tobey's. Why ruin this site? (designated areas – 5) Be decisive – Make clear choices – Stop trying to generate revenue from this unique natural sanctuary.

4 wheel trucks are cause severe road damage

I'm not interested in responding. It's okay if you spend money and okay if you don't.

(Timber) only for park needs; (access0 use Albion's year-round access

There are lots of snowmobile trails already!

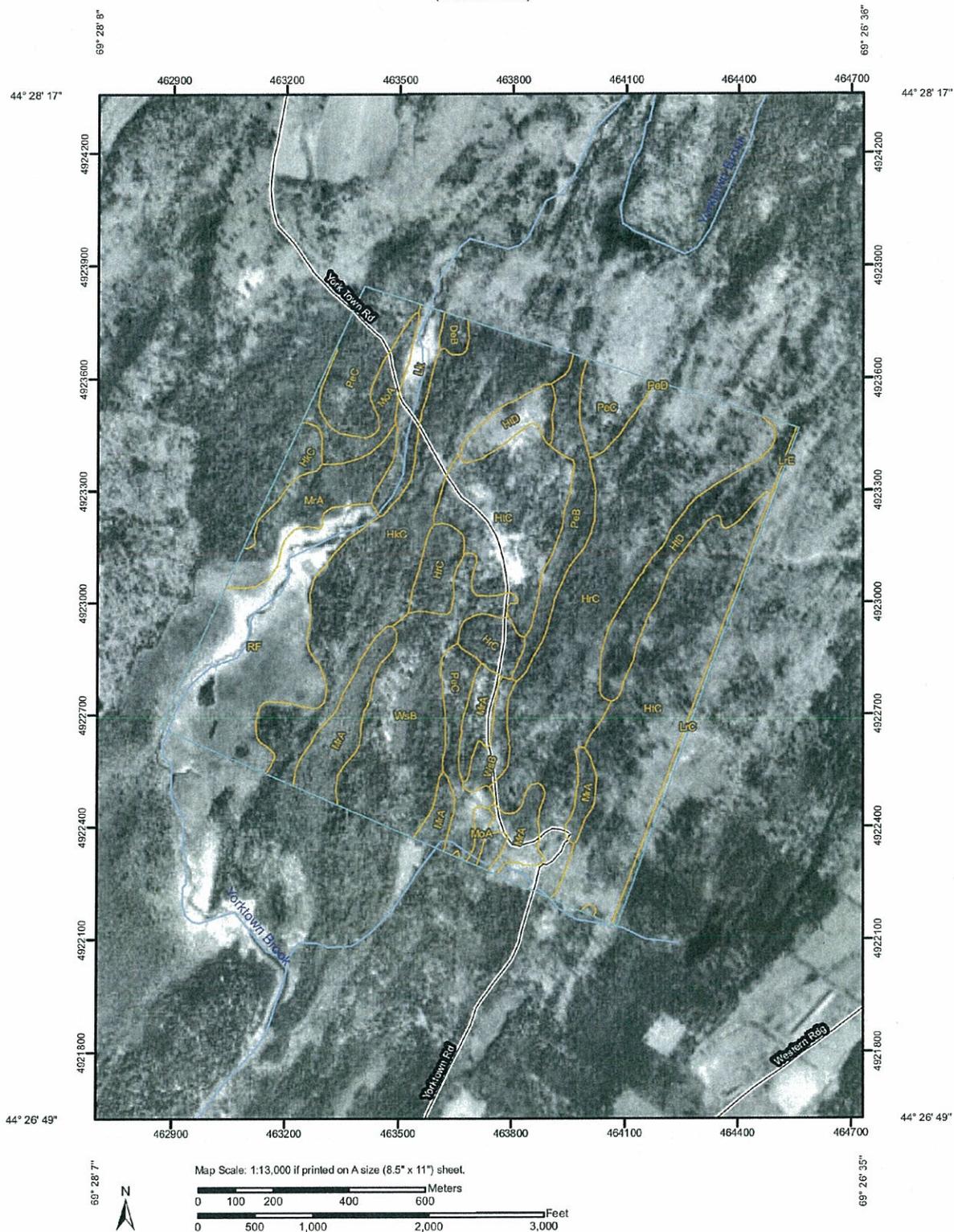
Town should sell Thurston Park

(ATVs) ?? more damage with these; (hunting) dangerous to others using park; (timber – 1) because timber is renewable; (gravel for town – 5) because sand/gravel is not renewable

(timber, gravel ,gravel – 5) why compete with our private resource owners?

Appendix 5. Comments from public opinion survey, page 3 of 3.

Soil Map—Kennebec County, Maine, and Waldo County, Maine
(Thurston Park)



USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Web Soil Survey National Cooperative Soil Survey

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Appendix 6. Soils map of Thurston Park. See next pages for legend.

Soil Map—Kennebec County, Maine, and Waldo County, Maine
(Thurston Park)

MAP LEGEND		MAP INFORMATION
Area of Interest (AOI)	Very Stony Spot	Map Scale: 1:13,000 if printed on A size (8.5" x 11") sheet. The soil surveys that comprise your AOI were mapped at 1:20,000. Please rely on the bar scale on each map sheet for accurate map measurements.
Soil Map Units	Wet Spot	
Special Point Features	Other	Source of Map: Natural Resources Conservation Service Web Soil Survey URL: http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov Coordinate System: UTM Zone 19N NAD83
Blowout	Special Line Features	
Borrow Pit	Gully	This product is generated from the USDA-NRCS certified data as of the version date(s) listed below.
Clay Spot	Short Steep Slope	
Closed Depression	Other	Soil Survey Area: Kennebec County, Maine Survey Area Data: Version 11, Jul 27, 2009
Gravel Pit	Political Features	
Gravelly Spot	Cities	Soil Survey Area: Waldo County, Maine Survey Area Data: Version 12, Jul 27, 2009
Landfill	Water Features	
Lava Flow	Oceans	Your area of interest (AOI) includes more than one soil survey area. These survey areas may have been mapped at different scales, with a different land use in mind, at different times, or at different levels of detail. This may result in map unit symbols, soil properties, and interpretations that do not completely agree across soil survey area boundaries.
Marsh or swamp	Streams and Canals	
Mine or Quarry	Transportation	Date(s) aerial images were photographed: 5/27/1996
Miscellaneous Water	Rails	
Perennial Water	Interstate Highways	The orthophoto or other base map on which the soil lines were compiled and digitized probably differs from the background imagery displayed on these maps. As a result, some minor shifting of map unit boundaries may be evident.
Rock Outcrop	US Routes	
Saline Spot	Major Roads	
Sandy Spot	Local Roads	
Severely Eroded Spot		
Sinkhole		
Slide or Slip		
Sodic Spot		
Spoil Area		
Stony Spot		

Map Unit Legend

Kennebec County, Maine (ME011)			
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
DeB	Deerfield loamy fine sand, 0 to 8 percent slopes	1.8	0.4%
HkC	Hinckley gravelly sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	56.5	13.3%
HrC	Hollis fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	84.7	19.9%
HtC	Hollis-Rock outcrop complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	79.8	18.8%
HtD	Hollis-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 30 percent slopes	22.4	5.3%
Lk	Limerick silt loam	8.9	2.1%
MoA	Monarda silt loam	9.3	2.2%
MrA	Monarda very stony silt loam	38.5	9.1%
PeB	Paxton-Charlton very stony fine sandy loams, 3 to 8 percent slopes	12.9	3.0%
PeC	Paxton-Charlton very stony fine sandy loams, 8 to 15 percent slopes	30.0	7.1%
PeD	Paxton-Charlton very stony fine sandy loams, 15 to 30 percent slopes	0.1	0.0%
RF	Rifle mucky peat	39.8	9.4%
WsB	Woodbridge very stony fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	36.9	8.7%
Subtotals for Soil Survey Area		421.6	99.2%
Totals for Area of Interest		425.2	100.0%

Waldo County, Maine (ME027)			
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
LrC	Lyman-Rock outcrop complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	3.3	0.8%
LrE	Lyman-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 60 percent slopes	0.3	0.1%
Subtotals for Soil Survey Area		3.6	0.8%
Totals for Area of Interest		425.2	100.0%

Appendix 6. Soils map of Thurston Park, 2nd page of legend. Note that percentages apply to the entire selected rectangle, rather than to the park alone.