

Great Moose Lake

Harmony



Description

The shores and waters of Great Moose Lake provide habitat for at least two rare animals as well as an uncommon floodplain forest community. Black terns, known from only a dozen sites in Maine, have been documented as nesting there consistently since 1988. The Pickerel Cove population is one of the most viable nesting populations in the state, with 12-15 nesting pair common. Eagles have nested on Round Island and the shallow cove south of it every year since 1994, and this area is probably the optimal eagle setting in the Sebasticook watershed. Eagles often perch and forage along the wooded point on the northwest side of The Narrows. Wading bird surveys have not been done, but the lake provides excellent habitat for waterbirds. A few individuals of the Tidewater Mucket, a rare mussel, have been found near the Narrows in the lake; it may occur elsewhere in the lake as well. A Hardwood Floodplain Forest, dominated by silver maple and sensitive fern, extends along Higgins and Fergusson Brooks to the north shore of the lake. Silver maple hardwood floodplain forests are rare in Maine, and are typically found on larger rivers.

Rare Species and Natural Communities Summary Table

Common Name	Latin Name	EO Rank	Global Rank	State Rank
Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	--	G4	S2
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	--	G4	S4

Tidewater Mucket	<i>Leptodea ochracea</i>		G4	S2
Hardwood Floodplain Forest		B	--	S3

Other Resources Mapped by MDIFW

Wading Bird – Waterfowl Habitat and Deer Wintering Areas are mapped within the area.

Protection Status

None of the land appears to be in conservation ownership. Recreational use of the island with the eagle nest is heavy in the summertime.

Conservation Considerations

Conservation easements and/or fee acquisition would be appropriate land protection vehicles here, for example on Round Island, where easement or fee acquisition could be important in maintaining its suitability for eagles in the long term. For most of the Great Moose Lake area, efforts to maintain or improve the water quality within the watershed are equally important.

Monitoring recreational use will be an important component of conservation as well.

Timber harvest in the floodplain forest would degrade its qualities as an exemplary natural community. Where timber harvest or development continues, buffers should be maintained around all wetlands and ponds. While different species can have different buffering requirements, wider buffers provide better protection for riparian and wetland-dependent species. The state minimum shoreland zoning standards specify a minimum 75’ buffer in which very little harvest or clearing is allowed, with less stringent restrictions within 250’ of the wetland border. Better protection will be afforded to the wetlands and ponds if as little alteration as possible occurs within 250’ of the wetland/upland border. Any timber harvesting within and adjacent to wetlands or adjacent to ponds should be implemented with strict adherence to Shoreland Zoning guidelines and Maine Forest Service Best Management Practices.