

Recreation

Draft 3

GOAL: To promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters.

Dresden has many opportunities for outdoor recreation all year 'round. There is hunting, fishing, hiking, cross country skiing, skating, snowmobiling, and other pursuits available to Dresden residents throughout the town.

There are two public tracts of land in Dresden. One is the Green Point Wildlife Management Area, which is maintained by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and developed cooperatively under the Wildlife Restoration Act and the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. Green Point is popular with bird watchers and hunters during the season. The area can be accessed on Route 128 approximately three miles south of the Route 197 intersection.

The other is the Erle R. Kelly Wildlife Management Area, owned by the State of Maine and developed cooperatively under the Wildlife Restoration Act. This area, also known as the Dresden Bog, can be accessed from Blinn Hill Road and the Bog Road north of Route 27. The area provides opportunities for skating and ice fishing in the winter and canoeing and kayaking in the summer.

The Dresden Sno-Valley Riders, a snow mobile club, maintains a total of 23 miles of trail in town, and uses Green Point for some of it with permission from the State of Maine. The club has an average of 20 active members, but the trails are also available to the public. When trails pass through private property, the club acquires written permission from the land owners. The trails are also used by cross country skiers, for snow shoeing, and even by dog sled enthusiasts.

There is a skating rink at the Recycling Center that was built in 1990, with some more current work to establish drainage in the spring and to retain water during the fall and winter. The Fire Department provides additional water as needed. The rink is cared for by volunteers.

At the Pownalborough Courthouse property, two miles of moderate hiking opportunities exist through old growth forests, along an ancient cemetery and the Kennebec River. Dresden Elementary School has a nature trail that is maintained by its students.

Dresden has a Recreation Fund that receives annual franchise fees from Time Warner Cable. The Fund helps support an annual Summer Fest, a Christmas concert, the Harvest Supper, a Winter Fest, some school activities, and the annual open house at the Fire Department. The Christmas concert, featuring the Downeast Brass Quintet, is being held in 2013 for the 15th year.

Bridge Academy Public Library has a facility for basketball and a tennis court, although the tennis court needs some repair. Basketballs are available for public use during regular library hours.

Both the Kennebec and Eastern rivers are available for boating during the summer and ice and smelt fishing during the winter. Kayaks and canoes can be launched from several places in Dresden, but larger boats are currently put in the water at the public landing in Richmond.

GOALS:

- Conserve and protect important natural resources in Dresden, which also function as recreational resources, through the Dresden Land Use Ordinance.
- Maintain and upgrade existing recreational areas as necessary to meet current and future needs.
- Preserve open space for recreational use as appropriate.
- Seek to achieve at least one major point of public access to major water bodies for boating, fishing and swimming; work with nearby property owners to address concerns.

POLICIES:

- Encourage access, for recreational purposes, to the Kennebec and Eastern Rivers, the *Earle R. Kelley Wildlife Management Area (also known as the Dresden Bog), the **Pownalborough Courthouse Trails, the woodland trails maintained by the Dresden Snowmobile Club, and the winter ice-skating rink at the town's Transfer Station.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- Establish a recreation committee
Responsibility: Select Board
Timeline: 1st year after plan approval
- Evaluate of the recreational needs of the community
Responsibility: Recreation Committee, in collaboration with the Select Board.
Timeline: 1st year after plan approval
- Make recommendations as to how these needs can be met.
Responsibility: Recreation Committee, in collaboration with the Select Board.
Timeline: 1st year after plan approval
- Develop a master plan to meet the recreational needs of all ages and abilities, to explore future needs based on changing demographics, and to explore opportunities to collaborate with nearby communities.
- Include any capital needs identified for recreation facilities/spaces in the Capital Investment Plan.
- Oversee the maintenance of skating rink.
Responsibility: Recreation Committee, in collaboration with the Select Board.
Timeline: 1st year after plan approval

- Pursue public boat landing for both the Eastern and Kennebec rivers.
Responsibility: Recreation Committee, in collaboration with the Select Board.
Timeline: 2nd year after plan approval

* <http://www.maine.gov/ifw/wildlife/land/departement/recreation.htm>

** <http://www.mainetrailfinder.com/trails/trail/pownalborough-court-house-trails>