

Appendix B

Policy Recommendations

In order to take significant steps to protect the Kennebec Corridor for future generations, some major planning efforts must be undertaken. Throughout the KRI process during 2007, stakeholders voiced many times, concerns over various land uses that they found unacceptable. While these concerns varied by region, three issues came up regularly. Better regulation of gravel pits, ridgeline development and loss of our working farms and forestlands.

- Many KRI participants expressed the need for better regulation of existing gravel pits, restrictions on where new pits may be dug, and reclamation of inactive or problem pits. State Senator Libby Mitchell authored legislation to restrict gravel pits in the river corridor in her District, from Augusta to Waterville.
- The threat of ridgeline development in the most scenic sections of the river is of major concern to many stakeholders involved with the KRI process. It was acknowledged that several times that zoning would be the best way to protect the corridor; however zoning has been notoriously difficult to carry out in many Maine towns. Special districts, such as farm districts, were also recommended for some towns, but with the same pessimism as to voter support. Unfortunately, the land trusts cannot on their own protect the kind of landscape that Mainers cherish. Working farms, forested riverfront, public access, and scenic views will all be greatly reduced over time without real planning.
- Along with zoning, substantial incentive programs are needed to keep farms and forests as viable working lands. If we value farms and forests for their scenic and cultural value as well as their economic importance, support is needed for individual families faced with major decisions about their land. A recently enacted bill (LD 1414) allows towns to make farm support payments equal to property taxes in exchange for a 30-year farmland easement.

For other legislation considered during the Maine Legislature's 2007 session (123rd Legislature) which could affect the Kennebec Corridor, refer to the table on the following

Kennebec River Initiative

pages. This table is intended only to give an overview of current bills and is not necessarily exhaustive. For more detailed information about these or other bills and enacted legislation from past or current years and legislative sessions, visit the following websites:

State of Maine Legislature website

<http://www.maine.gov/portal/government/legislature.html>

Bill text query – use for key word searches on specific topics

<http://janus.state.me.us/legis/LawMakerWeb/billtextsearch.asp>

Maine Statutes – use for key word searches on specific topics

<http://janus.state.me.us/legis/statutes/search.asp>