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Bangor Land Trust is pleased to announce that after 2 years of careful planning, we have adopted a management plan for Walden-Parke Preserve.

We have thoughtfully considered the uses of this property in the context of its location, the uses of neighboring properties, the ongoing uses of this property and our mission. We have done extensive research on a variety of issues and consulted with both local user groups and conservationists across the state and nationally.

As the least disturbed tract of land between Penjajawoc Marsh and Caribou Bog, the preserve forms an important wildlife corridor. It is flanked by the growing Edgewood Development on one side and the heavily used City Forest on the other. It is also a popular spot for hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, and mountain biking.

Our challenge in creating a management plan was to allow for continued recreational enjoyment while protecting the habitat values of the property – and to preserve its special recreational characteristics. As soon as we received the Oldenburgs' and Shuberts' gift, a number of people asked us to be sure that the land kept its wild feeling, and did not become “improved,” like the City Forest. We have kept to our commitment to do that. Bangor Land Trust offers trail experiences at the “rustic and natural” end of the spectrum – ensuring the preservation of one of Bangor's most special qualities.

Many things in life require compromises – and Walden-Parke Preserve is no exception. All the trails that we are keeping open on this preserve will be multi-use – shared by hikers, mountain bikers, cross-country skiers and showshoers. This will require that mountain-bikers and other faster-moving trail users yield to the slower-moving hikers and give ample warning when desiring to pass. We've been very pleased with the courteous behavior of the mountain bikers on this preserve, and count on that to continue.

We plan to have one loop trail that is wide enough for people to walk or bike two abreast. This is our “Blue Trail,” (blazed in blue), and it is the only one that we will map. Dogs and other pets are allowed on only the Blue Trail, and must be kept on leash to minimize wildlife disturbance and for the comfort and safety of other trail users. Pet owners must clean up after their pets.

Rains this past summer created a number of very wet spots on the Blue Trail. We plan trail remediation projects for next spring, and we invite everyone who enjoys the Walden-Parke trails to volunteer to join in the trail work! Our goal is to have the trail remediation process be as low-impact as possible to preserve the current unspoiled feel of the area.

We are also preserving most of the narrow trails that we found on the property. These are fun to hike and bike, and out of deference to those who desire a “wilder” experience of exploration, we will not publish maps of these trails. We do plan to mark them discretely. In consultation with the mountain bikers who bike this Preserve, we will be closing some of the less-used trails in order to leave more undisturbed wildlife habitat. We ask that all users of Walden-Parke Preserve stay on marked trails. The narrow trails also require work to remediate wet spots and re-route in some eroded stretches. This will be another volunteer opportunity for trail users and friends.

A future project is a foot and biking trail that will run the length of the power line.

The Paul Bunyan Snowmobile Club has been extremely cooperative from the beginning of our planning for this property. Their trail will continue to run down the power line to the railroad bed, and along the old Veazie RR bed.

Because of our concerns about trail upkeep, and for the safety of other trail users, horses are not permitted in Walden-Parke Preserve.

For further information about this preserve, and to join our volunteer trail crew, please call 942-1010 or e-mail info@bangorlandtrust.org. And watch our website for Bangor Land Trust programs on this and our other preserves.