

— 2019 —

GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON TOURISM
DESTINATION MAINE:

CHARTING THE COURSE

APRIL 9 & 10 // AUGUSTA, MAINE





Destination Development Case Study: Moosehead Lake

Governor's Conference on Tourism

April 9, 2019

The Place



The Context

The Moosehead Lake Region

1.25 million acres

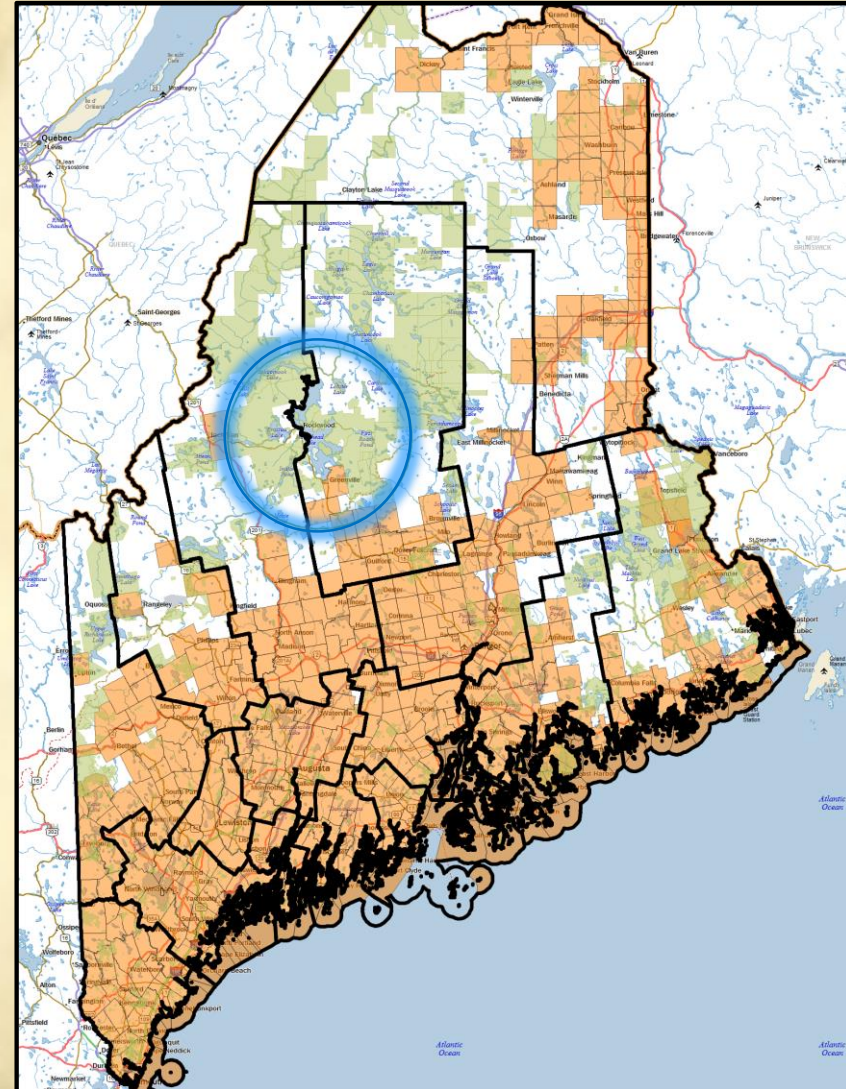
- Bigger than some states
- Nearly half in conservation

Over 100 lakes and ponds

- Highlighted by 75,000 acre, 40 mile long Moosehead Lake
- Over another 60,000 acres of water

Population of 4,200 (2.5 persons per sq. mile)

- Greenville – 1,646 residents
- Rockwood – 320 residents
- Jackman – 718 residents
- Shirley – 183 residents



The Catalyst

❖ Loss of Anchor Businesses

- ❖ Lumber Mill & Steam Plant
- ❖ Ski Area
- ❖ Whitewater Rafting
- ❖ Condo Lodge (Realtor Investors)

❖ School & Hospital in jeopardy

- ❖ 25% loss of population
- ❖ School enrollment 1996 – 374; 2018 – 216;
- ❖ Grades 9 -12 = 88 in 2018;
 - ❖ projected: 68 in 2020; 48 in 2024



The Catalyst

- ❖ Reformed defunct Economic Development group - 2014
- ❖ Hired Roger Brooks: Branding
 - ❖ Brand Leadership Team
 - ❖ Committees: Downtown, Wayfinding
- ❖ Maine Office of Tourism:
 - “Moosehead Pilot Project”



The Catalyst

❖ Changing forest ownership, new conservation framework

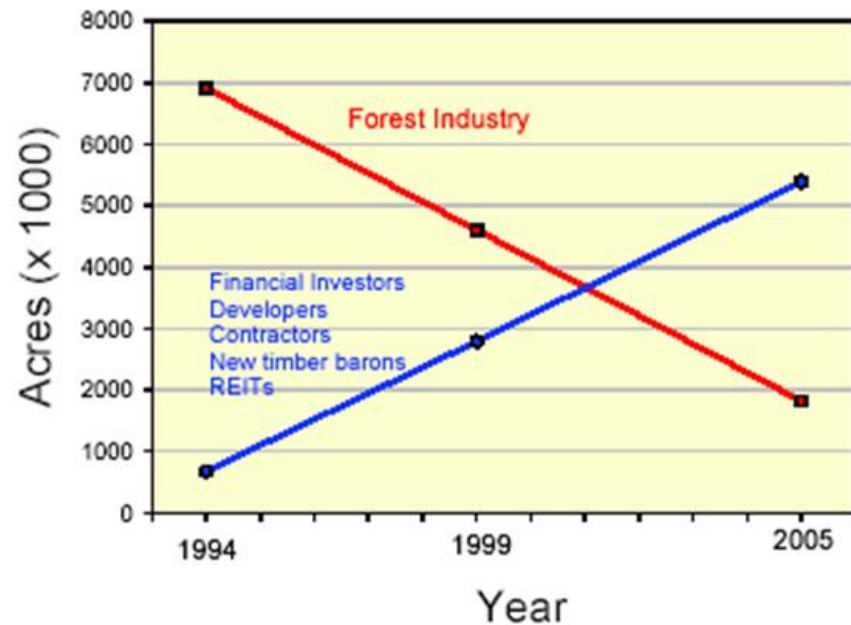


Figure 6. The number of acres owned by Industry (red) and by various newer forest owner types combined (blue) in Maine between 1994 and 2005.

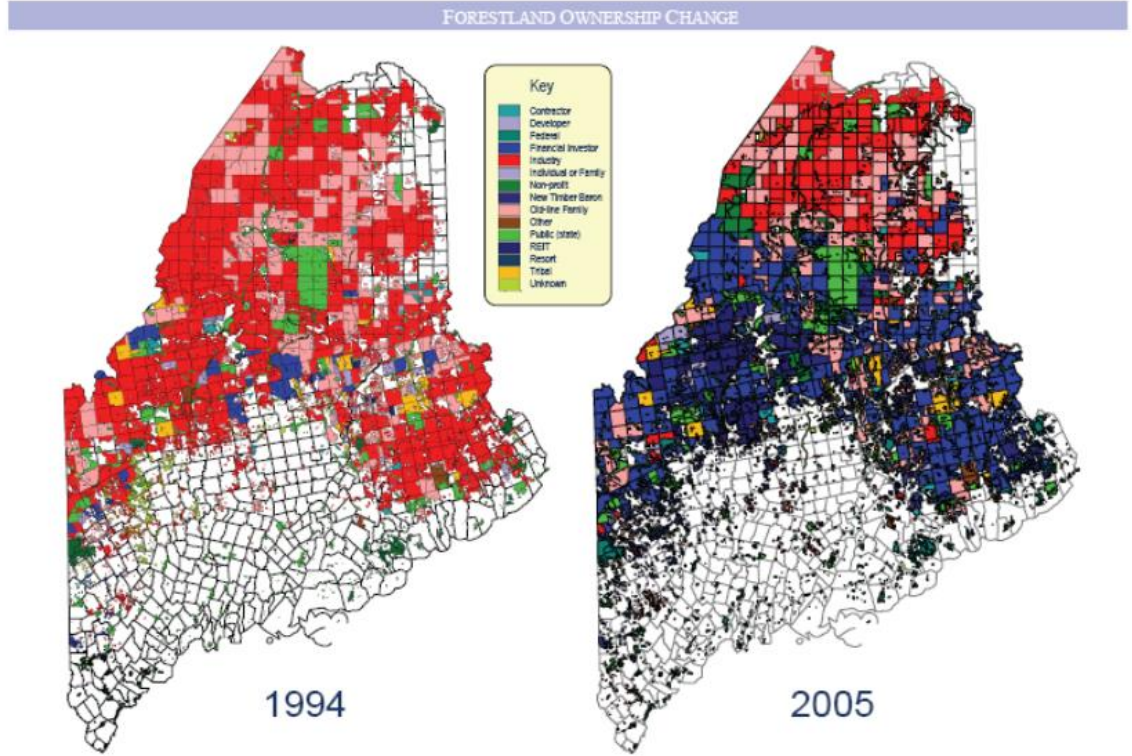
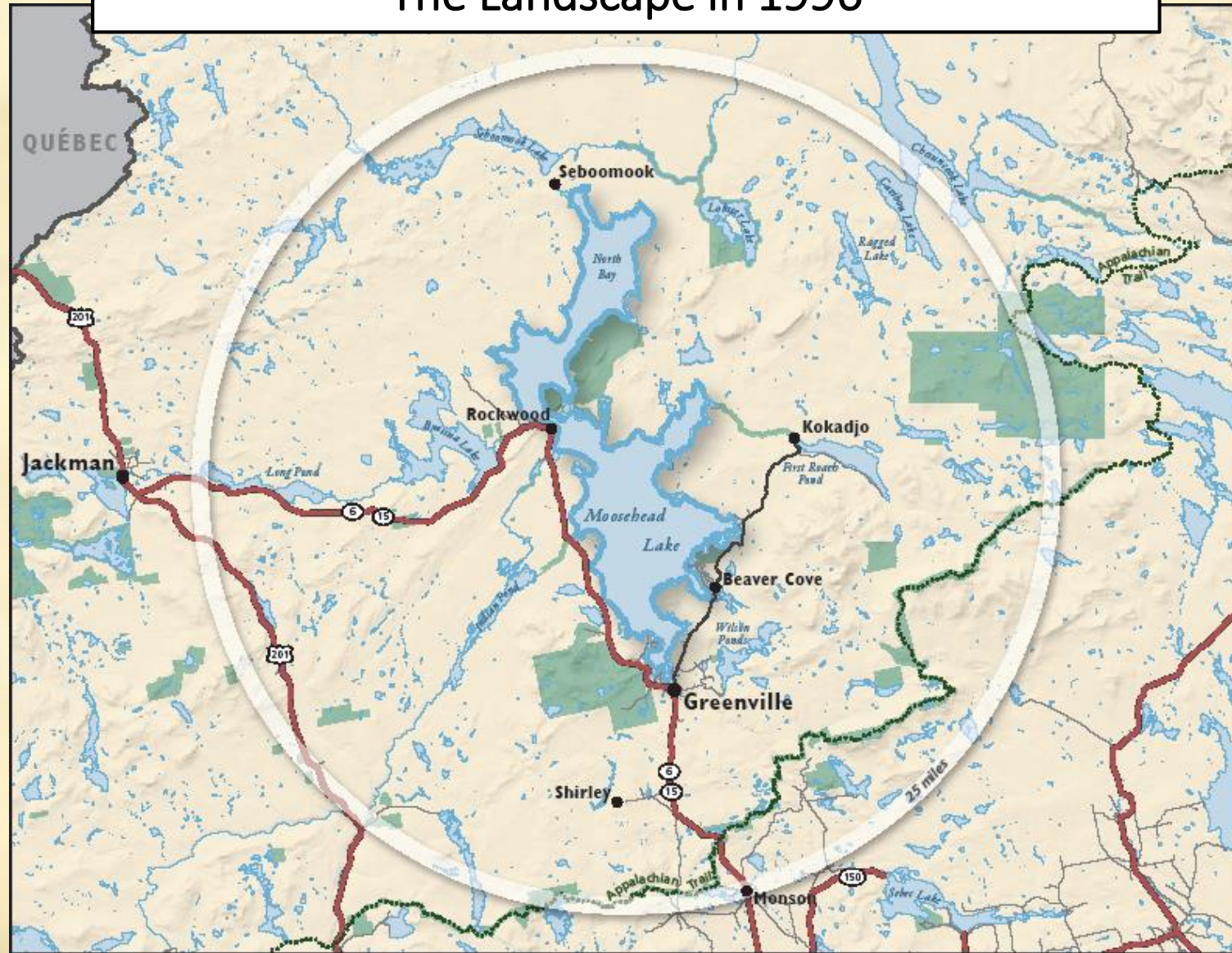


Figure 7. Map of Maine timberland ownership by owner type in 1994 and 2005. See Table 1 for a description of owner types. (GIS data from J.W. Sewall Co., Old Town, Maine).

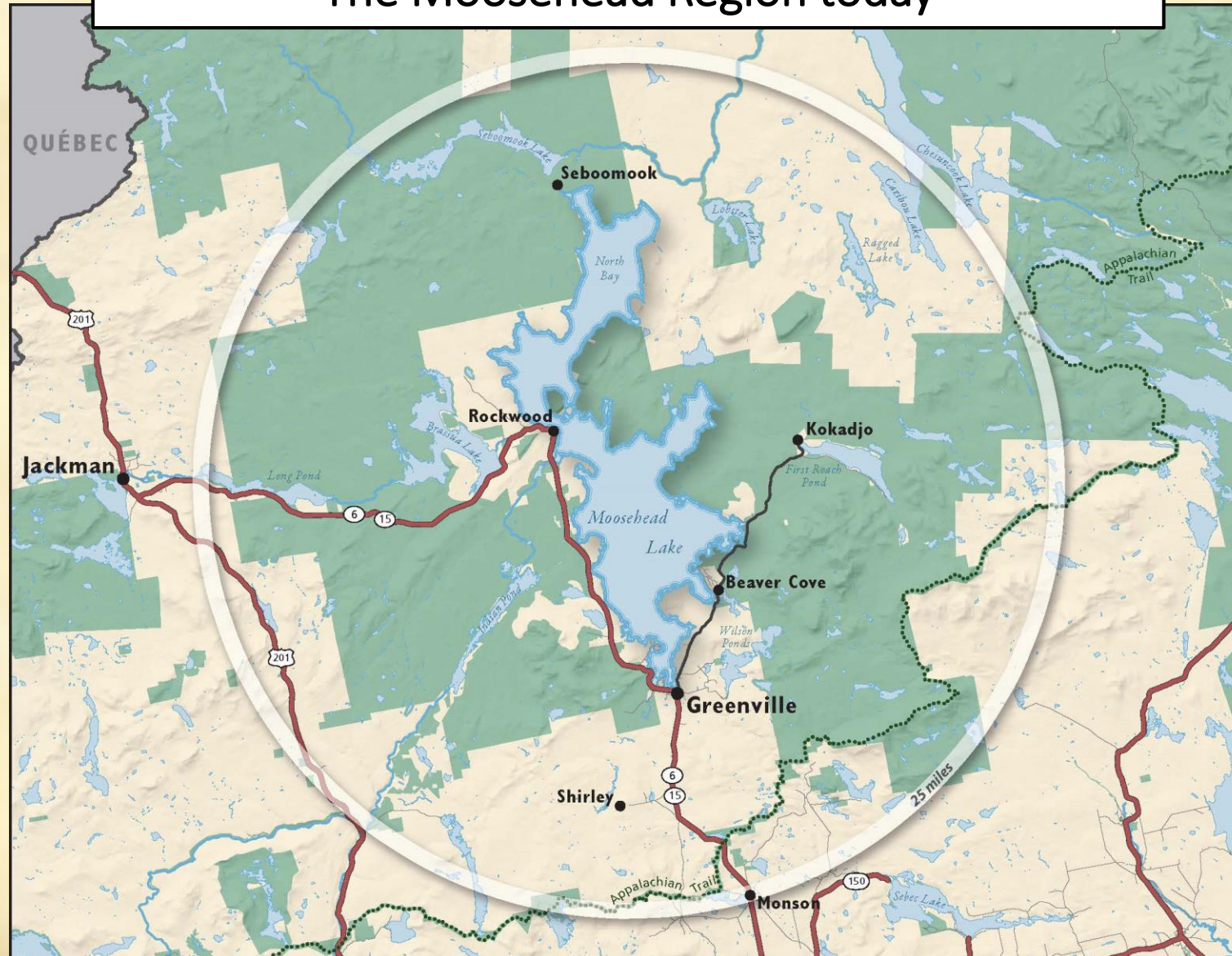
The Catalyst

The Landscape in 1996



The Catalyst

The Moosehead Region today



The Action



The Maine Woods Initiative

The Appalachian Mountain Club's Strategy for Land Conservation in the 100-Mile Wilderness:

- ❖ Landscape-scale conservation
- ❖ New outdoor recreation destination
 - ❖ Sustainable forestry
- ❖ Regional economic development, community partnerships and local environmental education



The Action



AMC Maine Wilderness Lodges

In 2018: Approximately 4,000 unique visitors, 10,000+ overnight stays
10-Month Operation. Peak Season Months: February-March & July-September
55% New England States, 35% Maine, 8% Other U.S., 2% International

AMC Visitor Spending In Moosehead Lake Region: 2003-2017 = \$1.6 Million

20% spend an overnight at another lodging property in Greenville;

25% visit a local historic site or cultural institution;

67% eat at local restaurants;

77% make purchases at local retailers

2017 Direct Visitor Spending in Local Economy = \$197,000

The Actions

Downtown Committee – VISION



Our Goal:

To energize & revitalize downtown Greenville for both residents and visitors thereby fostering more people to move here, open a business, vacation and spend their money here.

The Actions

Memory Benches

21 Benches and flower pots

Investment: \$21,000



The Actions

Attractive Trash Receptacles



The Actions

Downtown Greenville Master Plan

- Town of Greenville hired the Musson Group
- Downtown Plan Resulted



The Action

Northern Forest Center Façade Grant Program

After:



Before:



The Actions

Updating Town Ordinances



- Lighting Ordinances
- Zoning Ordinances
- Allowable Business Ordinances
- First & second floor uses

The Actions

Create an 'Artisan Village'



The Actions

Artisan Village Enhancements & Landscaping



The Actions



Moosehead Lake Artisan Village

Our Track Record So Far:

	Pilot 2017	2018	Estimate 2019	Long-term
Weeks Open	7	9	10	12
Cottages	2	4	4	6
Artists	5	20	25	40
Occupancy	71%	78%	80%	80%

The Actions

❖ Moosehead Lake Artisan Village

Key Program Components:

- Artisan Village Programming Committee
- Recruitment of artists
- Focus on building relationships with artists
- Complimentary and reduced-priced lodging
- Low fees and flexible requirements
- Marketing the program throughout the region
- Beautiful location and setting



The Actions

❖ Moosehead Lake Artisan Village

Challenges/Future Plans:

- Artists' sales revenue
- Long-term staffing
- Long-term location



The Actions

❖ Downtown Greenville Summer Music Programs

1) Expansion of Destination Moosehead Lake's Gazebo Concert series

2) New Thoreauly Entertaining! series

Total cost: \$8,275 for 2017 and 2018

\$3,425 for Gazebo Concert expansion

\$4,850 for new Thoreauly Entertaining! series

Revenue: 8 philanthropic donations



The Actions

❖ New Thoreauly Entertaining! Series

Key Program Components:

- Downtown *buzz*
- Performances
- Recruitment of Musicians
- Marketing the Program

Challenges/Future Plans:

- Long-term program ownership
- Expansion to Saturdays
- Funding



The Actions

WHY WAYFINDING???

- Key Priority in Moosehead Lake Branding Effort (by Roger Brooks International)
- Surveyed 1400+ people
- Economic Impact of Wayfinding:
 - More attractions lead to longer visitor stays
 - Increase in visitors numbers overall
 - Increased revenue for stores, lodging, restaurants, arts/cultural venues.
- “Comfort Level” in remote areas

The Action

COMMUNICATION, COMMUNICATION, COMMUNICATION!!

- Focused on the goals
- Met with all parties impacted:

Town Managers

Select Boards

Planning Boards

Code Enforcement Officers

County Commissioners

Maine Office of Tourism

Maine DOT

Community Members

Area Businesses

State of Maine Regional Park Services

Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands

Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

Moosehead Lake Economic Development Corp

Landowners/Managers:

Natural Resources Education Center

Weyerhaeuser

Brookfield

LIBRA Foundation

AMC

Individual Property Owners

Local Newspapers



The Actions

STEPS:

- Hired Axia Creative as wayfinding consultant (objective expert)
- Identified key attractions based on objective criteria:

Towns

Sections of Moosehead Lake

Public Boat Launches

Lake & Pond Fishing Access

River Fishing Access

River Boating Access

Hiking Trails

Swimming beaches

Snowmobile/ATV Trailheads

Non-motorized trailheads

Public Parking

Public Restrooms

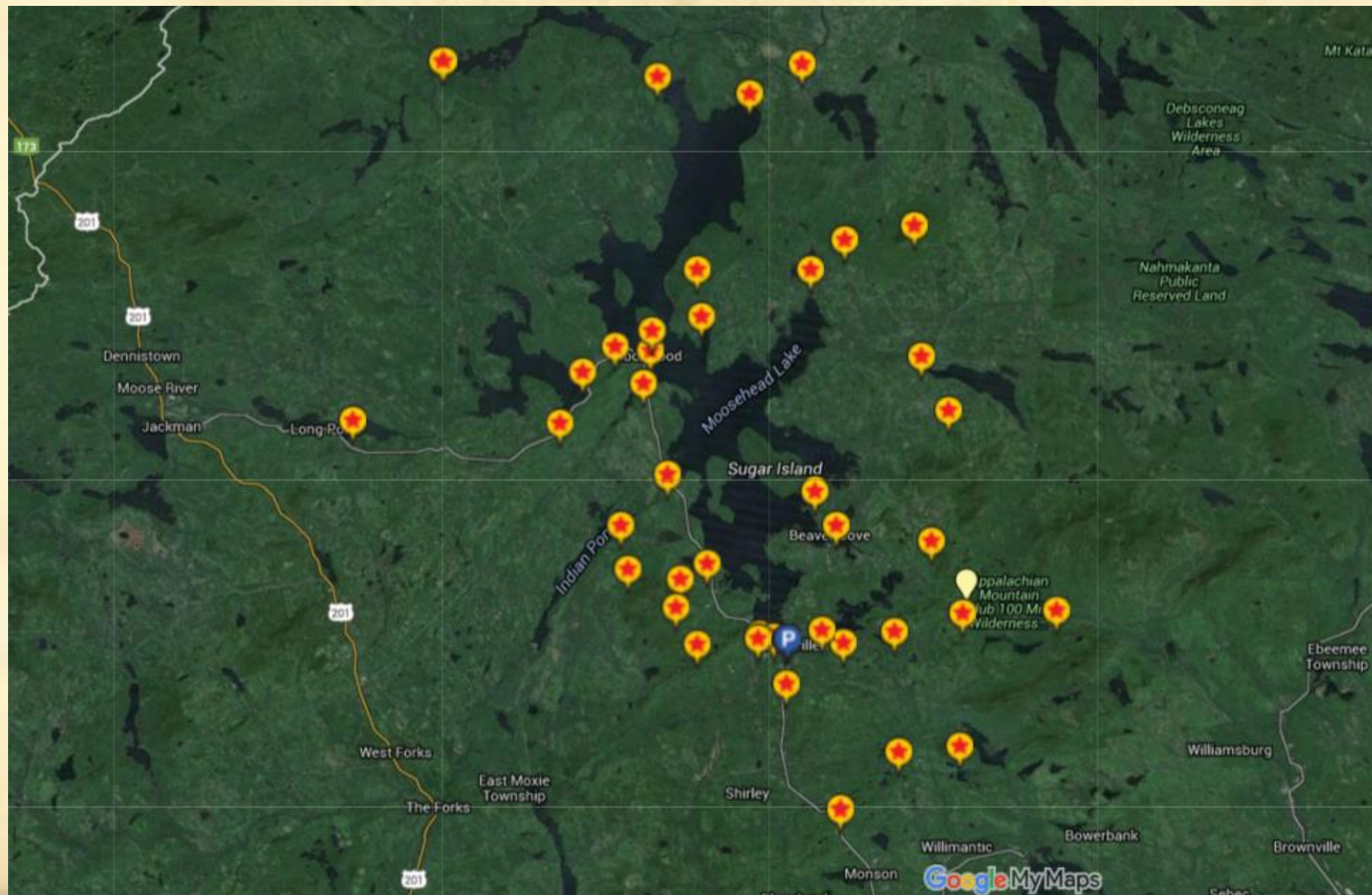
Airport

Museums

Historical Sites

Camping

The Actions



The Actions

STEPS (cont.):

- Met with Maine DOT to present goals and map of destination points
 - Brought key decision makers and support people from Moosehead Lake
 - Identified roads that fall under DOT jurisdiction
 - Gained rudimentary understanding of DOT regulations
 - Got buy-in to begin moving forward
 - Established DOT contact point for communication at every step
- Worked with Axia consultant to finalize sign designs
- Met with DOT to get approval of sign designs and locations

The Actions

STEPS (cont.):

- Issued RFP (MOT and DOT helped with a vendor list, plus locals)
- Checked references, visited manufacturing sites, reviewed previous jobs
- Met with landowners/municipalities to get approval on sign designs and locations
 - Obtained signed “permission slips” for DOT files
 - Negotiated contracts specifying ownership, liability, maintenance
- Tested prototype of sign panel (size of letters and font type)

The Actions



The Actions

STEPS (cont.):

- Burr Signs provided fabricated prototype sign for approval
- Allow 8-12 weeks for fabrication
- Identify all sign locations by GPS coordinates and photo
- Have Dig Safe verify locations prior to installation

The Actions

ROUGH TIMELINE

- October 2015 Started working with Axia, wayfinding consultant
- June 2016 Issued RFP to vendors
- August 2016 Selected Burr Signs as vendor
- Sept 2016 Gave go ahead to Burr to begin fabrication
- Nov/Dec 2016 Started installation
- WINTER (stopped installation)
- Sept 2017 Completed Phase 1 of installation
- Nov 2017 Completed Phase 2 of installation
- May 2019 Plan to install Information Kiosks
- FUTURE More signs on top half of the lake and toward Jackman

The Actions

BUDGET SO FAR:

- \$75K Wayfinding Consultant
- \$225K Fabrication and installation of 78 signs in 2 phases
- \$50K Information Kiosks and Business Map Stands
- 350K

FUNDRAISING:

- Counties (Somerset & Piscataquis)
- Corporate Donations
- Landowners
- Foundation Grants

The Actions

BEFORE



AFTER



The Actions

BEFORE



AFTER



The Actions

BEFORE



AFTER



The Actions

BEFORE



AFTER

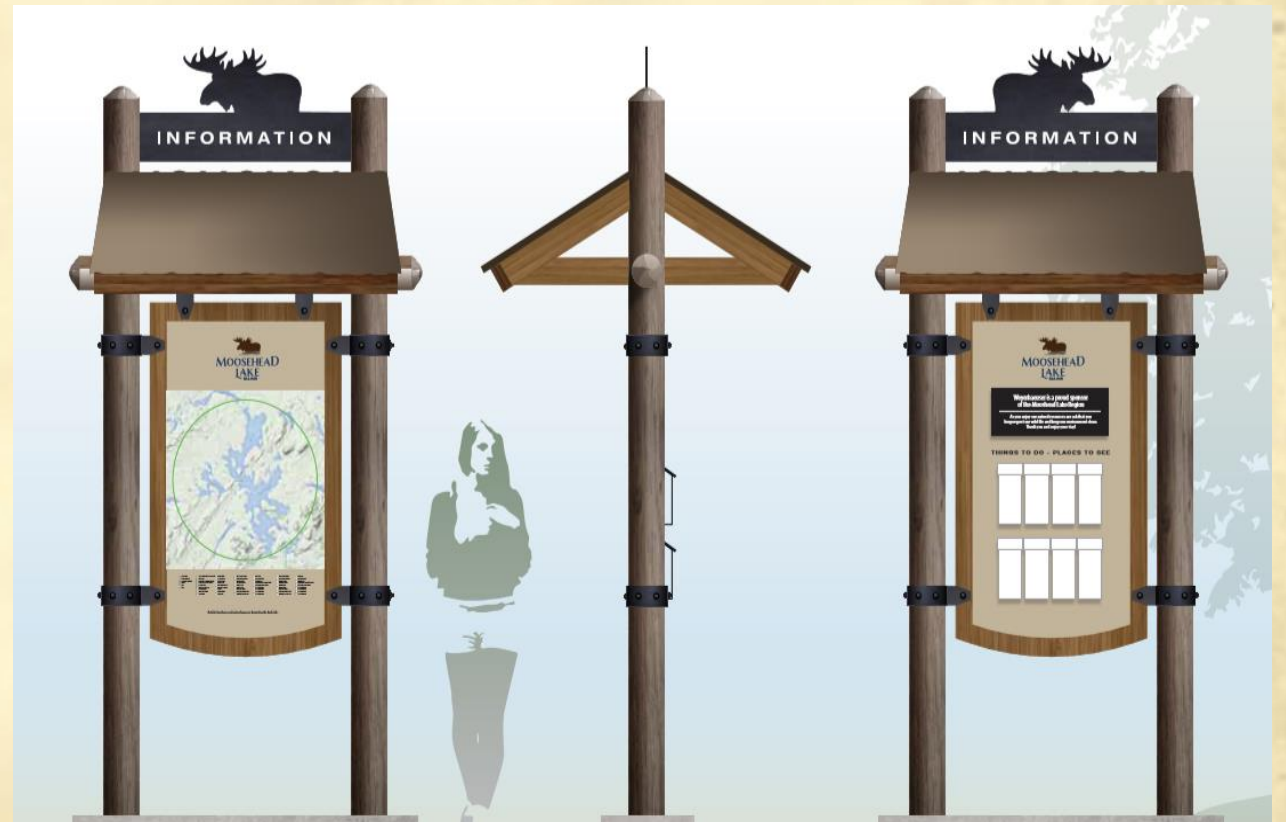


The Actions

BEFORE



AFTER



The Actions

WOUDDA COUDDA:

- Communicate with affected parties early and often (GOALS!!)
- DO NOT install signs in winter
- Know what signs look like with different numbers of message lines on them.
- DON'T RUSH THE DESIGN. It's easier to change things on paper than in the field.
- Design Consultant should use standard software like Excel (message schedule) and Google Maps (location plan) so you can make changes and own the process.

The Action

Community Destination Academy



Maine
VisitMaine.com



Moosehead Lake Region ANNUAL EVENTS



**Moosehead Lake Togue
Derby with Ricky Craven**
Weekend before Superbowl Sunday
NRECmoosehead.org or
Facebook NRECmoosehead

Wilderness Sled Dog Race
First weekend in February



Thoreau-Wabanaki Trail Festival
Fourth week of July
mooseheadhistory.org



Forest Heritage Days
Second Thursday-Sunday in August
forestheritagedays.org or
Facebook Forest Heritage Days

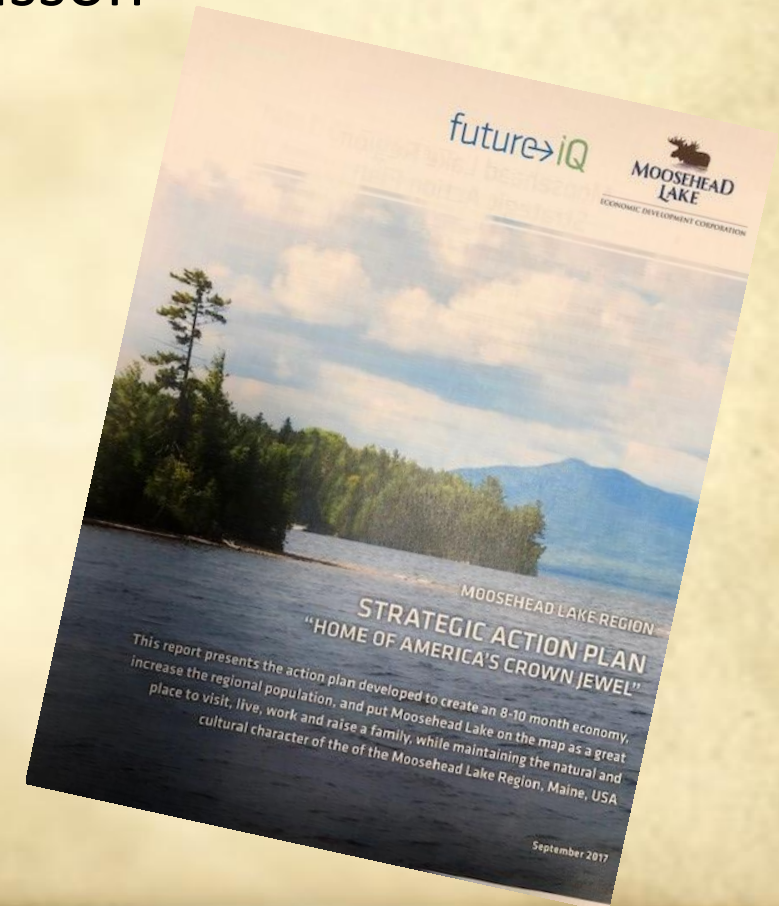
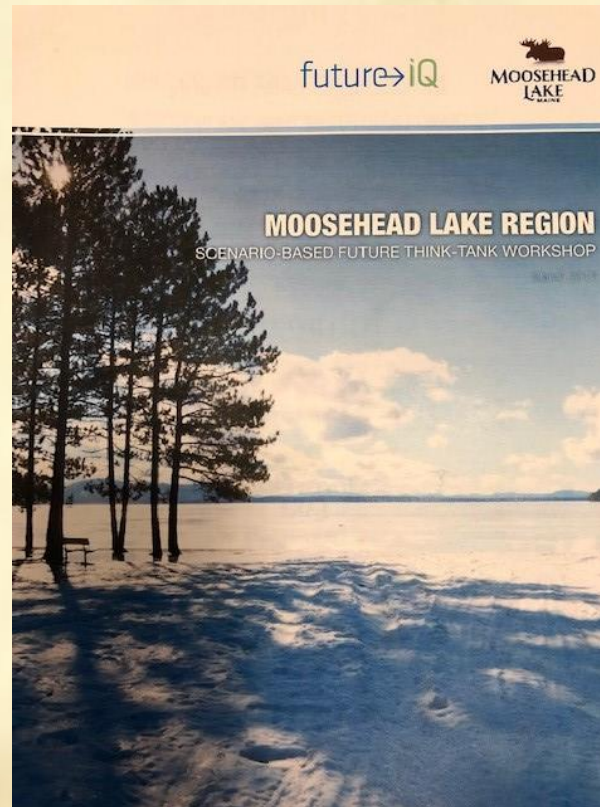
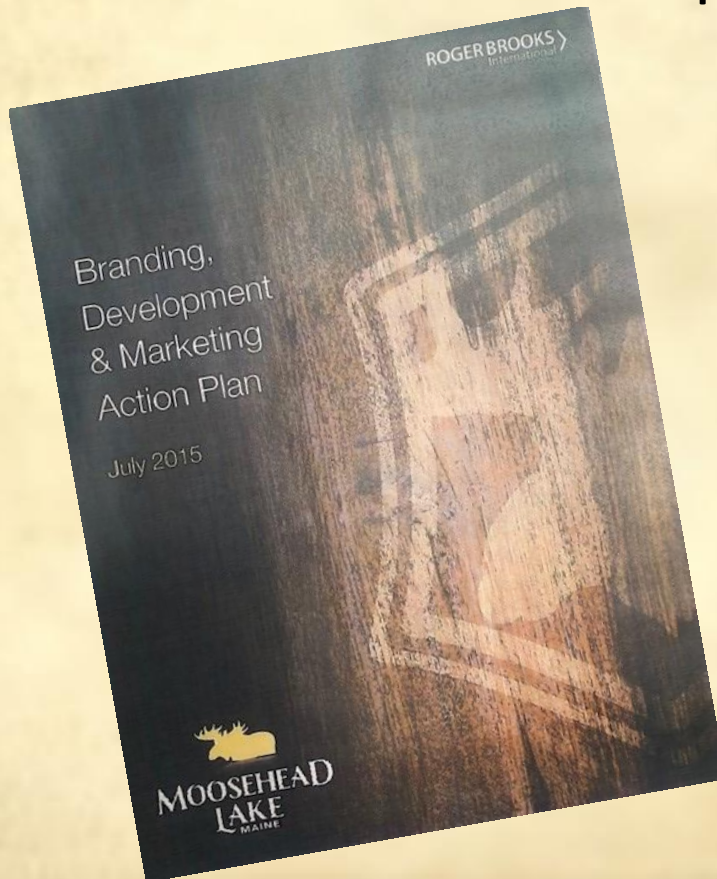
The Difference

- ❖ Local Engagement and Awareness
- ❖ Tourism Master Plan
- ❖ Downtown Plan
- ❖ New Business Owners & Investors
- ❖ Increased Business over the last 1-3 years



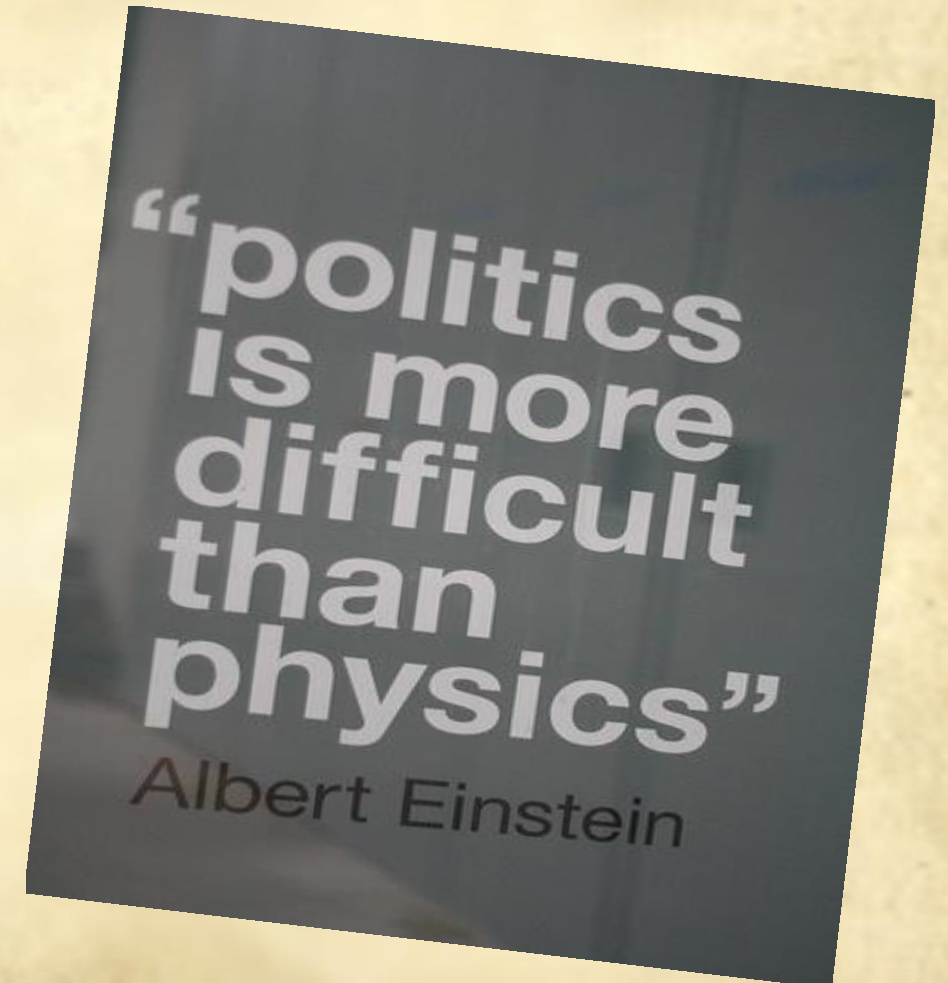
The Essentials

- ❖ Anchor Businesses – AMC, Weyerhaeuser
- ❖ Anchor Funding – Plum Creek now Weyerhaeuser
- ❖ Professional Expertise – Brooks, Future IQ, Musson



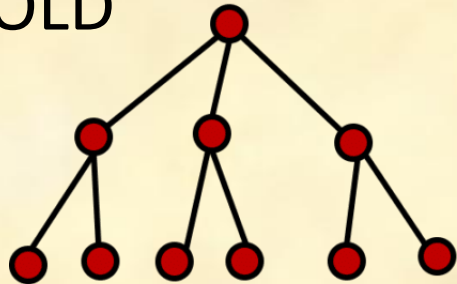
The Toughest Challenge

- ❖ Local Politics
- ❖ Organizational Capacity
- ❖ Getting things done efficiently

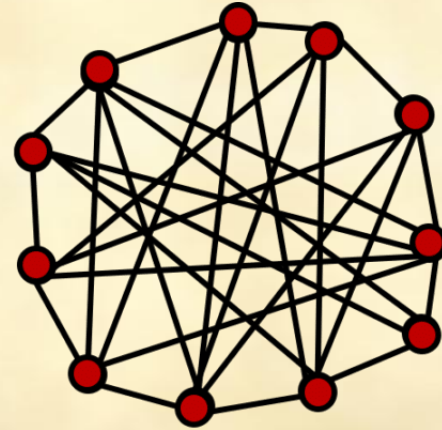


The Best Advice

- ❖ Build Grassroots up
- ❖ Stabilize/build key organizations first
- ❖ Get internal house in order – before you start marketing
- ❖ Deliver tangible products
- ❖ Be BOLD



“Top-down”



“Bottom-up”



Thank You!

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