



SAM NEWS

Official Publication of the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine

July/August 2008 - Issue 0804 - www.samcef.org

SAM News - July/August 2008 - Page 15

Forest Society of Maine Doing a Great Job

As avid sportsmen, we are all too aware of the great changes underway in Maine's woods. One of the greatest conservation challenges we face today is how to keep Maine's large tracts of woods and waters free from development and available for continued public enjoyment, and to do so respecting that these are largely private lands and working forests.

The Forest Society of Maine (FSM), a Bangor-based land trust, has figured out how to meet this challenge. FSM was created to serve as Maine's land trust for the North Woods—to protect and conserve Maine's forestlands, lakes, rivers, and mountains for their recreational, economic, cultural, and ecological values. It is an organization that fits well with SAM's own mission.

This group has accomplished great things since its inception in 1984. They have helped conserve nearly half-a-million acres of forestlands, much in township-sized blocks or larger where hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, hiking, camping and more will continue forever.

Five hundred miles of shoreline on more than 100 lakes and ponds and nearly a thousand miles of rivers and streams—including many high value brook trout waters—have been protected. FSM works primarily with conservation easements that embrace the values and traditions of Maine, including the continuation of

high-quality forest management and habitat protections.

These goals are assured through FSM's state-of-the-art easement oversight program using Bean boots on the ground and images from satellites in space.

Most recently, FSM has quietly but effectively stepped into a key role in the debate around Plum Creek's plans before LURC for their lands in the Moosehead Lake region. FSM's leadership in working with Plum Creek and others has been instrumental in bringing greater public benefit to that plan.

For example, the original plan proposed 11,000 acres of permanent conservation and no permanent guarantees for public access. Plum Creek's current plan offers 431,000 acres of permanent conservation and guarantees for public access. Much of that credit goes to FSM.

Like SAM, FSM is dependent on people who make contributions in support of its important work. FSM is a group deserving the support of every sportsman who has ever enjoyed a day in Maine's woods or on its waters.

Recently, a long-time FSM member and avid grouse hunter offered to match all donations to FSM received prior to July 1 from first-time supporters, as an invitation for other outdoor enthusiasts to join. FSM is a vital component to maintaining

Maine's great traditions of outdoor recreation. Please consider becoming part of this important organization. To learn more or to make a donation, visit www.fsmaine.org or call 207-945-9200.