

Bigelow Preserve

Flagstaff Twp, T3 R4 BKP WKR, Bigelow Twp, Dead River Twp

Vital Statistics

Size: 10,540 acres

Regulated: 4,341 acres

Non-Regulated: 6,199 acres

Upland: 10,331 acres

Forested Wetland (NWI): 71 acres

Non-Forested Wetland: 140 acres

Open Water: 20 acres

Roads: trails-23 miles

Biophysical Region: Mahoosucs/Rangeley
Lakes

BPL Region: West



Rare Species and Exemplary Natural Community Table for Bigelow Preserve

Common Name	Latin Name	S-RANK	G-RANK	State Status
<i>Exemplary Natural Communities</i>				
Acidic Cliff		S4	GNR	N/A
Grassy Shrub Marsh		S5	GNR	N/A
Heath Alpine Ridge		S2	GNR	N/A
Montane Spruce-Fir Forest		S4	G3G5	N/A
Northern Hardwood Forest		S4	G3G5	N/A
Raised Level Bog Ecosystem		S4	GNR	N/A
Subalpine Fir Forest		S3	GNR	N/A
<i>Rare Plants</i>				
Alpine Blueberry	<i>Vaccinium boreale</i>	S2	G4	SC
Alpine Sweet-grass	<i>Hierochloe alpina</i>	S1	G5	T
Appalachian Fir-clubmoss	<i>Huperzia appalachiana</i>	S2	G4G5	SC
Bigelow's Sedge	<i>Carex bigelowii</i>	S2	G5	SC
Boreal Bentgrass	<i>Agrostis mertensii</i>	S2	G5	T
Cutler's Goldenrod	<i>Solidago multiradiata</i> var. <i>arctica</i>	S1	G5T4	T
Dwarf Rattlesnake Root	<i>Prenanthes nana</i>	S1	G5	E
Fragrant Cliff Wood-fern	<i>Dryopteris fragrans</i>	S3	G5	SC
Lapland Diapensia	<i>Diapensia lapponica</i>	S2	G5	SC
Mountain Sandwort	<i>Minuartia groenlandica</i>	S3	G5	SC
Northern Comandra	<i>Geocaulon lividum</i>	S3	G5	SC
Silverling	<i>Paronychia argyrocoma</i>	S1	G4	T
<i>Rare Animals</i>				
None found				

Description

Extending over 3,000 feet from Flagstaff Lake (1140 feet) to West Peak (4150 feet), the Bigelow Ecological Reserve encompasses the highest elevational gradient of any of the 16 reserves. Its area of alpine ridge (171 acres) is second to the Mahoosucs among ecological reserves, and it supports over 3,100 acres of subalpine spruce-fir forest. Some of this sub-alpine forest has been harvested in the past, depending on forest type and accessibility. Nearly all of the sub-alpine type shows evidence of natural disturbance, spruce-budworm mortality and wind/ice damage. The Appalachian Trail traverses the eastern part of the ridge, and other hiking trails provide access from the south and west.

Operable mid-slope forests extend both north and south of the main ridgeline, affording opportunities to study the influence of aspect on forest characteristics. Most of the low to mid-elevation forests in the preserve were harvested several times in the last century. However, the reserve also supports small but good examples of two common matrix-forming natural communities, beech-birch-maple forest and montane spruce-fir forest. These stands show little evidence of past harvesting and support many trees over 110 years old.

Wetlands in and around the floodplain of Stratton Brook provide excellent examples of successional wetland systems from broad graminoid and shrub meadows and a convoluted mosaic of acidic fen, shrub swamp, and various graminoid and herbaceous meadows. All of the wetlands sampled in the 1990s had been influenced by beaver.

Resources

Bigelow Preserve Management Plan. 1989. Bureau of Public Lands, Department of Conservation, Augusta, Maine. 67 pp.

Calijouw, C. and S. Roeske. 1981. A natural resource inventory and critical areas survey of Bigelow Preserve. Bureau of Public Lands, Department of Conservation, Augusta, Maine. 127 pp.