

BAKER FOREST

The Bakers gave land, now called Baker Forest, to the DRA in January 2004. It consists of approximately 165 acres along River Road in the town of Newcastle-Lincoln County, Maine. The majority of the land, except a six hundred foot buffer set back from River Road, is in tree growth.

Description of land: Hard wood/soft wood mixed forest that contains old growth pine, spruce and hemlock. Rocky ledges can be found in the northwestern portion. A beaver pond and forested wetland can also be found on the property. Highest elevation is approximately 230 feet above sea level. Beaver pond is approximately 40 acres.

Timeline:

Nov.28, 1855: Daniel Hopkins to George Tukey

Nov.21, 1913: Edith Tukey to Almore Sprague

Almore Sprague to Charles D. Lyford

Nov. 9, 1921: Charles D. Lyford to Manfred Wyman

Nov. 5, 1923 Charles D. Lyford to Connie Wyman

Aug.21, 1942 Connie Wyman, Maine Society for Protection of Animals to Ross Hall

May 31, 1961 Elmer Bugbee (+5 heirs of Ross Hall) to Margaret Baker

Interview with Bob Baker:

The original property was on both sides of River Road and contained two houses. The property was left to the Maine Society for Protection of Animals by Connie Wyman. Ross Hall was a caretaker and purchased the land from the Maine Society for Protection of Animals. The Bakers purchased the property, minus the two houses. One house, currently occupied by Sis Phillips was once occupied by Marion Webber, who was a cook for Francis Perkins.

When the Bakers purchased this property it already was a tree farm started by Ross Hall. There was a shed on the property near the beaver pond that housed two horses. The roof of the shed collapsed during a heavy snowstorm and killed one of the horses who are buried on the property. The foundation of an old smokehouse is also located on the property.

Bob used the property mainly as a wood lot. He planted Spruce and tried to plant Red Oak but could not get the oak to grow. Bob said he would push acorns into the ground, but never got a tree. He also tried planting White Ash, but here again was not successful. There is plenty of Red Oak on the property from natural growth.

Bob cut Fir for pulp wood. They would bring a freight car to Newcastle station and load it with 50 cords of pulp wood. Bob said he was paid \$15/cord. Wood went to a specific mill, but Bob could not remember the name. He also cut hardwood, Birch, for the Diamond International mill in Jay, ME. Bob said he was paid good money for the hardwood.

Bob said that since he has owned the land the Ridge has been struck by lightening many times but never caused a fire. He also told us that in 1900 a major fire swept through the area and that is why there is so much Fir on the property.

When Ross Hall owned the property there was a cattle pound and open pasture land. The cattle pound was probably built around 1900. In the deed there is reference to the "old mast road". It came from Route 1 across by the beaver pond and is barely visible today. Bob does not feel that trees from his property were used for ship masts, but that they came from Alna or Sheepscot.

Bob does feel that timber from this property was used to fire the brick kilns that line the River. Bob has five kilns on his own property and it took 5 cords of wood to fire a kiln.

He knows of no Native American history on the property.