



Friends of Baxter State Park

Forever Wild

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF BAXTER STATE PARK
FALL 2011 VOL. 10 NO. 4

President's Column

by Barbara Bentley

In May, Friends of Baxter State Park became the first non-profit in Maine to support a feasibility study for a national park on lands east of the Park. After conversation at our Board meeting with Roxanne Quimby about her proposal to donate to the National Park Service land that she owns, and some she intends to acquire, we wrote to Senators Snowe and Collins, and to Representatives Michaud and Pingree, requesting that they ask Congress to authorize such a study.

The total land area Quimby hopes to convey is approximately 140,000 acres. The 70,000 acres between Baxter State Park and the East Branch of the Penobscot River would become a National Park, and an additional 70,000 acres east of the East Branch would become a National Recreation Area and include multiple uses such as hunting and motorized recreation. She proposes to endow her gift with up to \$40 million.

Her stated goals are to preserve much of this beautiful ecosystem in its natural state and enhance educational opportunities while creating a powerful engine for economic development in the region. She cites examples of other National Parks across the country where the economic activity generated by a national park has complemented the traditional industries such as logging or mining in that area and brought prosperity to the region.

Some of the land is yet to be acquired and much work is yet to be done in outlining details of how a National Park might benefit the citizens of the United States in general and of Maine

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Spirits not dampened by rainy weather, the MYWLP participants danced through the 9-day program. L to R, front: Co-leader Leah Titcomb, Kate Pontbriand, Francesca Governali, Marguerite Wisner, Kristina Alex, Sara Costello; back: Co-leader Will Ginn, Asa Reed, Jimmy Kenyon, Kevin Johnson, Keegan Donnelly, Lukas Temple.

2011 Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program Graduates Ten

At the end of their nine-day backpacking trip in Baxter State Park, ten exhilarated Maine high school students and their two trip leaders recounted the highs and lows of their wilderness experience. Jimmy echoed the sentiment of many others when he said, "The last week that I spent immersed in the Maine wilderness was one of the most memorable weeks in my life." Thank-you notes and journal entries they have since shared with us are testimony to the enormous success of the program.

In their own words, the students describe their new understanding of, and appreciation for, wilderness. The skills they've acquired have equipped them to travel, cook, and recreate in wilderness areas leaving minimum impact. Marguerite reports, "I

now have the tools to advocate for the wilderness, something I feel is essential to our very existence. I loved getting all the different perspectives on the Park from the experts. I now possess a more complete view of the Park, its value, history, and mission. This experience was extremely valuable to me, and it was lots of fun!"

Before the beginning of the program, the students read a number of books and did assignments in photography, geology, and tree identification; seventeen different specialists worked with the students during the program. Comments about the specialists include, "I loved having an astronomer work with us. It is something that will stay with me forever. I would have loved to have . . . even more time looking at the

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Friends of Baxter State Park is a 501(c)(3) organization working to preserve, support and enhance the wilderness character of Baxter State Park in the spirit of its founder, Percival P. Baxter.

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in particular. However, we believe there are potentially strong benefits for the region and for Baxter State Park. A conservation buffer on any border of Baxter State Park has great potential benefit, and the creation of this National Park on the Park's eastern boundary is likely to provide a major ecological and social buffer protecting its wilderness character.

At an August meeting in Millinocket, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, along with National Park Director John Jarvis, fielded questions and concerns about this national park proposal from an audience of over 300 people, explaining the various vehicles for creating a national park and emphasizing that using the 3-year feasibility study would assure the most participation and input from the people of the area. He said, and has subsequently repeated, that the offer of a gift such as this is something worth studying and encouraged folks to take a close look. We agree.



Roxanne Quimby presented her proposal for a national park to the FBSP Board at their May meeting. *– Photo © Jym St. Pierre*

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While enjoying the many wonders of Baxter State Park, it is easy to take for granted the hard work going on to make that experience happen and to preserve that opportunity for future generations. Your membership helps fund the important work of maintaining and conserving trails, training volunteers, advocating for protecting the wilderness, providing unique experiences for members, and cultivating future wilderness stewards.

Whether it is funding a survey of trail systems, monitoring legislation, attending authority meetings, creating publications, supporting training programs, conducting a science project, creating a wilderness program for teens, or one dozens of other projects, FBSP works tirelessly to support and promote the wilderness experience in the Park.

THANK YOU to all who have renewed for 2011! We have recently sent out renewal reminder notices to those who have not yet renewed their memberships this year. Memberships are due on March 1st of each year, but we welcome your renewal at any month that fits your schedule.

Current Membership:	662
Lapsed:	220
Total :	882
New since January 2011:	74



Hints for the Holidays

It's almost THAT time of year, when you wonder what to give the nature enthusiasts in your life for a gift. Let us make some suggestions! **How about the 2012 Baxter State Park Calendar?** This edition is more than 12 stunning photos and vignettes of the Park in its splendor, but also a resource of facts and information with a practical sized calendar for writing appointments and trip dates.

We also have hats, polar fleece vests, maps, books and more! Check out our website for more ideas. www.friendsofbaxter.org

Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program

(Continued from p. 1)



A day on the trail with Penobscot Cultural Educator Barry Dana and his family included making fire, plant identification, and bare feet. – Photo © Sara Costello

stars.” “Leave No Trace training was very helpful and ingrained in me a new awareness of the human impact on Baxter and how we can diminish it.” And on doing work on the North Peaks trail, “This opportunity was once-in-a-lifetime, many people die for the opportunity to give back to BSP, and we were able to! It really helped me have a greater connection to, and appreciation of, the Park and its Rangers.”

Sara gives testimony as to how a program like this can have an impact when she recounts the change she experienced: “People told me that this trip would change me. I hadn’t understood how that was possible until I read my journal entries from the beginning of the trip to the end. Here is part of my journal entry from day one: “Today I took a leap. I stepped into an adventure with little knowledge about what I was about to experience, and with whom I was going to experience it. I soon became familiar with my fellow traveling partners and got a hint of what the next eight days were going to entail. . . .” Eight days later: “. . . This trip was the first to teach me how to make expressing nature physically and mentally, while leaving no trace, a lifestyle and not just an event. Not only have I learned about the different forms of art and being environmentally friendly, but I have also learned more about myself. I didn’t give myself enough credit for the amount of strength and endurance I have to take risks and jump into a kind of journey like this one.”

More than just an enjoyable hike in Baxter State Park, the Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program is valuable training for

the next generation of wilderness stewards, thanks in no small part to the Chewonki wilderness leaders, described by one participant, “They were great leaders but could also step back and let us lead. They were amazing people, friends, and teachers.” Interest in the program is high; this year there were 60 applicants for the ten places. Good news is that, thanks to generous support of major donors, we have funding in place for future programs. Applications for the 2012 program are due in February. All current Maine high school sophomores and juniors are eligible to apply. Please see the FBSP website for more information.

Our Readers Write...

Katahdin Lake Wilderness Camps

Baxter State Park was such an integral part of my formative years in the 50s and 60s; yet, I had not been back in that area for the forty years that I have been living in the southwest. I joined a Friends *Walk in the Park* weekend over June 23rd and was so delighted to see the familiar peaks of Katahdin looming over the Katahdin Lakes where the most delightful wilderness camps exist for the pleasure of campers and hikers. The wilderness camp’s staff are extraordinary cooks and hosts along with the interesting and friendly people from the Friends of Baxter State Park. An extra bonus was the Friends of Baxter State Park discount at the Katahdin Lake Wilderness Camps that made the trip most affordable. I’m looking forward to more Friends adventures.

– Joellyn Pollock, Phoenix, AZ



Starting in the north of the Park, the MYWLP group covered many miles of back country trails.

– Photo © Sara Costello

Correction to Summer 2011 issue of *Forever Wild*

I read the Summer FBSP newsletter today. As usual, great work. One small correction: on the FBSP Annual Meeting piece, p. 9 re: my spring meeting address, you attribute the words “Although we know with full certainty. . . . Nature is in charge.” to PPB. Maybe, but I’m pretty sure they are my words, not Percival’s.

– Jensen Bissell, Milo, ME

Ralph Dolley remembered

You mentioned that in the Fort Mountain area the tote roads and trails are now overgrown. This reminds me of the summer of 1958 when I took my two younger brothers and a cousin on a hike to Russell Pond where we were befriended by Ralph Dolley. He took us up the side of Wassataquoik Mountain (I think it was) and he followed an old tote road that was not yet fully overgrown. I am sure it is now. When we got to the top, he showed us the barest remains of a sluice on the other side on which logs slide down into Wassataquoik Lake. We went around the shore of the lake and then back to Russell Pond. That was really quite a special hike. When we got back, Ralph asked us if we would pick the blueberries, he would bake a pie. So of course we picked them, and Ralph made pie crust from scratch and produced the sweetest blueberry pie I ever ate. You must have your own stories about him. I wonder if anything has been written about Ralph and his days as the Park Ranger at Russell Pond? I would like to know more about him and the stories of others who camped at Russell when he was there.

– Peter Clark, Chevy Chase, MD and Clark Island, Lower Togue Pond, ME

For sale at Camp Phoenix

After careful deliberation, Brad Burns and I have decided to list our camp (1-A) for sale. Camp Phoenix is a magical place indeed and I wish I were 20 years younger. . . I sure wouldn’t be selling it at that stage of my life. The camp is in first class condition, having been completely rebuilt in 1998. The entire building sits on steel I-beams and is as solid as a rock. North Woods Realty in Millinocket has the listing. Dan Corcoran of North Woods Realty is the broker and can be reached at 207-723-9086. The listing price for the furnished camp is \$139,000.

– George Watson

Tip for Techie-Hikers

There is a new website that helps you see what you are looking at from any peak. Just choose the peak from a long pull down list, or type in the lat/long and it will create a 360 view showing the surrounding peaks and land forms. Check out the view from Katahdin. www.heywhatsthat.com

– Sarah Holland, Camden, ME

Middle Fowler’s secret

Just thought that you would enjoy this picture of an unnamed falls located around 500

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This view of South Pogy from Wassataquoik Lake shows the scree slope Neff refers to in the article below, a scramble up which affords one a fabulous view of the Wassataquoik valley.

– Photo © Bill Bentley

Looking back... An Island to Oneself

– John Neff, Author of *Katahdin: An Historic Journey*

One of the most magical places in Baxter State Park is in the Park's backcountry, a five-mile backpack from Russell Pond. After an exhilarating hike through dense forest (stopping for a quick dip at Deep Pond) across a lonely esker in the middle of nowhere, and past ponds that beg to be fished, the hiker comes to the shore of Wassataquoik Lake. This enchanting realm includes the remarkable Green Falls a short distance from the southern shore, one solitary leanto campsite on an island that snakes narrowly into the middle of the lake, sandy beaches at the tip of the island, glorious sunsets behind the hills at the head of the lake, an interesting scramble up the scree slope of South Pogy Mt. (see photo at top of page) where the whole of the Wassataquoik Valley to Katahdin and the Katahdinauguoh is spread out in full view, a canoe set aside for the exclusive use of those who occupy the leanto, signs here and there of the rollicking lumbering era when the lake was full of logs in the spring before their journey down Wassataquoik Stream to the Penobscot River and the sea, and a persistent evening chorus of loons to top off the day. If you have not already camped at this matchless mountain lake, I recommend it highly. You will not be disappointed.

Got a story to tell? An idea to share? A response to an article or letter? An article of your own? We welcome input from all our members. See *How to Contact Us* on page 2 of the newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

– Editor

Sleuthing about Katahdin....

– David Little, *Art Detective*

Given the relative scarcity of 19th century illustrations of Katahdin, it is surprising and thrilling to see an early wood engraving of the mountain appear in a popular geography textbook in 1879!* (*See illustration below.*)

For generations of young students in grammar schools across the country and especially in New England, this illustration might have been their first introduction to Katahdin- a view of the mountain from Katahdin Lake (near the outlet) with Native Americans in canoes and ducks flying overhead. Who was the artist with initials SF? And how did the artist come to depict the mountain with such a degree of realism? The engraving is a splendid mystery in a new context-

intended for instruction.**

* David M Warren's *Common School Geography: New England Edition* 1879 published in thirty five editions 1863-1905 by Cowperthwait & Co, Philadelphia. With an additional section: *Special Geography of the New England States*. Engraved by Van Ingen & Snyder.

** Most of the early 19th century engravings from the Katahdin area were published in geological reports, guidebooks, and adventure stories. Their purpose was to illustrate a painting, a view, a physical feature, a specific place, or a surprising or humorous event.

The illustration of Katahdin below is courtesy of the Avery collection of the Maine State Library, Augusta. The geography book cited is courtesy of the Osher Cartographic Library, USM, Portland.

Editor's note: David Little is a landscape painter living in Portland. He is currently working on a book about Katahdin and the artists who have been inspired by the mountain and the region.



The original caption with this engraving reads: The highest mountains in the State are Mount Katahdin, 5200 feet; Mount Abraham, 3388 feet; Mount Blue, 2700 feet; Mars Hill, 2000 feet.

– Courtesy of the Avery Collection in the Maine State Library

Pitchin' In and Steppin' Out

Laurie Rich,
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I just spent five days enjoying the peaceful world that is the Park. The leaves were putting on a show of red, yellow, and orange. The night skies were filled with stars and northern lights. With fall upon us, the Park had taken on a different feel. The days were warm and the nights, crisp and cold. I remembered that, the spring, I had helped ready for visitors the cabin in which I was staying, and here it was getting towards the time to close up this same cabin for the winter. I took satisfaction in the work that was done by the volunteers throughout the season.

Since the last newsletter, over a hundred hours of volunteer work was completed. We split and stacked over three cords of wood, painted a cabin, several outhouses, lean-tos and picnic tables, cleared a few blow downs and moved gravel to fill in the potholes of paths to buildings in a campground. All this was with a thank-you to Steve Ellis, Rosemary Rodrigue, Sue Lussier, Brant Miller, Linda and Bill Lee, Maria and Marshall Haas, Doug Rich, and the Schmitt Family.

Sharing the work to complete a project for the Park has brought a special gift to me and I hope to the other volunteers – a great feeling of camaraderie. Each of us is now part of an extended family, sharing time working and having a meal or two. While I like the sense of accomplishment when a project is done, I think I like best the stories of families and Park adventures that fill the air as the paint goes on or a log is split.

And we aren't finished yet. There is still work to be done, a cabin to paint, a trail to be trimmed, work on the Tote Road, culverts to be cleaned out, campgrounds to be closed up for the winter, and on and on. So if you have some time and would like to take on a project, feel free to email or call me and I'll set it up. I hope each and every one who would like to volunteer gets to have the same experience that I have had this season.



L to R: Bill Lee, Doug Rick, and Linda Lee have almost finished painting a lean-to at Nesowadnehunk Campground.
– Photo © Laurie Rich

October 16 - 22 – VIP
Campground Closing

Walks in the Park with Friends

A “Walk” in the Park can be just that, a walk; but it can also be a backcountry camping trip, a mountain ascent, a guided geology tour, a stroll to a bog with a biologist, or a paddle. On each trip, participants are free to take part in all or as few activities as they wish. So if you just want to relax and wait for a moose to stroll by, take a leisurely walk, or you want to charge up Katahdin, you'll find there is something to meet all levels of enthusiasm and fitness.

Each year, a few members of Friends of Baxter State Park make the journey to Millinocket on Opening Day, the day after Martin Luther King Day, and stand in line in sub-zero weather to make reservations at various places for these Walks in the Park. Cabins, bunkhouse space, lean-tos – we get some of each lined up for each season, in the north and in the south of the Park. Most trips are two or three nights, but some are shorter day trips. Some are accessible by car, some require a short hike in, and a few are in the backcountry.

In 2011, we skied to Katahdin Lake, and later spent the Warm Winter Weekend at Twin Pines on Millinocket Lake. In June, we hiked to Katahdin Lake; in August, camped at South Branch Pond, and in September, spent three nights at Chimney Pond.

The activities change each year so let us know soon where you'd like to go in 2012! Contact Board member Mike Stillman at poepaddy@hotmail.com or us at info@friendsofbaxter.org



L to R: Nancy Wright, Lisa Neely, and Barbara Bentley pause on the Saddle Trail on their way to the peak in the rain.

– Photo © Susan Mulherin

Walk in the Park at Chimney Pond

Susan Mulherin, President of Friends of Mt. Carleton in New Brunswick, joined her sister Nancy Wright, Lisa Neely, Bill and Barbara Bentley, Jill Ippoliti and her daughter for what might be the wettest trip to Chimney Pond in recent memory. On trips to the summit and to Blueberry Knoll, ever optimistic, our mantra was, “It's getting brighter, don't you think?” Rain or shine, Chimney Pond is a great place to be.

Our Readers Write...

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feet from the Middle Fowler south campsite. It was taken on a trip just over two weeks ago (September 11). I call it Hidden Falls because in years past I have met campers who have stayed overnight at the camp site and still did not know that the waterfall was there. I have also talked to Park employees who were unaware of the falls (and some who were). The source of the water for the falls is on the north side of Traveler mountain, not upper Fowler Pond as most people would think.

Last year we dropped a line over the falls and measured it at more than 60 feet in height. Usually the water flows just a few feet down the dry wash to Middle Fowler before disappearing underground. This year the channel had water all the way to the pond and the falls itself was just amazing.

I have been going to Middle Fowler off and on for between 25 and 30 years. It is my favorite Baxter destination. Thanks for being there.
— *Bill Reitsma, Orrington, ME*



Hidden Falls at Middle Fowler may not be on the map.
— *Photo © Bill Reitsma*

Trails End Festival

Just a quick note to express my personal thanks, and as a member of the Trails End Committee our thanks, for your participating in the festival and specifically the kayak event. The participation of Friends of Baxter certainly helped make this trip most enjoyable. This paddling event was designed around the premise that there is so much more to do in and around the Katahdin area. We put in near the spot where Thoreau portaged a leaky white man's canoe around the torrents then flowing relentlessly down both Millinocket Stream and the West Branch. Our trip up the West Branch showed some of the power of that river; Thoreau was wise to have portaged around Grand Falls. Perhaps next year we may recreate the next leg of his travel through Millinocket.

— *Charlie Cirame, Millinocket, ME*

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September's Walk in the Park Features Forestry and Geology Tours

The "Walk in the Park" at South Branch Pond featured a tour of the Scientific Forestry Management Area (SFMA) led by its Resource Manager, Richard Morrill. The highlight of the tour for Friends' Board member Mike Stillman was the opportunity to operate the single-grip fixed-head processor under the watchful tutelage of its operator, Clint Morrow. Morrow and his nephew, Corey, constitute the two-member crew from Pelletier Brothers, Inc. of Millinocket that is under contract with Baxter State Park to harvest in the SFMA.

Mike's enthusiasm after his exhilarating experience was captured in the following remark: "I will have trouble wiping this smile off my face for a week." Mike described Clint, who started logging by horse with his father, as a skilled operator who handles the processor with "surgical efficiency" while minimizing damage to the surrounding forest. Mike also reports that Clint takes great satisfaction in adjusting his harvesting practices to the rigorous sustainability requirements set by Baxter State Park.

The processor has three tasks: fells the tree, de-limbs the stem, and cuts the stem into desired lengths, e.g., sawlogs or pulp. According to Rick Morrill, the harvested trees are de-limbed in the woods so that the slash and associated nutrients stay on site and are available for use in armoring machine trails to reduce potential ground compaction and other soil damage. The forwarder, operated by Corey Morrow, moves the cut logs from the woods to the roadside and sorts them into different piles based on product type and destinations.

Mike described his time at the helm as being part of "a choreographed ballet."



Working up to a big smile, Mike Stillman gets a thrill in the cockpit of the processor in the SFMA.
— *Photo © Bill Bentley*



Bob Johnston gives an overview of the Park's geology before setting out for N. Traveler and the down South Branch Brook.
— *Photo © Bill Bentley*

Who says geology isn't interesting? Board member Bob Johnston of the State Geological Survey led a field trip focusing on the origins of the Katahdin granites and the rhyolites of the Traveler. Both are igneous rock formed by the solidification of molten lava; however, the cooling and solidification of the Katahdin granites occurred below the earth's surface, hence their characterization as intrusive igneous rock.

An example of one of the Katahdin granites is what we commonly refer to as the "pink granite" found at the summit. In contrast, the Traveler-Rhyolite is of volcanic origin with the lava flowing to the surface where it solidified to become what is known as extrusive igneous rock. The resulting six-sided columnar joints of the Black Cat formation are similar to those of the Giants Causeway in Northern Ireland and the Palisades along the NJ side of the Hudson River.

Participants in the three-day "Walk in the Park" were joined on the field trip by BSP Resource Manager Rick Morrill, his wife Dawn, and her parents Diane and Ross Morgan of Vermont.

To learn more about Katahdin's fascinating bedrock and glacial geology, obtain a copy of the new edition of *A Guide to the Geology of Baxter State Park and Katahdin* by Doug Rankin and Dabney W. Caldwell (ME Geological Survey, 2010). It is available through FBSP, BSP, or the Maine State Geological Survey.

— *Howard Whitcomb*

A Love Affair with the Park

Books mentioned in this article:

- *A Walk in the Woods* (1999) by Bill Bryson
- *My Wilderness: East To Katahdin* (1961) by William O. Douglas
- *The Call of Katahdin: Life in Werler's Woods* (2003) by Ed Werler
- *Lost on a Mountain in Maine* (1978) by Donn Fendler as told to Joseph B. Egan
- *To Katahdin: the 1876 Adventures of Four Young Men and a Boat* by George T. Sewall
- *Katahdin: An Historic Journey* (2006) by John W. Neff

It was not Thoreau who inspired our book group to spend an October weekend at Baxter State Park, but rather the quixotic author of *A Walk in the Woods*. Bill Bryson set out with a Snickers-toting sidekick to walk the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine, first having read and catalogued gruesome accounts of bear maulings and other mishaps that might befall a hiker. His quest interrupted several times, he manages to hike non-contiguous segments covering a third of the trail: 870 miles, but with enough material for a 270 page paean. From one promontory he recounts "It was so beautiful I cannot tell you. That this boundless vista represented but a fragment of the Appalachians' full sweep, that under my feet there lay a free and exquisitely maintained trail running for 2200 miles through hills and woods of equal grandeur, was a thought almost too overpowering to hold. I don't recall a moment in my life when I was more acutely aware of how providence has favored the land to which I was born."

Most accounts of the Maine woods, and in particular of Baxter State Park and Mt. Katahdin read like fond if not passionate love stories. "Katahdin has been like a haunting melody since the day in the late twenties when I first saw it against a buttermilk sky," wrote Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas. Douglas was a regular at the park for several decades, joining artist Jake Day of Damariscotta for the early summer salmon-fly hatch. *My Wilderness: East To Katahdin* chronicles his relationship with the woods, rivers, mountains and lakes that were vital parts of his life. "There is poetry for me in the talus slopes of Katahdin," he wrote of his favorite mountain.

We arrived at our Daicey Pond cabin with plans to hike, read, eat and relax. Over the weekend we climbed Sentinel Mountain, sampled the Ap-

palachian Trail on our way to the falls on Nesowadnehunk Stream, and hiked the old tote road into Katahdin Lake Camps. The October air was cold and clear, the yellow and ochre foliage on the trails a warm embrace.

We brought a canvas bag of books and considerably more food than we needed for three days. Around the cabin's wood stove we ate skillet-toasted corn bread with our tea, and read the 1876 travelogues of the Sewall brothers and their cousin of Old Town. Seeking adventure, they traveled for fifteen days by foot and flat-bottomed boat from Greenville up Moosehead Lake and down the west branch of the Penobscot River to Katahdin, before continuing on the Penobscot back to Old Town. "We carried with us . . . fifty pounds of flour and twenty pounds of salt pork, as a foundation whereon to build breakfast, dinner and support on the way; and for less substantial material, a sufficient quantity of sugar, tea, cornmeal, molasses, salt, pepper, beans, cheese, and enough cooked food to last a day or two until we should be fairly into the wilderness." George Sewall's chronicle of their adventures was serialized at the time in the Bangor newspaper, and published as a book in 2000 by Tilbury House.

Two months after the Sewalls' trip to the North Woods, the man whose name would become synonymous with wilderness preservation in Maine was born. Percival Proctor Baxter began purchasing parcels of land in 1930, and for the next 32 years devoted his considerable energies and personal wealth to acquire and preserve over 200,000 acres for the park that would bear his name. Many excellent accounts of Baxter's life and "magnificent obsession" have been written. Our bookgroup poured over gems from John Neff's *Katahdin: An Historic Journey*, especially enjoying the histories of the sporting camps including our Daicey Pond cabins. We read that in August 1939, 150 people gathered at our campground under the auspices of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy to celebrate the completion of the AT and its extension from Mt. Washington to Mt. Katahdin.

Donn Fendler's *Lost on a Mountain in Maine* is a different kind of love story. In July 1939, twelve-year old Fendler was lost for 9 days in the wilderness

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Our Readers Write.... (cont. from p. 6)

North Peaks Trail

A decade ago, when the Park had decided to discontinue the North Peaks Trail, I wrote Buzz, lamenting that decision and observing that "The North Peaks Trail is remarkable for its spectacular views of the basins and the rest of the Park, and for its solitude. In contrast to the heavily used trails up Katahdin that can be choked with hundreds of climbers on a summer day, the North Peaks Trail is an opportunity for a quiet climb, enjoying the natural beauty and wild-life of the Park. There are no shouts by raucous adolescents trying to create the perfect echo, no jostling hikers lacking basic trail courtesy, no dislodged rocks rolling down, no ruts in the trail, no need for "Please Stay on Trail" signs."

The exclamation point to this summer's week in the Park was the decision of the Park to reopen the North Peaks Trail, something that has been a focus of Friends. Our party spent a day on "corridor definition," removing sections of blow downs that had been cut by a chainsaw crew, and using clippers and handsaws on brush and overhanging branches. And next summer, we'll plan to hike the circuit from Russell Pond up the North Peaks Trail to Hamlin Peak, and then down to Davis Pond and back to Russell Pond.

— John Mirick, Worcester, MA

Wassataquoik Stream

Aah . . . the Wassataquoik.. Katahdin is majestic, and the Knife Edge and Chimney Pond are spectacular, but unfortunately, they are all heavily used. In contrast, much of the Wassataquoik is wild and untamed. . . . It would be a positive step if someday the land all the way down Wassataquoik Stream to its junction with the East Branch could be acquired and added to Baxter State Park. The deep wagon ruts of the old tote road can still be found in the woods on the north side of the stream. An historic route could be turned into a trail from "Old City" on downstream. Also old trails that once ran from Katahdin Lake to the Wassataquoik tote road could be reopened. I'll never see these places again, but future generations would surely appreciate the opportunity to enjoy the lower section of the watershed.

— Bob Richardson, Walpole, NH

We welcome letters and photos from our readers. Please give us your name and address and aim for 150 word limit. See How to Contact Us on p. 2. Thank you.
— Editor



North Turner comes into view over Russell Pond as weather breaks, welcome sight during stretch of rainy days. – Photo © Bill Bentley

Update from the Park

by BSP Park Director Jensen Bissell

The summer has passed in a flash in Baxter State Park. Visitor use levels had been similar to 2010 until the rainy weather of August slowed activity. To date, Park Rangers have worked on a number of minor rescues but fortunately, no extensive searches or carries.

Earlier this summer, Resource Manager Rick Morrill led the effort on the third Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) sustainable management certification audit of the Scientific Forest Management Area (SFMA). FSC Certificates must be renewed every five years; the SFMA was first certified in 2001. The certification audit is a three-day affair including a day for the audit of administrative and management documents and a day in the forest to audit field operations. The effort was very successful and the SFMA now holds a renewed certificate as a sustainably managed forest as measured by the rigorous FSC regional standards.

On August 20, the comment period closed on the Draft Baxter State Park Management Plan. Many thoughtful comments were received, and we would like to thank the various members of Friends of Baxter State Park for taking the time to carefully review the draft plan and forward comments. We will begin work on the second draft later this fall with a target date of March 2012 for the completion of the next revision to the draft plan.

This summer marked the second summer of visits from crews from the Natural Resources Conservation Service working on examining soils in the Park for the development of a current soils map for the Park. The work is part of a larger project to map the soils of Piscataquis County. Under a careful and specific agreement, the crews, led by State Soil Scientist Tony Jenkins, examined soils on the Tableland as well as

remote areas with pending proposals for new trail development. This work will yield information that will benefit future planning efforts in the Park. A more complete summary of the work should be available sometime in 2012.

Thanks to the support of Friends of Baxter State Park, we were also successful this summer in gathering almost a complete set of trail inventory data for all Park trails. Andy Pelletier and Patrick Aldrich formed the strong-legged two-person team that gathered extensive data on drainage structures, steps, bridges, bog bridging and other trail features on Park trails. The work of these two dedicated trail interns was documented by Bill Green in a *Bill Green's Maine* piece aired earlier this summer. Trail Supervisor Paul Sannicandro hopes to gather data on the remaining Katahdin trails this fall. The dataset acquired will prove invaluable in helping the Park effectively plan and implement maintenance work on our

extensive trail system. We will be spending time this winter evaluating the data, and we will be displaying the preliminary results by the spring of 2012.

In addition to the Trail Inventory project, the summer proved to be another successful summer for trail work including the work conducted by Maine Conservation Corps crews supported by the Friends of Baxter State Park both directly and through a Recreational Trails Program grant. This work has been very helpful in continuing the Park's effort to address erosion and trail maintenance problems on some of the Park's most heavily hiked trails including the Abol, Helon Taylor, Marston, and Hunt Trails.

As we move toward the close of the camping season on Saturday, October 15, we are preparing for our last major project of the year – the completion of the restructuring work at the Foster Field Group Camping area. This last phase will include the realignment of the Park Tote Road to place the Group Area on the east side of the Tote Road. We hope to complete this work sometime between October 18 and 28, and the work will likely involve the closure of the Tote Road at this location for one or two days. When the work is completed, we believe this popular group campground will be safer, quieter, less dusty, and more enjoyable to Park campers. After this work is completed, we will be dusting off the cross-country skis and getting ready for snow!



Quarrying rock to stabilize trails above the tee line is time-consuming and technical work. The Park's trail crews "move mountains" during the course of the summer. – Photo © Park Staff

Need reservations?

Go to the Baxter State Park website at baxterstateparkauthority.com

Under Camping and Reservations, click on CAMPSITE AVAILABILITY to plan your trip. Then call or write Park HQ's.

Check on up-to-date trail conditions by calling the newly established Hiker Info Line at 207-723-4636.

Day Use Parking Reservations are now available on Park website or at Park HQ by calling 207-723-3877 (DUPR).

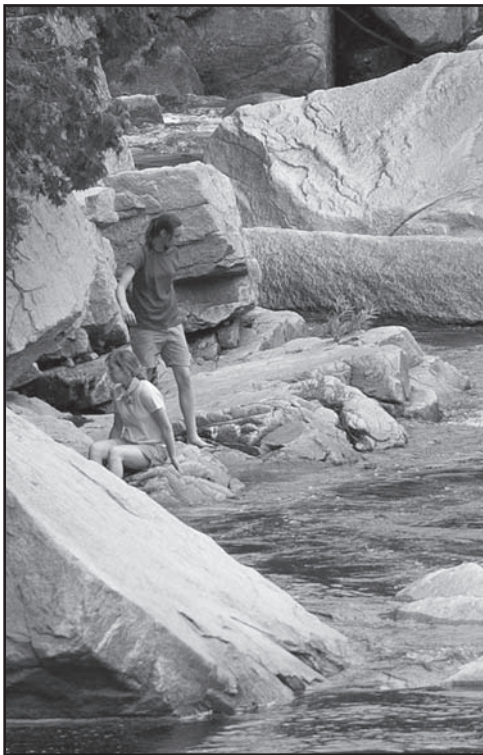
Love Affair *(continued. from p. 7)*

around Katahdin. I read that book each year, as much for the cautionary tale as to witness again the strength and comfort the young boy derives from his love for his parents, which along with the crucial outdoor skills learned from the Boy Scouts and his daily prayers, sustains him throughout his ordeal. We read aloud the final chapter, in which the emaciated boy stumbles out of the woods, and finally comes upon a camp that isn't abandoned.

Less well known, *The Call of Katahdin: Life in Werler's Woods* is, next to Douglas's book, my favorite love letter to the Maine wilderness. In 1947 Ed Werler and his wife pack everything into their ten-year old Plymouth coupe and leave New Jersey for the wilds of Maine. From Fire Warden on Daicey Mountain to ranger at Chimney Pond, with glimpses into his role as guide for the much revered Douglas and Jake Day's "Rangers", Werler recounts the hard but satisfying work and life in the Maine woods.

Our last morning we rose early, pulled on wool hats and, wrapped in blankets, went down the edge of Daicey Pond to gaze up at Katahdin as the sun rose. We too were smitten.

— Leslie Bird, *Boothbay Harbor, ME*



L to R: Catarina Ruksznis and Edna Aguilar are first cousins and the third generation of a family tradition of camping a week at Russell Pond, in lean-to #3, each year for the last 51 years. Here they weigh the virtues of a swim at Grand Falls of the Wassataquoik, a Monday afternoon ritual. — Photo © Bill Bentley



At Boody Brook Outlet, looking out towards Matagamon Lake, the campsite is on the distant peninsula on the right. — Photo © Charlie Jacobi

“Grand” Camping at Boody Brook

I slipped the canoe out of the launch area and slid under the footbridge at Trout Brook Farm. Kingfishers chattered at my passage and practiced avoidance measures. The 6-day old remnants of Hurricane Irene carried me quickly downstream to Grand Lake Matagamon. There I hung a left and looked back studiously so I could locate the Trout Brook outlet on my return. A tall but scraggly white pine served nicely for this purpose. I had last paddled the lake many years ago but had never camped on it, so this trip was as good as new. *Destination:* Boody Brook Campsite. *Weather:* sunshine and light winds.

The East Branch of the Penobscot River was dammed in the 1880s to create the lake. Before the “Grand” Lake, I suppose there was First and Second Lake, as these names still appear on many maps. There is a muddy, shallow section between them requiring some careful navigation to avoid running aground. Depending on the water level, you might have a longer paddle than I did this Friday before Labor Day, when I was able to stick reasonably close to the southern shore.

Compared to the hiker's mountain paradise in the rest of Baxter State Park, paddling Grand Lake Matagamon is like being in another world — a water world of course. Quiet prevailed. Only one float plane flew close overhead over the two days I was out. A bald eagle flew overhead, too, quietly of course, and a flotilla of mergansers developed an allergy to me, keeping their distance and then paddling away. I passed a couple of loons as well. This was not the Tableland.

Now it was time to hug the shore looking for the site. No worries. There's the sign. I'd been paddling less than two unhurried

hours. Then my very own landing beach of shingled rocks appeared. Sweet. Before landing, I turned the corner around a rocky bluff and paddled into the still-water inlet for Boody Brook itself. A loon and her now supersized chick occupied this lovely spot. They allowed me to explore a little before I paddled back to the beach and landed to set up camp.

After setting up the tent, I hung a bear line for my food, with some difficulty, between a couple of trees. A picnic table and a very new privy made these accommodations seem plush! And my beach was perfect for swimming in the warm afternoon sun. A few late-season mosquitoes could not dampen my enthusiasm.

After a pleasant night, my paddle back was uneventful, if slightly damp, and highlighted by watching the raindrops bounce off the water and seeing a couple of great egrets. The water level had dropped overnight, but I still found my way, running aground only once in the shallows.

Boody Brook Campsite comes highly recommended. The ambiance is stellar. It's an isolated but easily accessible site. As in business, it's all about location, location, location. Maybe it's busier in the summer or on the weekends, but I had not seen another boat of any persuasion. Some modest paddling and navigation skills and a few dry bags are all you need. You can rent a park canoe as I did. The next time all the frontcountry sites are full, book Boody, or another campsite on the lake. I'm sure you'll find it just grand. — Charlie Jacobi, *FBSP Board Member and backcountry camper (See his photo on p. 10.)*

Friends of Baxter State Park
P.O. Box 609
Union, ME 04862-0609

We're looking for new Friends!

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_____ \$ 500	Katahdin Club
_____ \$ 250	Knife Edger
_____ \$ 100	Hamlin Peaker
_____ \$ 50	Sponsor
_____ \$ 30	Family
_____ \$ 25	Individual

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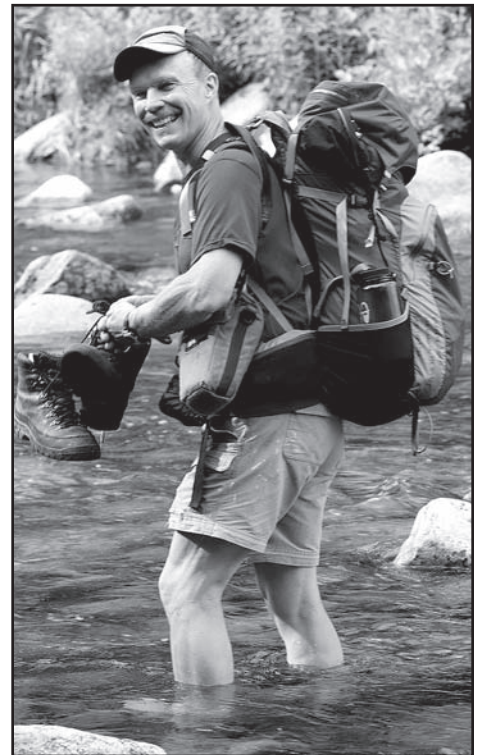
Thank you!



L to R: Sisters Nancy Wright and Susan Mulherin, seen here on dock at NEOC on Millinocket Lake, didn't know this might be the last view they'd have of the mountain they'd climb during the *Walk in the Park* at Chimney. – Photo © Bill Bentley



BSP Resource Manager Rick Morrill, accompanied by SFMA interns Eli Shank and Steve Allen, gave a very informative tour of the SFMA for *Walk in the Park* participants at South Branch Pond in September. An article about the SFMA will appear in the Winter 2012 issue of *Forever Wild*. Be sure to read about Mike Stillman's forestry adventures on p. 6 of this issue. And can you name the handy forester's gadget Rick has in his hand in the above photo? – Photo © Bill Bentley



Yes, it's cold. Charlie Jacobi fords the Wasataquoik en route to Russell Pond in early August. Why has he loosened the belt on his pack? – Photo © Bill Bentley