



**Policy Statement
Friends of Baxter State Park
East Branch Lands
Adopted November 8, 2004**

1. Issue: Conservation of lands east of Baxter State Park between the Park and the East Branch of the Penobscot River (the East Branch Lands).
2. Background: It has long been recognized that development, unsustainable timber harvesting, or other incompatible uses in lands adjacent to BSP will have an adverse impact on the Park. BSP has acquired lands southerly of the original park and the state and conservation organizations have partially conserved lands southerly and westerly of the park. The north is protected by the SFMA and the lakes. The east is unprotected other than lands owned by Elliotsville Plantation, Inc. a private foundation of Roxanne Quimby. Logging on unprotected lands especially threatens park resources.
3. Friends Policy Position. The Friends of Baxter State Park believe that the conservation of the East Branch lands, especially the area around Katahdin Lake, is of paramount importance. FOBSP supports efforts to conserve these lands through, in priority order, state acquisition, compatible conservation ownership by another entity, or easement.
4. Rationale: The Friends of Baxter State Park are committed to enhancing the wilderness values of the Park, which does not exist in a vacuum. Indeed its integrity and resource values are interconnected with, and impacted by, adjacent lands. Conservation of East Branch buffers will enhance the wild character of the Park, especially its wildlife and experiential wilderness qualities. In particular the area around Katahdin Lake merits protection and possibly incorporation into the Park. Governor Baxter included this area in a map showing his vision of the completed Park. Dean Bennett in his keynote presentation the Friends 2004 annual meeting outlined the concept of concentric circles of protection to buffer wilderness areas.
5. Action taken or proposed: Inform membership, BSP Authority, Advisory Committee, and park staff of our position. Inform those who are involved in protection efforts across the state of this position. Participate to the extent we are able in the work of the statewide coalition that seek its protection. We support the efforts of others to raise funds for acquisition and secure additional funding for the Land For Maine's Future Program.

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