



FOREVER WILD



Newsletter of Friends of Baxter State Park

Fall 2015

Vol. 14 No. 4

Executive Director's Column

by Aaron Megquier

Baxter State Park has over 220 miles of trails, ranging from flat walks in the woods to steep scrambles through the alpine zone. Many long-time Park users – myself included – feel that trails are the heart of Baxter State Park.

Friends is continually looking for ways to support the Park, and trails are one of our major areas of focus. If you've ever hiked a trail that has gone without attention for a single year, you know how important trail maintenance is. After ten years, with blown down trees and new growth, it's almost like the trail never existed. A trail is not a one-time construction effort; it's a permanent commitment.

For the past seven years, Friends has been providing financial support for trail projects in the Park. Through a partnership with the Maine Conservation Corps, we have donated over \$200,000 in support since 2009. Most of these projects involved rebuilding or relocating sections of trail with severe erosion or safety issues, including the Mount OJI, Saddle, Chimney Pond, and Helon Taylor trails. This year, we provided \$52,000 for the Abol Trail Relocation Project. This type of focused support has helped the Park grapple with the trouble spots in its trail system. The Park recently announced the Trautmann Trail Improvement Initiative, an effort to address ten high-priority relocation projects over the next decade. This is a huge step in the right direction.

During any given year, however, 99% or more of the Park's trail system is not the focus of one of these relocation efforts. All trails need annual maintenance. Just clearing 220 miles of trails each year is a monumental task. After a difficult winter, a single mile of trail can have 50 or more blow-downs, and many hundreds of fallen branches.

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Eben Sypitkowski, Resource Manager for Baxter State Park, explains preparation for spruce budworm to Friends of Baxter State Park Board directors, members and staff during an October 3 tour of the Scientific Forest Management Area.
– Photo © Jym St. Pierre

Focus on the Scientific Forest Management Area

By Dick Klain

"I want this township to become a show place for those interested in forestry, a place where a continuing timber crop can be cultivated, harvested and sold; where reforestation and scientific cutting will be employed; an example and an inspiration to others. What is done in our forests today will help or harm the generations who follow us."

– Formal Communication from Governor Baxter to Governor Edmund S. Muskie, May 2, 1955.

The Scientific Forest Management Area (SFMA) comprises about thirty thousand acres in the northwest corner of Baxter State Park. This area was set aside by Governor Baxter to foster

the improvement of the forest using the best forestry techniques. It is used as a demonstration forest for students and professionals from around the world.

Thanks to the current Park administration, all of this land has been carefully studied from a forestry perspective and split into dozens of different management units. Each of the management units in the SFMA has specific objectives that are somewhat independent of market conditions. This is unlike most commercial forest areas. Some areas have been specifically designated as riparian zones, and at least two areas are set aside as reserves where no cutting

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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.

Executive Director's Column

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Friends is hoping to broaden our trail support to the Park to provide more help with ongoing maintenance. The Park already has a program in place to address this: the Trail Stewards program. All Trail Stewards take a one-day primer in basic maintenance, which is usually offered in early June. Stewards maintain the trail corridor with loppers, clean out waterbars, paint blazes, and remove debris from the treadway. There are trails for all abilities, ranging from the Dwelley Pond Trail – an old roadbed on relatively flat terrain – to steep, rugged trails in remote areas.

Most trails below treeline also need to be cleared of blowdowns every spring. Volunteer chainsaw crews can be a tremendous help in this task. Chainsaw sawyers must successfully pass a safety course to run a saw in the Park. A crew typically includes one sawyer and two swampers who follow behind and remove material cut by the sawyer. Swampers do not need to be certified, which means that just about anyone can help out on these crews. We regularly organize chainsaw safety courses for our members.

As a grassroots citizens group, our membership is one of our greatest strengths. We hope that by matching our members up with favorite trails in the Park, we can greatly expand the level of trail support we provide. Several of our members are trained as Trail Stewards, and have already adopted trails. If you'd like to do the same, please get in touch.



Membership Matters

By Sarah Holland, Administrative Manager

A new member recently wrote, *"After my brother's and my successful 65th anniversary climb of Katahdin, I thought I would join the Friends of Baxter State Park."* Wow, 65 years! Imagine the memories they have of Katahdin and of the Park's many ponds, rivers, trails, and campgrounds – how much things have changed and how much, thankfully, they have stayed the same. We are grateful that she thought joining Friends is a fitting way to celebrate this important milestone and their love of Baxter State Park. The Park is indeed a beloved place for many who return with their families and friends. This is one of the reasons we work so hard to preserve this unique wilderness and maintain the trail system and waterways for future generations. If you know someone who shares your enthusiasm for this place, please share this newsletter and encourage them to join. Membership also makes a great gift for a Baxter Park enthusiast!



While we never want the wilderness of the Park to change, we at Friends have made some changes. A big one is our mailing address. As of last year our address is in Belfast, not Union. If you have old mailers with our Union address please toss them in the recycling bin. Also please make a note of it in your address book. Our USPS forwarding service will end soon and we don't want to miss your letters, notes, and donations. We enjoy hearing from our members. In this age of electronic communication it's so refreshing to get the occasional hand written note. Plus I enjoy my short walk to the Belfast post office and seeing a pile of letters in the box.

Thank you to those who have become "Forever Friends" by setting up a recurring monthly credit card payment. This program is working very well. Our Forever Friends don't have to worry about membership expiration dates or receive renewal reminders. However, if you change credit cards or have a new expiration date we will need to be updated. If you have recently made such a change, please call us to give us the new information. Stay in touch and share your experiences, thoughts, and photos of the Park.

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Focus on the Scientific Forest Management Area *Continued from pg.1*



The Scientific Forest Management Area is divided into many different management units, with objectives ranging from riparian zone protection to varying levels of commercial harvest. Eben Syptkowski explained these management units to the Friends Board on October 3, 2015 using the educational kiosk located along the Park tote road. — Photo © Jym St. Pierre

Eben follows Jensen Bissell, the current Park director, and most recently Rick Morrill in this position. On a recent tour with several members of the Friends board and staff, Eben explained in layman's terms the history, science, difficulties, and joys of managing this area. When asked about why he did this work, his response was, "Are you kidding me? What's not to like? I get to walk around outdoors in the woods. I get to meet with interesting groups of people from all sides of the forest products industry. I get to supervise huge machines doing big jobs. I get to use chainsaws and brush hogs and paint guns." It sounds like Eben has found his dream job.

Our tour included visits to three different forest stands as well as several miles of traveling over well-sited, surprisingly good roads. The first stand we visited had been selectively cut to "release" red spruce from competition about ten years ago. Red spruce is a management priority across much of the SFMA. The cutting took place in very small patches, about 0.1 acre in size, which were intended to mimic natural disturbance. Young red spruce trees were thriving in the open patches.

According to Eben, finding markets for wood from the SFMA is becoming more challenging. The recent closures of several mills in Maine have been a blow. The nearest market for wood from the SFMA is now more than sixty miles away, which results in very high transportation costs. Eben also noted that when China recently devalued its currency, western Canadian lumber headed to Asia had no ready market. That lumber was imported into the U.S., which depressed our prices. Within days, the amount that would be paid for sawlogs coming out of the SFMA decreased. Even Baxter State Park is part of the world economy. Per Governor Baxter's instructions, any profit from the sale of timber from the SFMA supports the Park as an income stream similar to reservation fees and endowment income.

The final site we visited was the Frost Pond Forest. This is a special stand with old-growth characteristics that is being managed with very limited harvesting. Every red spruce over 20 inches in diameter – and there are many – has been marked with paint and is regularly monitored for health. A few of these trees become tonewood for high-end musical instruments. The ground here is covered with thick moss that appears to have had little disturbance for a long time. It was quiet while we were there. No machines spoiled the silence. Henry Thoreau could have come from around one of the trees with his Penobscot guide and he would have been very comfortable with what he saw. Some of the trees in this stand

will take place. Managing an area of this size and complexity takes a special kind of person. The current Resource Manager, Eben Syptkowski, grew up in Bangor and previously worked for the New England

were 150 years old when Thoreau visited the area, and they are over 300 years old now. This is one of those sacred spots that make Baxter State Park so special.

The Scientific Forest Management Area provides outstanding recreational opportunities, including hiking, biking, paddling, and hunting, while serving as a showcase for thoughtful, scientific forestry. The SFMA often earns a financial profit, but in a greater sense we all profit from the work being done there.

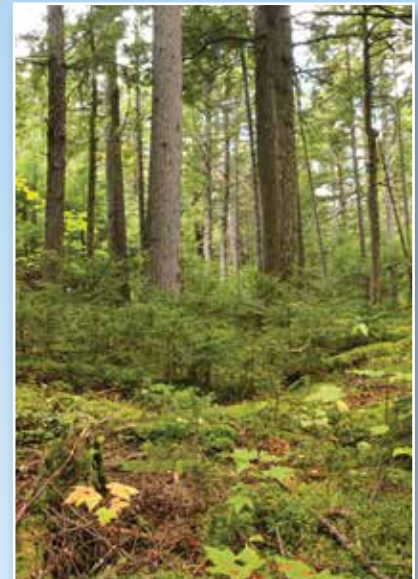
Update on AT Thru-hikers in Baxter State Park

by Aaron Megquier

Friends has received many phone calls and letters in response to our cover story about the Appalachian Trail in the summer issue of *Forever Wild*. This issue has also been widely covered in local, state, and national news and social media. As always, we welcome and appreciate feedback from our members. Please continue to write or email anytime with your thoughts. Even if we aren't able to respond right away, we appreciate hearing from you and will carefully consider your opinion. I'd like to extend a special thanks to the 77 members who recently made contributions to support our work on this issue.

Baxter State Park staff have been raising concerns about this issue for several years. They have asked the AT community to take some responsibility for addressing problems at the northern terminus. This is now happening in earnest in a spirit of goodwill and cooperation. Friends is doing everything we can to support this process. Friends is working on these issues with leaders from Baxter State Park, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Maine Appalachian Trail Club, National Park Service, Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association, and local businesses.

The Baxter State Park Authority considered the relationship between the Park and the Appalachian Trail at its meeting on October 2, 2015. Several AT officials attended this meeting, including Wendy Janssen, Superintendent of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, and Ron Tipton, Executive Director of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. Friends fully supports Park staff and the BSP Authority in carrying out the Park's mission, which places resource protection first and recreation second. We remain optimistic that we can find solutions that fully protect the Park's wilderness values while developing a sustainable relationship with the Appalachian Trail.



Mature red spruce in the Frost Pond Forest unit of the Scientific Forest Management Area. This area is managed for old growth characteristics with extremely light harvesting. These trees – many of which reach over three hundred years old at two feet in diameter – produce a tight-grained, resonant wood that is prized as tonewood for musical instruments.

— Photo © Jym St. Pierre

In Memoriam:

Leon Gorman, December 20, 1934 - September 3, 2015

Diane Giffen, April 6, 1945 - August 18, 2015

Glenn Buckingham, August 3, 1949 - October 29, 2015

President's Column

by Dick Klain

Luck Was with Them: The Humorous and the Scary

At the end of August as our group finished supper, a Mini Cooper pulled up in the lower parking lot of Kidney Pond and a young man way too tall for such a car unwound himself from the drivers side. He loosened his tie and headed for the canoe rack. A diminutive female companion got out on the other side gathering her dress in one hand. Right behind them was a black nondescript car with a female driver. She got out and immediately started taking pictures of the couple. One of our group ran down to the landing to help the man get a canoe into the water. As he jogged back, the couple got into the canoe facing each other – not a way to make progress in a canoe. They were about twenty feet from shore when the photographer asked them to stand up and join each other in the center. Gathering her dress, the bride put one foot then the other over the thwart and steadied herself low in the canoe. The groom crouched low and inched toward the center. When they were both together they stood unsteadily in the center while the photographer standing on shore snapped away. They then came back ashore for a couple more photographs before the photographer left.

The groom wasn't sure where the OJI cabin was. He checked the map at the ranger station, grabbed a paddle, and headed across the lake by himself sitting in the stern of the canoe. He was not a small young man and the canoe's bow was up about three feet above the water. As he zigzagged across the lake, three strokes on one side, then three on the other, the bride shared with one of our group that she had made her own wedding dress and that this was the first of several nights of their honeymoon in the Park each at a different campsite. After exploring the opposite shore in the decreasing light and finding the landing to the cabin, the groom returned. Wanting to get back as soon as possible to retrieve his beloved, about a hundred feet from shore, he dug in too deep, lost his balance, and the canoe flipped over. Ranger Dean Levasseur, who had been watching him, ran down to help. His assistance was refused and a very soaked and embarrassed groom pushed the canoe ashore only to find that his brand



The weather on August 28 offered searchers nearly perfect conditions for searching for John Lyon. This view from North Brother shows the high, rugged terrain where Mr. Lyon became lost, and the western portion of the area scoured by searchers from August 28 – 30. South Brother is at center in the foreground, with Mount Coe to the left, Doubletop to the right, and more distant summits visible in the background.

– Photo © Aaron Megquier

new wedding ring had come off in the capsize! The rest of us turned away so as not to make the embarrassment of the young couple worse.

A little later, as the young couple made their way across the pond in the gathering darkness, Ranger Levasseur returned to our group. He had told the young couple that this was in a way a “blessing” for if they could see their way past this “tragedy” then they would have a good chance at a long and happy life together. The only things heard that night from the far side of the pond were the cries of loons calling to one another. When we left the next morning at 10:30 the Mini was still in the parking lot. I guess they were still working it out.

Earlier that same day while climbing Doubletop we saw and heard aircraft in the Park. That meant someone was in trouble. An experienced hiker had gotten lost on the Mount Coe Trail the day before. His friends had stopped for a break while he continued up the trail not to be seen again. After searching for him in vain, his friends returned to the parking lot and reported him missing. The day we were hiking, an all-out search and rescue effort was initiated using planes, helicopters, and trained search dogs. That area of the park is very rough terrain and two trails were closed while the search continued. Early Sunday afternoon, after having been in the woods for three nights, the seventy-eight year old was spotted by one of the aircraft waving a sock at the end of a stick. He was a bit scratched up with relatively minor injuries.

These are just two examples of humans in the wilderness of Baxter State Park. In one instance, the flying conditions were near perfect for a rescue. In the other, help was only a few feet away and the water was warm.

Looking back...

by John Neff, Author of
Katahdin: An Historic Journey

Journey into the Past at Katahdin Lake

On a recent three-day trip into Katahdin Lake and the famous camps on its south shore, I found myself journeying back across the years and remembering some of the incredible history of that beautiful place.

- The sign at the lodge announces that the camps were founded in 1885. At first Madison Tracy and John Cushman brought guests from the Wassataquoik Tote Road to the north end of the lake and canoed them down to the present site.
- We visited the beach where Frederic E. Church and other artists have often painted Katahdin.
- We visited the outlet where Katahdin Brook begins its journey down to the Wassataquoik.
- We passed the site of the cabin Marcus Keep built circa 1858 just below the crude logging dam at the outlet.
- We envisioned Percival P. Baxter hiking along the still two-lane path through the middle of the camps in 1920 on his first trip to Katahdin's summit.
- We saw the high ground at the southeast corner of the lake where circa 1874 the Lang and Jones sporting camps were located before the present camps were built.
- We visited the new BSP lean-to on the north shore of the lake near where the AMC had a shelter built for its 1887 “August Camp.”

Katahdin's powerful presence is overwhelming on this lovely lake now under the protection of Baxter State Park. The history of the camps and the lake, as well as the hovering spirits of those who once walked the trails and canoed the waters, make a visit very special indeed.



Hiking boots on the porch at Katahdin Lake Wilderness Camps after a day of exploring. The camps make an excellent base for exploring the wild and historic southeastern corner of Baxter State Park.

– Photo © Lisa Shapiro



Update from the Park by BSP Director Jensen Bissell

By all indications, the 2015 summer season in Baxter State Park has been a busy one. With good weather characterizing much of the summer, particularly the weekends, it seems likely that visitation numbers will be up in 2015. Park revenues, usually a good surrogate for visitation, are up about ten percent over 2014.

During the summer, we completed the renovations to the Headquarters exterior. This work should keep the building looking sharp for many decades. We have also completed an expansion of the warehouse facility. This facility, converted from Park housing in the 1990s, has been very cramped for some time and the new space will be very helpful.



Maine Conservation Corps crew members work together to move a large boulder above treeline on the route of the new Abol Trail. Park staff expect the new Abol Trail to be open by July 4, 2016. Friends supported this project by donating 14 weeks of MCC crew time at a cost of \$52,000.

Photo © Aaron Megquier

In the Park, the Maine Conservation Corps crews have made great progress on the Abol Trail Relocation project. An inspection hike was conducted on September 10. The group included Aaron Megquier and Dick Klain from Friends of Baxter State Park as well as Bill Green of WCSH 6 in Portland. Bill filmed the work and crew members for a segment on this project to be aired this fall. We will continue work on installing drainage and stabilization to the new trail tread on Abol in 2016, but we expect that we will be ready to open the trail to hikers by July 4.

We continue to plan and implement improvements to our hiking trail system under the Trautmann Trail Improvement Initiative. The

Baxter Park Trail Supervisor and MATC President Lester Kenway have separately completed preliminary relocation lines on segments of the Hunt Trail above Katahdin Stream Falls. This relocation work will allow the closing of heavily eroded segments of this popular Katahdin access trail that are hard to hike and maintain. It will provide new segments with less steep grades and the opportunity for successful long-term maintenance. We owe a continuing debt of thanks for financial support from Frank Trautmann, which allows the Park to undertake this work.

We are also planning to continue our work on infrastructure upgrades in 2015. We have completed the engineering work for the replacement of two large culverts allowing Roaring Brook to cross the Tote Road. This is not the more widely known Roaring Brook on the southeast side of the Park, but the lesser-known Roaring Brook that crosses the Park Tote Road north of the Marston Trailhead parking lot. This project will require the closure of the Tote Road for up to one week at this location. The project will go out to bid this fall and the bid prices will help us decide when to schedule this work.

Although the season has been relatively quiet operationally, we did have a flurry of intense activity in late August after we received a report from a group of hikers from Virginia that they had lost contact with one of their party on the Mt. Coe Trail. After the first search attempts of trails in the area proved unproductive, we rapidly ramped up the search effort and called in the Maine Warden Service Command Post

and crew. On day two, over 80 people were involved in the search for John Lyon, a 78 year-old hiker. Late on day 3, Mr. Lyon was spotted by a Maine Forest Service helicopter not far from Annis Brook. After reuniting with concerned family and friends at Millinocket Regional Hospital, Mr. Lyon was released after a couple of days and returned to Virginia. I don't believe he is done at all with hiking, but I'm fairly certain he will always have a good map with him from now on.

Lastly, this season has included some transitions within the Park staff. In August, we completed a thorough and competitive hiring process for a BSP Ranger position. This position includes limited law enforcement capabilities covering the enforcement of Park Rules and Regulations only. David Loomer has assumed his new duties as a BSP Ranger and will be working with Chief Ranger Ben Woodward and Deputy Chief Ranger Stewart Guay to complete his orientation and training over the next year. As Dave Loomer comes into the Park staff, we will be saying farewell to Rod Angotti, Maintenance and Transportation Supervisor. Rod's last day with the Park was September 30. We are well along in the hiring plan for Rod's replacement and we hope to be seating a new Supervisor before Thanksgiving.

We said goodbye to seasonal staff with our annual all-staff meeting and banquet on October 16. Winter is coming. I hope this one has plenty of snow, but maybe not quite as cold as last year!



Baxter State Park is planning an ambitious schedule of trail relocations over the next decade through the Trautmann Trail Improvement Initiative. One of the next projects in the lineup is a relocation of two heavily eroded segments of the Hunt Trail above Katahdin Stream Falls. The new routes, shown in pink on this map, will offer a lower grade and improved treadway.

— Map courtesy of Baxter State Park

Our Readers Write...

Maine's North Woods have precisely what most of the world is missing



Katahdin Brook, the outlet stream of Katahdin Lake, flows toward the East Branch of the Penobscot over lands owned by Elliotsville Plantation, Inc.

— Photo © Aaron Megquier

Several decades ago, as a young Registered Maine Guide, one of the first canoe trips I led was along the rolling waters of the East Branch of the Penobscot River just east of Baxter State Park. Nowadays, the river and surrounding land is within the Katahdin Woods and Waters Recreation Area, which the landowner, Elliotsville Plantation Inc., wants to donate to the nation as a national park and recreation area.

This summer, after many years of guiding elsewhere, I returned with clients in tow. To my delight, I found an unchanged landscape still vibrant with the sounds of pristine water pounding over rock, birds warbling from dawn to dusk, deer and moose feeding in the calm oxbows, fish darting as dark shadows from deep bankside pools, eagles perched in prominent pines and mossy tent sites so quiet I could hear the blood coursing through my veins. How rare to return to a place of our youth to find the feeling, smells, sounds and sights just as we remembered.

As most of us know, New England's original woodlands and pristine waterways have long since been transformed into farmlands, tree plantations, housing developments, commercial buildings, streets, highways, hydroelectric impoundments and so on. In remarkable contrast, the land surrounding the East Branch — home to the Wabanaki for thousands of years — though repeatedly cut during the last two centuries, has remained largely undeveloped.

Presently, due to the changing owner-

ship of these lands and the goals and values of a new owner, Elliotsville Plantation Inc., we now find haul roads being reclaimed by alders and birch, patrolled by shy, resident lynx; remnants of rotted wooden dams and pulp bark being swept away by spring freshets, allowing the native brookies to thrive in the now cold, oxygenated waters. And thanks to the stunning natural beauty of this part of Maine, you can bask in lush silver-maple intervalees where numerous medicinal herbs and turtles thrive. The steep, mountainside forests sweep dramatically upward to rocky, east-facing summits, gleaming in the rising sun. And on clear nights the forest path is illuminated by brilliant starlight piercing the dense forest canopy just as it did when Wabanaki families, Thoreau, Teddy Roosevelt and countless others through the centuries walked this very land.

Why do I care about wild places with free-flowing waters, diverse woodlands, few roads and abundant animal life? The practical reason is that, since 1978, I have made my living as a year-round recreational guide by bringing people to experience the thriving wildness within legendary, protected river corridors such as the West Branch, Moose, St. Croix, St. John and Allagash. These areas are precious and rare as diamonds in our world today. My guests have made comments that resonate with me, and this is the strongest reason I chose to be a wilderness guide: because wild areas bring us alive, teach us and connect us with something far greater than ourselves.

Most Maine Guides have guided people from as far away as California, France, Australia and Japan all seeking what their homelands have lost — large, connected, undeveloped lands for wild animals, game and humans; places where they can find free-flowing rivers, unpolluted water, dark skies and clean air. It's hard to believe when you live right here, but Maine's North Woods contain precisely what most of the world is presently missing.

However, we have the distinct potential to lose it and the associated economic benefits without visionary, community-based support and action. I am excited, engaged and honored to join the activities and efforts to help bring about our newest National Park and National Recreation Area.

In order for that to happen, we need Sens. Angus King and Susan Collins to show leadership and introduce the legislation

necessary to accept this amazing gift offered by Elliotsville Plantation Inc., which, along with the land, includes the offer of a first-of-its-kind \$40 million endowment for park operations.

Just as we have greatly benefited from the vision of people before us who have honored and protected wild places, I hope that future generations traveling in the East Branch Penobscot region will be able to turn to their children and say, "Why, this is exactly as it was when I was young!"

Alexandra Conover Bennett
Elliotsville, ME

Alexandra Conover Bennett is an Honorary Director of Friends of Baxter State Park. This letter appeared in the Bangor Daily News as an op-ed on October 5, 2015. It is reprinted here with permission.

Comments on the Appalachian Trail in Baxter State Park

I am reading with interest the growing stories and reports about the difficulties being experienced by Baxter State Park Authority and staff in maintaining the wild nature of Baxter, given the growing number of individuals who enter the Park to access or complete the Appalachian Trail rather than visiting the Park to enjoy it for its wild nature. Although Baxter is not federal Wilderness, its charter is similar to that of the Wilderness Act. A most important definition it provides for Wilderness — one I find compelling, and that defines Baxter for me — is that wilderness has "outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation." Baxter State Park is special. Its prime value — wilderness — must be preserved.

Donna Lawson
Bozeman, MT

Surely there has to be a formula that can satisfy the wishes of Maine's magnanimous governor while still enabling thru hikers the special and well-deserved satisfaction of a Katahdin climb after a six-month ordeal. A well run public relations campaign (which appears to have already begun) to educate hikers specifically and the public in general seems to me to be the best way to achieve this delicate balance.

Edward Harrow, MD
Dedham, ME

Answer: Trivia Question in Summer Newsletter

In our summer newsletter, we asked: "John Neff has long experience in trail maintenance. He used to be responsible for maintaining the Hunt Trail up Katahdin. Before John, who was responsible for the Hunt Trail?" Several of the people listed as choices were involved in maintenance of the AT, but the answer was none of the above.

Review of *Queen Bee: Roxanne Quimby, Burt's Bees, and Her Quest for a New National Park* by Phyllis Austin

(Tilbury House Publishers, 2015)

By Howard Whitcomb, FBSP Historian

Phyllis Austin's biography of Roxanne Quimby, *Queen Bee*, provides a fascinating, unvarnished look into the quixotic figure behind the proposed national park/recreation area in the Penobscot East Branch lands due east of Baxter State Park. There is no one more qualified to trace the multifaceted career of the back-to-the-land entrepreneur whose sale of Burt's Bees, the personal care products company Roxanne built, enabled her to become a major player in the 21st century land acquisition movement in the north Maine woods. Austin, an award-winning journalist, has skillfully combined her coverage of the Piscataquis County start-up company with her reportorial familiarity with the rapidly changing ownership landscape in northern Maine.

While this is not an authorized biography, Austin's account benefits from her unfettered access to Roxanne Quimby from 2008 to 2011, when it was abruptly terminated. By then she had the intriguing family history; a good hold on the late Burt Shavitz, co-founder of Burt's Bees; Roxanne's relationship with RESTORE: The North Woods, the group that had articulated a vision for a grand park and preserve in the region; and an in-depth understanding of the earliest days of Burt's Bees, the successful business she eventually sold for hundreds of millions of dollars.

In many ways, this biography contains two separate stories: first, Burt's Bees' meteoric rise to become a worldwide, natural skin-care products company and, second, the Thoreau devotee's aggressive acquisition of lands in northern Maine and efforts to preserve them for posterity. The link between these stories is Roxanne's use of the profits from the sale of Burt's Bees, thus enabling her to accelerate her land purchases. Many of the early acquisitions of land formerly owned by Maine's big timber companies didn't attract much notice, but those of an aggressive, intelligent female entrepreneur did. One cannot help but be reminded of the same sort of vehement opposition that Percival P. Baxter encountered as Baxter State Park grew northward, seemingly threatening the self-proclaimed rights of residents of the neighboring lands.

Those interested in the ongoing debate raging over the pros and cons of national park proposals for the Maine Woods would be well served by reading this excellent biography. At the bare minimum, it informs the debate. An intriguing question is whether readers will appreciate Roxanne Quimby's deeply felt call to conserve land for its own sake and for the restorative powers such wilderness preserves would offer to those who visit them.

The national park proposal detractors should be wary of underestimating Roxanne Quimby's resolve, and that of her son, Lucas St. Clair, who is now the public face of their national park initiative.

2016 Baxter State Park calendars now available



It is time to purchase your 2016 Baxter State Park Calendar for \$13, sales tax and shipping included. All proceeds benefit Friends of Baxter State Park. You can order online at www.friendsofbaxter.org or give us a call at (207) 505-5779.

—Calendar cover photo © Donna Lawson

New Charging Station for Electric Vehicles

By Dick Klain

Baxter State Park Headquarters now has a charging station for electric vehicles (EVs). This is the first public charging station in Maine north of Bangor. This means that EVs can now access at least the southern end of Baxter State Park as well as surrounding areas. Previously the most northerly station was the Darling's Nissan dealership in Bangor.

For most EVs it will still be a long slog up I-95 to Medway and Millinocket but that possibility exists. Interestingly, the Canadians have surrounded the northern tier of the state with charging stations as the provincial governments continue to encourage the development of EV infrastructure. Hats off to Baxter State Park administration for encouraging this new means to access the Park with non-internal combustion engine vehicles.



Baxter State Park's new electric vehicle charging station is located at Park Headquarters at 64 Balsam Drive in Millinocket, Maine. It is open to the public and features a J1772 plug.

— Photo courtesy of Baxter State Park

Baxter State Park Trivia

Puzzle Master Al Howlett

Katahdin has been the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail since 1933. A key reason the southern terminus of the Appalachian Trail changed to Springer Mountain from Mt. Oglethorpe in 1958 was:

- Some Georgians consider the summit of Mt. Oglethorpe to be sacred ground.**
- The construction of several pungent chicken farms along the route north.**
- The construction of a "wilderness" development on the slopes of Mt. Oglethorpe.**
- The picturesque location of Springer Mountain in two national forests.**

Send Trivia answers to admin@friendsofbaxter.org



Friends of Baxter State Park

PO Box 322

Belfast, ME 04915

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Thank you!

Join us at Warm Winter Weekend

We invite you to join other Friends of Baxter State Park members for a weekend of fun at New England Outdoor Center this winter. On the weekend of March 17 – 20, 2016, we've rented three cabins with total capacity for 38 people.

New England Outdoor Center's Twin Pine Camps are located on the shore of Millinocket Lake, about eight miles south of the Togue Pond gate of Baxter State Park. The accommodations include beautiful heated cabins with full kitchens, groomed cross-country ski trails, an inviting lodge and restaurant, and wonderful views of Katahdin. The cost for the weekend is \$128.40 per person, regardless of whether you spend one, two, or three nights. This trip is open to all members of Friends of Baxter State Park.

To reserve a space, call NEOC at 1-800-634-7238 and mention you are with the Friends of Baxter State Park group. After you've made your reservation, please notify Sarah Holland at admin@friendsofbaxter.org so we can stay in touch about trip details. This trip usually fills very quickly – call to make your reservations today!