



FOREVER WILD



Newsletter of Friends of Baxter State Park

Spring 2016

Vol. 15 No. 2

Executive Director's Column

by Aaron Megquier

This summer, Friends will celebrate a conservation milestone with the publication of the *Plants of Baxter State Park* field guide. Representing more than four years of exhaustive research, this full-color field guide is currently being published by the University of Maine Press. Lead author Glen Mittelhauser did an extraordinary job bringing this project to completion six months ahead of schedule.

The “forever wild” principles of Baxter State Park mean that flora and fauna take precedence in management decisions. But it's very difficult to protect what you don't know you have. During the years of research for this field guide, volunteer and professional botanists added nearly 300 species to the known flora of the Park. When combined with the species that had already been documented, the total flora of Baxter State Park now stands at 857 species. Every single species is included in the field guide.

Science relies upon the incremental accumulation of knowledge. This field guide has drawn a line in the sand about the current state of our knowledge. Now we can all go out into the woods – hikers, campers, botanists, and Park staff alike – and use the field guide to identify the plants we find. Perhaps most importantly, we can all try to find what's NOT in the guide. Baxter State Park is a big place, and it's very likely that there are some species yet to be documented. You could be the one to find them!

This field guide will also provide a baseline for understanding the impacts of climate change. Maine is expected to have a climate similar to the current climate in the Mid-Atlantic states within 100 years. As new species arrive in Baxter State Park – and native species are no longer able to adapt to changing conditions – we'll be able to

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Climbing Katahdin is a tradition that spans generations in many families. The left photograph shows Charles Ansell (at center) summiting Katahdin in August 1915. The right photograph shows Lauren Jacobs, Charles Ansell's great-granddaughter, on Katahdin in August 2015, exactly 100 years later. Lauren is holding the photograph of her great-grandfather shown above. The Park's new AT permit system is an important step toward protecting Katahdin from inappropriate use, and ensuring that these wilderness traditions can continue forever.

– Photos by Bert Call and Abigail Maynard

Baxter State Park Implements Permit System for AT Thru-hikers

by Aaron Megquier

Baxter State Park recently announced a new permit system for Appalachian Trail (AT) thru-hikers for summer 2016. Park staff have been raising concerns about increasing thru-hiker numbers and declining behavior for several years. Our cover story in the summer 2015 issue of *Forever Wild* provided some background on these issues. Here are the key details of the new permit system:

- All northbound, section, and flip-flop AT thru-hikers entering Baxter State Park in 2016 must obtain an AT Long Distance Hiker Permit Card. Permits will not be required for southbound AT thru-hikers.
- Permits will be free, and there will be no limit on the number available in 2016.
- Hikers must provide their legal name and trail name, and must acquire their permit card in person.
- The permit card will be date-stamped at the time of issue, and again at Katahdin Stream Campground in the Park after the hiker completes his or her Katahdin climb.
- All northbound, section, and flip-flop AT thru-hikers entering through the Togue Pond or Matagamon gates, or staying at The Birches thru-hiker campsite, will be

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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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understand the changes as they happen. The Park is home to the largest concentration of rare and endangered plants in Maine, and this guide will be a vital tool for protecting them in the years ahead.

We are planning three events around the state this summer to celebrate the release of the *Plants of Baxter State Park* field guide: one in Brunswick, one in the Bangor area, and one in Millinocket. Please stay tuned for details. Many thanks to the volunteers and donors who helped to bring this project to a successful conclusion.

Answer: Trivia Question in Winter Newsletter
 In our winter newsletter, we posed this question: "In the good old days campers at Chimney Pond washed their dishes in the outlet stream. This unhappy place for those unlucky souls assigned to wash dishes was fondly referred to as _____?" The answer was A, The Wash Basin.



Membership Matters

By Sarah Holland, Administrative Manager

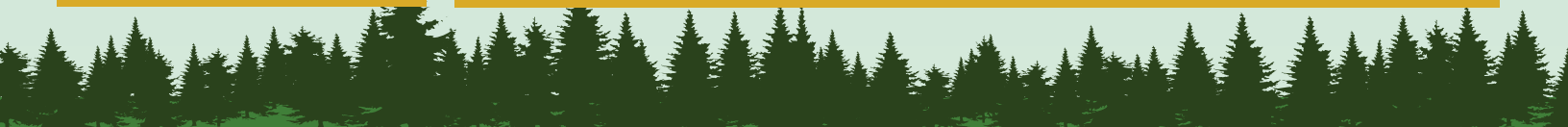


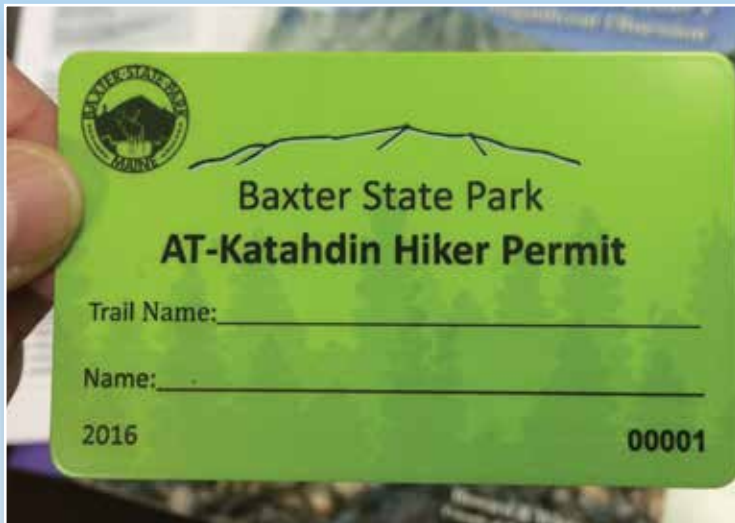
Ever wonder who our members are and what they think about BSP? We do too. In our winter issue we published some facts about our membership, including where you are from and how long you've been members. We've met some of you at Walks in the Park, Warm Winter Weekend, the Annual Meeting, volunteer programs, or other Friends events. Others we've known since the founding of our organization.

We know that the common thread of our membership is that we all care enough about Baxter State Park to support Friends. However, we would like to know a little more about you. What inspired you to join? What programs are most important to you? What are your interests, and what would you like Friends to focus on in the future? To answer these questions, we will be conducting an email survey of our membership later this year. Please be on the lookout for this to appear in your inbox. We would appreciate your candid responses. But you don't have to wait for the survey to let us know more about your experiences, expectations, and thoughts about the Park and this organization – we would love to hear from you at any time.

As of late May, we are halfway to our membership goals for the year, which is very encouraging. We will continue to urge you to keep your membership up to date, invite friends to join, share our Facebook posts, and pass along this newsletter. Please let anyone interested in the Park know that new Friends are always welcome!

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AT Thru-hiker Permit Card

– Photo courtesy of Baxter State Park

required to show their permit card.

- Permit cards will be available at the Katahdin Stream ranger station, BSP Headquarters in Millinocket, and the AT kiosk at the Park boundary when the AT steward is present.

Every permit card issued will involve a one-on-one conversation between the thru-hiker and a BSP staff member. This will provide a great opportunity to answer questions and share expectations about behavior on Katahdin. This should be a very straightforward process for hikers, particularly since permits are already required elsewhere on the Appalachian Trail, including in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy is opening a new Visitor Center in Monson, Maine this summer. Monson is the last town northbound thru-hikers pass through, and an ideal spot to do outreach related to finishing well on Katahdin. Permit cards will not be available at the Visitor Center in 2016, but AT hikers may preregister for their permit using an on-site tablet computer provided by Baxter State Park, and print a receipt that can be exchanged for a permit when the hiker arrives at Baxter. Park staff will receive information on hiker registrations daily.

Friends has received many phone calls and letters related to the Appalachian Trail over the past year. As always, we welcome and appreciate feedback from our members. Please write or email anytime with your thoughts. We will continue to devote substantial time and resources to these issues in 2016. For more updates on our efforts related to the Appalachian Trail, please see the article on page seven of this newsletter.

2017 Baxter State Park Calendars have arrived!

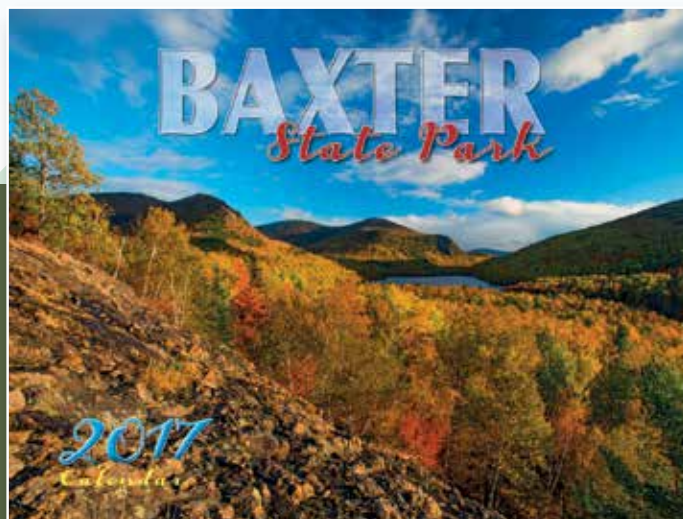
The brand new 2017 Baxter State Park calendar is hot off the presses! The price is \$13, with sales tax and shipping included. All proceeds benefit Friends of Baxter State Park. We also have a limited number of 2016 calendars still available. These are on sale for \$8, with tax and shipping included. You can order online at www.friendsofbaxter.org or give us a call.

Board of Directors adopts position on Maine Woods National Monument

Friends has been monitoring conservation activity east of Baxter State Park for over a decade. In 2011, Friends was the first conservation organization in Maine to expressly support a feasibility study for a national park on lands owned by Elliotsville Plantation, Inc. – the same lands now proposed for a new Maine Woods National Monument. We sent letters to Maine’s congressional delegation and to the Secretary of Interior sharing this position. In 2014, Friends sent letters to the Maine congressional delegation reaffirming our support for a conservation buffer bordering BSP. The Board of Directors of Friends of Baxter State Park recently endorsed the proposal to create a Maine Woods National Monument. The position of the Board is as follows:

1. Friends of Baxter State Park reaffirms its support for permanent conservation of lands bordering Baxter State Park as one action that can help preserve the wilderness character of Baxter State Park.
2. Friends of Baxter State Park, a member of the Katahdin Area Chamber of Commerce, stands with the chamber to affirm the importance of this area in ensuring a sustainable environmental and economic future for the Katahdin region.
3. Friends of Baxter State Park endorses the establishment of a Maine Woods National Monument on lands owned by EPI bordering Baxter State Park with the understanding that the impacts on BSP will be carefully considered.
4. Friends of Baxter State Park supports a planning process that addresses particular concerns, including protecting viewsheds from BSP and ensuring that lands surrounding Katahdin Lake are adequately buffered from inappropriate public access from roads and trails on the Maine Woods National Monument.

The complete position statement is posted on our website at www.friendsofbaxter.org.



– Calendar cover photo © Billy Fay



Whetstone Falls on the East Branch of the Penobscot River, on the lands proposed for a new Maine Woods National Monument.
– Photo © Aaron Megquier

President's Column

by Dick Klain

Deeds of Trust

Recently while contemplating the creation of a community solar farm on our property I needed to examine our deed. Deeds are interesting “creatures” that take on a life of their own. If someone over the last couple of centuries wanted to add something to a deed, it could be done. Those of us who follow in the ownership of that parcel have little recourse but to live with the consequences of our predecessors’ decisions. In this manner “rights of way” and “conservation easements” can be given for future generations to use and enjoy. Of course, sometimes these become “encumbrances” to the wishes of later generations.

Percival Baxter knew this very well. As he gave the sections of cutover land that he had bought, primarily from the Great Northern Paper Company, to the people of the State of Maine, he tailored each deed to make sure that it would be used for the purpose that he wanted. These are more commonly referred to as the “Deeds of Trust.” According to Baxter’s wishes in the deeds, hunting would no longer be allowed in most of the properties. Fishing was okay following the rules and regulations of the State. Some areas would be set aside for the practice of scientific forestry. Roads would not be paved. Vehicular traffic would be limited. Large vehicles and motorcycles would not be permitted. No commercial enterprises would exist within the Park with the exception of some in-holdings that would eventually be termed out. People would be confined to designated campsites so that they would not interfere with the wild animals in the Park that he loved. Baxter then went so far as to have the legislature of the State of Maine accept the terms of each deed as he gave them to the State,

including the creation of the Baxter State Park Authority to administer his wishes. By doing all of this he hoped to prevent the Park’s wilderness character from being desecrated. He even created a trust fund to help finance the stewardship of the Park so that the Park would never be a burden on the taxpayers of the State.

In the years since Governor Baxter’s last gift, much has happened in the area around the Park. The Great Northern Paper Company no longer exists. Its holdings have been broken up and sold to the highest bidder. The once vibrant softwood industry in Maine’s northern forest has been in steep decline. The closest paper mills to the Park in Millinocket, East Millinocket and Lincoln have shuttered their doors, and some of the valuable equipment that once produced paper used around the world has been sold as

scrap. These towns are shells of their former selves. People from away have bought huge chunks of the northern forest. One in particular, John Malone, owns more Maine land than his buddy Ted Turner does in Montana. The climate has begun to warm. The human demands on Baxter State Park have increased. Park officials continue to work with the public to communicate the policies and practices that set the Park apart from all other parks in Maine.

Now the lands east of Baxter State Park are the subject of debate. The basic question is whether a private landowner can give her land away to become a new public park. Elliotsville Plantation Inc. (EPI) would like to give 87,500 acres of land to the Federal government to become a Maine Woods National Monument. EPI will even contribute a \$40 million endowment for its maintenance. If all this sounds familiar, it should. Acadia National Park was created this way through the efforts of George Dorr. Roxanne Quimby is following Percival Baxter’s lead, except that she doesn’t trust our state government. Perhaps if state officials hadn’t blown her off earlier in her entrepreneurial career she might be offering this gift to the state, but that is water over the dam (see Phyllis Austin’s book *Queen Bee*).

This year marks the centennial of the creation of the National Park Service in the United States. Our national parks are the gold standard for conservation throughout the world. Friends supports the creation of a National Monument within the National Park System with the properties that EPI is offering. Percival Baxter faced great criticism when he gave the State his gifts, but he persevered. He created the gold standard for wildland parks in Maine. In the future, let’s hope that the names of Dorr and Baxter will be joined by the names of Quimby and St. Clair as the visionaries that preserved much of our state for future generations. Their deeds of trust will live long after them.

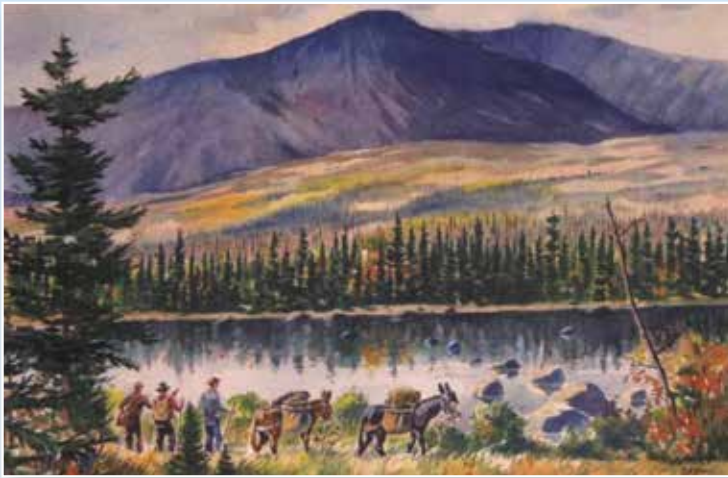
Looking back...

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

A Memorial Tribute

Former Baxter State Park Ranger Ed Werler passed away on February 5, 2016 at his home in Waldoboro at the grand age of 102. Born in Chicago, Ed grew up in Indiana, but after vacationing several times in Maine he fell in love with the north woods and moved here in 1947. Ed became the Fire Warden on Deasey Mountain, which is today on the path of the International Appalachian Trail in the so-called East Branch Lands and looks out over Katahdin in the near distance. In 1950 he became a seasonal ranger at Baxter State Park for 10 years serving at Chimney Pond and Roaring Brook. He is especially remembered for his management of a burro business from Roaring Brook to Chimney and Russell ponds.

In 1960 Ed was offered a full-time position as a Ranger at Two Lights State Park in Cape Elizabeth, later becoming a District Ranger for the State of Maine. In 1982 he retired to Waldoboro. After his



This Maurice "Jake" Day painting shows Ed Werler and his burros on the way to Russell Pond. The painting is in the collection of Baxter State Park and is on display at Park Headquarters. — Image courtesy of Baxter State Park

wife of 50 years, Mary Jane, died, he married Martha Day, widow of frequent park visitor and well-known artist of so many Katahdin area paintings, Maurice "Jake" Day. I will always be grateful for the way Ed and Martha welcomed me to their home, "Werler's Woods," and their assistance in my research for two of my Katahdin history books. Ed wrote a popular autobiography *The Call of Katahdin* in 2003. The following was said about that effort: "The mountain spoke to him, inviting him to begin the life his spirit had longed for, a life lived close to nature." Friends of Baxter State Park gives thanks for Ed's contributions to the Park and for his great love of Katahdin.

In Memoriam:
Lt. Col. Patrick J. Whelan
12/1/69 - 4/11/16

Trip Report: Warm Winter Weekend, March 2016

by Howard Whitcomb

The Eighth Annual Warm Winter Weekend was held at the New England Outdoor Center on Millinocket Lake from Thursday, March 17, through Sunday, March 20. Anne Huntington, Dick Klain, and Howard Whitcomb coordinated arrangements with invaluable assistance from Sarah Holland. There were a record number of participants (28). The cost per person was in the neighborhood of \$130 for one, two or three nights. This was comparable to the rate in recent years.

As in the past there were two evening meals for the entire group arranged by Howard Whitcomb. Howard provided spaghetti and meatballs at Millinocket Stream Cabin on Thursday, and on Friday night Anne Huntington provided homemade turkey pie with all the fixings at the recreation hall. Hors d'oeuvres, salads, and desserts were provided by volunteers. Cabin-specific food items were coordinated by Ken Spalding, Jill Ippoliti, and Sarah Holland. Roger Zimmerman featured, for the second consecutive year, his sourdough pancakes on Saturday morning for everyone at the Millinocket Stream cabin. Peter Jones and Sarah Holland featured breakfast burritos on Sunday morning for all comers at the Sandy Stream cabin. By all accounts the communal food was the best ever. Virtually all attendees joined in for the buffet dinner at River Drivers' restaurant - braised beef ribs, baked salmon and all the fixings.

Programs were held on both Thursday and Friday evenings after dinner. Bob Crowley, a long-time friend of Dick Klain's, spoke about his experience as a winner of the reality TV show *Survivor* on Thursday. The following evening David Little and Howard Whitcomb presented a 45-minute slide show on their (along with John Neff) recent book, *Penobscot East Branch Lands*. Scot Miller designed the book, which included several of his own photos. The presentation focused on prominent social, historical and cultural features of the lands, e.g., the Native Americans, logging, sporting camps, Thoreau, Teddy Roosevelt, Percival Baxter, Myron H. Avery, William O. Douglas, and the International Appalachian Trail.



Participants cross a partially frozen stream on skis during the 8th annual Warm Winter Weekend in March 2016. — Photo © Tom Maycock

There were no group-wide organized activities; however, small groups went hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing in the immediate area as well as in BSP, the Debsconeag area, and Elliotsville Plantation Inc. lands. Snow conditions were not optimal given the problematic ice conditions on Millinocket Lake and the minimal snow pack. An individual highlight was the Bill Webster/Ellen Klain ski excursion to the ice caves in the Debsconeag Wilderness Area. This Warm Winter Weekend format seems to be very popular among Friends members. Dates for 2017 have already been reserved. More information for the next Warm Winter Weekend will be coming in later editions of this newsletter.

Our Readers Write

Perspectives on the National Monument debate

Voices from History

The following remarks were prepared by John W. Neff for a panel presentation on May 16, 2016 at a public meeting hosted by Senator Angus King on the proposed Maine Woods National Monument. The panel did not take place due to time constraints, but we reprint John's remarks here in their entirety.

I am greatly honored on this occasion to be the one to point out the exceptional historical features of the East Branch Lands now being considered for federal protection. Each one of us has a fervent interest in this project and we all earnestly trust the generous proposal of the Quimby family will receive careful and thoughtful consideration. I salute all of you for being present.

There are a number of persons present today but only in spirit - whose voices are important enough for us to hear them during the crucial decision-making process over the months ahead. Permit me to be their voice.

I want, first of all, for you to hear the voices of our Native American brothers and sisters who inhabited these woods and waters long before our ancestors came and whose deep and abiding reverence for these lands is now truly legendary. Though it was non-native Edwin Bernbaum who included mighty Katahdin as one of the sacred mountains of the world in his remarkable 1990 work *The Sacred Mountains of the World*, native peoples know instinctively that such a designation includes the lands surrounding the Katahdin massif. I am certain they would encourage us in our efforts to preserve and protect these sacred spaces.

There are loggers here today who cut over the great timber parcels in these lands for three-quarters of a century from the 1830s to the early 1900s. Despite the almost total clear-cutting philosophy to which they adhered at that time, their stories of hardship and bravery are an important part of the history we celebrate in these lands. The forest, of course, recovered from their touch and will continue to recover and regenerate over the years to come.

I want you to hear the voices of the recreationists who came to these lands beginning in the 1840s when access was gained to the East Branch and to Katahdin. They came to hike, to canoe, to camp - so they might return to their work and their families refreshed and invigorated. Do you hear their voices today?

I hope you will hear the voices of the botanists, the geologists, and other scientists who unlocked so many of the hidden wonders of these lands across the years. Their discoveries are a part of the history of the Penobscot East Branch watershed.

I note the proprietors of several remote sporting camps are here to remind us of their pioneering efforts to provide some measure of comfort for the recreationists - the Hunt Farm, Bowlin Camps, Little Spring Brook Camps, all on the Penobscot East Branch; Katahdin Lake Wilderness Camps on awe-inspiring Katahdin Lake; and especially Lunksoos Camps, also on the East Branch and which today serves as the on-the-ground center for these lands. What stories those trailblazers could share with us. Do you hear their voices?

Today there are present a number of very distinguished persons whose individual voices we need so much to hear. There is Henry David Thoreau who canoed down the Penobscot East Branch in 1856, camping along the way, and then extolling in later writings the wonders and challenges of the very lands we lift up today.

I see one of the greatest American artists is here today - Frederic Edwin Church. Church painted first at Mt. Desert Island but ventured inland to these very East Branch Lands and was so moved by his experience of the wilderness here he bought a farm on Millinocket Lake creating several of his major works in these special places.

I want you to hear the resounding, bully voice of Theodore Roosevelt who as a young Harvard student marched across these very lands with his guides Bill Sewall and Will Dow of Island Falls, staying at the Hunt Farm, and climbing Katahdin in his moccasins. I am certain his experience here made a profound contribution to his magnificently stubborn commitment to the American conservation movement in the early 20th Century, leading in 1916, 100 years ago,

to the establishment of the National Park Service. Thank you, Mr. President.

I see Governor Percival Proctor Baxter is here today. He and some of his political friends camped overnight at the Lunksoos Camps before climbing Katahdin in 1920. Thus it was in these very lands where Baxter found confirmation for his magnificent obsession to protect the mountain and the lands around it for all time. He is no doubt beckoning us even today to further his historic personal mission. Do you hear his voice in our midst? Thank you, Governor Baxter.

Also present today is Myron Avery, the Maine lawyer who almost single-handedly brought the valley of Wassataquoik Stream to the public's attention by telling its story and relating its history.

Ah! Yes! Associate Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas is also present to encourage us in our preservation efforts. After one of his trips to the Wassataquoik region he wrote:

God made it for man and all His other creatures - to use, to adore, but not to destroy. In this wilderness the body cells are once more in rhythm. The source of wind in birches, the conversation of swamp crickets, the gentle swish of trout feeding on the surface make the music man needs to survive the mad rush of the machine age.

Do you hear his voice?

Time does not allow other such voices to be heard yet they are out there, including the voices of those yet born. We must heed their call - these lands are worthy to be preserved and protected for all the people and for generations to come.

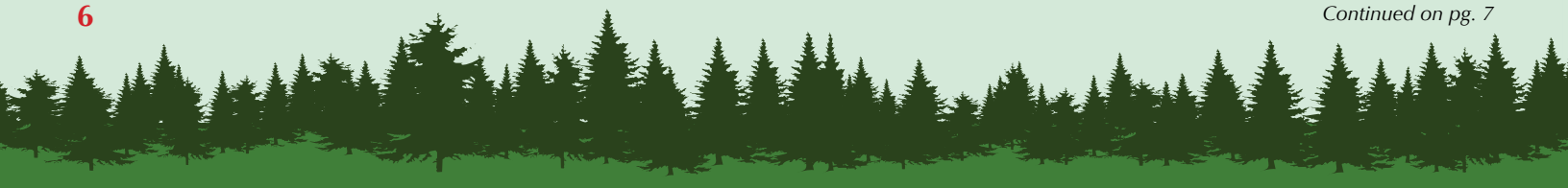
John Neff
Winthrop, Maine

Opposition to Monument

I don't believe all of your membership can support the position taken by the governing Board. I certainly do not for many reasons including the votes of communities in the area. I believe even BSP itself can be adversely affected in the long term by this "national" action.

William Bromley
Ellsworth, Maine

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Our Readers Write *Continued from pg. 6* National Monument Film

I am writing you today to introduce a short film in support of a new national park (or monument) in the Maine Woods. It can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/TgHENKnPB2U> (Best viewed in stunning HD in stereo!) Here are details and the thought process behind the creation of the film:

For over ten years, I have been on a journey of discovery, filming, photographing and learning about the land, people, and rich history of the Maine Woods, a place near and dear to my heart, and a place I love. Today, thanks to a benefactor's generous offer to donate 87,500 acres plus a \$40 million operating endowment, we have the opportunity to create a new jewel in the national park system, a wilderness park in the heart of the magnificent Maine Woods.

Amidst the millions of acres of the Maine Woods lie the Penobscot East Branch Lands, rich in historical, cultural and natural features. Bordered on the west by Baxter State Park with the East Branch of the Penobscot River running through its heart, the area includes amazing opportunities for traditional outdoor activities. One of the arguments against the creation of a national park I have seen and heard over the years is "there's nothing there worthy of a park." Well, I've seen the lands, studied the history and respectfully beg to differ. This film is my answer to that statement. The lands are worthy and I hope more people will embrace efforts to create the park.

*Scot Miller
Dallas, Texas*

New Membership Incentive

Join now as a new member and qualify for a chance to win this year's prize: a cedar garden bench handmade by Friends Board member Bob Johnston. The drawing will be in the fall, so don't miss this limited opportunity!



Cedar garden bench made by Bob Johnston.

— Photo © Judy Feinstein

Katahdin goes to Trail Days

By Aaron Megquier

Friends recently attended the Trail Days festival in Damascus, Virginia. To my knowledge, this was our first major outreach effort outside the state of Maine. This three-day event, which draws about 15,000 people, is a celebration of the Appalachian Trail and an annual reunion for the AT hiker community. I've been told that it's the largest festival of its kind anywhere in the world.

Our group at Trail Days included Board members Dick Klain and Jaime Renaud (aka Navigator), Paul Renaud (aka Ole Man), and myself. One of our AT Ambassadors for this year, long-time BSP volunteer Dave Edwards, also attended. Dave is currently thru-hiking the AT with his daughter Kelly, and both have enthusiastically agreed to serve as ambassadors to other hikers on the trail about respecting Baxter State Park and Katahdin. Our fiberglass Katahdin mountain model made the trip too – including about 200 miles on the roof of my Honda Fit before we switched to a larger rental vehicle. Katahdin was a major draw at the festival, with many people rushing into our booth eager to take a closer look.

Over the course of the weekend, we had one-on-one conversations with about 1,000 people who visited our booth. Many of these were current thru-hikers with questions about finishing on Katahdin. Friends also gave a presentation on Friday evening to a group of about 50 people. Many thanks to our friends at ALDHA (the Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association) for inviting us to Trail Days, and graciously hosting our table in their large tent. In a nearby tent, staff from the

Appalachian Trail Conservancy spent much of the weekend explaining the new Baxter State Park permit system, and chatting with hikers about the need to be respectful on Katahdin. We really appreciate the partnership and support of these two organizations, as well as grant support from Patagonia that helped fund our participation in Trail Days.



HIKING TO KATAHDIN?

THERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW.

Katahdin is in Baxter State Park.

Baxter is different from anywhere else on the AT. Wilderness comes first. Recreation comes second.

Katahdin is sacred to Maine's native people. It is a fragile and special place to finish a thru-hike.

In Baxter State Park and on Katahdin, plan to:

- ✓ Hike in small groups
- ✓ Celebrate quietly
- ✓ Save alcohol for later

You need to get an AT long distance hiker permit from Baxter State Park. Permits are free.

The future of the AT in Baxter State Park depends on partnership and good ethics from AT hikers.

**DON'T JUST FINISH THE AT.
FINISH WELL.** www.friendsofbaxter.org

Friends is publishing a new poster with guidelines for AT thru-hikers on how to finish well in Baxter State Park. This will be printed in an edition of 500 copies, at 13" x 19" in size. Friends will distribute this poster to hiker hostels along the entire AT corridor, as well as the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's Visitor Center in Harpers Ferry and other key locations.



The Appalachian Trail passes right through the downtown and community park in Damascus, Virginia, making it a perfect venue for a thru-hiker festival.

— Photo © Aaron Megquier

Baxter State Park Trivia

— Puzzle Master Al Howlett

Percival Baxter's first gift of land to the State of Maine included much of Katahdin itself. When he made this gift, he transferred it:

- In its entirety
- As a 3/8 interest in the property
- As a 5/8 interest in the property
- As a 1/2 interest in the property

**Send Trivia answers to:
admin@friendsofbaxter.org**



Friends of Baxter State Park

PO Box 322

Belfast, ME 04915

Visit us at www.friendsofbaxter.org

Email us at info@friendsofbaxter.org



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We're looking for new Friends!

- _____ \$10 Student
- _____ \$25 Individual
- _____ \$35 Family
- _____ \$60 Sponsor
- _____ \$100 Hamlin Peak
- _____ \$250 Knife Edge
- _____ \$500 Traveler

Join our Governor Baxter Society:

- _____ \$1,000 Pamola Peak
- _____ \$2,500 South Peak
- _____ \$5,267 Baxter Peak
- _____ \$10,000 Katahdin

Please make checks payable to Friends of Baxter State Park, or join online.

Dues and contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

Send to:

Friends of Baxter State Park
PO Box 322
Belfast, ME 04915

Thank you!

2016 Walks in the Park

FBSP is offering an expanded series of overnight trips, day hikes, and other adventures this summer. Advance sign-up is required, and space is limited. Please RSVP to Sarah Holland at admin@friendsofbaxter.org.

Evening Program at Katahdin Stream: July 23

Join writers Paul Corrigan and Bryan Wiggins for a selection of Katahdin-themed readings around the campfire at Katahdin Stream. Free.
Host: Paul Corrigan

Day Hike of New Abol Trail: August 6

After two years of hard work by the Maine Conservation Corps and BSP staff, the Abol Trail will reopen in summer 2016. Come check out the new version of this historic route to the summit of Katahdin! Limited lean-to space is available on Friday evening for those who would like to stay the night before. Host: Paul Corrigan

Kidney Pond Weekend: September 8 – 10 ** TRIP IS FULL**

Kidney Pond makes a wonderful base camp for hiking on the western side of the Park, paddling the many ponds in the area, or relaxing in the library with friends. Join our day hike of the Owl on Friday if you wish. Cost: \$75 per person for three nights. Capacity: 8 Hosts: Marion Gray, Andy Walsh.

Day Hike of the Owl: September 9

The Owl is a challenging day hike with spectacular views of Witherle Ravine and Katahdin. We'll make the 6.6-mile round trip and enjoy lunch on the summit if conditions permit. Capacity: 11 Host: Aaron Megquier

South Branch Pond Weekend: October 14 - 16

Enjoy two nights at South Branch Pond, with wonderful opportunities for hiking, swimming, canoeing, fishing, and relaxing. Join our day hike of North Traveler if you wish. Cost: \$22 per person. Host: Dick Klain

North Traveler Day Hike: October 14

North Traveler offers fascinating geology and sweeping views over the northern portion of Baxter State Park and the East Branch of the Penobscot. We will depart from South Branch Pond Campground. Capacity: 11



Annual State of the Park Report
by Jensen Bissell

Baxter Park has been around for a while now. Percival Baxter's initial Deed of Gift was offered to the Maine Legislature in March of 1931. Over the following thirty-one years, Baxter refined and sharpened his intentions regarding the management of the Park through language provided in subsequent Deeds of Gift, and ancillary communications as he continued to build his Park toward the 201,018 acres it would become by 1962.

Since that time, Park Authorities and staff have continued to work to clarify and define the Park's mission as intended by Baxter and in the context of current



The Baxter State Park Authority, shown here meeting in the library at Kidney Pond, is the sole governing authority for Baxter State Park. Current Authority members are Janet Mills, Attorney General; Chandler Woodcock, Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife; and Doug Denico, Director of the Maine Forest Service. Park Director Jensen Bissell is at right.
– Photo courtesy of Baxter State Park

knowledge and understanding. Other State agencies have long histories similar to Baxter State Park, but few have had the consistency of focus and mission that the trust nature of the Park has provided.

I have often said that I feel that it is a privilege to work for Baxter Park. This feeling is, in large part, a reflection of the value of the enduring nature of the Park as an op-

erating entity. The Park cannot be merged, sold, or traded. Our mission cannot change. To work for such a place means that one can take part in a long history, and join a long line of people who shared the same dedication to the continuation and preservation of an idea. For me at least, this is a unique and irresistible opportunity. For those of us fortunate enough to work for the Park, we can rest assured that our children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren can understand, enjoy and, if they wish, participate in the same work, the same dedication to the same idea. I see this understanding in the eyes of Baxter family members like Mike and Rupert White, who continue to serve the Park. The Park provides us an opportunity to explore and renew our personal connection to our natural world. The recognition of nature as a force that will function perfectly with, or without us, is a connection I believe is critical for us to maintain and strengthen in our generation, and the generations to come.

Working for the Park means, in part, working to preserve wilderness. This is not a common task in our society. While many of us understand and support the idea of wilderness as a designated status for some portion of our public lands, most members of our society will never set foot in a wilderness and fewer yet of us will earn a living in the man-



Baxter State Park is now one of the largest employers in the Katahdin Region, with annual payroll and benefits of about \$2.6 million.
– Photo courtesy of Baxter State Park



Baxter State Park maintains a kiosk near where the AT crosses the Park boundary to share key information with thru-hikers.

– Photo courtesy of Baxter State Park

agement and administration of wilderness. To work as a wilderness manager suggests that you develop an eye for the long play.

You try to develop an ear for distinguishing the signal from the noise. Percival Baxter had this eye, this ear – he purchased land that was unwanted, cut over, burnt up. Look at it now. He had the long view – he heard the signal through the noise. Baxter mandated that we not only protect the wilderness, but that we invite people to hike, camp, fish and spend time in the wilderness. To be sure, we know Baxter wanted us first to protect the wilderness values of the Park and only secondly to include recreation. It is this mixture – the inclusion of people, sometimes lots of them – that provides the fuel for almost all of our management challenges. The limitation of daily access to Baxter Peak, involving policies that have been in place in some form for around 3 decades, are policies that define the unique nature of the Park's management. Few other places employ limitations on public use like Baxter Park. This is in part because these policies are often unpopular in our society. The effective application of these policies requires discipline and commitment to clear principles of resource protection – seeing the long view, hearing the signal through the noise.

Including both employees and con-

tracted services, the Park Authority applies the efforts of about 100 people to manage the Park – almost all of them to service, inform, protect and monitor the recreational visitors in the Park. Consequently, we have applied a lot of attention over the past 10 years to ensuring that the structure and definition of the Park's staff is clearly defined and accurately reflects the work they are paid to do on behalf of the Park. In addition, we have worked diligently to be sure that our staff is appropriately compensated and that the pay and benefits of our positions allow the Park to compete effectively for quality people. It has taken us almost ten years, but we have conducted formal reviews of almost every position in the Park. The strength, beauty and spiritual draw of the Park's landscape, along with the permanent nature of the Park, will always help us tremendously in our efforts to build and maintain a skilled, motivated and happy staff.

We also carefully consider the facilities we provide for Park visitors. Our lodging menu has not changed much in 75 years. We continue to provide tent sites, leantos (mostly of log construction), bunkhouses with a capacity of 8 or 10, 21 cabins at two campgrounds, and several group areas. The handful of changes that have occurred have been modest, including new leantos at Hudson Pond, Frost Pond, Wassataquoik Lake, Center Pond, and Katahdin Lake. Many years ago, we removed a bunkhouse



Park infrastructure requires continual maintenance, and sometimes complete replacement. Here, BSP staff are installing a new gate at Matagamon.

– Photo courtesy of Baxter State Park

at Katahdin Stream Campground. We followed this several years later with the installation of the Long Distance Hiker site. This year, we are planning to install a bunkhouse at Nesowadnehunk Field Campground. We will retain the small cabin that has been serving as a bunkhouse and offer it as a two-person cabin rental. We haven't added a group camping area in 50 years, but we have redesigned three of the four group areas in the Park. Over the years, a modest amount of land has been added to the Park, increasing the Park's size by roughly five percent. While we have added



The lean-to on the western end of Wassataquoik Lake is one of the few new campsites that have been added by Baxter State Park during the last seventy-five years.

– Photo courtesy of Baxter State Park



According to a 2008 study, visitors to Baxter State Park generate \$6.9 million in economic activity annually, helping to support the tourism economy of Maine and the Katahdin Region.

– Photo courtesy of Baxter State Park

three lean-tos on the Katahdin Lake parcel, we have not added any camping capacity on the West Branch or Togue Pond purchases. Over time, I expect the Park to feel increasing pressure to add amenities to our lodging, but I expect that the Park will maintain a simple, rustic approach to overnight visitation. We strive to keep our prices modest as well. Our fee review protocol has guided pricing changes in the Park for two decades. Our last price increase was in 2010.

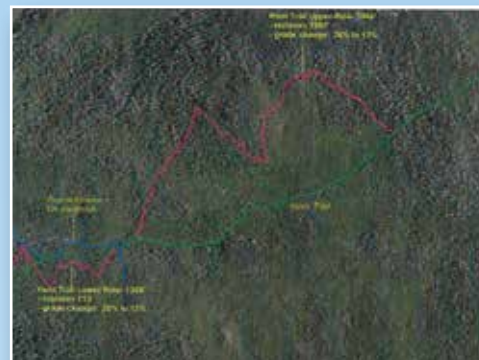
In addition to our public facilities, we have a surprisingly extensive array of operational facilities including storage buildings, staff housing, gatehouses and our Headquarters complex in Millinocket. The maintenance of these facilities provides a different set of challenges. We are

just now completing an expansion of the Park's warehouse facility in Millinocket and we are on track to complete the replacement of the staff lodging facility at Kidney Pond Campground by the end of the summer season.

One challenge that runs through the management of all Park facilities is the management of technology. This year, we are planning to complete a solar power installation at Togue Pond Gatehouse robust enough to provide a continuous internet connection at the gate and power for hand-held devices for the gatehouse attendants. The objective is to connect the gate to the Park's reservation system and to eliminate a disjunct in our data collection that has existed for many years. In addition, we will begin to change the registration process in ways that will shorten the time necessary to process a vehicle entering the Park and improve the collection and storage of the data that forms our use statistics. It is our intention that this be the clear line in the extension of technology into the Park. Other than simple hand-held devices, we have no plans to extend technology further into the Park and will resist outside efforts to do so. I do expect that the desire for technology from both visitors and staff, particularly wireless internet access, will be a pressure the Park will need to face in the years ahead.

Lastly, we have been working on the Park's transportation infrastructure, both roads and trails. This year, we are planning the replacement of two large culverts on the Park Tote Road north of the Marston trailhead. This work will require the closing of the Tote Road to through traffic at this point for up to 10 days. This will be a test of our ever-improving planning abilities and we are hoping for a successful outcome, because more challenging projects lie ahead. We will be continuing with the Trautmann Trail Improvement Program with the first stages of a relocation of a section of the Hunt Trail. We have restructured our trails program and we hope to soon hire two Trail Specialists to manage the increased trail maintenance and construction efforts we can now apply to the Park trail system. The work on our road and trail infrastructure will continue on for at least the next two decades.

Speaking of trails, our efforts to address management and use issues concerning



Baxter State Park is planning to relocate two sections of the Hunt Trail as part of the Trautmann Trail Improvement Initiative.

– Map courtesy of Baxter State Park

the section of the Appalachian Trail in the Park has drawn some attention in recent months. This issue deserves a passing mention in the broader perspective of the Park. The AT Conservancy's regional staff and the AT community in general have been very attentive to the Authority's increasing concerns with AT hiker behavior in the Park and particularly at Baxter Peak. The efforts of the Friends of Baxter State Park regarding this issue have also, and will continue to be, very much appreciated. The Park's efforts to address the issue of the growth of AT hiker use in the Park will take several years to unfold. This is primarily an effort to address functional differences in the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and the National Park Service operational management of the AT, and the Baxter State Park Authority's responsibility as trustees of Baxter State Park. The difference is fundamental and involves finding a resolution to the differences between a model that encourages unlimited growth and one that caps use at discrete limits.

This year, the Park is implementing an AT Hiker Permit Card system for AT hikers entering the Park. It might be helpful to think of this as a "Dash Pass for AT hikers." From the Park's perspective, this is the first step in addressing the issue, which, again, will likely take a number of years to fully resolve. When looked at from a close enough perspective, the Park appears to be constantly changing. A new trail here, a replaced building there, but looked at from a regional perspective, the Park appears as unchanging as Index Rock. We have about the same number of staff, the same campgrounds and most of the same trails as we had 30 years ago. We even have many of the same visitors!

In 2008, we completed an economic assessment that calculated that the Park's contribution to the local economy was in the neighborhood of six million dollars each year. That contribution, adjusted for inflation, has likely been about the same for the past 45 years and will likely continue into the future. During this period, the economic landscape around the Park has changed tremendously and continues to change. While I think the Park was a great gift to the people of Maine, I also believe the stability of the Park as an organization has been a gift to the Millinocket region. In terms of people's lives, stability is not a bad thing and I hope the Park can provide a foothold for positive change in the region in the years ahead.

Providing this stable foothold for positive change in the region, while carefully protecting the Park, will require the dedication and hard work of all of us. The Friends of Baxter State Park has been a great teammate for Percival Baxter's Park over the past sixteen years and has an important role to play in the future. Our strong relationship continues to contribute to the success and protection of the Park. Our mutual efforts in outreach projects

like the Park Calendar, the *Know Before You Go Brochure*, and the contributions the Friends have made toward major trailwork efforts, the Park Trail Guide, the Park's Trail Inventory and Vegetation Mapping projects, Naturalist Adventure Packs, funding for staff training, the Volunteer Program, and broader projects such as the Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program and the completion of the compilation of the Park's history in *Governor Baxter's Magnificent Obsession*, and the soon to be released *Plants of Baxter State Park* guide, have had a tremendous positive effect on the protection and successful management of the Park. I want to express my appreciation to the Friends for your continuing commitment to Baxter State Park and our symbiotic and productive relationship.

The future can't be known, but building resilient management and making open-minded preparation can help. Most importantly, it is important to know where you are going, what you want to be, what is signal and what is just noise. I think we know these things and we have Percival Baxter to thank for it. I think the future of Baxter State Park is great and I want to thank you all for helping make it so.



This word cloud shows the language used by Park Director Jensen Bissell in his annual State of the Park address at the 2016 Annual Meeting of Friends of Baxter State Park. – Graphic courtesy of Baxter State Park

