



FOREVER WILD



Newsletter of Friends of Baxter State Park

Winter 2016

Vol. 15 No. 1

Executive Director's Column

by Aaron Megquier

We are accustomed to thinking about wilderness in terms of place. We can visit a place, have an experience, and then – perhaps reluctantly – we can leave it and go home. The Wilderness Act of 1964 defines wilderness as “as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.” Many of us love to wax poetic about the spatial attributes of wilderness: acres of roadless area, distance from the nearest city, or miles of free-flowing river. Bob Marshall believed that a wilderness must be big enough that you couldn't walk across it in a day.

But our experience of wilderness is also deeply rooted in time. Picture a July day on the summit of Katahdin, around lunchtime. There might be 75 people on the summit. Perhaps some of them are shouting with joy. There are at least a few cell phones, and there might even be a line to take a picture by the summit sign. Now picture a winter sunrise on the summit, with the temperature at -20° F and the wind blowing 60 miles per hour. It's the same place, but with a vastly different feel. Are they both wilderness? Personally, I'm not so sure.

Some wilderness management tools deal with space alone – for example, you cannot build a big box store inside a wilderness boundary – but most also deal with time. This means managing for things like the number of cars through the gate per day, or the number of thru-hikers per season. These management strategies are designed to protect resources from overuse, and also to ensure a visitor experience that matches expectations about what wilderness means.

There's an old saw among ecologists that wildlife management is usually about people management. This is equally true for wilderness. Baxter State Park has many tools in place to facilitate and



Friends of Baxter State Park helps focus the power of a global constituency on issues facing our beloved Baxter State Park. The annual Baxter State Park calendar – one of our many publications – helps keep the Park's spectacular wilderness front and center for our members from Maine to Montana.

– Photo © Beverley Guay

What We Do: The Breadth and Depth of our Support of Baxter State Park

by Dick Klain

At a recent Board of Directors meeting, our Treasurer Gary Friedmann listed many of the things that Friends does for and with Baxter State Park. As Gary said, this list is certainly not complete, but it provides a good sense of our dedication to Baxter's vision.

- We are a bridge between local communities and the Park
- We undertake initiatives that explore how to strengthen the fabric of the north woods communities that support the Park, while maintaining the natural values that underlie the economy of the Katahdin region
- We develop outdoor leadership skills through programs based in BSP like the Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program
- We help build and maintain the Park's world-class trail system by recruiting and training volunteers, and by donating skilled labor from partners such as the Maine Conservation Corps
- We respond to issues that impact Baxter's vision for the Park through advocacy and education, as in the current issues surrounding AT thru-hikers

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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.

Director's Column

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manage human use over time. Trailhead parking lots of fixed size mean that only so many people can be on a given trail per day. A limited number of backcountry campsites limits the number of people in an area at once. These types of limits are employed in Baxter and at conservation areas worldwide to enable a sustainable level of human use in wilderness areas. They are all built around people, place, and time.

Thru-hikers entering Baxter State Park on the Appalachian Trail are currently able to circumvent many of these capacity controls. Park staff are working creatively and collaboratively with the AT community and FBSP to develop solutions that will address these issues. Some of these solutions will be implemented for the 2016 season. Friends will continue to work toward a positive resolution and will keep our members up to date on new developments.

Membership Matters

By Sarah Holland, Administrative Manager

Thank you to everyone who renewed or joined in 2015! You helped us meet our membership goals and funded our important work on behalf of the Park. We also appreciate all your gift memberships and the encouragement you gave to your friends and family to join. All this makes us closer than ever to having 1,000 current members. Bravo! Here is a snapshot of our current membership. Note that while most of our members hail from Maine and the Northeast, we enjoy support from such far-flung places as Ireland, Puerto Rico, and Hawaii! We welcome more Friends so please share this newsletter with anyone you think might share your interest in the Park.



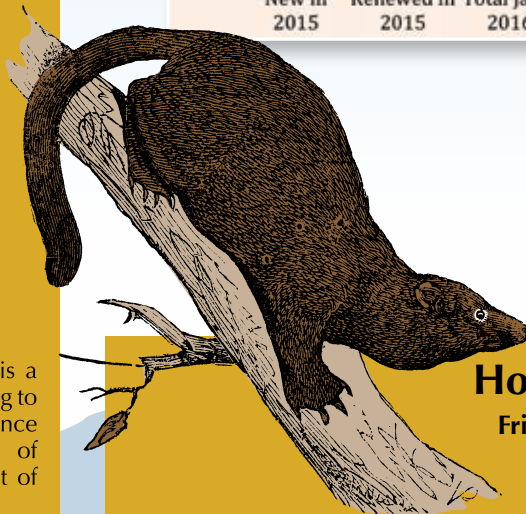
MEMBERSHIP BY DURATION



CURRENT MEMBERSHIP



MEMBERSHIP BY LOCATION



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What We Do – Continued from pg. 1

- We fund research that helps park managers and the public better understand the natural resources within and around the Park, like the Plants of Baxter State Park project, and a major study of climate change with the University of Maine and other partners
- We lead hikes and camping trips in and around the Park to encourage more people to value the Park
- We publish books, articles, calendars and newsletters that inform the public about BSP
- We do what needs to be done to support the Park that Baxter State Park itself cannot do
- We provide avenues for individuals who love the Park to support its mission and safeguard its values

If you would like to help or be involved in any of these activities please don't hesitate to call or email us. This is your organization, and we value your input and support.



With visitor numbers a tiny fraction of those during the summer months, winter brings an entirely new dimension to wilderness in Baxter State Park. - Photo © Jon Campbell



With no one else in sight on a half-mile of exposed ridgeline, a hiker descends Hamlin Ridge. Baxter State Park offers high-quality wilderness experiences that are increasingly difficult to find in the eastern United States. - Photo © Beverley Guay

2016 Baxter State Park Calendars On Sale



—Calendar cover photo © Donna Lawson

We have 2016 Baxter State Park calendars back in stock, and the calendar is now on sale for \$8, 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.

Answer: Trivia Question in Fall Newsletter

In our fall newsletter, we posed this question: "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: _____" Most sources agree that choice B, several pungent chicken farms along the route north, was one of the primary causes for this move. Road construction on the slopes of Mount Oglethorpe was also a factor.

In Memoriam: Edward Werler, November 15, 1913 – February 5, 2016

President's Column

by Dick Klain

Loving Wilderness

"Throughout his illustrious career, wilderness champion David Brower called upon Americans 'to determine that an untrammelled wildness shall remain here to testify that this generation had love for the next.' Now that all wild things and all places are threatened by global warming, that task is more complex." - "Whither Wind" by Charles Komanoff in Orion Magazine

This quote got me thinking not only about wind power, but about wilderness. Sun Edison, a wind power company, recently agreed not to develop any new wind projects within fifteen miles of Baxter State Park or the entire 281-mile Appalachian Trail corridor in Maine. For many of us, this agreement will allow us to continue our wilderness experience without having to see wind turbines close to the Park. At fifteen miles away, if any are ever built those 300-foot towers would be completely covered by the pinky finger of one outstretched hand. For some of us that is still too close. For others of us who grew up with the steam plumes of Millinocket and East Millinocket, it wouldn't be a significant change.

I bring this up to continue the discussion of change that Park Director Jensen Bissell started at our last annual meeting. Decisions are constantly being made that influence Baxter State Park. One current example is the long-standing growth in the number of Appalachian Trail thru-hikers ending their journey at the top of Katahdin. The Baxter State Park Authority has asked Director Bissell to come up with some proposals to mitigate this problem.

David Brower wanted us to show "love" for the next generation. At this point though the Hunt Trail is being "loved" to death, as is Baxter Peak, the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail. From Abol Bridge to Katahdin Stream Campground, the AT traverses several picturesque areas within the park including views of the West Branch of the Penobscot, Windy Pitch, and Big and Little Niagara Falls. While hiking that area this summer I met several thru-hikers. Most did not stop to marvel at these treasures. They were intent on finishing their trek. I know from personal experience that the urge to finish is human nature. They were intent on reaching



With about 80,875 registered hikes in a recent summer season, far more than two percent of visitors to Baxter State Park venture beyond the roads and parking lots. When entering the backcountry, personal responsibility and respect for the *Forever Wild* resource are equally important to a successful trip.

- Photo © Aaron Megquier

their goal – the final ascent to end their hike.

Baxter Peak and the AT from Abol to the summit are not what Brower or Baxter would have described as "untrammelled wilderness." Neither are the campgrounds, roads, and the SFMA. Percival Baxter in his wisdom made sure that areas of the Park would remain wilderness where the incursion of humans would be rare if at all. There are still large areas of the Park where the birds, beasts, and fish hold sway. Even though he gave the Park to the people of the State of Maine, the animals still have precedence throughout much of it. That is how Baxter wanted it, and that is what we are trying to preserve.

Recently while hiking at Bryce Canyon National Park, according to Park officials I became one of the "two percenters." That is I hiked below the rim of the canyon. This was true at Grand Canyon too. At Zion I joined the two percenters by hiking above the valley floor. I found it hard to imagine that ninety-eight percent of visitors to these unique places only experience them through their windshields or from viewpoints within a quarter mile of a parking lot. There are huge amounts of real wilderness that still exist even in these very well "visited" parks. The wilderness is there, as it is in Baxter. Even as we expend the energy to enjoy it, we need to be careful to not love it to death.

Plants of Baxter State Park field guide in publication

On February 2, Glen Mittelhauser of the Maine Natural History Observatory delivered the final *Plants of Baxter State Park* field guide to the University of Maine Press. The guide is now officially finalized and on the publishers desk for layout details before getting sent off to the printer. Many thanks to the hundreds of individuals and organizations that helped bring this project to a successful conclusion!



- Photo courtesy of Maine Natural History Observatory

Looking back...

by John Neff, Author of
Katahdin: An Historic Journey

Joan The Pigeon On Katahdin's Summit

One of the more bizarre stories in Katahdin lore unfolded in August, 1925 when several gentlemen from Houlton, ME arrived at the summit. Nothing unusual about that, but in addition to their daypacks one of them carried a cage occupied by a homing pigeon named Joan. Joan's homing instincts were well known at the time, and her keepers were eager to put her to the test on Maine's highest peak. With great ceremony Joan was finally released at 11:00 a.m. Though there was some fear that hawks hovering around the summit at the time might interfere, Joan made several circles of the peak and then, with a final flap of her wings, headed straight east northeasterly for Houlton.

The two gentlemen, of course, did not arrive back in Houlton very quickly, but Joan made it home in one hour and twenty minutes. A sidebar to this saga is that among those who observed this unusual summit occurrence that day was the then-governor of Maine, Ralph Owen Brewster, and his party. That story must remain for another time.

Friends to participate in 2016 Trail Days in Damascus, Virginia

Friends of Baxter State Park will be participating in the Trail Days thru-hiker festival in Damascus, Virginia. This annual three-day event is scheduled for May 13 – 15, 2016 and draws several thousand people. Friends will be on hand to provide information to thru-hikers and answer questions about Baxter State Park, Katahdin, and the northern terminus of the AT. We would like to extend our appreciation to the Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association for providing tent space and helping with our participation at this event.



Update from the Park by BSP Director Jensen Bissell

As I write this near the end of January, our winter has been tame – much too tame for Rangers to transport materials and supplies by snowmobile to back-country sites in the Park. Many lakes and ponds in the Park remain unsafe for even foot travel. I'm hopeful that by the time this report is available in print, winter has resumed a more normal stature and we are busy getting the work done to prepare for the coming season.

This winter has been a season of change in Park staffing with several departures. Park Secretary Ada Angotti retired at the end of November. In early December, Chief Ranger Ben Woodard resigned to take a position closer to his home in Norway at Bradbury Mountain State Park. In January, Park Interpretive Specialist Morgan Taylor resigned to move back to her hometown of York, Maine. Lastly, Trail Supervisor Paul Sannicandro resigned on February 6 to pursue other interests.

We have been in the search process to replace these positions, and will likely be working on orienting new employees later this winter. We have made one important step in filling these positions. On February 1, we announced the selection of long time employee and Deputy Chief Ranger Stewart Guay to the Chief Ranger position. With 24 years of service to the Park in a variety of positions, Stewart doesn't need much orientation as he steps into a leadership role with the Park.

Baxter Park now serves as one of the largest employers in the Katahdin region. We will continue to work to fill the remaining positions in the months ahead to prepare for the coming summer season. Our 2015 summer season was a busy one. The summer weather, particularly late summer and fall, was generally good. Our summer use numbers were up from previous years. As we look ahead to next summer, we have a number of projects in the Park that will be noticed by visitors in the Park.

Roaring Brook Culvert Replacement

We are planning to replace two large culverts in the Park Tote Road at the Roaring Brook crossing. This is not the Roaring Brook familiar to most Park visitors, but the "other" Roaring Brook that crosses beneath

the Park Tote Road north of the Marston trailhead and south of Slide Dam. The two large culverts have "cannon" outlets. These are culvert outlets raised above the stream level so the outflowing water pours down into the stream. These outlets prevent the natural passage of fish and other organisms, changing the ecology of the stream above the culverts. This project will take one to two weeks and will involve the closing of the Park Tote Road during the weekdays at this point while the work is being accomplished. The work is dependent on low water flows and consequently is scheduled to occur sometime between July 15 and October 1. We will be updating our Facebook page and websites as the timing of this work becomes more certain.

Kidney Pond Campground Ranger Housing

We are planning to install new housing for the Kidney Pond Campground Rangers. The housing will consist of two units installed between the access road to the day use parking lot and the existing trail crew camp. We hope to have the housing complete by the end of the summer season.

Togue Pond Solar Project

The Park has accepted a quote from Moosehead Solar to install significant additional solar power capacity at our Togue Pond Gatehouse. The Togue Pond Gatehouse handles 86% of visitor traffic entering the Park. This project will enable the gatehouse to complete camping reservations on the Park's reservation system after Headquarters has closed for the day. This system will also allow changes in the reg-

istration procedure that should speed the process for both day use visitors and campers entering the Park.

Reservation System Rebuild

For the last year, Shaun Campbell has provided technical support services to the Park. Shaun is a talented and skilled coder as well as a very productive systems thinker. We are making great headway in a number of technical challenges that the Park has been addressing. This winter, Shaun finished a complete rebuild of the code to operate the Park's reservation system. The first software, provided by Baxter Park Advisor and Baxter family member Mike White, served the Park very well for over a decade. The continuing expansion of user numbers and data held in the reservation system began to slow the system and it was clear that the time had come to rework the application. The new system is robust and very durable and should serve the Reservation Office and Park Visitors for many years.

We are also continuing our discussion regarding the management of Appalachian Trail hikers in the Park. The outcome of this work is currently in process. We are confident that the more robust communication now in place with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and the AT community will improve the relationship for the future and help us find common ground to resolve the issues of concern.

BAXTER STATE PARK COMPARATIVE GATEHOUSE STATISTICS 2006 - 2015										
PERSONS	*2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	*2015
Resident	33,402	34,874	31,577	34,992	36,717	34,106	36,352	34,085	33,945	34,043
Non-resident	25,014	25,850	23,862	24,869	26,904	26,255	27,341	29,389	29,104	31,900
TOTAL	58,416	60,724	55,439	59,861	63,621	60,361	63,693	63,474	63,049	65,943
Campers	18,455	18,941	17,808	19,599	20,577	20,415	20,373	21,476	21,462	22,808
Day Use	39,720	41,612	37,506	40,096	42,913	39,850	43,319	41,921	41,520	43,087
Walk/Bike	241	171	125	166	131	85	1	77	67	48
TOTAL	58,416	60,724	55,439	59,861	63,621	60,350	63,693	63,474	63,049	65,943
VEHICLES	*2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Togue Pond	18,260	20,822	17,485	18,991	18,677	18,322	20,760	20,690	20,519	21,598
Matagamon	4,322	6,834	3,239	3,543	3,485	3,357	3,234	2,922	3,120	3,310
TOTAL	22,582	27,656	20,724	22,534	22,162	21,679	23,994	23,612	23,639	24,908
*Walk/Bike tallied under residents										

Overall Park use showed an increase of nearly five percent in 2015 over the previous year, with most of the increase coming from non-Maine residents. Camping use was up about six percent over 2014, and day use was up about four percent. – Graphic courtesy of Baxter State Park



– Photo © Craig Kennedy

Annual Meeting on April 2

Please join us on Saturday, April 2 for the 2016 Annual Meeting of Friends of Baxter State Park. The meeting will be held at the Viles Arboretum, located at 153 Hospital Street in Augusta, Maine. We'll gather for coffee and muffins at 8:30 am, and the meeting will start at 9:00 am. The meeting will feature guest speakers, updates from the Park, decisions by members, and information about current programs and exciting new initiatives. Please join us for lunch and an optional group hike after the meeting. Friends will provide a selection of sandwiches, salads, drinks, and desserts for lunch. Please visit www.friendsofbaxter.org for more details. Hope to see you there!

Photo Submissions for 2017 Baxter State Park Calendar

This past October, 31 photographers submitted 307 images to be considered for the 2017 Baxter State Park Calendar. The photos showcased the incredible wilderness values of Baxter State Park, and the recreational experiences that bring people back to the Park again and again. The calendar is now in the publication process, and will be available for purchase in summer 2016.



The annual BSP calendar features a wide range of photography, including landscape, recreation, astrophotography, and wildlife images. The American toad, *Anaxyrus americanus*, is often seen along hiking trails in Baxter State Park, and will be making an appearance in our 2017 calendar. – Photo © Ross Knowlton

Katahdin Area Visitor App to be Released Soon

The Katahdin Area Chamber of Commerce recently announced the development of a native application for smart phones and handheld devices for visitors to the Katahdin Region. The app will highlight the region's cultural history, park and conservation lands, outdoor recreation activities, diverse trail network, and member businesses that support the region's tourism economy.

"Visitors to the region that download the free app will have access to an incredible amount of information," says Jean Boddy, Chamber Executive Director. *"Not only will a visitor be able to find the exact location of the region's ATV, hiking, snowmobile and cross-country ski trailheads - they will know which member businesses provide goods and services ultimately making their stay in the region much more enjoyable. From food and lodging establishments including campgrounds, grocery and convenience stores, art galleries and museums - they will also know where to board their pet for the day, locate an ATM, or get a massage. Simply, the visitor app will help promote a better visitor experience."*

The app is being developed by Friends member and local business owner Anita Mueller. It will be available this spring as a free download from both the Apple App Store and Google Play.



Friends members Jill Ippoliti and David Elliot ascending the Thorndike Brook Trail on Ragged Mountain. – Photo © Marion Gray

Friends hosts snowshoe hike for Great Maine Outdoor Weekend

With members in every corner of Maine – and spread out across most of the United States and Canada – Friends has been making an effort to host more regional events near where our members live. On February 15, we hosted a snowshoe hike on Ragged Mountain in mid-coast Maine as part of Great Maine Outdoor Weekend. The hike was perfectly timed to take advantage of the great snow conditions that Maine enjoyed very briefly during mid-February. Please stay tuned for more regional events in 2016.



Participants in the 2015 Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program studied writing, geology, art, Native American culture, botany, and more during their nine-day odyssey in Baxter State Park.

– Photo © Aaron Megquier

2015 Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program

Our Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program had another great year in 2015! We continue to partner with the Chewonki Foundation and Baxter State Park to deliver this world-class experience to Maine high school sophomores and juniors. We had a record number of applicants in 2015, and the difficult task of choosing 10 emerging wilderness leaders to participate in the program. Participants continue to describe the MYWLP in superlatives such as “life-changing”, “amazing” and “unforgettable.” Planning for the 2016 program is well underway, and we will be selecting this year’s participants in March. Many thanks to the wilderness specialists, leaders from the Chewonki Foundation, and Baxter State Park staff who make this program possible, and to the generous donors who fully funded it from 2009 – 2015.

Staff Changes at Baxter State Park

In January, the BSP Authority announced the selection of Stewart Guay as Baxter State Park’s new Chief Ranger. Guay has served Baxter State Park for 24 years in a variety of field ranger positions, including more than 11 years as Deputy Chief Ranger. In addition to his operational knowledge, Stewart’s time in the Park includes significant experience in supervision and the management of search and rescue incidents. As a member of the Park’s administrative team, the Chief Ranger oversees the operations of the Park’s ranger, trails and maintenance staff.



Stewart Guay became the Chief Ranger for Baxter State Park on February 2, 2016.

– Photo courtesy of Baxter State Park

In February, the BSP Authority announced the hire of Georgia Manzo as Park Secretary. Manzo is a lifelong resident of the Katahdin Region and brings a deep resume of experience in administrative, human resources and public relations work to the Park. She will work with the Park’s administrative team, supervisory staff, and several advisory committees on a wide variety of projects.

Congratulations on your new positions, Stewart and Georgia, and thank you for your service to Baxter State Park!



Georgia Manzo of Millinocket is the new Park Secretary.
– Photo courtesy of Baxter State Park

Thank You to our Business Members

We’d like to extend special appreciation to our business and organizational members from 2015. Thank you so much for your support!

Eaton Peabody
LL Bean
Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Chewonki Foundation
Flatbread Company
Thread Rolling, Inc.
Dead River Company
AT Lodge & Café
Big Moose Inn Cabins and Campground
Winona Camps
Kieve-Wavus Education
Pine Island Camp
Peaceful Pack Dog Training
North Light Gallery
Twice-Sold Tales
Camp Androscoggin
Chandler Bay Resources

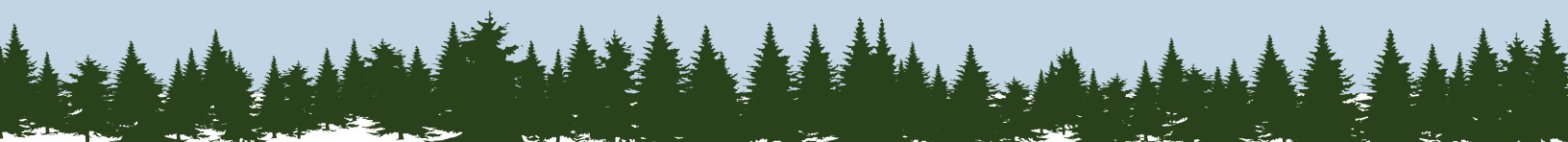
Baxter State Park Trivia

– Puzzle Master Al Howlett

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:

- a) The Wash Basin
- b) The Washing Machine
- c) The Washboard
- d) The Dump

Send Trivia answers to admin@friendsofbaxter.org





Friends of Baxter State Park

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Join our Governor Baxter Society:

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- _____ \$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:

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Thank you!

2016 Walks in the Park

FBSP is offering an expanded series of overnight trips, day hikes, and other adventures this summer. We're still working on dates for several events, and will announce them as soon as possible. Advance sign-up is required, and space is limited. Please RSVP to Sarah Holland at admin@friendsofbaxter.org.

Youth Day Hike: June 11

We'll explore the natural history of the Cranberry Pond trail on an easy hike for families and young children. Free. Capacity: 11

Evening Program at Katahdin Stream: Date TBD

Join writer Paul Corrigan 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! Please let us know if you are interested in camping the night before, and we'll reserve space at Abol if needed. Host: Paul Corrigan

South Branch Pond Weekend: Dates TBD

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: Date TBD

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

Kidney Pond Weekend: September 8 – 10

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