



Guide to the
Katahdin

WOODS AND WATERS NATIONAL MONUMENT



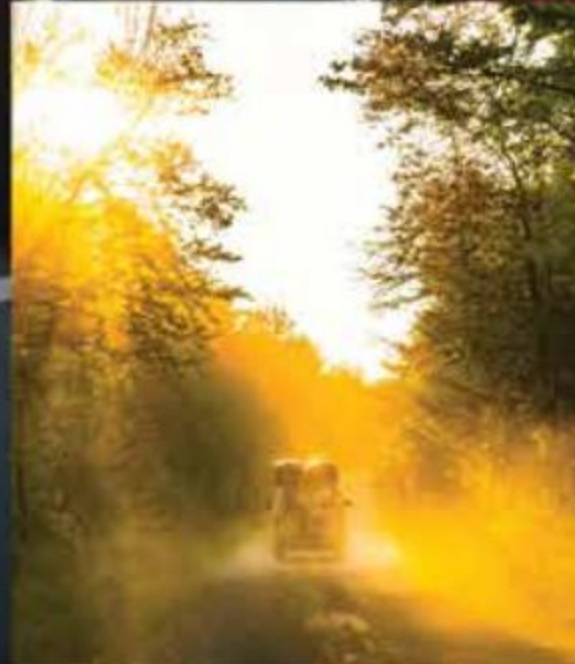
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Overseeing A NATIONAL MONUMENT

AN INTERVIEW WITH TIM HUDSON, KATAHDIN WOODS AND
WATERS NATIONAL MONUMENT SUPERINTENDENT.

BY MATT CHABE



It takes a lot to run a national monument. Tim Hudson's been the superintendent of the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument since it was designated. In this position, he's responsible for overseeing the monument's administration, upkeep, and public outreach.

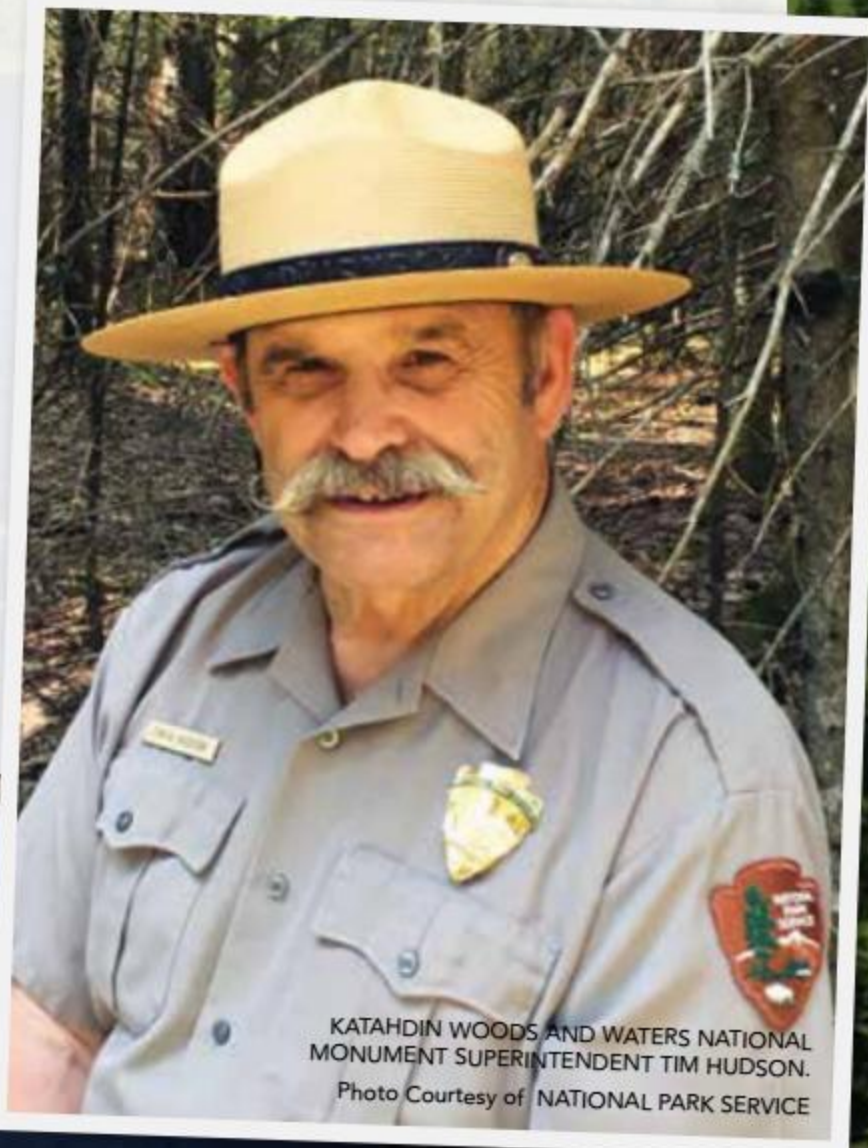
We recently had an opportunity to sit down with Hudson to ask him about his background and what makes the monument so special.

WHAT'S YOUR BACKGROUND?

I'm a civil engineer. My technical background is in water, sewer and garbage. I spent a long time in construction management. I started with the National Park Service in 1967. I spent most of my time in large parks out west—I was at Yellowstone for 31 years. I was the associate regional director for operations in Alaska. We moved to Bangor in 2009 to potentially retire, and a job came up in 2013 in the New York City area. I said I'd only take it if I could commute from Bangor to Staten Island, so that's what I did for three years until I was formally transferred to Maine.

HOW'D YOU FALL INTO THIS JOB?

When the monument started to develop, [the NPS] asked if I could...take over and help them out because it was a type of park area that I'd worked at for many years. I was happy to be able to live at home and get back to areas where things are a lot more rustic and rural.



KATAHDIN WOODS AND WATERS NATIONAL
MONUMENT SUPERINTENDENT TIM HUDSON.
Photo Courtesy of NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



Publisher

RICHARD J. WARREN

Senior Editor, Special Sections

MATT CHABE

Print Sales Manager

TODD JOHNSTON

Advertising Sales

JEFF ORCUTT

jorcutt@bangordailynews.com

Creative Services Manager

MICHELE DWYER

Creative Services

AMY ALLEN, MARCIE COOMBS,
CORALIE CROSS, BEN CYR, CALLIE
PICARD, CAROLINA RAVE

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WHAT MAKES THE MONUMENT STAND OUT?

The natural and cultural resources of the area are right up there at the top. You've got the three rivers that run through it—the Seboeis River, the East Branch Penobscot River, and Wassataquoik Stream. And you've got the history of the timber industry over the years, you've got Native American occupation for at least eight thousand years. The Wassataquoik, in particular, is literally unchanged. There's a lot of extraordinary geology in the monument, and I think that how it's set up right now, where have a large amount of traditional activities still going on inside the monument, makes it not unique in the park service, but unusual in some respects. I've got quite a mix of activity there.

The history in [the monument] is really remarkable, from way back from prehistoric and even historic times, and a lot of things have transpired over the years. We'd like to help promote that around the area, and interact with the state and the seven or eight communities that surround the park.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE AREA OF THE MONUMENT?

I really enjoy going along the Wassataquoik. Basically, you can be by yourself. I enjoy the north end [of the monument], and coming down along the river on the west side. You can hike, you can mountain bike on that side. And you've got a lot of traditional activities on the east side—hunting, snowmobiling, skiing.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE "WOW" AREAS FOR VISITORS?

People often go to the viewing areas when the leaves are out. I've seen quite a few people's jaws drop. People in the west don't see this kind of color. A visitor came up to me and said, "We don't have anything like this. I never saw anything like it." They lived in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

WHAT'S THE TOUGHEST PART OF YOUR JOB?

The toughest part of my job right now is that there's not much staff. So I try and go out and meet people whenever I can. And I still have paperwork to get ready to do to get ready for the summer. Meeting people is the fun part of the job. The paperwork isn't the fun part, but everything has to be put in order. Winter doesn't ever last as long as you think it does.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE PEOPLE TAKE AWAY FROM THEIR VISIT THERE?

You know, the history, the beauty of the area, the solitude that they can get. You've got great night skies—it's one of the better places in the lower 48 states, certainly on the east coast, for night skies. You don't have that light pollution. You've got little noise. You won't be bothered. You'll be out in the wilderness—your cell phone doesn't work in the monument, so you're not going to have that kind of [distraction]. You can camp without a lot of people in one spot. There's enough out here where you can walk not that far and really get away from things. ✕



ACTIVITIES BY SEASON

What seasonal activities does Superintendent Tim Hudson recommend? Read on to find out.

SUMMER: "For the visitor that wants to get an overview, see the terrain, and learn what's going on, the 17-mile loop road around the southwest corner lets you see Katahdin and the expanse of the area. There's a lot of nice walks out there. You can bike out there, as well as go into Orin Falls or the Wassataquoik. For the heavy-duty recreation user, there's the north end, and running the East Branch all the way down from from the Matagon area. You can canoe and kayak with portages...as far down as Bangor. And you've got the International Appalachian Trail—literally, the very beginning of it as it makes its way through Canada and Europe."

FALL: "The fall goes pretty late because you've got hunting in designated sections. Then you've got three or four weeks for snow to collect, and then the [snowmobile] clubs come in and groom them, and we open up for skiing up at the north."

WINTER: "The loop road isn't plowed, but snowmobiling goes through five main sections of the monument...and connects with [the ITS trails]. You've got hunting that's very popular in the section that's outside of Patten. We groom about 30 miles of ski trails in the north section. We have two huts that have been extremely popular to stay in this winter—in fact, one is booked almost every night."

SPRING: "There's not a lot going on in mud season. We'll make the roads stabilized before we let people back in."

For a more-detailed breakdown of activities, visit nps.gov/kaww.

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THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE GOING CAMPING.



Comedian Jim Gaffigan often jokes that camping is a tradition in his wife's family, but he's what people would consider "indoorsy." Gaffigan notes that the idea of burning a couple of vacation days sleeping on the ground outside isn't his idea of fun.

But the comic may be in the minority. Camping is one of the most popular outdoor recreational activities in North America. The Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument has ample opportunities for it, notably along the Wassataquoik Stream and the East Branch of the Penobscot River. (Check out the full map on page 12-13 to see them all.)

Camping can take many forms. Some purists equate camping to minimalist survival, eking out an existence for a few days with nothing more than a tent, a single roll of toilet paper, and a fishing pole. Others enjoy the creature comforts of home and would readily consider camping as something done from their climate-controlled RV.

Camping ranges from sleeping under the open stars to glamping (a style of camping with amenities and potentially resort-style services). No matter how one defines camping, information is the key to becoming the proverbial "happy camper." The following list is a general starting off point for planning a camping adventure.

NOT ALL CAMPSITES ARE EQUAL. When choosing a campsite, seek an area that offers the amenities you desire. Popular places like lakeside spots or those close to trails tend to book up early. Also, consider proximity to bathrooms, showers and ingress/egress spots. People who desire solitude will pick different campsites than those who want to be near the family action.

CHOOSE A TENT FOR THE WEATHER. Supplies will differ depending on the temperatures when you plan to camp. Select a tent with a sun-protection sealant to prolong its longevity. Opt for a location with partial afternoon shade to keep the campsite and tent cool. Face the tent door into the wind for a breeze (and also to keep mosquitoes from camping alongside you). Speak with a camping supply retailer about your camping needs.

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Such a pad also will serve as an extra moisture barrier and will help keep you warm or cool.

USE THE MOON. If this is your first time camping, schedule the night out to coincide with a full moon. There will be extra light at night to chase away any fears and make navigating a bit easier.

BE AN EARLY BIRD. To see wildlife, hit the trails as early as possible. Early morning hours also are cooler for working.

Remember that camping involves getting in touch with nature. Leave the campsite how you found it, taking trash along with you. ✕

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FIRST Launch

MY CANOE TRIPS DOWN THE EAST BRANCH HAVE SHOWN
ME VISITORS WILL LOVE THE MONUMENT LAND.

BY MIKE WILSON



My son, Tom, and I launched our canoe into the East Branch of the Penobscot River, just below the Matagamon Dam, at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 24. This was our third annual trip to the East Branch, and the first time we were starting at the top. We were feeling ready for the rapids and portages to come in those first 11 miles.

Tom likes the East Branch largely because we catch fish there—lots of big bass. I like that because fishing with kids is always more fun when you actually catch fish. We also count on seeing lots of wildlife and almost no people as we explore the quietly stunning landscape. I know Tom likes that, too.

This year, by coincidence, we were the first people to paddle the East Branch after much of the surrounding area was designated by President Barack Obama as the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. We were first to run Stair Falls and Bowling Falls. First to portage around Haskell Rock, Pond Pitch, Grand Pitch and the Hulling Machine. We're also pretty sure we were the first to skinny dip in the new national monument (around 3 p.m. if anyone wants to challenge us).

I've been involved with rural economic, conservation and cultural issues in the Maine woods for the past 20 years, and I have run the upper stretch of the East Branch once before and the lower portions several times. What I noticed this year was that the national monument designation hadn't changed anything, at least not yet. The portages still were grueling. The rapids just challenging enough. The wildlife still was abundant (we recorded 22 different species, including moose, eagles and a luna moth caterpillar). The fish still were biting, and we had that quietly beautiful landscape all to ourselves.

We also still were traveling through a landscape of mixed public and private lands. Two of our portages were on monument lands and two followed traditional portage trails on the privately owned east side of the river. Both nights we camped at traditional sites on private land because that's where we found the right sites at the right times.

Tom and I didn't plan our canoe trip on the East Branch because the area had been designated as a national monument. We were there because it's a great place where people who know how to get around in the Maine woods have been experiencing and learning about nature for generations. It's a wild place that forces people to

pay attention and disconnect from their technology and routine. A place that gives adults a chance to recharge and kids a chance to come of age a bit.

The new national monument will inevitably bring change to this special area. And for those of us who've come to love it as it is—wild, remote, uncrowded and uninterpreted—some of that change will be bittersweet.

The national monument will attract more people from across the country and around the world to experience outdoor recreation and renewal in the Maine woods. People who live in the area will have the chance to create new and expanded business and share their love of the place as ambassadors helping visitors understand our tradition of balancing forest management and outdoor recreation.

The federal government will invest in valuable new recreational and interpretive resources, and I believe local landowners and communities will respond to this opportunity by finding new ways to support and benefit from increased visitation.

And, while Tom and I understand our future experiences on the East Branch may be different, I know the region's economy will get a sorely needed boost, and new visitors will leave richer for their time in the Maine woods.

I can't measure the ways my son and I have benefited from our trips together on the East Branch, and I'm sure we'll miss the feeling of being out there alone together, with no other people around and no one to rely on but ourselves.

The powerful experiences we've shared there, though, confirm for me that national recognition of the region's environmental and cultural values is well deserved, and that the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument will make Maine and the United States better places for the generations to come. ✕

Mike Wilson of South Portland is the senior program director for the Northern Forest Center, a nonprofit organization dedicated to building economic and community vitality while fostering sound forest stewardship across the Northern Forest of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York.





TOM WILSON CHECKS OUT THE VIEW OF THE EAST BRANCH OF THE PENOBSCOT RIVER.
Photo by MIKE WILSON



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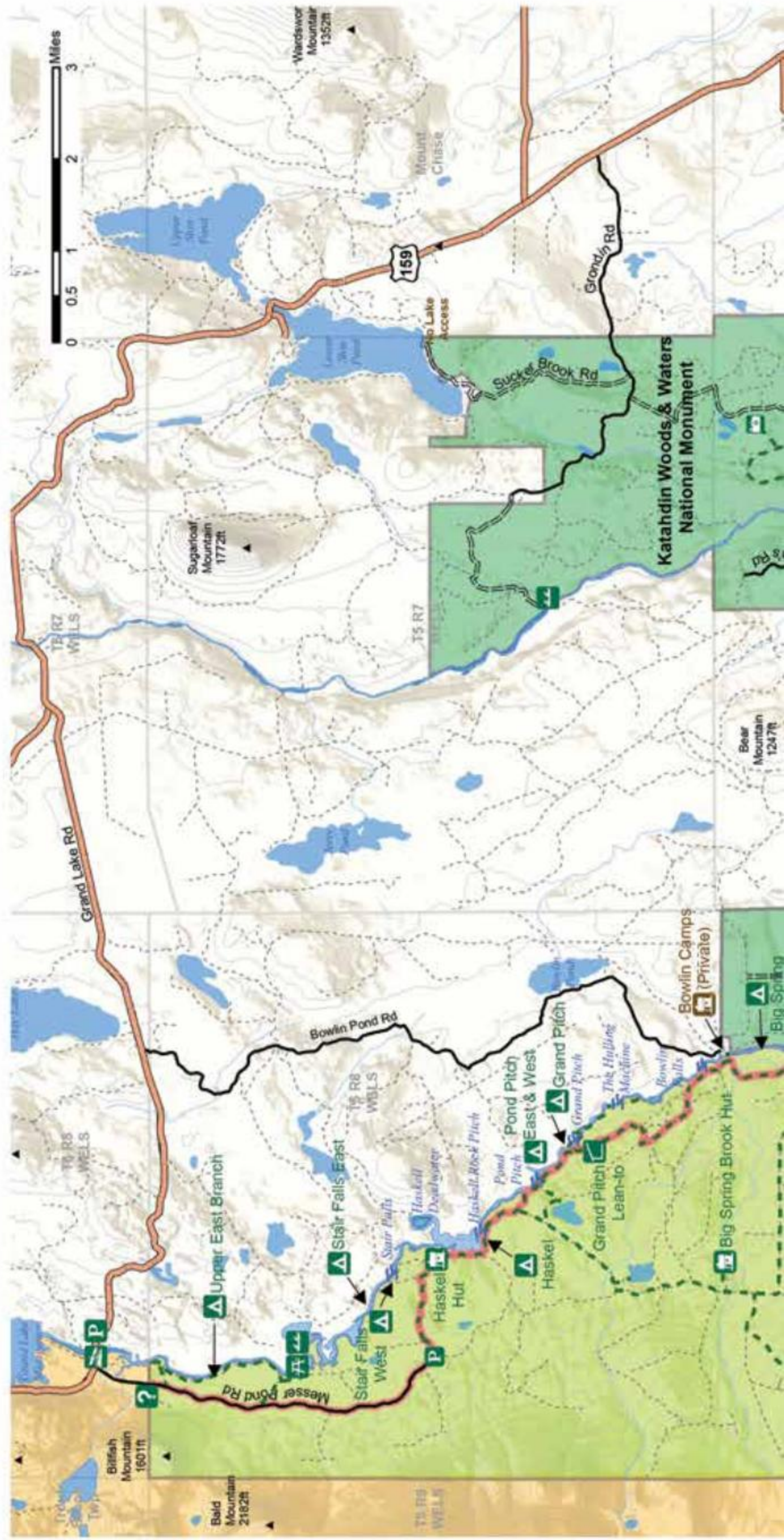
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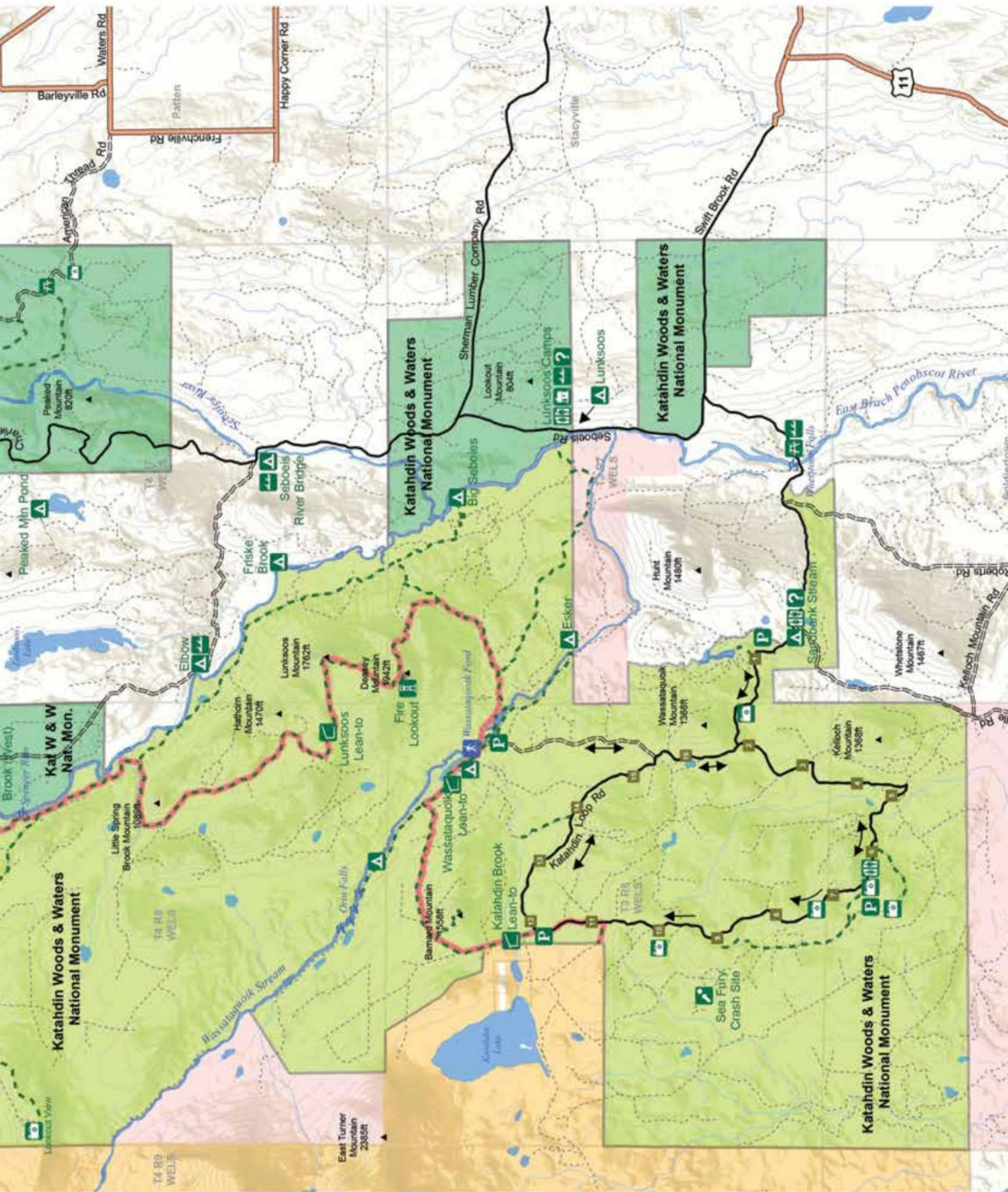
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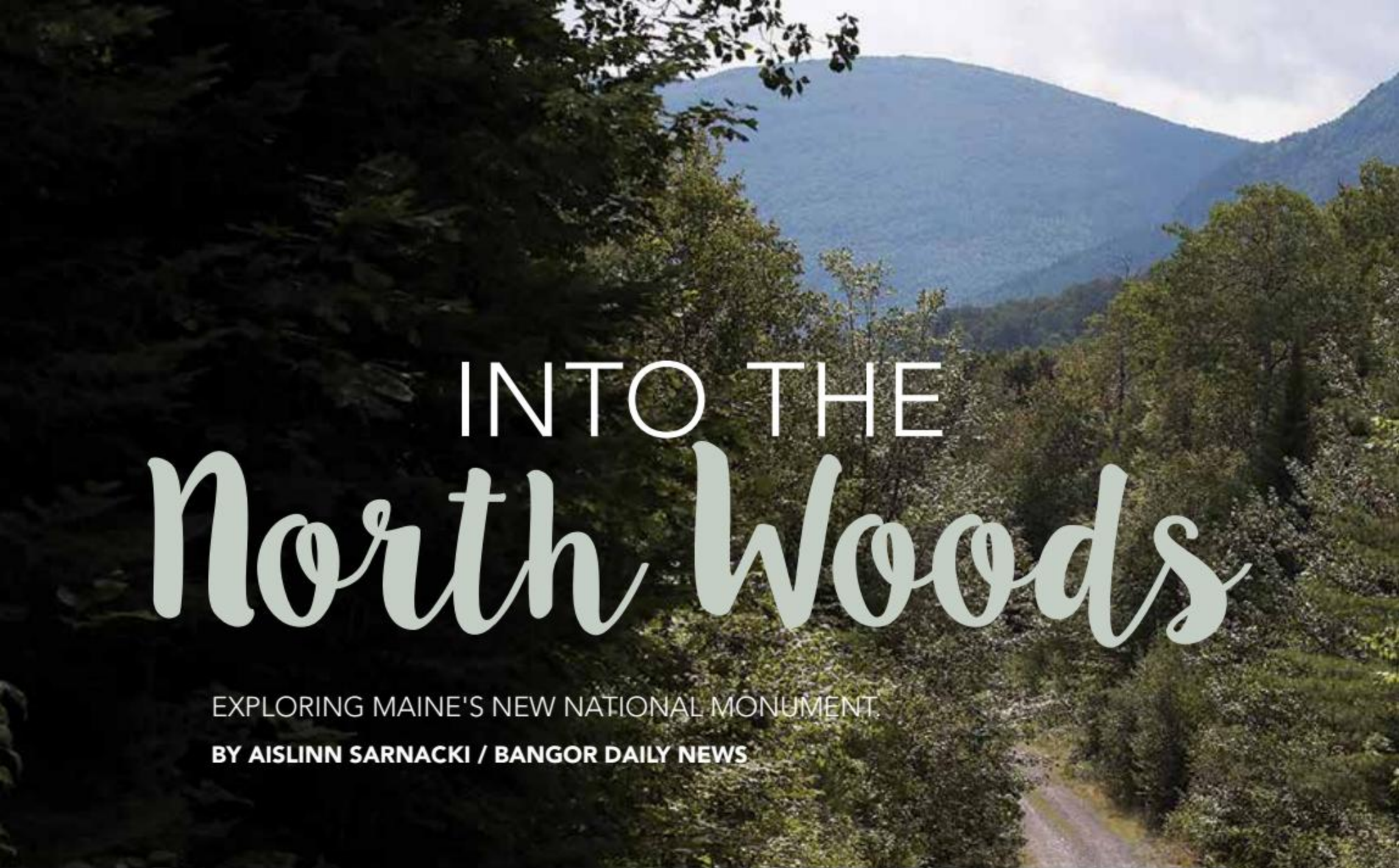
WOODS AND WATERS NATIONAL MONUMENT

RECREATION MAP

	WEST OF EAST BRANCH PENOBSCOT RIVER (NO HUNTING)		RIVER FEATURE		FIRE LOOKOUT
	EAST OF EAST BRANCH PENOBSCOT RIVER (HUNTING ALLOWED)		WATER CROSSING		PICNIC AREA
	BAXTER STATE PARK		SCENIC OVERLOOK		POINT OF INTEREST
	MAINE BUREAU OF PARKS & LANDS		CABIN		MILE MARKER
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	TRAILS		AREA CAMPSITES		GRAVEL ROAD
	INTERNATIONAL APPALACHIAN TRAIL		PARKING		UNIMPROVED ROAD
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			RESTROOM		







INTO THE North Woods

EXPLORING MAINE'S NEW NATIONAL MONUMENT.

BY AISLINN SARNACKI / BANGOR DAILY NEWS



The roar of the river grew louder as we pedaled our bikes through the forest toward the East Branch of the Penobscot River. Then, all of a sudden, the trees opened up and we were at our destination: Haskell Rock Pitch in the new Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument.

“Woohoo!” Bangor Daily News photojournalist Gabor Degre yelled as he steered his mountain bike off the path and out of sight.

“Oh my!” I exclaimed after following him around the bend.

On a rocky ledge, we stood with grins on our faces, looking upriver at the rapids. The frothing water tumbled and churned as it rushed down river, bending around boulders and plunging over hidden shelves to roll back onto itself in spirals of white. The grace and power of the river, illuminated in the afternoon sun, held us transfixed.

To be among the first people to play in the new Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument was a momentous occasion, rich with the smell of balsam fir and the gentle roar of the East Branch. It’s a memory I hope to relive, decades from now, for my children and grandchildren as we sit around a campfire.

The memory will go something like this:

Just hours after President Barack Obama signed into law the creation of the 87,563-acre national

monument on Wednesday, Aug. 24, Gabor and I were on the property, signing the registration book at its north entrance. He shares my passion for outdoor recreation.

That morning, after the big announcement came from the White House, the two of us were chosen by BDN editors to head north and explore Maine’s new national monument for the day. Our mission was to document the adventure, get a feel for the property and bring that experience back to our readers.

As we neared the north entrance of the property, the traffic dwindled and our cellphones lost reception. Bordered on the west by Baxter State Park, the new national monument already features a network of old logging roads and trails used by hikers, mountain bikers and cross-country skiers. Running through the property’s heart is the East Branch of the Penobscot River, ideal for canoeing, fishing and whitewater paddling, with many campsites already established along its shore.

As we drove into the property on a gravel access road Wednesday afternoon, a frog hopped across the road, barely escaping the tires of our vehicle.

About 3.5 miles along the gravel road, a fallen aspen tree barred the way. While Gabor wrestled with the tree to the side of the road, I tried to help, bending a branch here and there—but for the most part I was just getting in the way.



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"This makes me think we're quite possibly the first people in the north section after it became a national monument," Gabor pointed out after successfully moving the tree. "Although, who knows, maybe the tree just came down or someone could be in there camping."

A short distance farther, we parked at Haskell Gate, which barred the old logging road, and continued our journey on mountain bikes. Steering around the metal gate, we pedaled along the overgrown dirt road, which is also a section of the International Appalachian Trail. Through a mixed forest of birch, white pine and maples already starting to turn fall colors, we biked 1.5 miles, passing several wetlands and carefully navigating wooden bridges.

A sign marked the short side trail to Haskell Hut, an old cabin set on a grassy hill above a wide bend in the East Branch. The door was open, and we entered to find a clean, rustic living space, with wooden beds and a kitchen with a handpump placed over a wide sink. On a table sat a registration book, which we opened to find a handful of entries from people who'd stayed at the cabin over the past year, during the winter, spring and summer. Someone had sketched a mermaid on one page—the Mermaid of the East Branch?

Over the one doorway in the cabin, a "National Park Yes!" sign had been tacked up, next to a horseshoe. Leaving Gabor to take photos, I wandered outside and followed a footpath down the embankment to the river, where I crouched behind tall grasses and watched a female wood duck swimming nearby and a hawk wheeling overhead.

From the cabin, we continued our ride 0.5 mile to Haskell Rock Pitch, the magnificent rapids that were the high point of our trip. The sunlight had taken on the golden glow of late afternoon. We turned our bikes around at Haskell Rock Pitch and headed back toward Haskell Gate, but we were reluctant to end our journey. So on the way back, we took a few detours.

First, we visited the campsite and lean-to by the scenic Haskell Deadwater, just above Haskell Rock Pitch. The water was as smooth as glass, and the campsite was in a peaceful clearing of tall grasses and wildflowers, scattered with charred trees that told of a recent fire. At the shore, Gabor cupped the cool, clear water in his hands and splashed it over his face.

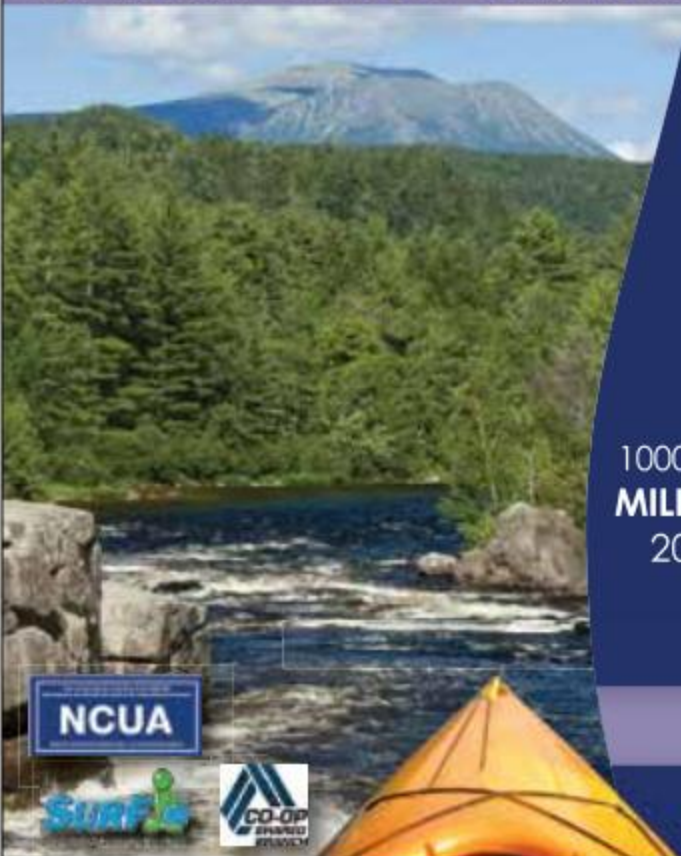
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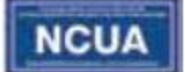
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Dragonflies darted over the river, and a bright orange viceroy butterfly made a brief appearance before disappearing into the bushes along the shore.

In the shallows of the boat landing, we watched a small frog swim along the bottom, then surface to float, seemingly without a care. A belted kingfisher flew across the river and perched in a maple leaning over the water, and I resolved to return to the peaceful location some day to pitch a tent.

Continuing on, we took one more detour: a 0.5-mile side trail to Stair Falls, which ended up being a series of very shallow “stairs” in the East Branch (less dramatic than Haskell Rock Pitch).

Just past the falls was another campsite, set on a grassy ledge over the rushing water.

As we finished our bike trip, Gabor and I talked about how easy it was to bike to a number of campsites and scenic locations in just a few hours. The trails were easy enough for families to enjoy,

and the intersections were already marked well with signs that gave mileages to different destinations on the property.

“I was shocked that nobody was in there,” Gabor said as we drove off the property. We hadn’t seen any other people on the trails that day, and all of the beautiful campsites had been empty, though they displayed evidence of being used, such as charred logs in campfire rings. It being such an important day for the property, we had expected to see visitors out biking, hiking and paddling in celebration. But we didn’t mind having the north end of the new national monument to ourselves.

On the way home, we stopped at Craig’s Clam Shop in Patten for sandwiches and fried pickles. Sitting at the picnic table, surrounded by locals eating dinner, Gabor edited photos of our trip and I jotted down notes before bits and pieces of the trip started to slip from my memory—a memory I’ll cherish for years to come. ✕

WE HADN'T SEEN ANY OTHER
PEOPLE ON THE TRAILS THAT
DAY, AND ALL OF THE BEAUTIFUL
CAMPSITES HAD BEEN EMPTY,
THOUGH THEY DISPLAYED
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THINGS TO KNOW:

HUNTING: Hunting is permitted (with a Maine state license) in the recreational areas of the monument, designated in dark green on the monument map (see page 6). This includes the lands to the east of the East Branch Penobscot River. Bear baiting, trapping and chase dogs are not permitted.

CAMPING: Campsites and lean-tos are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The Haskell Hut is available winter only by reservation. The Big Springs Brook Hut is available in the summer and winter by reservation. Dogs are not permitted in the cabins or lean-tos. At this time, there is no fee to use the lean-tos or huts.

FISHING: The East Branch Penobscot River and the surrounding tributaries offer excellent fishing opportunities. A Maine state fishing license is required.

For more information, visit nps.gov/kaww.

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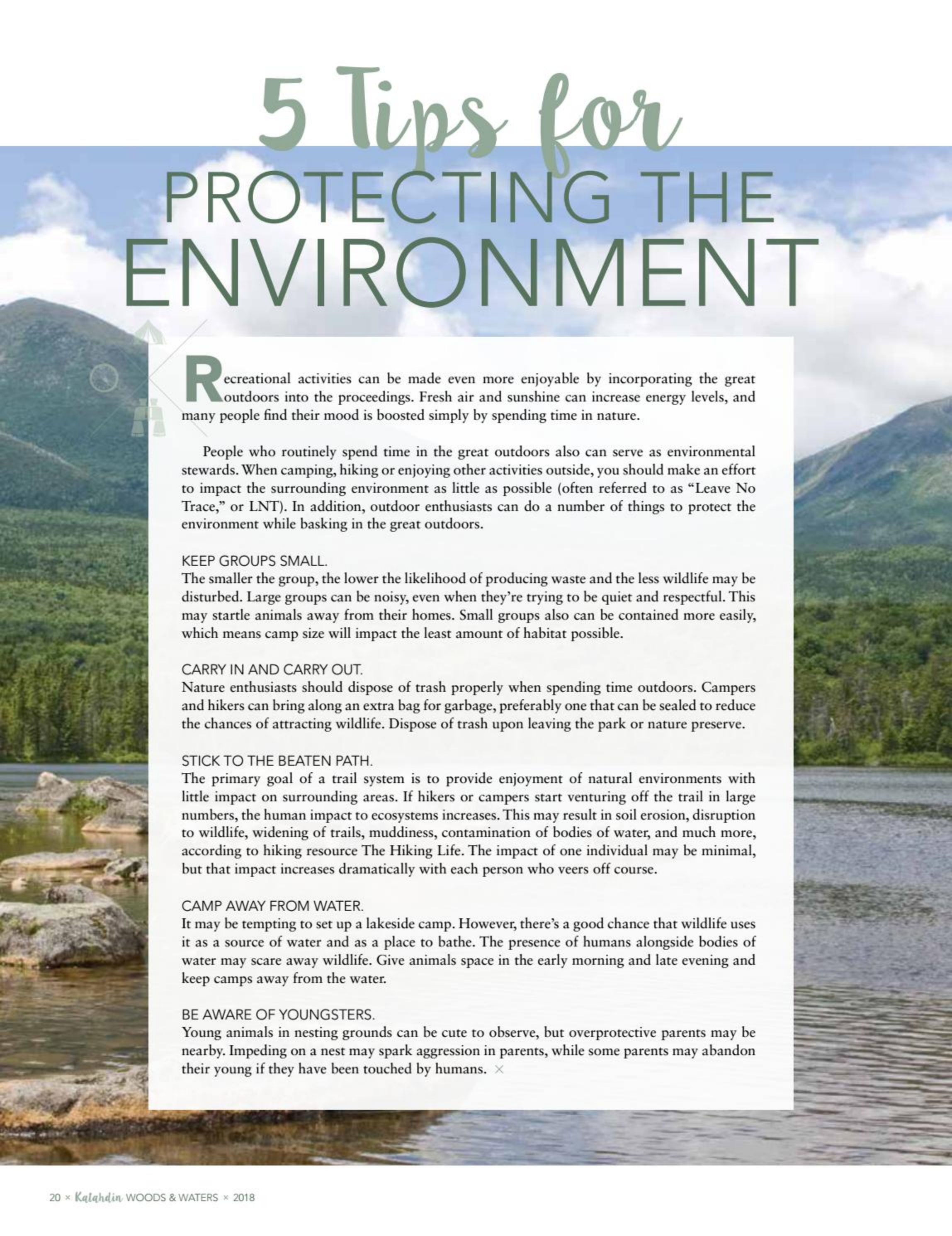
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5 Tips for PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT



Recreational activities can be made even more enjoyable by incorporating the great outdoors into the proceedings. Fresh air and sunshine can increase energy levels, and many people find their mood is boosted simply by spending time in nature.

People who routinely spend time in the great outdoors also can serve as environmental stewards. When camping, hiking or enjoying other activities outside, you should make an effort to impact the surrounding environment as little as possible (often referred to as “Leave No Trace,” or LNT). In addition, outdoor enthusiasts can do a number of things to protect the environment while basking in the great outdoors.

KEEP GROUPS SMALL.

The smaller the group, the lower the likelihood of producing waste and the less wildlife may be disturbed. Large groups can be noisy, even when they’re trying to be quiet and respectful. This may startle animals away from their homes. Small groups also can be contained more easily, which means camp size will impact the least amount of habitat possible.

CARRY IN AND CARRY OUT.

Nature enthusiasts should dispose of trash properly when spending time outdoors. Campers and hikers can bring along an extra bag for garbage, preferably one that can be sealed to reduce the chances of attracting wildlife. Dispose of trash upon leaving the park or nature preserve.

STICK TO THE BEATEN PATH.

The primary goal of a trail system is to provide enjoyment of natural environments with little impact on surrounding areas. If hikers or campers start venturing off the trail in large numbers, the human impact to ecosystems increases. This may result in soil erosion, disruption to wildlife, widening of trails, muddiness, contamination of bodies of water, and much more, according to hiking resource The Hiking Life. The impact of one individual may be minimal, but that impact increases dramatically with each person who veers off course.

CAMP AWAY FROM WATER.

It may be tempting to set up a lakeside camp. However, there’s a good chance that wildlife uses it as a source of water and as a place to bathe. The presence of humans alongside bodies of water may scare away wildlife. Give animals space in the early morning and late evening and keep camps away from the water.

BE AWARE OF YOUNGSTERS.

Young animals in nesting grounds can be cute to observe, but overprotective parents may be nearby. Impeding on a nest may spark aggression in parents, while some parents may abandon their young if they have been touched by humans. ✕



LEAVE NO TRACE

Leave No Trace is built on seven core principles that are used to communicate the best available minimum impact guidance for enjoying the outdoors responsibly. The Seven Principles of Leave No Trace were developed to help educate and guide recreationists in sustainable minimum impact practices that mitigate or avoid recreation-related impacts. These Principles are the most robust and widely utilized minimum impact outdoor practices.

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

The Principles are based not only on a respect for nature and other visitors, they are also based on and supported by scientific research. The majority of this research aligns with the fields of Recreation Ecology and Human Dimensions of Natural Resources. Recreation Ecology research informs us about recreation-related impacts and how they can be reduced by managers and visitors, while Human Dimensions research tells us about outdoor enthusiasts' perceptions, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors regarding enjoyment of the outdoors.

Excerpt © 1999 by the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics: www.LNT.org.



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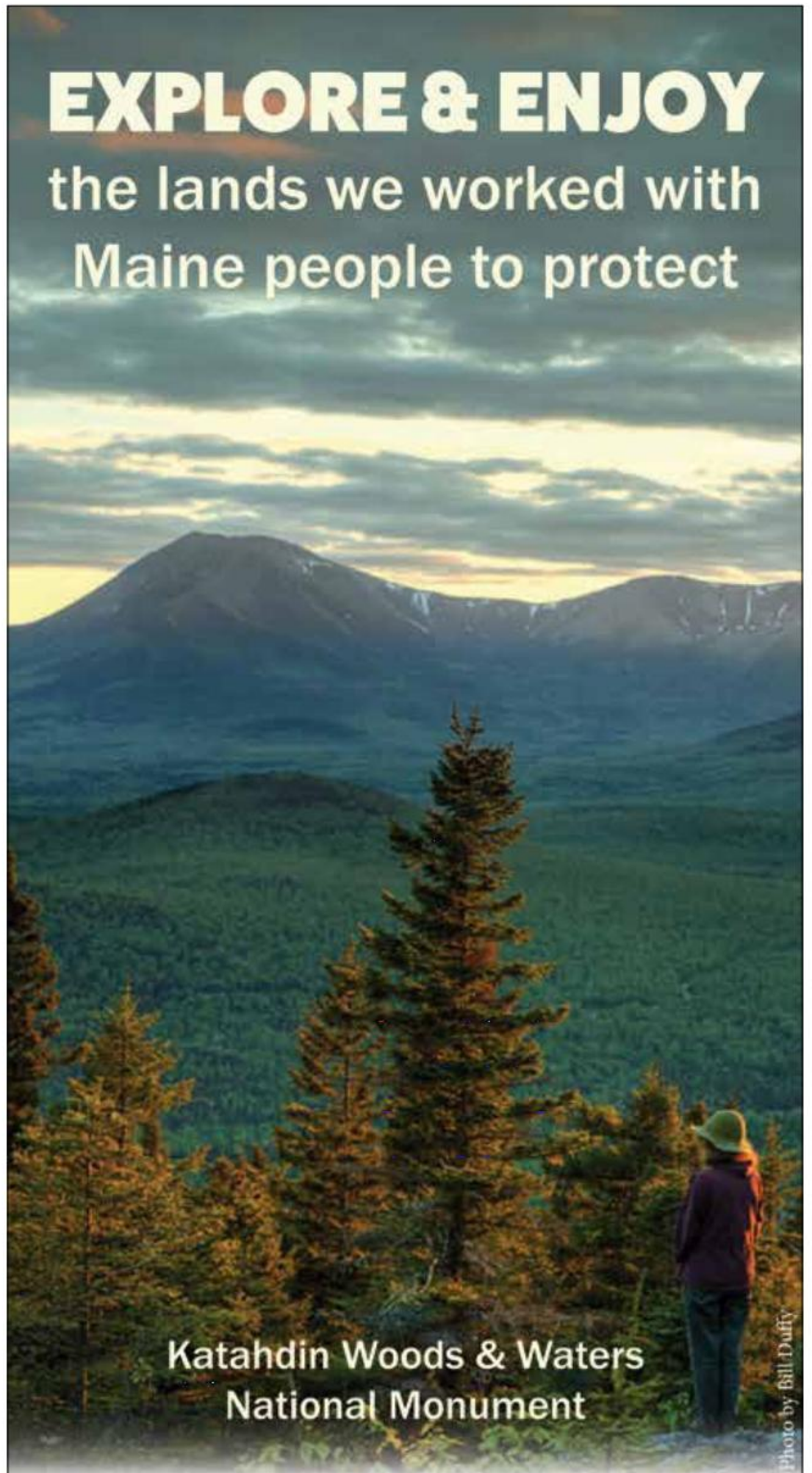


Photo by Bill Duffy

Katahdin Woods & Waters National Monument

We invite you to find out more about the Natural Resources Council of Maine and all that we are doing to help protect the nature of Maine.



Natural Resources Council of Maine
3 Wade Street • Augusta, Maine • 04330 • www.nrcm.org
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