



Guide to the

Katahdin

WOODS AND WATERS NATIONAL MONUMENT



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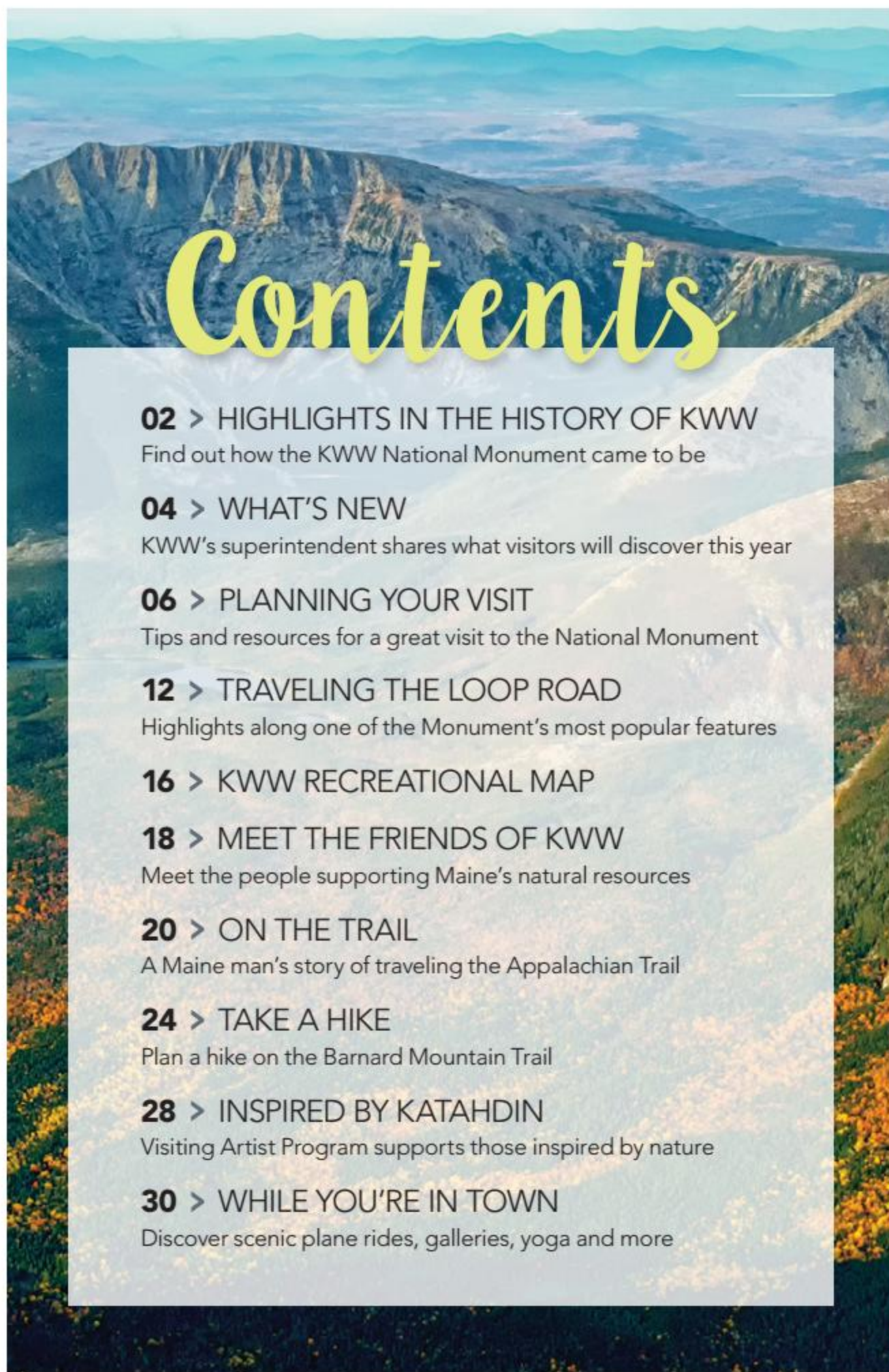
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Highlights IN THE HISTORY OF

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FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS

Penobscot Nation ancestors inhabit the lands in the East Branch region, to hunt, fish, and collect other wild foods for sustenance.

1820

MARCH 15, 1820

Maine becomes the 23rd state, separating from Massachusetts.

1879

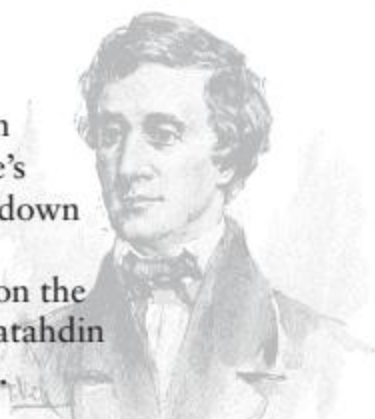
AUGUST 29, 1879

Teddy Roosevelt and his guide, Bill Sewall, summit Katahdin. Roosevelt and his party crossed the East Branch of the Penobscot River and Wassataquoik Stream in an experience that sparked a life-long commitment to land conservation by the man who would become the 26th president of the United States and sign into law the Antiquities Act of 1906.

1857

JULY 20, 1857

Henry David Thoreau leaves his home in Massachusetts for his final trip to Maine's North Woods, during which he paddles down the East Branch of the Penobscot River, camping at many spots along the shore on the lands that would one day become the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument.

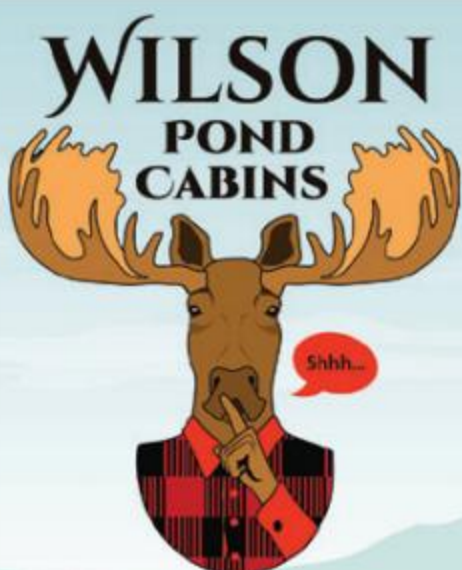


1899

MAY 15, 1899

A paper mill and the brand new town of Millinocket are carved out of the forest along the banks of the Penobscot River, about 10 miles south of the land that would become the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument.

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KATAHDIN WOODS AND WATERS

1931-
1963

1931 – 1963

Former Maine Governor Percival P. Baxter purchases 28 parcels surrounding Katahdin, Maine's highest mountain, and donates them to the State of Maine to create Baxter State Park, immediately to the west of the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument.

2011

MARCH 28, 2011

Roxanne Quimby announces she wants to donate 70,000 acres for a new National Park in the East Branch region. Between 2003 and 2014, Elliotsville Plantation, Inc., a private foundation established by Quimby, purchased a total of 89,261 acres in the region.

2016

AUGUST 12, 2016

Elliotsville Plantation, Inc. transfers 87,000 acres of land east of Baxter State Park to the United States of America. Between 2012 and 2016, Natural Resources Council of Maine staff members and Lucas St. Clair, President of Elliotsville Plantation, Inc., held meetings with area residents, and the National Park proposal evolved to include a National Recreation Area where access for snowmobiling and hunting is guaranteed.

2016

AUGUST 24, 2016

President Obama designates Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument.



TODAY

TODAY

Visits to KWW Monument quadrupled in 2017 — approximately 30,000 people visited the Monument from 45 states and 9 countries. In the past two years, more trails have been added and work continues to ensure the Monument's future.



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What's New

WITH KATAHDIN WOODS AND WATERS

KATAHDIN WOODS
AND WATERS
NATIONAL MONUMENT
SUPERINTENDENT
TIM HUDSON SHARES
WHAT VISITORS WILL
DISCOVER THIS YEAR

BY KATIE SMITH



Running the Katahdin Woods and Waters national monument is what Tim Hudson does. In fact, he's been the superintendent since the 87,563 acres was proclaimed as a national monument in August of 2016.

We got to have a talk with Hudson about all the new and exciting things that have been underway for all to enjoy. The most exciting being five trails that were finished late last fall — people haven't even been on them yet.

"Three of them are off of the Katahdin Loop Road," says Hudson. "One is a short trail to Lynx Pond and is fully accessible for wheelchairs. It has a viewing platform and moose are often spotted there."

There is also a new trail to Deasey Pond which is about a mile and a half long. Hudson said the trail climbs up to an esker and then drops down to a great pond with a viewing platform.

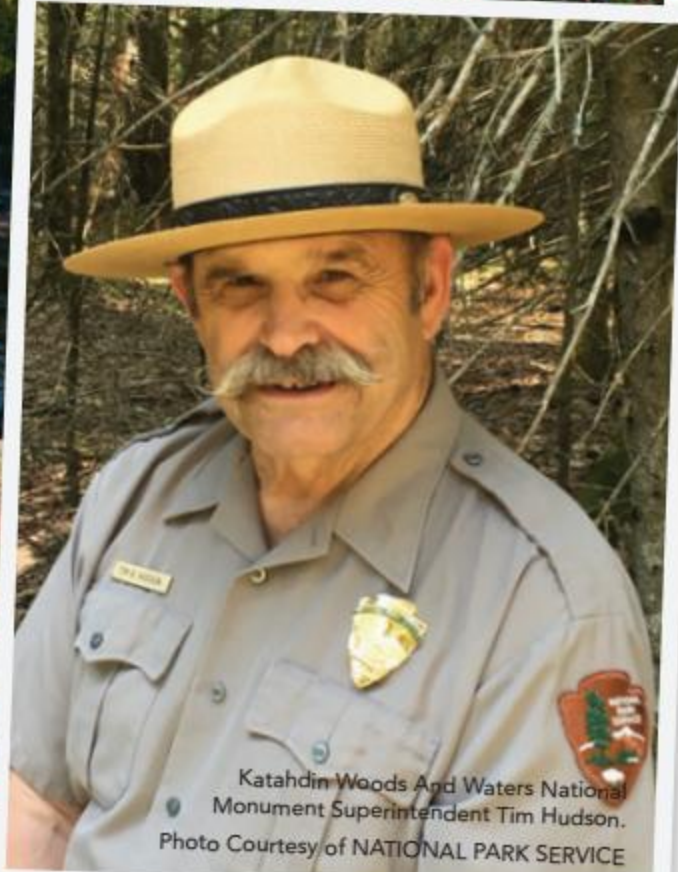
There has been some moving around to make room for more people to visit the trails, Hudson explains. "The Esker

trailhead has been relocated to provide for more parking and a trail up to an esker overlooking a dead water. This is a fairly short walk of less than half a mile."

The other two trails that were added are fairly short and located in the northern part of the monument. "They are upgraded trails to the Kimball Deadwater and to Twin Ponds," says Hudson.

Trails aren't the only part of the upgrade. There have been three new vault toilets added for visitors, with the one near the Orin Falls parking area which is one of the most popular trails in the monument. "This is a service that didn't exist before," says Hudson.

There are more exciting things happening in the months to come. Hudson reports, when the monument was established, the previous owner kept some reserved rights to build some trails, a contact station and other amenities, and those will start to become reality in 2020 and beyond. "The first trail from those reserved rights will be completed in the early summer along the Seboies River," he says.



Katahdin Woods And Waters National Monument Superintendent Tim Hudson.
Photo Courtesy of NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

There will also be upgrades to the roads this year, with extensive work on the north end roads, along with replacing some culverts with small bridges to make them compatible with the efforts to restore the Atlantic salmon in the area of the east branch of the Penobscot.

The biggest change for this year may well be the 22 signs that were put up in late fall so that visitors can more easily find their way to the monument from I-95 and Route 11. "This is the first year that signage will be available outside of the monument boundary," Hudson says.

There is much to do when you visit the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. "The attractions of the natural beauty, the natural and cultural resources, continue to draw people for wildlife viewing, vistas, fishing, canoeing, biking, hiking, cross-country skiing and the darkest skies in the eastern part of the country throughout the year," Hudson says.

With the new trails and other upgrades it's sure to attract even more people from our great state and beyond. ✕

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PLANNING YOUR *Visit*



TIPS FOR A GREAT VISIT TO KATAHDIN WOODS AND WATERS

BY JOSHUA ARCHER



If you're looking for the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument you might just miss it. What is sometimes mistook as a single thing, the park is a designation of almost 90,000 acres of land open to the public. But to get the full monument experience visitors should explore Maine's woods as well as the communities that surround the monument.

ONLINE HELP

It's suggested that those planning to visit the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument begin by visiting their page on the National Park Service website nps.gov/kaww. There you can learn about the park, plan your visit and view a map of the area. Visitors may also visit the Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters website at friendsofkaww.org for additional information and maps with current trails, roads and what to do. And to learn more about trails visit mainetrailfinder.com.

The Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument has two contact stations: one in downtown Millinocket and the other at the Patten Lumbermen's Museum. The Millinocket location is open from Memorial Day to Columbus Day. And the Lumbermen's Museum office is open weekends starting Memorial Day. Visitors can find maps of the monument at the contact stations.

RESOURCES IN THE COMMUNITY

When entering the monument visitors planning to stay for a length of time must know there are no amenities inside the park.

"There's [no place to buy supplies] in the monument, [but] all the communities in the Katahdin area are well set up for you," said Tim Hudson, superintendent of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument.

Visitors can also find help through the Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters organization.

"You can actually call the Friends and ask for recommendations. They'll guide you to the business that you need to visit to get the things you need while you're there," said Lucas St. Clair, Elliotsville Foundation director. "If you want to hire a guide, go canoeing, need fishing gear, all of that is available at different stores throughout the region and Friends will do a good job at pointing you in the right direction."

The Katahdin Chamber of Commerce in Millinocket, which serves the communities near the monument, can also provide further information on local businesses.

"When you come to the Katahdin region and you're experiencing the monument you should also linger in the towns, go to the local restaurant or coffee shop, and talk to the locals and ask them where all the best sites are because they are very free with that information and very helpful and very friendly," said Mike Elliott, Regional Economic Development Director for the Katahdin region. "I think that experience is equally important to the awe inspiring and breathtaking views of nature in its rawest form that folks are going to be able to experience."

Last year the park saw around 22,500 visitors and the numbers continue to grow at least five percent each season.

CAMPING TIPS

Whether you're camping out of your car or if you plan to hike deep into the monument to set up camp there are some things visitors should know before visiting the park.

You will need a permit to kindle a fire. Permits are provided by the Maine Forest Service in Ashland. Also, there is a 14 day camping limit. Off road vehicles are prohibited. The monument has no services, no potable water, no electricity and no cellular service.

"So you need to come prepared," Hudson said. "You're on your own. There's no communications and you need to be able to get yourself out."

Be prepared for narrow gravel roads with active logging trucks which have the right of way. And the monument is pack-in and pack-out. "So bring your garbage cans and take your own trash out," Hudson said.

Dogs are allowed into the monument as long as they're on a leash.

If you're parked overnight, you need a parking permit "so that if you don't show up to get your car when you're scheduled to then we'll go looking for you," Hudson said.

Contact lunksoos@gmail.com or call 207-852-1291 for a free overnight parking permit prior to your visit.

Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument is open 24 hours per day year-round. Gates to the Loop Road open in the spring each year depending on the weather.

"We usually open the Loop Road around Memorial Day. The north entrance we usually open sometime in mid May," Hudson said.

PHOTO: FRIENDS OF KATAHDIN WOODS & WATERS



THE LOOP ROAD

A popular first experience is taking the Loop Road through the monument.

“That’s probably where almost half the people go straight off. You go up Route 11 and then take the Swift Brook Road,” Hudson said.

There are short treks off of Loop Road including a new accessible path to Lynx Pond where you may take a wheelchair in.

The most popular stop on the Loop Road is the overlook point where you can see Katahdin all the way down past Millinocket Lake.

“That’s by far the most popular spot and that’s one of the key spots you’d go to especially if you didn’t want to walk anywhere,” Hudson said.

WHEN TO GO

The monument is a four-season destination and there is something to do regardless of the weather.

“The fall is a great time to go. Bugs are down, the water is down, the animals start coming out, the leaves change and drop, it can be a really beautiful time of year in late September and October,” Hudson said.

Columbus Day weekend tends to be the height of the leaves changing, when visitors can see classic views of Katahdin off the Loop Road from the overlook.

“In the spring, what you’ll see when you get there when it opens in May, Katahdin will still be snow-capped typically, so on a clear day you get quite a little view of that snow-capped peak,” Hudson said.

WHAT TO DO AND WHERE TO STAY

Choosing what time to visit the monument may depend on what recreational activities you’d like to do.

“The next question I ask people is what do you want to do? It’s a big place. It’s almost 90,000 acres; it’s hard to see all of it in one trip,” St. Clair said.

For campers there are no fees or reservations, and campsites and lean-to shelters are first-come first-served.

“You can have a backcountry experience with nothing around, or you can come in for day trips and stay in a hotel or a motel outside the monument,” Hudson said.

“There’s a camping area at Sandbank Stream, which is first-come first-serve. There’s also the International Appalachian Trail with a camping area up there, and that is a very cool place to spend the night,” St. Clair said.

PHOTO: SUSAN ADAMS



Along with many areas to camp there are miles of trails that will satisfy any level of hiker.

“A popular walk is up to Barnard Mountain, which is about two miles each way off of the Loop Road,” Hudson said. “There are short walks off the Loop Road like Lynx Pond Trail. The most popular trails are on the south side of the loop.”

Trails to Barnard Mountain offer views of Katahdin Lake and Mount Katahdin together.

“Katahdin Lake is hidden from most spots and that’s got a climb to it,” Hudson said.

A hike up Barnard Mountain is a four mile round trip, St. Clair said.

“I always recommend if people are feeling a little more adventurous to go up into the Wassataquoik Valley to Wassataquoik Stream, which is one of the most remote streams in Maine,” St. Clair

said. “The water runs really clear, giant boulders throughout and it’s just a super way to spend a day hiking up along the river going from plunge pool to plunge pool.”

Another hiking trail St. Clair recommends is the International Appalachian Trail, which runs from the border of Baxter State Park and through the monument.

“You can hike bits and pieces of it, you don’t have to hike the whole thing, and it’s super — there’s really nothing quite like it,” St. Clair said.

The logging roads throughout the monument offer great conditions for mountain bikers looking for double track riding.

“If you like to bike you can mountain bike on the Loop Road,” St. Clair said. “You can ride from the north end down the east branch which is really cool.”

Bikes are allowed on the east side of the

monument but be mindful of traffic as it’s interspersed with private land.

“We recommend you bike off of the Loop Road or off of the north end,” Hudson said.

Those looking to fish while visiting the monument should follow state regulations and the few restrictions the park has.

“We don’t allow live bait anywhere — that’s really the only change. License and seasons are the same for the rest of Maine so you can look at the Inland Fisheries book for that,” Hudson said.

Fishing in the monument is more popular in the spring when the water is high.

“Then in the summer, when it cools down you need to pick your spots, so look for cold water springs or something that comes into the river,” Hudson said.

“The east branch of the Penobscot River in the spring fishes really well for trout and



PHOTO: FRIENDS OF KATAHDIN WOODS & WATERS

as the water warms up it turns into more of a small mouth bass fishery and that can be really super fun with fish eating on the surface,” St. Clair said.

Hunting in the monument is restricted to the east side of the east branch and the park follows the same hunting seasons and regulations as the state.

“We don’t allow live bait, we don’t allow chase dogs or pack dogs and we don’t allow bear baiting,” Hudson said.

Hunters are allowed a bird dog.

“There are a lot of bird hunters in that Sebois section. That’s really good for bird hunting — the section right outside of Patten,” Hudson said.

“My favorite hunting is grouse and partridge in the fall,” St. Clair said.

If you’re going to haul large game out you may need a hunting pack frame and a way to cut it up and get it back to your vehicle.

“It’s a little different than hunting in the rest of the unorganized territory. A lot of people are going to hunt off of the logging roads. However far in you go to get your moose, that’s how far you have to haul it to your vehicle,” Hudson said.

“THIS IS AN AREA AND NOT JUST ONE SPOT. THERE’S LOTS TO DO IN THE ENTIRE KATAHDIN AREA AND ONLY PART OF YOUR KATAHDIN EXPERIENCE WOULD BE THE MONUMENT.”

ANNUAL EVENTS

Along with recreational activities in the monument, there are annual events for folks to enjoy as well.

The largest event at the national monument is the annual Stars Over Katahdin held late September.

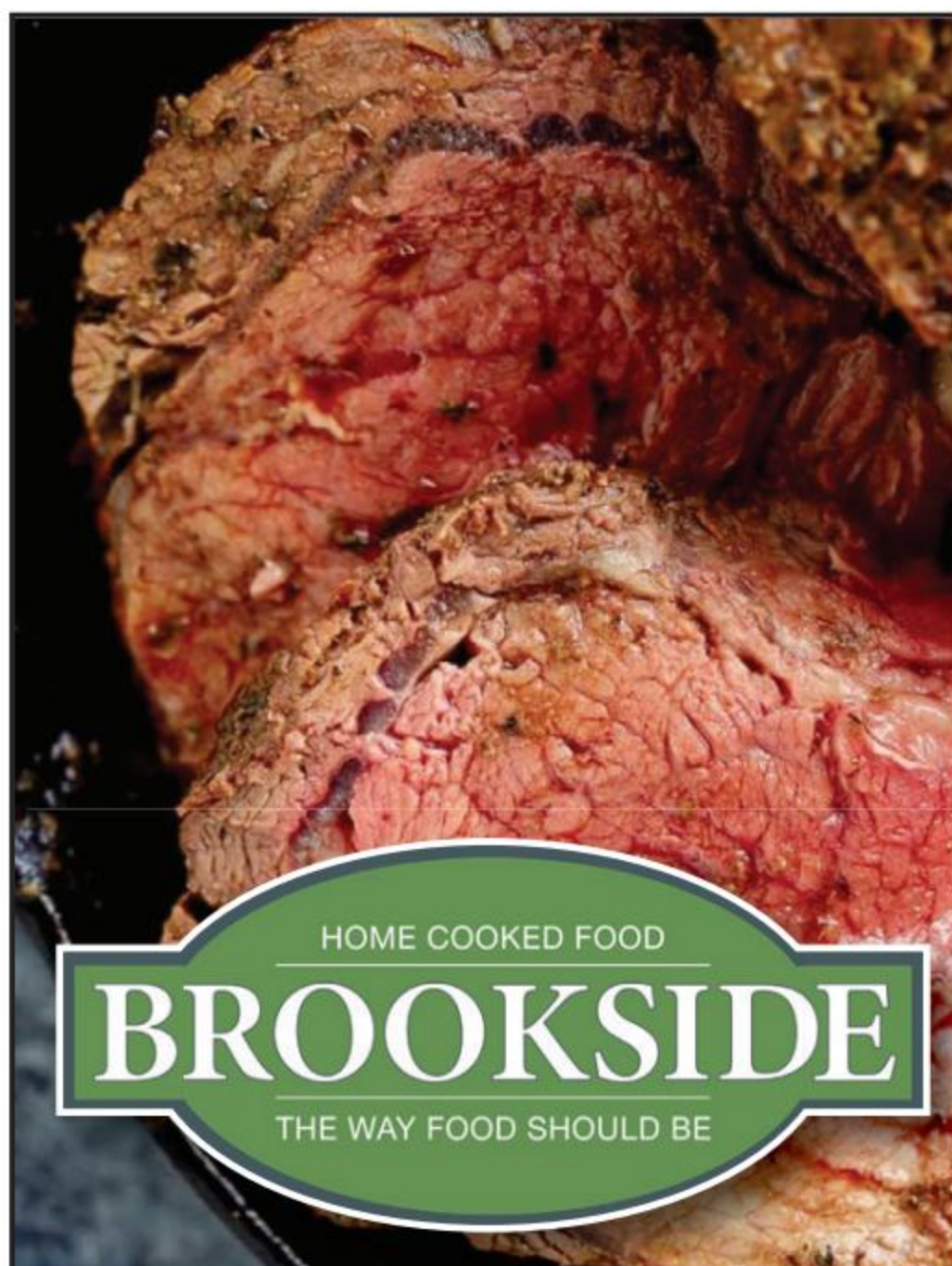
“The Katahdin area has the darkest skies to the northeast U.S.,” Hudson said.

The monument has submitted for Dark Sky Sanctuary designation and is in the process of being finalized.

“If they are approved they’ll be one of 13 locations in the world that have that designation. It’ll be the only one east of the Mississippi River,” Elliott said.

For more on events that take place in the Katahdin region throughout the season visitors may contact the Katahdin Chamber of Commerce for a list of events.

“This is an area and not just one spot. There’s lots to do in the entire Katahdin area and only part of your Katahdin experience would be the monument,” Hudson said. ✕



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TRAVELING THE Loop Road

TRAVEL ONE OF THE MOST
POPULAR FEATURES OF
THE KATAHDIN WOODS
AND WATERS NATIONAL
MONUMENT

BY JOSH DEAKIN

The Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument is a relatively new attraction to the state with its formal inception being August of 2016. Within the national monument are over 87,000 acres of wilderness and a 16-mile Loop Road, full of sightseeing spots for tourists and locals alike.

The Loop Road begins at the Sandbank Stream Picnic and Camping area. This area has been repurposed from its former days as a resource for building logging roads along Sandback Stream. The recommended time to drive the road as well as enjoying the stops along the way is two and a half hours. If you plan on doing any hiking on your trip, you may want to set aside even more time.

ESKER TRAIL

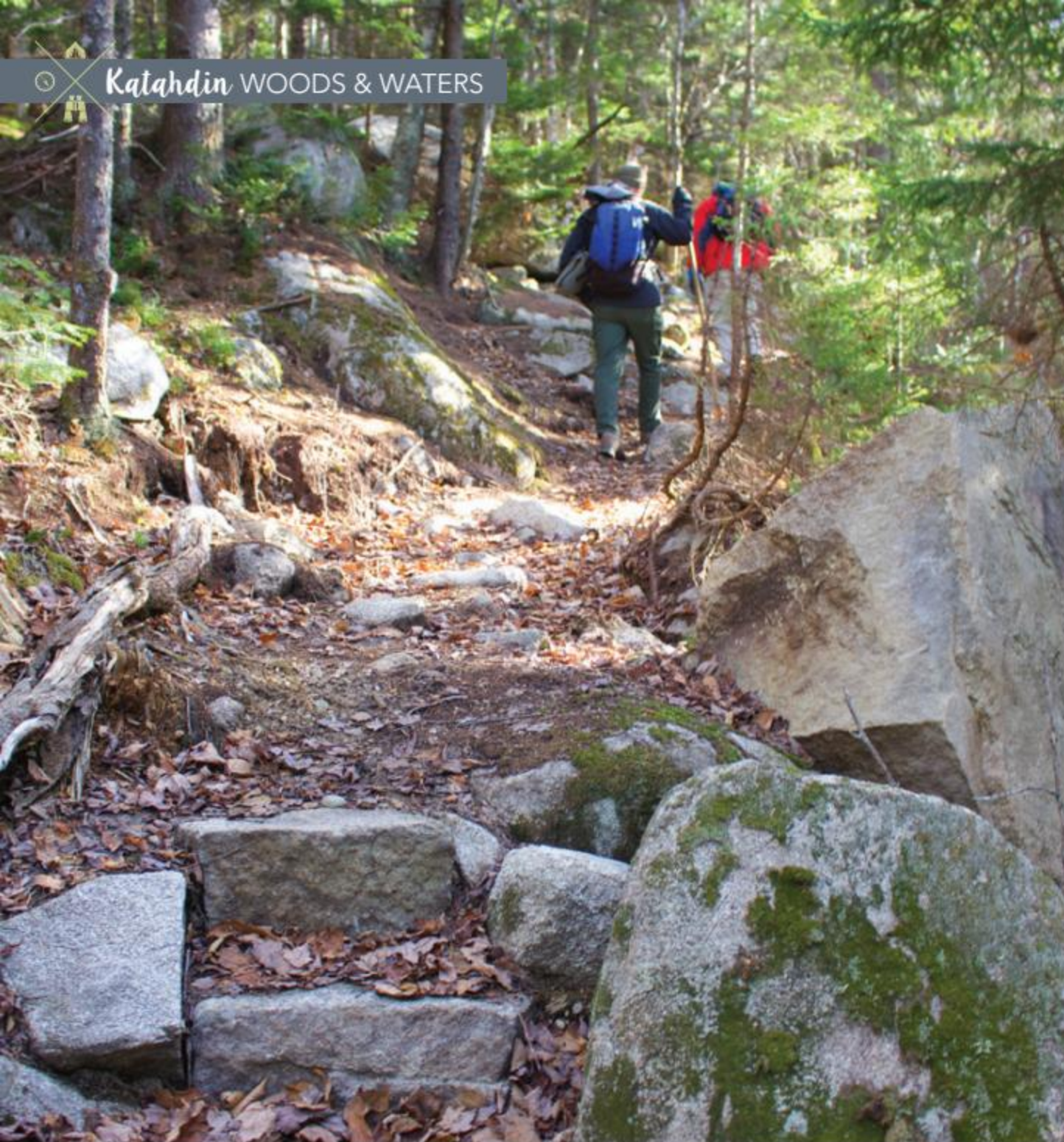
The first stop along the loop is the Esker Trail. This trail is named after the esker (long, winding ridges of stratified sand and gravel) that is found all over the monument. The trail is a mile round trip hike to a marsh and back. This is a great location for wild blueberries as well as some bird spotting, including Eastern Wood Pewee and the rare Black-Backed Woodpecker. This is the first of several short hikes along the loop road.

SCENIC VIEWS

At the first mile marker, there will be a small pull off on the Loop Road to take in a beautiful scenic view of Maine's own Mount Katahdin,







towering over the region at nearly a mile high above sea level in the monument adjacent Baxter State Park. This is again just the first in numerous scenic views along the loop road. At about six and half miles into the road, there's an overlook providing views of Millinocket Lake as well as smaller bodies of water around.

BARNARD MOUNTAIN TRAIL

Just under the 12-mile mark is parking for the International Appalachian Trail as well as Barnard Mountain Trail. The International Appalachian Trail extends the Appalachian Trail from the northern terminus at the peak of Katahdin to Belle Isle, Newfoundland, Canada. Barnard Mountain stands at 1,621 feet tall. On the way to the peak of Barnard Mountain, you will pass through Katahdin Brook as well as the first campsite on the International Appalachian Trail. This short hike will provide a great location to have lunch at the summit.

ORIN FALLS

At about 15 and a half miles in, there's a road turnoff for Orin Falls and access to the Wassataquoik Stream. Orin Falls is a six-mile hike round trip which provides fantastic locations for fishing. The Wassataquoik provided access for many adventurers in previous centuries to climb Katahdin. In 1879, future President of the United States Theodore Roosevelt was guided up the mountain this way by William Sewall. Years later, Donn Fendler became lost on top of Katahdin and survived by following the Wassataquoik. It was nine days before he was found and his journey is now detailed in his book "Lost on a Mountain in Maine."

The Loop Road has a speed limit of 15 mph to minimize the risk of accidents in a remote area where cell phone reception may be limited at best. To access the Loop Road, you can take Exit 244 from I-95 and travel west towards Medway. Less than a mile from the exit, turn right onto Route 11. About 20 miles up Route 11 is the turnoff for Swift Brook Road on the left. You'll take this road for a little over nine miles and Sandbank Stream Camping and Picnic Area will be located to your left. Please note that at the moment, the Loop Road is closed due to the recent weather as well as the probability of more accumulation of snow in the area. Please stay vigilant as the road will open to the public as soon as it is safe to do so. ✕





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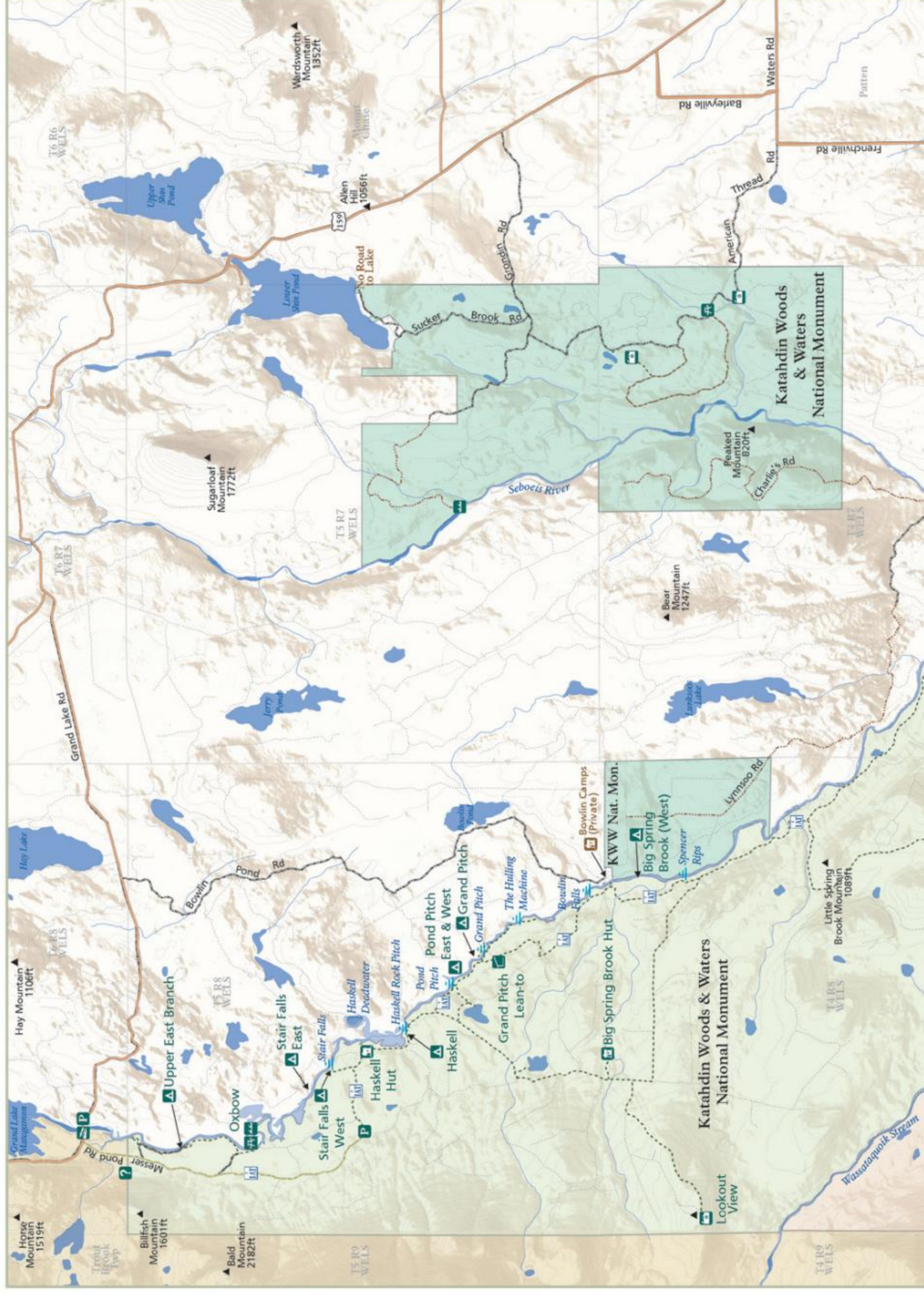
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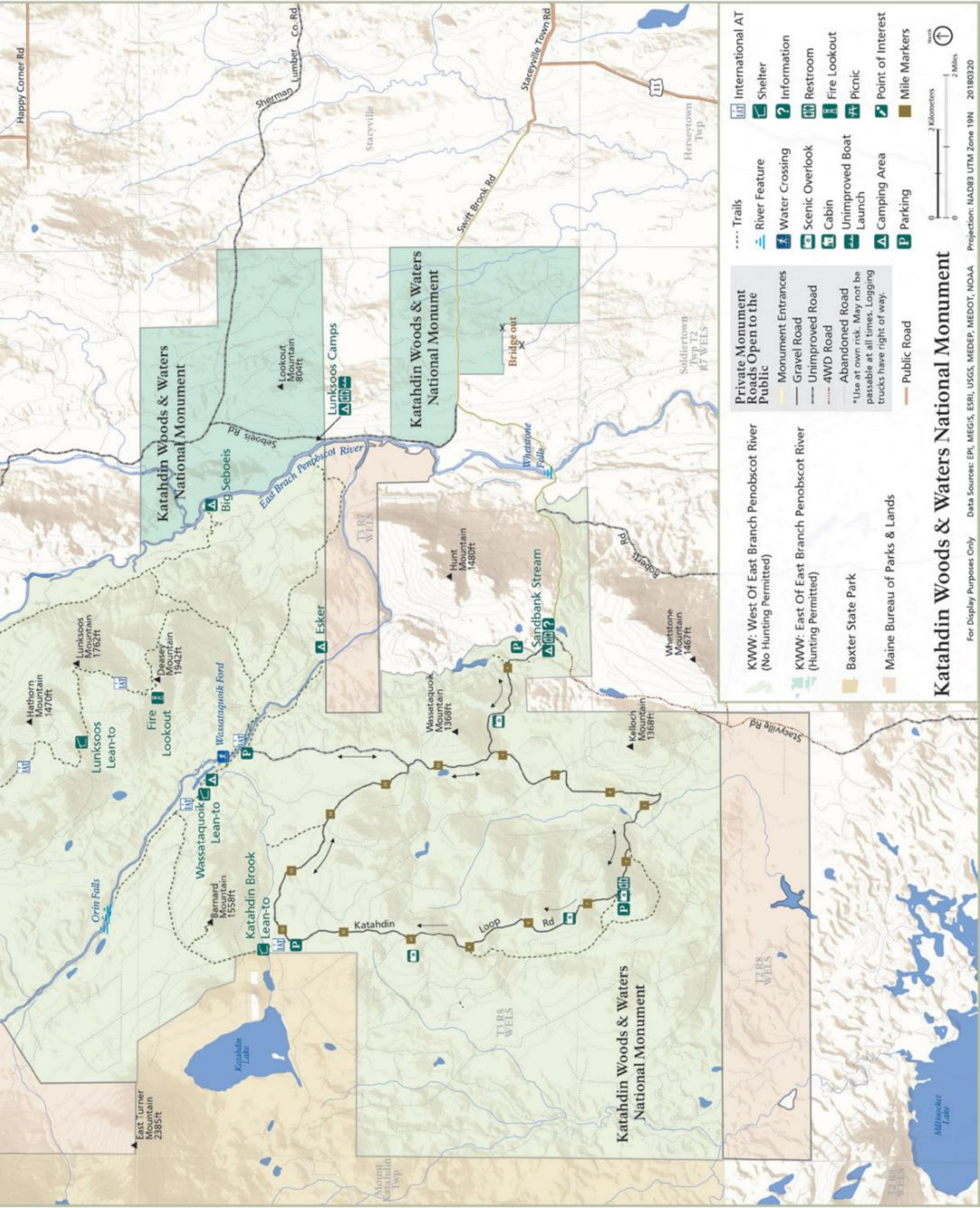
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Katahdin Woods & Waters

RECREATION MAP

For the most up-to-date maps, visit the Friends of Katahdin Woods & Waters website at www.friendsofkwwo.org/visit/maps-guides.
When you become a Friend of Katahdin Woods & Waters, you'll receive their Map Adventures Waterproof Trail Map as part of the welcome package for new members.





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- Mile Markers

KWW: West Of East Branch Penobscot River (No Hunting Permitted)

KWW: East Of East Branch Penobscot River (Hunting Permitted)

Baxter State Park

Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands

Katahdin Woods & Waters National Monument

For Display Purposes Only Data Sources: EPI, MEGIS, ESRI, USGS, MEDEP, MEDOT, NOAA Projection: NAD83 UTM Zone 19N 20180320





Meet the Friends OF KATAHDIN WOODS AND WATERS

GETTING PEOPLE
OUTSIDE TO
APPRECIATE THE
NATURAL RESOURCES
OF THE NORTH
WOODS

BY SARAH COTTRELL

E.B.

White once said, “I would rather feel bad in Maine than feel good anywhere else,” and after spending some time in the incredible beauty of the north Maine woods, it is easy to feel moved by his words. Luckily, the Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters have felt that stir of inspiration, which is why they’ve worked tirelessly since 2017 to preserve and protect the natural and cultural resources of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument and its surrounding communities.

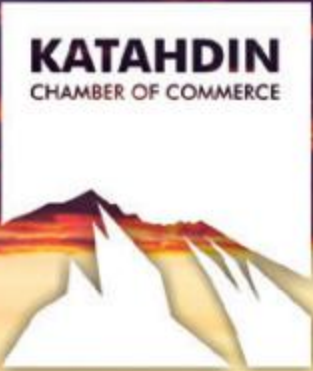
The Katahdin Woods and Water National Monument is an expansive 87,500 acres located east of Baxter State Park. It was established in 2016 and is managed by the National Park Service. Soon after the monument was established, Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters was formed by a group of individuals to galvanize the support of individuals, non-profits, businesses, and foundations.

Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters is a nonprofit that aims to get people outside and experiencing and appreciating the unparalleled natural resources of the north woods. To ensure park visitors have exceptional experiences connecting to the National Monument, the Friends group has published the Loop Road Interpretive Map, Map Adventures Waterproof Trail Map, and the first-of-its-kind Day Sky Guide and Bird Checklist for Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument.

Through their Katahdin Learning Project program, educators and volunteers connect students and community members to Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument and the surrounding region. Since the start of the program there have been over 3,000 student experiences. Students have learned about water quality testing, the journey of Donn Fendler, the history of Hunt Farm, the dark skies above the National Monument, and much more.

The 4th Anniversary Celebration of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument is scheduled for August 15, 2020, and will include dinner, music, as well as a live auction and a “rousing toast” that will highlight the Maine Beer Company’s Woods and Waters IPA.

One of the most poetic experiences, Stars Over Katahdin, will take place on Sept. 12, 2020. This event is an annual celebration of the celestial night skies. Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters work closely with volunteer astronomers, both professional and

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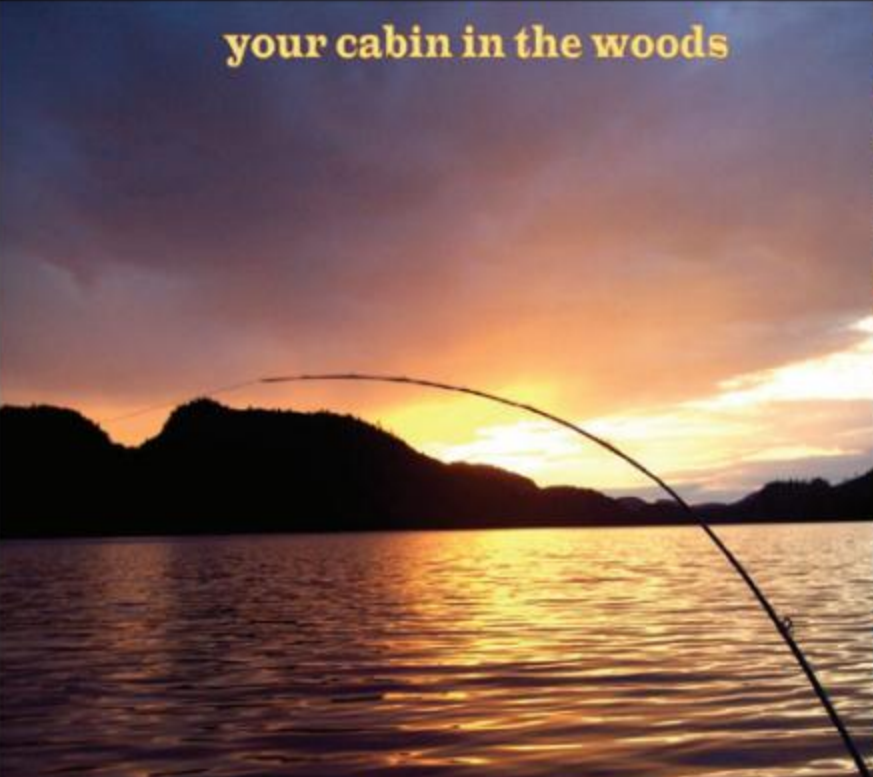
amateur, for an evening of stargazing at the Loop Road Overlook at Mile 6.4. It is a breathtaking opportunity to experience the darkest skies east of the Mississippi River.

The folks who are the lifeblood of Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters group are the volunteers who make up the board of directors and the non-profit's community. Supporters from all walks of life share a vision of promoting the natural beauty and resources of Maine. With 17 members on the board of directors, each adding invaluable skills and life experiences, and a staff of five who run the daily operations, Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters is able to oversee a network of volunteers who help with nearly every aspect of their projects.

Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters programs are made possible with support from the organization's members. To sign up as a member and become more involved with the National Monument community, visit www.friendsofkww.org/becomeamember today. If you're interested in volunteering with Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, you can email info@friendsofkww.org and someone from the Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters staff will connect you with a volunteer opportunity. ✕

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(Top to bottom) Nevin Williams, known as Plus2 on the trail, poses for a photo; setting up camp for the night; Mount Rogers Outfitters in Damascus, Virginia is a hostel and store for hikers; Plus2 and "Mouse" pose at the North Carolina-Tennessee line; Plus2 poses in front of Black Rock Cliffs in Maryland.

Photos courtesy of NEVIN WILLIAMS



ON THE Trail

"PLUS2" CONQUERS THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL

BY MOLLY MAYO

It takes a certain person to brave the storms and challenges that the legendary Appalachian Trail holds. With an estimated one in four people actually completing the trail, you have to be physically and mentally prepared for 2,190 miles of rugged wilderness, months of sleeping in less than conventional places, and eating weird food combinations like Ramen noodles and stuffing mixes. At times, the overwhelming feeling that what you're doing just isn't worth it will wash over you. But for Nevin Williams of Bangor, it was the best move he could possibly make.

"One of the types of people who hike the trail are people who go through life changes," says Williams. "I went through a life change. I had a divorce and then I had my kids on my own for the next five years. During those last five years I wasn't all that happy at my job, so I decided it was time."

Preparation for Williams included two years of reading Appalachian Trail hiker biographies, slowly stocking up on food, and choosing a trail name for himself. One of the defining characteristics of an Appalachian Trail hiker is their trail name: a name that quickly becomes their identity on the trail. Williams chose Plus2 for himself as a reminder of who he is, a father of two. When all was said and done, Williams did what any well-adjusted individual would do: "I just kind of flew by the seat of my pants." Heading northbound from Springer Mountain in Georgia in the cold on March 18, 2012, Williams took his first step into the world of the Appalachian Trail.

Flying by the seat of his pants quickly turned Williams from a man who had literally never spent the night out backpacking before to a man who called hiking Katahdin 'easy.' Some of the difficulties Williams faced while on the trail included loneliness, physical injuries, and mental challenges. Going solo, Williams' initial feeling of solitude quickly dissipated as he formed a friendship with a young hiker from

Plus2 and his son Shawn at the top of Mount Katahdin.
Photo courtesy of NEVIN WILLIAMS





(Above) Winding Wooden Trail in Virginia.
(This photo) Plus2 posing on the Laurel Fork Creek AT Footbridge in Tennessee.
Photos courtesy of NEVIN WILLIAMS

Texas. Relationships are often formed as the trail unites hikers from all walks of life.

A typical day for Williams started at 5 or 6 in the morning, and ended anywhere from 4 to 9 at night. When asked how he filled his free time, Williams laughed and replied, “You don’t have free time. The only free time you have is if you go into town.”

Going into town proved to be an integral part of the trail as hikers had to replenish their food supplies every 5-7 days. And when you go into town, “you have laundry to do, you charge up your phone, you make calls to people, you get food, and you make sure everybody hasn’t forgotten about you.” Occasionally Williams would catch up with hiker buddies while in town and enjoy a feast of restaurant food or a special treat as simple as an ice cream.

THE TRAIL OFFERS AN ALLURING TASTE OF FREEDOM THAT CANNOT BE EXPERIENCED ANYWHERE ELSE...

Although Williams sustained shin splints, sprained ankles, countless cuts and bruises, and a weight loss of 35 pounds along the way, they were all nothing when compared to the mental fortitude of staying on the trail day after day. Williams says that the mental challenge “beats you down every time. You’re hiking mountains every day and it’s beautiful, but at some point, you are asking yourself, ‘Why are you here?’” When this happened, Williams determined to never get off the trail. Instead, he would ask himself, “In three months’ time if I head home, am I going to be glad that I left the trail, or would I prefer to be able to say that I accomplished what I wanted to do?” Regaining focus and setting his eyes on his goals, Williams pushed through his self-doubt and shin splints and lived to tell about it.

Looking back at his five-month wilderness adventure, Williams says, “The sights and the stories that I have left for a lifetime are magical. The stories I can share with grandkids, the people I can talk on the phone with...” From the sweat and injuries to the long-lasting friendships and endless beauty of the rugged trail, Williams says, “I would do it again in a heartbeat.” So don’t be surprised if you see Plus2 on the trail again. The trail offers an alluring taste of freedom that cannot be experienced anywhere else, what Plus2 himself calls “the ability to live.” ✕



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TAKE A Hike

BARNARD MOUNTAIN IS A FAVORITE HIKE IN KWW

STORY & PHOTOS BY AISLINN SARNACKI

Rising 1,621 feet above sea level, Barnard Mountain is one of the main hiking destinations in the new Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. From an overlook near the mountain's top, hikers are rewarded with a stunning view of nearby Katahdin, Maine's tallest mountain, and just in front of it, Katahdin Lake.

The hike starts on an old logging road that spurs off the north end of the Katahdin Loop Road. Blocked off to vehicles, the logging road crosses Katahdin Brook on a wide footbridge, and just after that, it passes Katahdin Brook Campsite, which was constructed in 2012 and is used by hikers of the International Appalachian Trail. This first section of the hike along the old logging road is a great opportunity to view wildlife, since the road is straight, allowing you to see far ahead. Moose, white-tailed deer, bear, and coyotes often walk along this road. You'll likely see their tracks, if not the animals themselves.

After about 0.7 mile of walking on the logging road, you'll come to an intersection where you'll veer right, following a sign that reads "Barnard." This next portion of the hike is along a narrower woods road that is much more overgrown than the first and is hemmed in on both

sides by vegetation. The beginning of this road is blocked off with boulders, preventing any motor vehicle traffic.

After another 0.4 mile on the logging road, you'll come to the 0.8-mile Barnard Mountain Trail, which disappears into the forest on your right and is marked with pink flagging tape. A traditional hiking trail, it switchbacks up the mountain to end at an open granite ledge and a picnic table.

The trail was constructed by the Maine Conservation Corps in 2014 and includes several short sections of granite steps. And one interesting feature along the trail is a split boulder. The trail travels through the narrow gap between the two granite halves.

At first, the trail travels through a fairly young forest composed of deciduous trees, including plenty of striped maple and beech. Then, near the top of the mountain, the forest quickly changes into a spruce-fir forest.

The ledge at the trail's end is a great spot to have a picnic. Looking out over the woods of Baxter State Park, Katahdin is straight ahead. To its right are South Turner and North Turner mountains; and to its left, off in the distance, you can see the distinctive ridge of Big Spencer Mountain in the Moosehead Region. In front of all the mountains is Katahdin Lake.





Exploring THE DEBSCONEAG LAKES

THE WOODS & WATERS
OF THE DEBSCONEAG
LAKES

**COURTESY CHEWONKI
FOUNDATION**

“I’ve been to a lot of remote cabins in Maine,” says Cullen McGough, a Maine native and employee of Chewonki Foundation. “But I’ve never had a whole lake to myself before. This is amazing.”

He’s describing a recent visit to Debsconeag Lake Wilderness Camps, one of

Chewonki’s two North Woods outposts (the other, Big Eddy Cabins and Campgrounds, is located on the West Branch of the Penobscot River). And he’s not kidding about wilderness: this cluster of cabins, yurts and a central lodge sits within nearly 1,000,000 acres of conserved forestland. The pristine area is spangled with lakes, ponds, and streams and studded with mountain tops only a mile and a half from the Appalachian Trail and 12 miles, as the raven flies (or the moose rambles), from Mount Katahdin.

None of that means much to two-year-old Benjamin Baxter McGough (his middle name pays homage to Baxter State Park), who recently traveled with his parents and a few aunties to the campsite on Fourth Debsconeag Lake. What impressed young Benjamin most were the wild blueberries, canoeing under starlit skies, and staring into the flickering flames of a campfire.

Fourth Debsconeag Lake, one in a chain of eight, is a four-hour journey north of Portland. The trip requires a 22-mile stretch on a buck-shot dirt logging road and a short boat ride across the lake. “It’s an epic journey,” says McGough. “To get there, you really have to want it, which makes the destination all the sweeter.”

Strapped to the back of his parents, Benjamin Baxter McGough enjoyed two expeditions: a day hike from Fourth Debsconeag to Third Debsconeag and back, passing through moss-covered rock canyons with a cascade coursing down the middle;



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and a 45-minute trek to the top of the granite cliffs that rise up over the lake, where he hunted for blueberries passed over by the moose and bear that frequent these woods.

The campground is the only one on the lake, “and the only one that will ever be on this lake,” as Chewonki Vice President Greg Shute likes to say. McGough remembers, “You arrive at the boat landing and look around, and there are no gaps or other docks or motor boats anywhere along the shoreline. You’re so far away from everything” — including cell phone service — “surrounded by mountains. It’s completely silent except for the wind and the sounds of wildlife.” The surrounding land is “heavily forested in cedar, birch, and beech,” he says. “There’s a really pleasant cedar-box smell to the whole area.”

Chewonki now uses Debsconeag Lake Wilderness Camps as a base for many of its educational programs and rents cabins and yurts to the public at certain times in the spring and fall. Site Manager Andy Williams knows the area like the back of his hand and can provide maps, information, and advice to those who visit. The camps offer excellent access to trails and waterways.

Sailing, canoeing, swimming, napping, reading, good conversation, a Frisbee game, and leisurely meals filled out the weekend for the group. In keeping with Debsconeag tradition, the site manager provided freshly baked goodies and coffee each morning. “A blueberry muffin, hot coffee, and a lake all to myself?” says McGough. “That’s my picture of heaven.” ×



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**Deasey Mountain,
Katahdin Woods & Waters National Monument**

Photo by Bill Duffy

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Protecting the Nature of Maine

Inspired BY KATAHDIN

BAXTER'S VISITING ARTIST PROGRAM SUPPORTS
ARTISTS INSPIRED BY THE GREAT OUTDOORS

BY JOSH DEAKIN



Baxter State Park has a very unique program that's been around for the past 12 years. The Visiting Artist Program brings an artist into the area to spend two weeks inside the park. The artist then spends those two weeks creating something original to interpret the wilderness experience through their art.

Marc Edwards, Park Naturalist at Baxter State Park, elaborated on its inspiration and provided a little history. "Katahdin and the surrounding landscape have been capturing the imagination of artists and writers since the mid 1800s, when famed American landscape artist Frederic Church began his visits to the area and Henry David Thoreau made his dramatic ascent described in 'The Maine Woods.' Over the years, many have worked to capture the aura of Katahdin as seen from Katahdin Lake and Chimney Pond, while others have ventured to the northern reaches or interior of the park."

Thoreau, who's famous work "Walden" can be found in most high school English curriculum, has an area on the plateau of Katahdin dubbed "Thoreau Springs." He's just one of the many examples of artists to take advantage of the plethora of inspiration waiting in the Maine woods.

"In recognition of this long tradition, Baxter State Park adopted the Visiting Artist Program to provide rustic cabin lodging for two weeks to provide an opportunity for an artist to immerse his/herself in the wildness of Baxter State Park and interpret the experience through art," Edwards said.

The program has been in place in its current form since 2008. For artists to apply for this opportunity, there is an application process to consider including plans for a required evening program provided to the public during your stay, as well as a summary of what you intend to accomplish while there. "We are seeking artists who are looking towards wilderness and the wilderness spirit as creative inspiration. We are also seeking artists willing to engage with the public to interpret nature through their art," said Edwards.

The lodging that the artist will be staying in is fairly basic. There is running water, both cold and hot, but it is recommended that all water should be boiled before drinking. The heat source is a wood stove as well as a fire pit outside. There's no electricity in the cabin, but propane lights are provided. A propane stove and a refrigerator are provided as well for cooking purposes.

The lucky recipient of the two-week stay will need to host one evening program as well as an open studio with the public over the two weeks. The staff of the park will work with the artist to create these programs.

It is also asked that within one year of their stay, the artist provide prints or documents of their work while they resided in the cabin.

The program has garnered quite a bit of interest since its implementation in 2008. This year's deadline was March 15. Once the application materials are evaluated, we will have this year's artist. The program has been promoted through various press releases as well as the Baxter State Park website and Facebook page. If you are interested in this opportunity, please be sure to check out the website for more details on how to apply, and be on the lookout for next year's deadline!

With the program running since 2008, it has clearly been successful and isn't going anywhere. "We hope to continue the tradition of wilderness inspiring art, and add to the already rich body of work inspired by Katahdin and Baxter State Park," said Edwards. ✕





PHOTO: JOHN HOLYOKE / BDN FILE



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PHOTO: Courtesy of KATAHDIN AIR SERVICE



PHOTO: Courtesy of SEWALL HOUSE YOGA RETREAT



One of many wildlife photos you can find at Moose Prints Gallery.
PHOTO: Provided by MOOSE PRINTS GALLERY

WHILE YOU'RE IN Town

BY JANELLE DIANNE JUNDT

The Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument could easily provide an entire trip's worth of entertainment for the average outdoor enthusiast all on its own. Whether you are hiking, sightseeing, ATVing, kayaking or all the rest, the possibilities are endless. However, don't discount all of the other entertainment and activities the surrounding area has to offer. From scenic plane rides, to art galleries, to hearty homemade foods, there are many ways to entertain yourself while you're in town.

KATAHDIN AIR SERVICE

If you think Katahdin is beautiful from the ground you won't want to miss a chance to see it from the air. Katahdin Air Service offers transportation and scenic flights to all those wanting to truly experience the full beauty of Maine. According to reviews, sights are breathtaking and the pilot is knowledgeable and entertaining. There are many different experiences to choose from. You could have a mountain ride, enjoy a secluded picnic, fly into a remote area for a canoe expedition, or many more. If you have some downtime during your visit, Katahdin Air Service could be the perfect way to spend a day.

SEWALL HOUSE YOGA RETREAT

Maybe you are looking to unplug, unwind, and reconnect with nature or yourself on this trip. If this is you, look no further than the Sewall House Yoga Retreat in Millinocket. With almost 200 five star reviews and multiple features and articles, this relaxing space in the heart of the Katahdin area has a lot to offer. There are yoga classes for any skill level. The retreat also offers massage, local organic vegetarian dishes cooked by rotating guest chefs, outings, and downtime to do as you wish. This is a one-stop location for all your relaxation and self care needs with all the area has to offer at your fingertips.

WHITE WATER RAFTING

Are you a thrill seeker? You should book a white water rafting trip during your stay. North Country Rivers offers all inclusive trips with lodging and meals, or you can just enjoy the day rafting then head to another great location.

You can also book through New England Outdoor Center for full or half day trips. They also have lodging and an award-winning restaurant that you can enjoy after an exciting day on the water.

ART GALLERIES

Interested in high quality local art? There are a couple of places to peruse for some new wall hangings or to just admire the local talent. One spot is the North Light Gallery in downtown Millinocket. It features artists who paint pictures of interior Maine or live in interior Maine. You can check out the latest pieces in a calm and serene space in the heart of town. Another place you'll want to stop at is Moose Prints Gallery. This gallery also hosts art from the region. It also has collections of quirky backwoods gifts and souvenirs to bring back to loved ones or keep for yourself to remember your trip.

SHOPPING

If you have some extra spending money burning a hole in your pocket there are some great options for shopping in the area. The first place is Gracie's Aunt's Emporium. This little eclectic shop is full of sweet little trinkets, jewelry, cute clothes, gifts, and antiques.

Another spot you can go for outdoor gear, clothes or gifts is the Katahdin General Store.

This long-standing store has everything you might need out on the trails for any season; it also has a great souvenir and gift selection. If you just love clothes, they have a great selection of sweatshirts, shirts, pajamas, baby clothes, hats and more.

For a sampling of locally made products and items, the Trailside Country Store is the place to go. They have organic and local foods and beautiful handcrafted items all made by local artisans with care.

RESTAURANTS

Maine is known for its stick-to-your-ribs delectable home cooked food and the Katahdin area showcases that. There are many different places to choose from when you are ready to fill your belly after an active day in the great outdoors.

One such spot that is a must-stop in downtown Millinocket is the Appalachian Trail Cafe. This little cafe, featuring a small but amazing menu, is a frequent end point for Appalachian Trail Hikers. The proof is in all the signed ceiling tiles from Hikers who have passed through its doors. Reviewers rave about their breakfast menu, burgers and vegetarian options. People also love the atmosphere and sense of community the cafe brings.

The next place you should try when not blazing the trails or sightseeing is the River Drivers Restaurant, part of the New England Outdoor Center. With a menu offering a variety of choices featuring many seafood dishes, burgers, and other unique entrees, this place is sure to have something for everyone you are traveling with. It has it all -- great food, entertainment with live music, an outdoor firepit, and a beautiful view on the water's edge. At the end of a long day of adventuring, grab a cocktail and some hearty grub and unwind while watching the sunset over the water. If you are looking for lodging, this restaurant sits on a beautiful campground with tenting sites and various cabins to stay in as well.

Another downtown Millinocket spot that locals and visitors alike love to congregate at is Angelo's Pizza Grille. If you are looking for a slice of pizza, delicious sub or calzone swing in and be treated with a warm welcome and friendly service. Reviews rave about the handmade pizzas and other dishes and the friendly wait staff, as well as unique menu items like a fiddlehead pizza. It's a nice casual spot to feed your craving for food and friendship when you have some downtime and an empty stomach. ✕

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