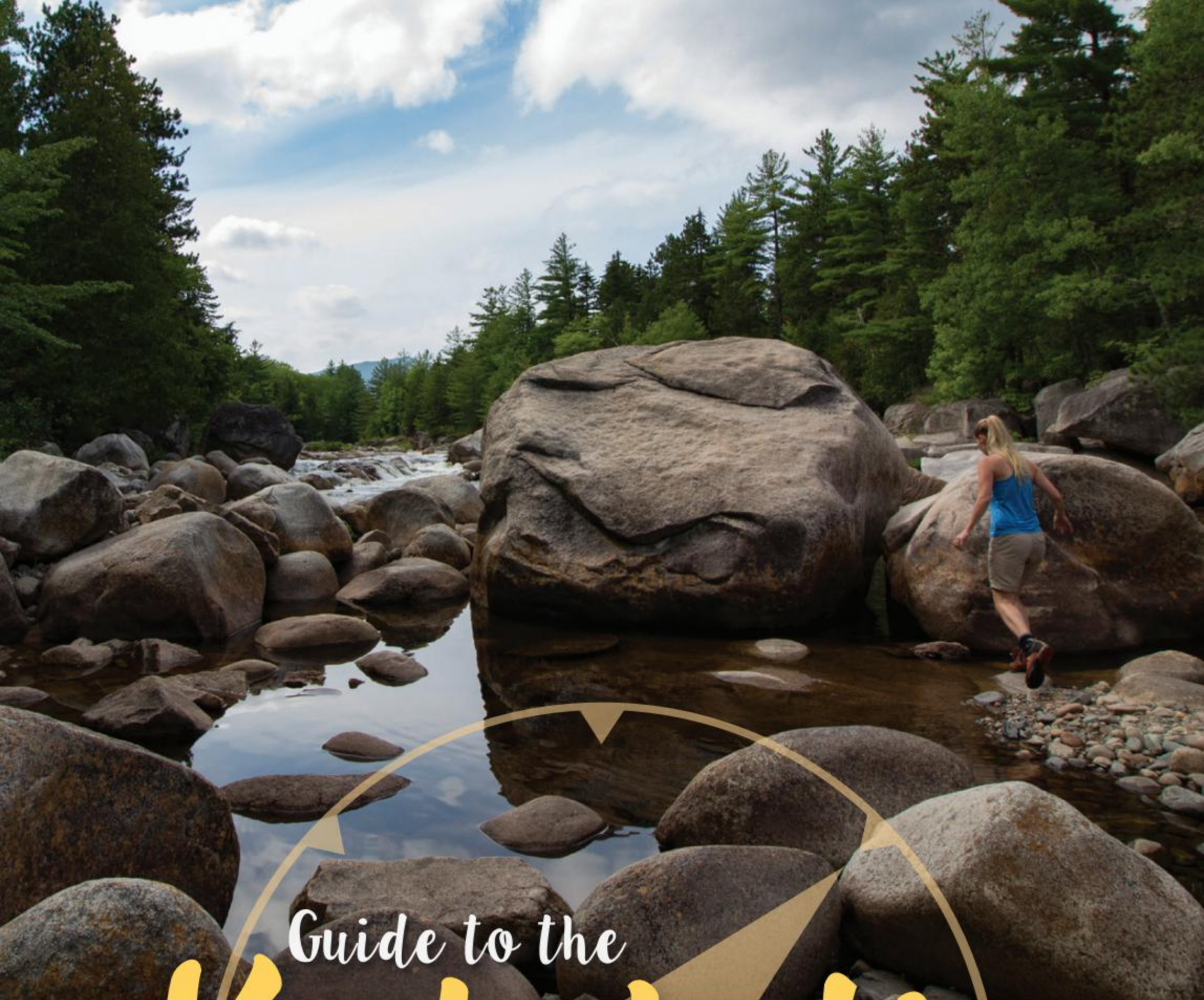




Guide to the

Katahdin

WOODS AND WATERS NATIONAL MONUMENT



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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



For five years, Tim Hudson has been the expert when it comes to Katahdin Woods and Waters. Hudson has been the superintendent since 2016 when the 87,563 acres were proclaimed as a National Monument.

We chatted recently with Hudson about some of the new and exciting developments coming for visitors to enjoy, as well as recap some of the improvements made last year that have had a positive impact on Katahdin Woods and Waters.

The most exciting piece of news: There are going to be seven walk-in campsites added at the Lunksoos Camps area along the East Branch of the Penobscot River. "These sites are being added through a 'Reserved Right' in the deed to that property that allows certain developments to be added by the previous owner until August of 2021," said Hudson.

The sites are available first come, first served as you can't make a reservation so keep that in mind during your travels.

This is all being done by private funding, as no federal funding is involved. Hudson said the building of the sites will be starting in June and should be completed by August.

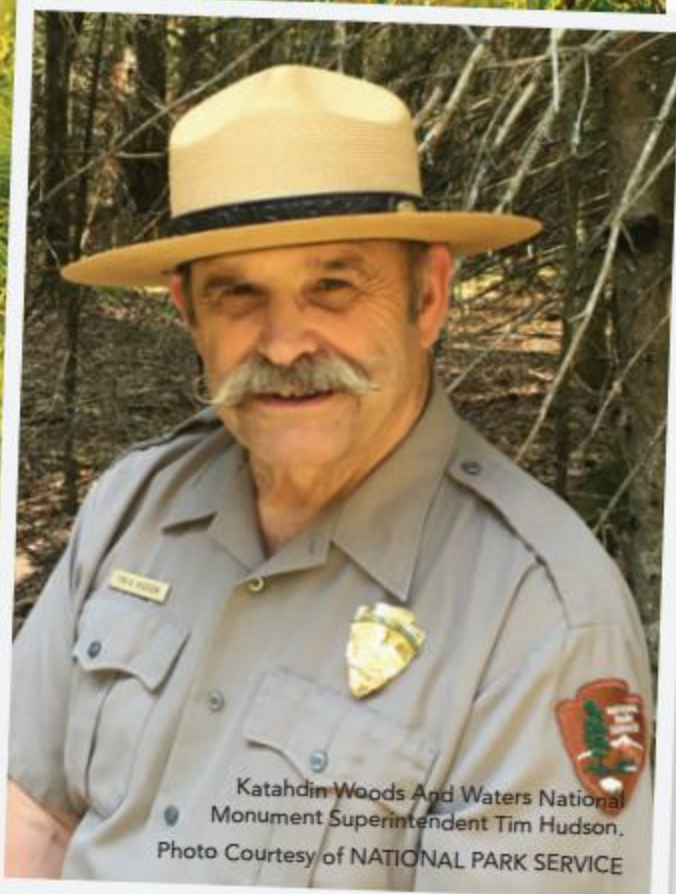
"Two are group sites and one site is fully accessible," he said.

Many improvements were made last year which increased visitation to Katahdin Woods And Waters, including the opening of three trails that had been in the works for the past two years, according to Hudson. The monument now offers 10 camping sites as well, which visitors took advantage of last summer and fall.

The roads are always being improved as the area, but it is a work in progress. "We take it one step at a time. We've cleared brush out of the northeast section of the park which was always there to access, it's just better now -- an improvement on what was already available," Hudson reported.

Additional bridges have also been added to KWW, along with some work on the streams that run through the area. "We replaced some culverts with open channel bridges," Hudson said. This was done to restore the movement of Atlantic salmon in the area.

Adding three outhouses to the area last year was also a great upgrade to make visits more enjoyable. "We'll be adding another vault toilet this year which will be keeping



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

the sewage out of the ground,” said Hudson.

And the 22 signs that were added last year have made it a lot easier for guests to find their way around the monument.

Last year, the park received \$380,000 in federal funding for a possible expansion. Hudson said this funding is intended to allow the monument to pursue the purchase of two parcels of land which were part of the original proclamation, but not owned by NPS.

There is so much beauty to explore when you visit the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. People come to enjoy the fishing and wildlife on the beautiful trails. Plan a hike, throw your bike in the back of the truck in the warmer months and enjoy the cross country skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling in the winter time. The snowmobile routes run north to south to the east of the East Branch of the Penobscot River.

With all new amenities like the toilets, signage and improved trails, Katahdin Woods and Waters is sure to attract those from Maine and beyond. ✕



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PADDLING THE Penobscot

EXPLORE THE EAST
BRANCH OF THE
PENOBSCOT RIVER

BY WANDA CURTIS



One very popular hobby for outdoor enthusiasts today is paddling. Whether canoeing or kayaking, paddling is a fun way to explore the landscape and waterways in any geographic area. It also provides a great opportunity to get away from it all for a day or two.

The East Branch of the Penobscot River is a favorite waterway of many paddlers. It's one of the major attractions of the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument located east of Baxter State Park. The main stem of the East Branch drops more than 200 feet over a stretch of about 10 miles through rapids and waterfalls including Stair Falls, Haskell Rock Pitch, Pond Pitch, Grand Pitch, the Hulling Machine and Bowlin Falls. The name "Hulling Machine" originated from the fact that the force of the water there used to strip bark from large logs driven down the river during log driving days.

Many lumber jacks and log drivers earned their living on the river. Some lost their lives during the dangerous log driving operations. Before that, Native Americans used the waterway to transport

food, furs and medicines. Artists and authors have been inspired by the beauty of nature there. Henry David Thoreau traveled the Penobscot when he visited Maine during the 1800s.

After Teddy Roosevelt crossed the East Branch of the Penobscot with a guide in the late 1800s, he developed a commitment for land conservation. In 1906, he signed into law the Antiquities Act which gave U.S. presidents authority to create national monuments on federal land to protect natural, historic or cultural features from destruction. Presidents can also accept private land to be reserved for that purpose.

Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters' executive director Andrew Bossie said that nothing compares to paddling on the East Branch. He said that, besides the excitement associated with paddling through swiftly moving waters, the scenery along the way is beautiful. He added that the multitude of fiddleheads growing beside the river in the floodplains create an awesome scene beneath the shimmering silver maples and at the right time of year can also be harvested for personal consumption.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF FRIENDS OF
KATAHDIN WOODS AND WATERS



Paddling on the East Branch of the Penobscot River offers a great opportunity to get away from it all.



“The rushing waters flush these areas of most plant life in the spring, leaving well-rooted ferns and maple trees to enjoy the nutrient-rich soils,” said Bossie. “The result is towering tree trunks, a thick canopy of leaves high above and a lush green carpet of ferns. It’s like standing in a cathedral, complete with bird song. There is a silver maple floodplain along much of the calmer sections of the river and there are notable areas by the Oxbow picnic area on the northern stretch of the river and then again further south where the Wassataquoik Stream meets the East Branch.”

Many wildlife species can be viewed traveling along the river. Deer, moose, river otters, beavers and even an occasional

black bear may be seen peeking through the bushes. Mergansers, chickadees, thrush, grouse, woodpeckers and even an occasional bald eagle can be seen flying overhead.

MANDATORY PORTAGES ON NORTHERN END OF RIVER

According to Bossie, there are at least four mandatory portages on the northern end of the East Branch of the Penobscot River—Haskell Rock Pitch, Pond Pitch, Grand Pitch and the Hulling Machine. Portaging refers to carrying one’s canoe over dry land to the next navigable section of the river. He said that only experienced whitewater paddlers should attempt this section of the river or be accompanied by a registered Maine guide.

Haskell Rock is named after a 20-foot pillar of stone in the middle of a downstream torrent of water. Grand Pitch drops 30-40 feet almost straight down. Bossie said that, for the most part, the portages are short. He said the longest is the Hulling Machine, which is last.

“For someone looking for a peaceful flat-water day paddle, I’d recommend launching from Lunksoos Camps and paddle up river about two miles to Big Seboeis campsite,” said Bossie. “There’s a nice view, good swimming and bald eagles are known to frequent the area. If no one is using the campsite, you can picnic at the shaded table. Always wear a PFD and paddle with others. Check with the National Park Service for the latest conditions.”



Haskell Rock Pitch, named after a 20-foot pillar of stone in the middle of the river.

GREAT FLY FISHING ON THE EAST PENOBSCOT

According to Bowlin Lodge and Camps website at www.bowlincamps.com, the East Branch is a great place for fly fishing with naturally reproducing brook trout, landlocked salmon and smallmouth bass. The website says that, in 2012, Maine started removing dams in the Penobscot River making it possible for salmon, shad, sturgeon, alewives, eels and smelt to return to their native spawning grounds in the Penobscot River Basin and the East Branch is a part of that.

Driving north, Bowlin Lodge and Cabins are located off Exit 264. They have a lodge and dining room where hot meals

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Watch for wildlife along the waterway, including moose, indigo buntings and great gray owls.

are served. They rent private 1- and 2-bedroom log cabins with a kitchen, bathroom and wood stove. The cabins are a good base camp for anyone traveling to the area for paddling, hiking or hunting out in the wilds. They offer wildlife tours, waterfall hikes, registered Maine guides, canoe rentals and more.

PLANNING A PADDLING TRIP

When planning a paddling trip, the following supplies are recommended—plenty of water, food, necessary medications, life jackets, a first aid kit, map, flashlight, pocket knife, light tent, sleeping mat, bug nets and repellent, matches, a dry bag (waterproof bag which rolls shut to form a seal to keep water out), sunscreen and warm, dry clothing. It's important to prepare for being in the water even if paddlers don't plan on getting in the water, said Bossie. As an added precaution, he said that it's always important to notify someone else of the trip agenda before leaving, in the event that help is needed. ✕



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Dark Skies

AND BEAUTIFUL STARS

EXPERIENCE THE STARS OVER KATAHDIN ANNUAL EVENT

BY CRYSTAL SANDS



In May of 2020, the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument in northern Maine was designated as an International Dark Sky Sanctuary. As one of only about a dozen such places in the world, this designation is a valuable one for our state, as it honors the importance of dark skies and our ability to view the stars as humans have done for thousands of years.

This year, in October, the Stars Over Katahdin event is set to be the first in-person celebration of the night sky since the national monument received this important designation. In 2020, due to COVID restrictions, the event was held online, but this October, the event is tentatively scheduled to take place in person. And, although the Stars Over Katahdin event is always a special experience, this year's upcoming event will be even more exciting since this will be the first time the event will be in person since the Dark Skies designation.

Andy Bossie, Executive Director of Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters, says the Dark Skies designation is so important because it honors years of





hard work by many volunteers who “saw an opportunity and wanted to make sure the area was preserved and promoted.” Bossie says the area is the only Dark Skies Sanctuary on the east coast and is only the second in our national park system. He points out, “80 percent of the nation can’t see the Milky Way,” so having a Dark Skies Sanctuary here in Maine gives both Mainers and visitors a unique opportunity to experience the stars in a powerful way.

There is much excitement about this year’s Stars Over Katahdin event. The event happens on a Saturday in October (October 9, 2021 this year) and is based on the lunar cycle. Bossie explains that the event has to take place when the moon is not bright, such as near a new moon, because darkness is so important to seeing the stars in all of their glory.

Leading up to the event, in early fall, volunteers engage in youth education

programs in local school districts. An inflatable planetarium is used in schools to incorporate astronomy education into the curriculum.

The Stars Over Katahdin event itself begins during the day on October 9 with hiking, biking and paddling around the national monument area. As the sun begins to set, everyone gathers for a bonfire, hotdogs and roasted marshmallows. Around the bonfire, volunteer astronomers tell stories and share information about the stars and constellations.

Once the sun sets and the sky is dark, a true celebration of the stars begins. Bossie says it takes about half an hour for your eyes to adjust to the dark. Using only red lights, everyone at the event takes a small walk and makes their way to an overlook. There, powerful telescopes are available for viewing the moon and planets. Experts use

laser beams to point to constellations, and shooting stars are often seen, adding to the unique experience this event offers.

Bossie says the main focus of the Stars Over Katahdin event is to help people “understand and appreciate the night sky.” The event is an excellent opportunity for both children and adults to enjoy nature, experience the stars and become educated about the importance of places like Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument.

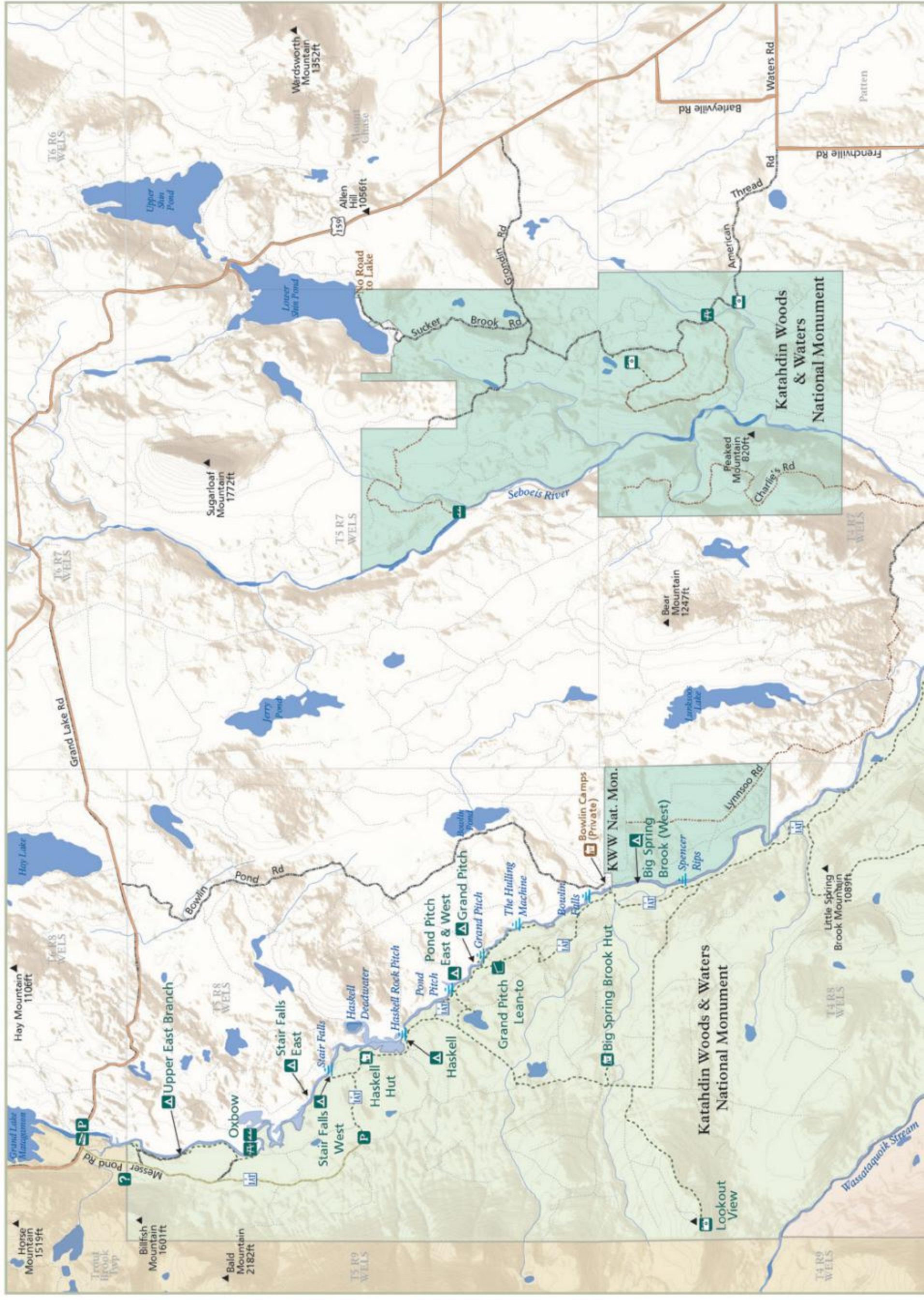
For those interested in camping in or near the park, Bossie says it’s important to make reservations well in advance of the event. Because the event takes place in October, when it is also leaf season here in Maine, the camping sites fill up quickly. For more information about this year’s event, you can visit the Stars Over Katahdin site at www.friendsofkw.org/stars. ✕

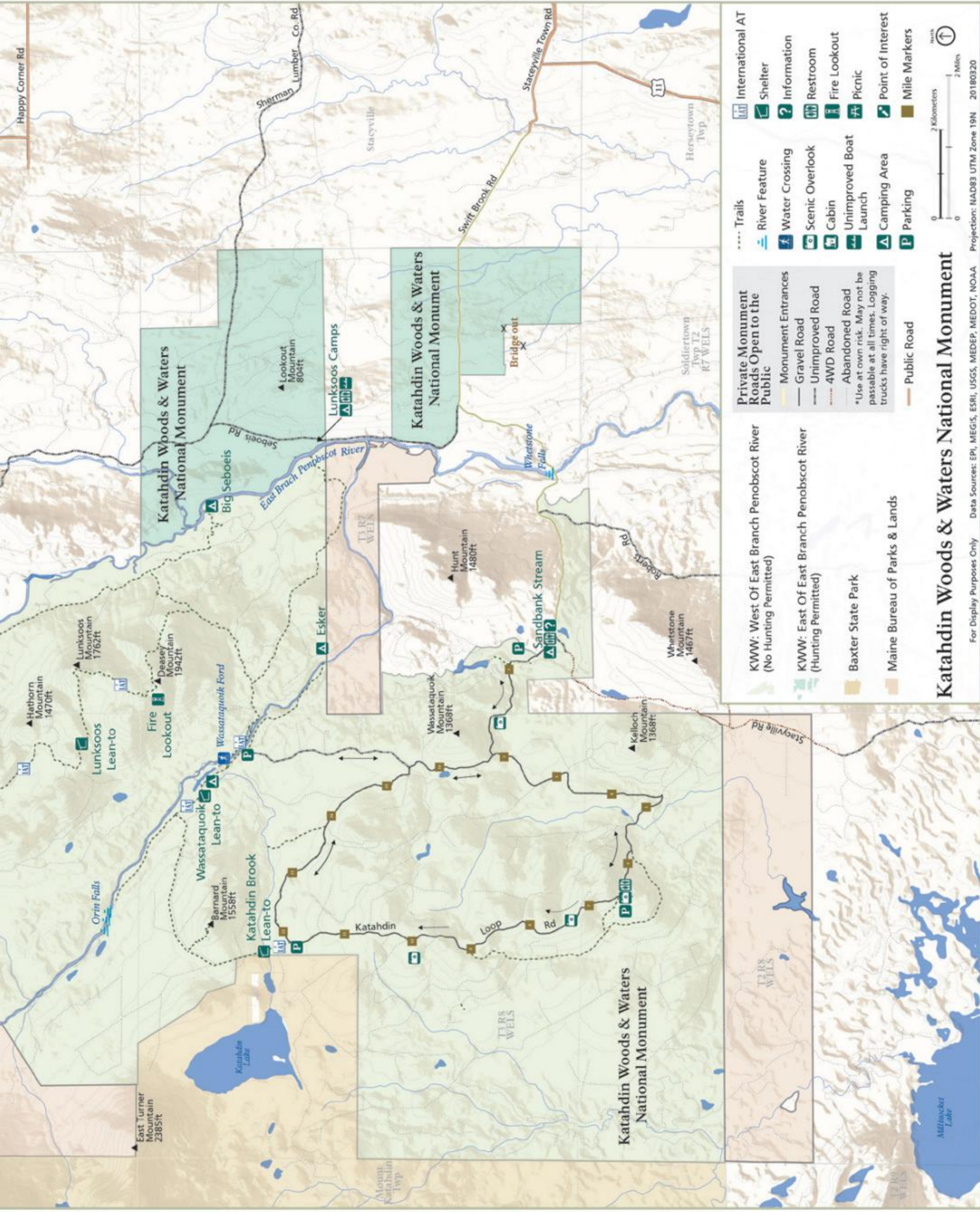
Katahdin Woods & Waters

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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ALONG THE *Golden Road*

FOR SCENIC VIEWS, WILDLIFE SPOTTING, FISHING AND MORE,
TAKE A RIDE ALONG MAINE'S HISTORIC LOGGING ROAD

BY JOSH DEAKIN

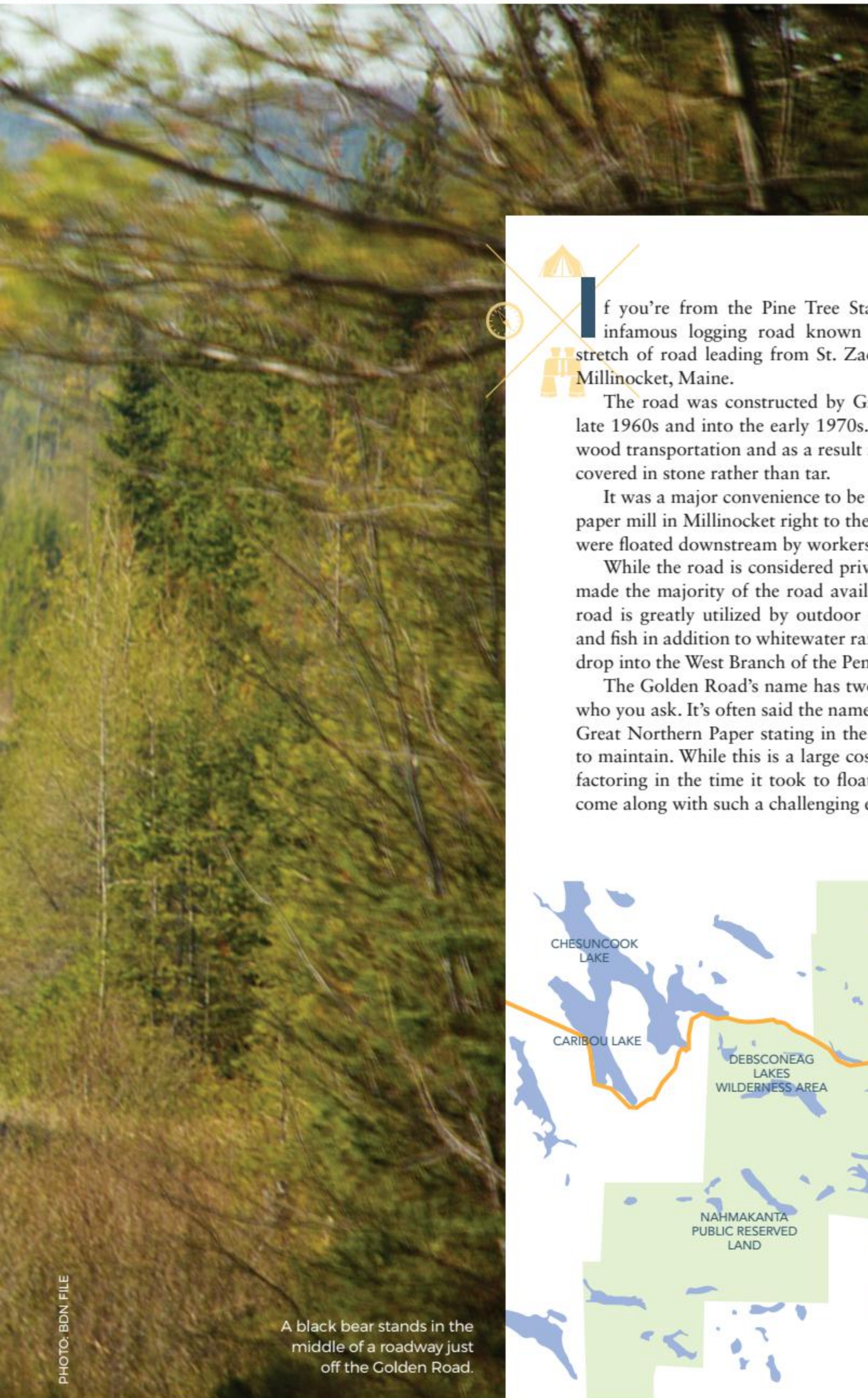


PHOTO: BDN FILE

A black bear stands in the middle of a roadway just off the Golden Road.



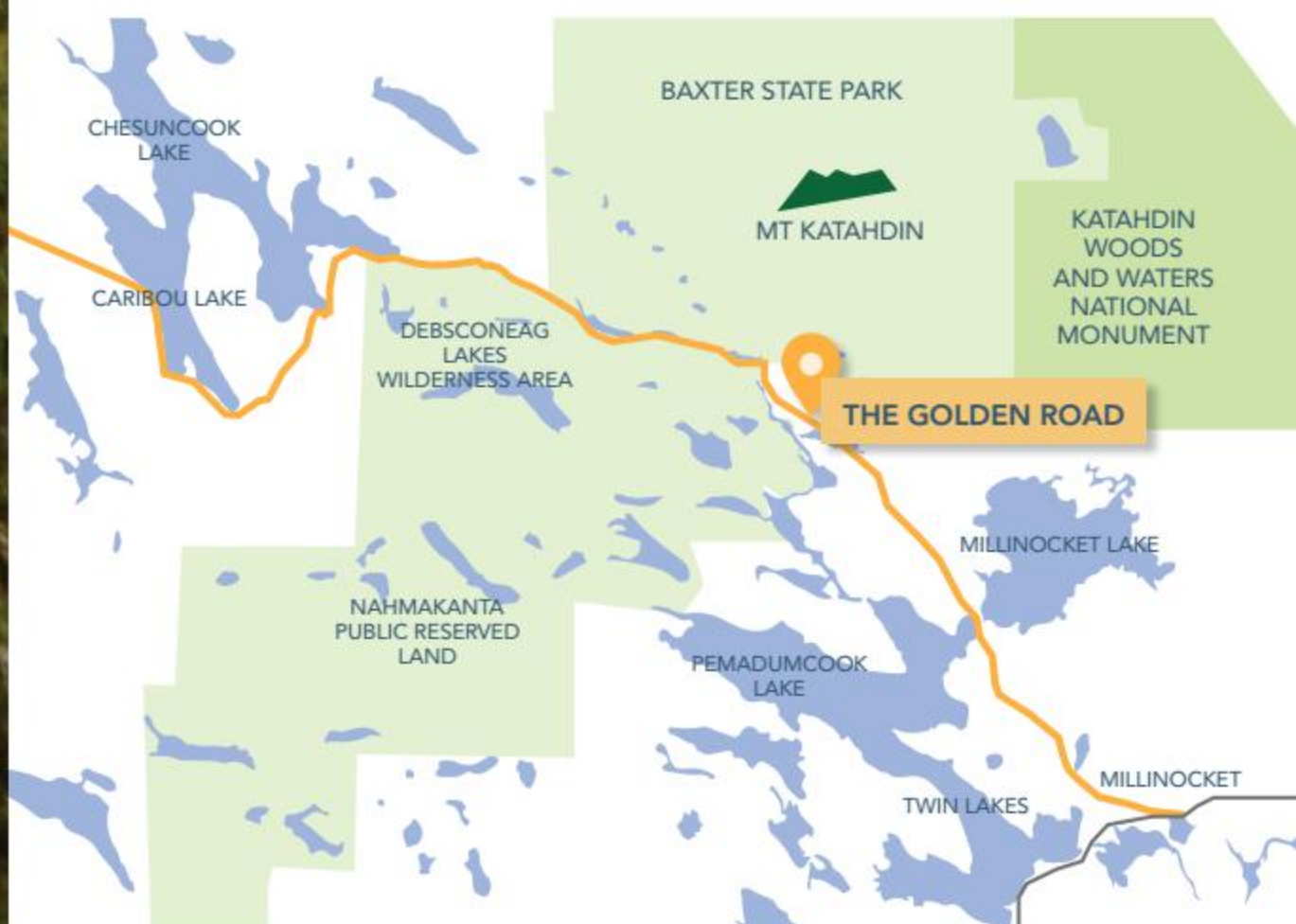
If you're from the Pine Tree State, chances are you've heard of the infamous logging road known as The Golden Road — a 96-mile stretch of road leading from St. Zacharie Border Crossing and ending in Millinocket, Maine.

The road was constructed by Great Northern Paper Company in the late 1960s and into the early 1970s. It's a private road, used primarily for wood transportation and as a result remains mostly unpaved with 65 miles covered in stone rather than tar.

It was a major convenience to be able to transport raw materials for the paper mill in Millinocket right to the site. Before the road was created, logs were floated downstream by workers known as "River Drivers."

While the road is considered private, Great Northern Paper has always made the majority of the road available to the public for use. In fact, the road is greatly utilized by outdoor sportsmen looking for places to hunt and fish in addition to whitewater rafting expeditions looking for a place to drop into the West Branch of the Penobscot River.

The Golden Road's name has two different origin stories depending on who you ask. It's often said the name is related to the cost of the road, with Great Northern Paper stating in the 1980s it cost \$6.8 million a year just to maintain. While this is a large cost, it was still considered savings when factoring in the time it took to float wood down river and the costs that come along with such a challenging endeavor.





A truck drives down the Golden Road near Millinocket.

(Below) A fisherman casts his line in a river off the Golden Road.



Other people will say the name comes from the color of the road itself with it being full of dust and dirt that can cause the road to give off a golden color.

While Great Northern Paper Company no longer operates the mill, the road is still used today and is owned by four different companies. Many visitors journey along the Golden Road yearly for the scenic views it provides of the beautiful state we live in. The foliage in particular is a large attraction, especially for those tourists from “away.”

If you decide to take a trip down the infamous road, you’ll get a glimpse of Maine’s natural beauty as the road weaves its way through Maine’s 100 Mile Wilderness as well as sections of the Appalachian Trail. You’ll pass through gorgeous sight-seeing opportunities of Maine’s tallest mountain as well as the Northern Terminus of the Appalachian Trail. Katahdin sticks out through the trees and breaches the sky many times on the road’s winding curves and hills.

PHOTOS: BDN FILE

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Once around Katahdin, you'll pass through Caribou Lake where the Ripogenus Gorge waits. The Ripogenus Gorge is a small canyon where the West Branch of the Penobscot River enters Caribou Lake. The gorge extends 10 miles. You'll also pass through Greenville and the Moosehead Lake region where you could visit the Indian Hill Trading Post or take a ferry ride across the lake.

In addition to the plethora of natural wonders that lie on the path of the Golden Road, you'll also no doubt run into some wildlife along the way. All year long the road receives travel from people looking to see their first moose or bear. Since it does not receive the high travel of other routes in Maine, wildlife tends to stand out more on the path.

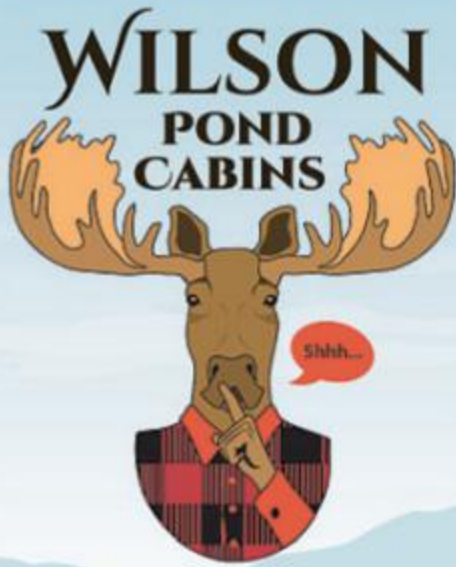
The Golden Road has served the Maine people for decades in a variety of ways and stands today as a special monument to the logging history of the state. While the Millinocket Mill isn't taking in new lumber anymore, the road remains a popular destination and for good reason. If you're looking for an out of the way experience to see Maine's natural beauty, look no further. ✕

(Above) The Golden Road leading to Millinocket.

(This photo) A marsh is seen off the Golden Road.



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Hike ORIN FALLS

ENJOY STUNNING VIEWS ALONG THIS SCENIC HIKE IN
KATAHDIN WOODS AND WATERS NATIONAL MONUMENT

STORY & PHOTO BY AISLINN SARNACKI

DIFFICULTY: Moderate. Most of the 6-mile hike follows old logging roads that travel over gentle hills, with a short, narrow hiking trail leading to Orin Falls at the far end.

HOW TO GET THERE: From a bend in Route 11 at the center of Stacyville (a town that is just north of Millinocket and Medway), turn left onto the gravel Swift Brook Road. Set your odometer to zero. In about 1 mile, you'll cross a bridge over Swift Brook. At 5.2 mile, veer left to stay on Swift Brook Road. At about the 7 mile mark, you'll cross over the East Branch of the Penobscot River on a long, one-lane bridge high above the water. At 9.8 mile, you'll pass by Sandbank Stream Campsite, and at 10.1 miles, you'll pass a sign for Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument by a wetland area. At 12 miles, you'll arrive at the beginning of the Katahdin Loop Road loop. Turn right and reset your odometer. In 1.3 miles, turn right onto Orin Falls Road. Drive approximately 2.5 miles to the trailhead parking area. Start your hike by walking past a gate that blocks the old logging road off from vehicle traffic at the far end of the parking lot.

The hike — or bike ride — to Orin Falls was one of the first day trips established in the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. Most of the 6-mile, out-and-back hike follows an old logging road, with the last leg of the hike turning onto a narrow woodland trail that leads to the edge of Wassataquoik Stream at Orin Falls, a series of cascades and rapids tumbling around large granite boulders.

From the trailhead at the end of Orin Falls Road, the hike starts at a gate that bars vehicle traffic and follows an old logging road along a glacial esker, which is a ridge of sand and gravel formed by glaciers thousands of years ago. Just a short distance from the trailhead, you'll come to a signed intersection where you'll turn left to hike toward Orin Falls. Shortly after, the International Appalachian Trail joins the logging road on your right, where it descends through the woods and crosses Wassataquoik Stream in a fordable location, then travels west then north to the top of Deasey Mountain (and on to cross the border into Canada).

After joining with the IAT, the old logging road leading to Orin Falls descends a gentle hill to an old wooden bridge that spans Katahdin Brook, an outflow from nearby Katahdin Lake in Baxter State Park. Beyond the bridge is the IAT Wassataquoik Campsite

that includes a picnic table, fire ring and a lean-to that was constructed in 2008, and donated by Katahdin Forest Products.

Past the campsite, the old road passes through a section of hardwood forest where you can find woodland flowers such as trillium and trout lily, according to an interpretive brochure for the Katahdin Loop Road published by Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. Many different birds call this forest home, including the sharp-shinned hawks, scarlet tanager, spruce grouse, northern parula, ovenbird and a number of different species of warblers.

At the halfway point, about 1.5 into the hike, you'll come to an intersection where the IAT turns left onto a logging road, striking west to Barnard Mountain, another popular hike in the national monument. The way to Orin Falls is straight ahead and marked with a sign.

Continuing through the forest, past raspberry and blackberry bushes, clusters of young pine trees and crossing the boundary from Township 3, Range 8, to Township 4, Range 8, the old road travels over a few gentle hills. At nearly the 3-mile marker, the hike turns right onto a narrow footpath that travels through a mixed forest to the banks of the Wassataquoik Stream at Orin Falls.



This trail, measuring just a few hundred feet long, is well-groomed and marked with a brown sign that reads "Orin Falls." It includes a couple narrow bog bridges, a wider wooden bridge and rock steps.

At the edge of Wassataquoik Stream, named after a Native American word meaning "place where they spear fish," you can rock hop clear across the stream at low water. Small gravel beaches are scattered along the banks, and large boulders make for great places to sit, picnic and fish. This location also includes several fairly deep pools located among the boulders and ledges that make for great swimming holes. And for anglers, brook trout have been found in this stream in recent years.

Dogs are permitted but must be leashed. Mountain biking is also permitted on this trail, though ATVing, snowmobiling and hunting are prohibited. ✕

AISLINN SARNACKI is a staff writer for Bangor Metro and the editor of Act Out, a section of the Bangor Daily News. An expert on the Maine outdoors, she is author of the guidebooks "Dog-Friendly Hikes in Maine," "Maine Hikes Off the Beaten Path" and "Family Friendly Hikes in Maine." Follow her adventures at bangordailynews.com/act-out.



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NATURE'S Classroom

THE LEARNING PROJECT MAKES EDUCATION AN ADVENTURE

BY ANNE GABBIANELLI



(This photo and above)
Weekly adventures with
students from Southern
Aroostook Community
School's After School Program.

A service-learning day last fall in the
monument with teacher Susan Linscott and
students from Lee Academy.

"I am hooked working with the Learning Project," said Sylvia Hartt, who has been a student of and now a mentor with the Katahdin Learning Project, led by the Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters, a citizen conservation nonprofit organization.

The Katahdin Learning Project, established in 2016, is a place-based learning initiative designed to connect students to communities and the KWW National Monument which spans well over 87,500 acres. To date, more than 5,000 students have benefited from nature's classroom.

Hartt, a senior at Katahdin Middle/High School, says students have a great opportunity to connect with the outdoors and have fun — and teachers benefit as well. "It helps with their classroom; it's an amazing, enriching program that they will not only see their students enjoy, but they will enjoy themselves."

"Having kids experience the wonder of nature and what communities can

do together is amazing," says Executive Director Andrew Bossie. "It's linking nature and curiosity that creates the breadth of learning."

Kala Rush is the Education Coordinator who works hands-on with visitors. "The kids up here are in a place that is so rich in history, culture and environment that they are learning to cherish. We want them to be more invested in the land and communities surrounding it going forward."

Classroom learning has expanded to include the Monument for many students in the greater Katahdin region, but those from Bangor, Brewer and even the Portland area have also made the journey to the Great North Woods. Hartt says, "Some students came up here from Casco Bay to volunteer and help us paint the public library in Patten, for example, connecting to a community. The students were really fun to be around," adding a lot of them made new friends.

Another community project gives students a multi-point learning experience. “For BikeMaine, students travel with the crew, work on the road and learn in the afternoon about every town they are in and its history, offering students an in-depth learning experience,” says Rush.

These types of community partnerships are evolving and growing with each year. “We know and share that any community’s most precious asset is the future generation, so teaching the students about our communities while working in partnership with other organizations charts the future,” says Bossie.

“Being involved has given me a whole new perspective on learning,” Rush says. She is joined by many educators who have taken part in the Learning Project’s teacher camp. “The camp brings teachers together to find their passion about education and how to reach out to their students to ask what role they want.”

Shannon Mathers of the After School Program in Dyer Brook says the Learning Project is most accommodating.

“We explained what we would like our students to experience as far as an outdoor education, and they designed lessons around it,” Mathers said.

Susan Linscott, who coordinates outdoor and environmental programs at Lee Academy, says her students appreciated a service learning activity of clearing brush. “This connected to our curricula for the natural resource management class working on a unit regarding managing land for public use, environmental science studying soils and erosion, and an outdoor ed class exploring different types of recreation.”

When the pandemic hit, the education did not stop for the Learning Project. Rush and her team of volunteers like Hartt went to the communities and met with students outside. “The role we play in communities now more than ever has involved adapting and pivoting like good dance partners,” said Bossie.

For Rush, the greatest reward is when she is in a local store and, “an energetic kid runs up to me with the sweetest voice full of enthusiasm about the Learning Project. If I could dream big, I’d wish these experiences could be for every kid.” ✕

Educators seeking to offer their students the Monument learning experience can reach out to: Kala Rush, Education Coordinator for Friends of Katahdin Woods & Waters Learning Project at (406) 728-5692 or email kala@friendsofkw.org.



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