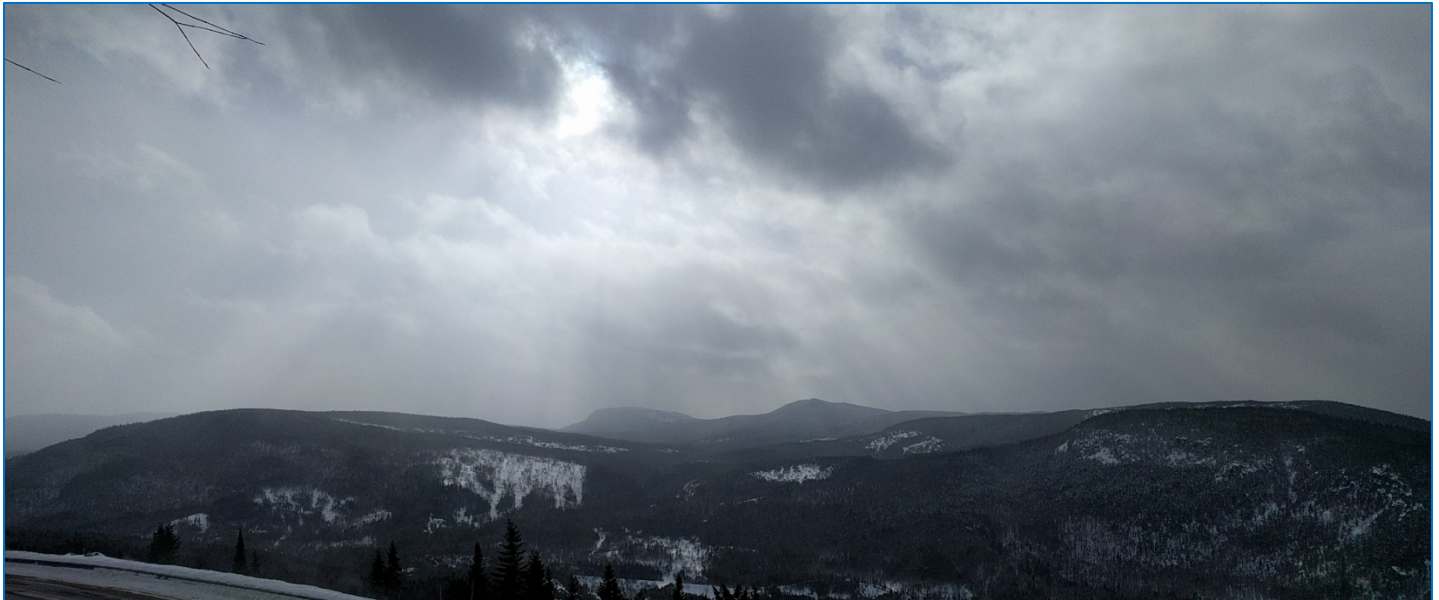


Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust

Winter 2017 Newsletter



Appalachian Trail Maine: Next Century Update

Since the Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership was launched in 2015, significant progress has been made towards a comprehensive land protection strategy for the Appalachian Trail landscape from Maine to Georgia. After the 2016 conference at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, the attendees were tasked with exploring new partnerships and connections in order to broaden the reach on this landscape, which stretches for over two thousand miles from north to south and is dozens of miles wide in places. These partners designated priority areas, which include the Hundred Mile Wilderness and the Maine High Peaks region. They also came up with a vision to:

- bring together the expertise and funding capacities of organizations, communities, and public agencies along the A.T. to protect a broad landscape;
- preserve the scenic values, important watersheds, fragile natural habitats, and the cultural and recreational resources of the A.T.;
- link the extensive wilderness and protected areas along the Appalachian Mountains to the developed human landscapes of eastern communities and metropolitan areas;
- enable future generations to enjoy a high-quality recreational experience and scenic vistas generated by protected natural habitats along what was once the frontier of American civilization.

One of the efforts the Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust is involved in is the Regional Conservation Partnership Network in New England. These clusters of conservation organizations – the High Peaks Initiative, Maine West, the Maine Mountain Collaborative, Staying Connected Initiative, Hudson to Housatonic, and so on – will be vital in conserving the A.T. landscape in the coming years.

The Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust is doing its part by working on a database of the A.T. landscape in Maine. This will include information on five categories important for the protection of the A.T.: Scenery Along the Treadway, Views Beyond the Corridor, American Heritage, Natural Resource Quality and Ecological Connectivity, and Visitor Experience. We're doing some really exciting work in these areas and this information will be public and sharable. We are currently working with several historical societies in towns along the A.T. in Maine to document cultural and historical features that have yet to be included in any assessment of the Appalachian Trail Landscape (see page 5 for article on this project). By involving the communities along the trail, we are hoping to draw on their expertise and knowledge to create a project that other states up and down the trail can duplicate. Getting our communities involved in the Appalachian Trail landscape will be critical to the success of this initiative. Look for continued updates to this initiative in upcoming newsletters.

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Community Development in Maine High Peaks



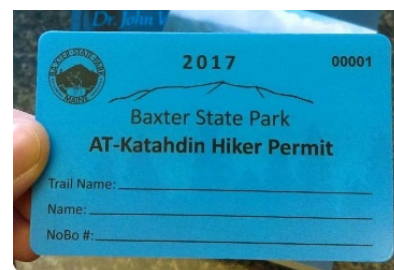
Executive Director Simon Rucker talks branding, trademarks and the Maine High Peaks logo.

One of the things we stress in our conservation work along the Appalachian Trail in Maine is that the A.T. is not just a trail. It's a place where people do all kinds of things in addition to thru-hiking. People mountain bike in nearby trails, they ride ATVs, they use snowmobiles, they hunt, they fish, they ski, they geocache, they retreat into solitude, make livelihoods, meet friends. They do even more than that. People live in communities along the A.T.; the trail is linked to those communities and they are linked to the trail. The same can be said about our conservation work – there's no such thing as conserving a piece of land for a trail. The land is conserved so the people who use the trail in all these ways can continue to use the trail.

This idea was behind the start of the Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust's High Peaks Initiative. Through this program we became involved in an effort by community to brand the region as a means of economic development in Franklin County. Stakeholders include local businesses, chambers of commerce, tourism officials, political figures, arts groups, local non-profits and individuals who wanted to get involved. The land trust's part in this process was, surprisingly enough, to acquire the trademark to the term "Maine High Peaks". This is not what a land trust usually does (but it's not unheard of). We did this because we wanted to help out a group of people who wanted to help out their community, but we also did it because we can see the connection between the Appalachian Trail and the local towns in the High Peaks. This branding exercise will aid in economic development in the region, and that will include recreational tourism. Recreational tourists will hunt and fish and mountain bike in the area, but they will also be hiking on the Appalachian Trail. And without people hiking on the A.T., there wouldn't be an A.T.

Appalachian Trail Long Distance Hiker Permit Required for Baxter State Park

Please note! A free A.T. long distance hiker permit will be required of all long distance A.T. hikers: Northbound Thru-Hikers (Nobos), Southbound Thru-Hikers (Sobos), Flip-Flop Thru-Hikers and Section-hikers. Long distance A.T. hikers must obtain a permit card in person at Baxter State Park Headquarters or Katahdin Stream Campground when the A.T. (Hunt Trail) opens for hiking. Once hikers obtain a permit card they will need to have it stamped at the Katahdin Stream Ranger Station.

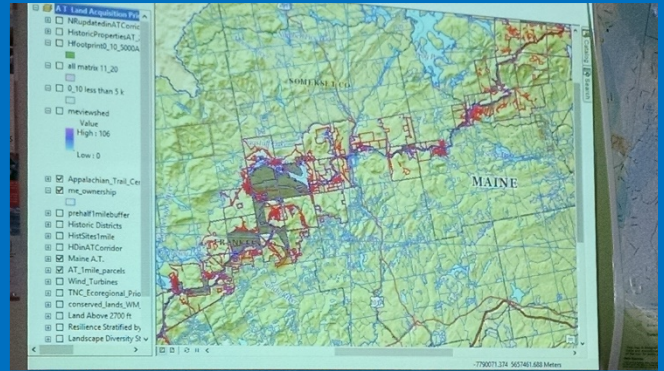


Community Update



- The land trust had a great hike for the **Great Maine Outdoor Weekend** on February 4th into the Four Ponds/Spruce Mountain area from Height of Land. The next GMOW will be in September, so check our website to join us for that one.
- Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust Executive Director Simon Rucker will be presenting on the A.T. Landscape Conservation Initiative as part of the **Portland Public Library's Sustainability Series**. The event will be held on May 24th in the Rines Auditorium in the Main Library building. Check their website or ours for more info.
- Our **Winter Hikes** will be continuing until the snow melts and the trails become impassible due to spring conditions. Upcoming hikes will be posted on our website in mid-March! For now, check out our rundown of the recent hikes on page 6.
- Our annual **Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust Day at the Ballpark** will be on June 25th at Hadlock Field to take in a Sea Dogs game. If you would like tickets to the game, email us at info@matlt.org or call 207-808-2073. Thanks to U.S. Cellular for sponsoring this event!
- Our **guided hikes** will be starting in June, with the first being with the **Ladies Adventure Club** up Puzzle Mountain in June. If you are a member and are interested in having a guided hike on the Appalachian Trail (or nearby) please contact us. We provide this service for groups free of charge!

Project Update



- **Saddleback Management Plan.** We are currently working on an update of our management plan for Saddleback Mountain. Part of this will be getting new photos of the property and that will involve use of a drone!
- **Redington Forest.** The Redington property is still on track to be conserved this year. There have been administrative delays due to state funding and other issues, but we're hanging in there!
- **Volunteer Trip Leaders.** As part of our Next Century Hikes program, we are training trip leaders for our hikes program. If you are interested in becoming a trip leader for the Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust please contact us! This includes Wilderness First Aid training.
- **White Cap Mountain.** The high-elevation parcel on White Cap Mountain will be conserved in the summer of 2017. Due to the change in the presidential administration, there have been delays in cabinet appointees and so the conservation pipeline for the A.T. has been backlogged. Hopefully we will have good news in the next newsletter!
- **ATC Maine 2017 Conference.** The A.T. biennial will be held at Colby College from August 4 to 11th. Registration opens on May 1st. We will have a full write-up in the spring newsletter, but you can check the website at atc2017.org for more info.

Board Member Profile: Pete McKinley



- **How did you first hear about the Maine A.T. Land Trust?** *Two board members approached a small forest management company that I worked for at the time in 2005. They were reaching out about a potential collaboration on easement and conservation projects. I was the ecologist/forester there overseeing land acquisitions management under Forest Stewardship Council with conservation groups that would result in state held conservation lands and easements on private working forests.*
- **What made you want to get involved?** *They invited participation on the board and it seemed a good fit for professional and personal reasons - professional as I am engaged in forest conservation and personal as I have long been interested in the history of the Appalachian Trail and have hiked sections of it throughout its length for about 40 years.*
- **How are you involved?** *I have been a board member since 2006 and have collaborated as a regional conservation planner and research ecologist with The Wilderness Society since 2010. I also collaborated as a consultant in researching and writing an ecological report on the Maine High Peaks region that was completed in 2007. I serve on the Land Committee and help provide ecological advice and backup for various projects in the field and at a GIS.*
- **What is your background - where are you from?** *While hiking an island and bird watching several times a week across from my house on Waquoit Bay in Falmouth, Mass, Cape Cod, or circling the island in various boats, I would dream on hiking mountains someday, having read, in junior high, "Appalachian Odyssey" by William and Julia Older who told the story of their honeymoon walk of the AT. I later went to Colby College and hiked a section of the AT between Bodfish Intervale in Monson to Katahdin Ironworks on a freshman orientation week. That section of trail became a touchstone over next four years as I led Colby maintenance trips there and Outing Club hikes throughout the year.*
- **Where did you work prior to working in conservation?** *It's been conservation since leaving College in 1987, with stops for master's and Ph.D. in forest and avian ecology along the way. The first paid conservation position post College was to a recreational trail inventory and plan for the Concord, NH, Conservation Commission, other work has included shorebird and saltmarsh conservation and research for NH Audubon, Director of research for northern forest birds and landscapes for Manomet Center for Conservation Science, Director of Forestland Conservation for Forest Society of Maine.*
- **What do you see as the most important issues in land conservation in Maine today?** *Keeping our remaining forest tracts from being subdivided and developed, these tracts include the north woods all the way to coastal tracts and habitat. This is important for quality of life, for the conservation of biodiversity today, and for the adaptation of biodiversity to climate change. This adaptation requires large, diverse, and well connected forested tracts across our woods and waters. This issue is not political as so many diverse values affecting nature and social and economic systems, and quality of life need these lands and waters.*

Sandy River and Rangeley Lakes Railroad

By Sharon Barber



Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes RR

What would you do in the 1890s era, and you had thousands of acres of prime timber, with no way to transport lumber and logs from the area? In those days you built a railroad to haul them out, and if you could get some tourists and sportsmen to visit the area, so much the better! The nearest connecting railroad to the hills and high peaks of northern Franklin County, where the Appalachian Trail now passes, was the Sandy River RR in Phillips. The Sandy River was a narrow gauge rail line built in the 1870s to two foot gauge, which connected Phillips and Strong to the national railway web at Farmington, with the Maine Central RR. The narrow gauge system grew and prospered, extending first from Strong to Kingfield, and later up to Bigelow in the east. The next wave of expansion was from Phillips, north through Sanders and Redington, to Rangeley. Several branch lines were built, to Madrid and Township #6, to Barnjum Mills, to Greens Farm and Langtown. In 1908, all these lines were consolidated into the Sandy River and Rangeley Lakes RR. At its peak this company operated 120 miles of track with 16 locomotives, hundreds of freight cars, 13 passenger cars, and even the world's only two foot gauge parlor car!

As the Appalachian Trail was being constructed, the railroad was on its last legs. One of its last big passenger trains carried some CCC boys up to Kingfield to work on the trail. The AT crosses the old grade near Redington, that portion was abandoned in 1932 and the rails lifted in 1933. The remainder quit in 1935, and was scrapped in 1936, another victim of the Great Depression. But for many years in the early 1900s, Redington, Sanders, Madrid Junction, Bigelow, Carrabassett, Kingfield, Phillips and Strong were beehives of activity in logging and lumbering industries, and this little railroad was how it was all shipped.

In the 1970s, a group of local enthusiasts banded together to form the Sandy River and Rangeley Lakes RR Museum. We are a 501(c)(3) non profit, tax exempt, all volunteer foundation dedicated to preservation and restoration of Franklin County's unique two foot gauge railroad. To that end, seasonally we operate authentic equipment along a short portion of historic right of way, in Phillips.

We have been asked by the Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust to assist them mark historic locations as part of the Next Century Initiative. Much of the old roadbed still serves as ATV and snowmobile trails, and from Carrabassett to Bigelow the roadbed is the well maintained, non-motorized Narrow Gauge Pathway, and the countryside is nearly as pristine as it was in days of yore.

The Sandy River and Rangeley Lakes Railroad is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, tax-exempt foundation dedicated to the preservation and restoration of one of the original two-foot narrow gauge railroads that were unique to the state of Maine. This railroad, located in the mountainous region of Franklin County, was the longest of the five two-foot railways that once serviced the state.

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Website: matlt.org

Next Century Hikes

Photos from some of our winter hikes – West Baldpate, Four Ponds/Spruce Mountain, Caribou Mountain, Old Speck



Spring Membership Drive



Individual membership is \$25 for a limited time



Family membership is \$35 for a limited time



Your donation funds land protection in Maine.

We are looking for 200 new members who want to protect the Appalachian Trail in Maine.

Thank You Volunteers!

Volunteers are the heart and soul of the Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust – our work both in the woods and in communities couldn't be done without our volunteer board and these volunteer members:



Louise puts her legal and datamining skills to work on our conservation inventory database. She's also traning to be a trip leader!



Mike is a trip leader who also helps with annual monitoring, stewardship duties and site visits to land trust properties.



Mary provides expert graphic design services on a volunteer basis. She designs infographic, brochures, newsletters and graphic displays.



Deb just moved to Vermont, but she served as a board member and trip leader during her term. Thanks for all your help Deb - we'll miss you!



Debi puts her GIS skills to work on the land trust's management plans, surveys and mapping projects.



Olin, an environmental science graduate, helps with baseline documentation, monitoring visits and ecological assistance.



Maine Appalachian
Trail Land Trust
P.O. Box 761
Portland, ME 04104

We need your help! The Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust is currently working on *four* different projects to conserve over 27,000 acres of land along the Appalachian Trail as part of our **Appalachian Trail Maine: Next Century** program. We are taking on stewardship and land management responsibilities to ensure that these lands remain open to public use! Please consider giving today – for a limited time, our individual and family memberships are discounted.

To make a donation, please send in this form with your check or head over to <http://matlt.org/support-our-work/> to make your contribution online. **We also accept gifts of stock and can work with your financial advisors.** Please call us at 207-808-2073 or email us at info@matlt.org if you'd like to discuss giving options with our staff.



Thank you for your continuing support of the Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust! Your donation supports our ongoing project work and allows us to continue operations, fund stewardship activities and protect land along the Appalachian Trail.

_____ \$1,000 _____ \$500 _____ \$100 **Discount for spring membership drive**
_____ **\$35** _____ **\$25** _____ \$10 \$_____ (other amount)

Please make checks payable to: **"Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust"**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Your donation is tax deductible. Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.