

Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust

Spring 2016 Newsletter



Appalachian Trail Maine: Next Century

New program aims to define conservation along the trail in Maine for years to come.

The Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust is pleased to announce our new initiative to protect the Appalachian Trail in Maine as we head into the second century of the National Park Service's existence. This initiative is informed by NPS guidance documents and their Next Century for Parks program and will be undertaken in concert with Appalachian National Scenic Trail NPS unit and Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC). We will be working to update the land trust's Land Acquisition Priorities by incorporating twenty-first century data and Next Century goals for the Appalachian Trail. This will include ecological, historical, and trails infrastructure data, among other things. We'll be increasing our outreach to landowners in order to build on existing relationships up and down the trail in Maine. Finally, we'll be expanding existing efforts to promote the Appalachian Trail in Maine at the national level. This effort will be critical to Maine's outdoor recreation economy and environmental future as we head into the second century of the National Park Service. The Appalachian Trail in Maine and the nearby conservation parcels held by the Maine A.T. Land Trust and several conservation partners across the state, as well as the potential Maine Woods National Monument, provide for a ready-made recreation resource in a region that has seen the decline of the timber industry and an exodus of the younger generations. Not only will these places attract visitors to stimulate the economy, but our planning can ensure that this remains a viable economic option for our communities to build on. More information can be found on our website and in upcoming land trust publications.



Like this A.T. blanket from Woolrich? We're giving it away for National Trails Day on June 4th! If you send us a donation by the end of June, we'll enter you to win it.

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Community Calendar



- **Hiking season** is upon us! Our first trip was up Spruce Mountain (at Height of Land on Route 17) on May 15th and next is Old Blue Mountain on June 11th. Check our website for more info! These hikes are always free and we provide a trip leader. See page 4 of this newsletter for a full schedule.
- Land trust volunteer **Deb Carroll** is now certified in Wilderness First Aid, courtesy of funding from the Maine Community Foundation. On the trips she will be leading, you are in good hands!
- The annual **Maine A.T. Land Trust Day at the Ballpark** will be on June 12th at 1pm for the Portland Sea Dogs game at Hadlock Field. We do have some free tickets to give away so please contact us at info@matlt.org or 207-808-2073 if you want some!
- The land trust will be the featured non-profit for **Portland Greendrinks** on September 13th. Save the date, more details in the next newsletter!
- The land trust will also be the featured non-profit for the **Congress Squared Restaurant's Mondays Matter** program in October, thanks to the Westin Portland Harborview Hotel! Details also TBD.
- **National Trails Day** is June 4th! Our event will be the June 11th hike up Old Blue Mountain. Head over to our website to register and celebrate American's Trail System on the most famous trail of them all!

Project Update



- **Redington Forest Conservation Easement.** The land trust continues to work towards the acquisition of a conservation easement over the Redington Forest property, which is comprised of approximately 10,000 acres of montane forest on the west side of the Appalachian Trail at Crocker Mountain. The project will be completed sometime this summer if all goes well!
- **Gulf Hagas-Whitecap.** This project, in the heart of the 100-Mile Wilderness, is still in the works but may be completed this year. Depending on the structure, Maine A.T. Land Trust may end up holding a 5400-acre parcel along the A.T. just south of White Cap Mountain. This is a beautiful area in the Katahdin Iron Works – Jo-Mary Forest that is traversed by the White Brook A.T. side trail.
- **Berry Pickers' Trail.** The new A.T. side trail up Saddleback Mountain should be open late in the summer. Due to the sensitive vegetation and bird habitat on the higher ridges, trail work cannot take place until after August 1st. After that time, the upper portion should be completed, blazed and opened to the public! We are planning to have our Great Maine Outdoor Weekend hike on the trail in September, so look for more information on our website or in our next newsletter.
- **New A.T. Projects.** There should be some news later in the summer about new projects along Maine's A.T. It's an exciting time for Conservation in Maine!

Board Member Profile: Claire Polfus



- How did you first hear about the Maine A.T. Land Trust?
I first heard about the land trust through my work as Maine Conservation Resources Manager for the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.
- What made you want to get involved?
The Appalachian Trail Conservancy has an ex officio position on the board so I get to work with the Maine A.T. Land Trust as part of my job.
- How are you involved?
My main role is to help connect the great work we do at the land trust with the larger A.T. community and ensure that communication flows between partners. I also am part of the conservation committee and help with trail-focused data and information.
- What is your background - where are you from?
I grew up next to a beautiful lake in northern Wisconsin, which is a lot like interior Maine without the mountains. I went to both college and graduate school in Vermont. In between those things I worked and explored in the Rocky Mountains, Alaska, British Columbia and the Great Lakes.
- Where did you work prior to working in conservation?
I have always worked in conservation. I started my career in field biology and spent field seasons chasing caribou, sage grouse, prairie plants and songbirds around their associated habitats. In graduate school I focused on ecology and land management. Now I work on a broad range of projects on the A.T. in Maine including in natural resources, youth engagement, recreation and project planning, land conservation and volunteer support.
- What made you decide to work for conservation organizations in Maine?
This:



- What kinds of work do you do for different conservation organizations?
Because my job is in conservation, I follow other (although related) passions in the rest of my time. I coach the ski team at Mt Blue High School and am involved with the ski community in Farmington. I also enjoy supporting local agriculture both in the fields and on the table.
- What do you see as the most important issues in land conservation in Maine today?
Maine and its people have faced so many transitions in the land base in the past thirty years. I think people are struggling to process how to relate to the Maine landscape now rather than in the past. As a whole, we need to figure out what Maine land ethic means without the mill structure and with quickly changing landowners. Specifically, I think we need to sort out issues on public access for both locals and visitors and how to go forward with equitable public land ownership at local, state and federal levels.

Maine Hikes on the Appalachian Trail



Hiking season is here! As part of our Maine Hikes program, we offer guided hikes on Maine's Appalachian Trail lands. Here is the calendar for the next few months. These hike range from easy to strenuous and there is a group size limit of 10-12 depending on the trip. First come first serve and as always, open to everybody who signs up. Check our website for more info – there will be a write up on each trip as we get closer to the date and you can RSVP now!

Spruce Mountain – May 15 – Easy/moderate hike from Height of Land to Four Ponds area.

Old Blue Mountain – June 11 – National Trails Day hike!

Sugarloaf and Spaulding Mountains – June 25 – Moderate or strenuous hike (options for route)

Puzzle Mountain – July 9 – Moderate/strenuous hike on Grafton Loop Trail

Goose Eye Mountain – July 30 – Strenuous hike in the Mahoosucs

National Park Service 100th Anniversary Hike (TBD) – August 25 or weekend directly after

Saddleback for the Great Maine Outdoor Weekend – Sept. 18 – new A.T. side trail up east side

Pleasant Pond Mountain – Sept. 25 – Easy hike along the pond and up the mountain with good views

White Cap Mountain – October 8 – Strenuous hike in a remote, beautiful part of A.T. in Maine

Corporate Sponsors

The Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust is pleased to have the sponsorship of these businesses.



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Website: matlt.org

Maine A.T. Land Trust Acquires Longley Conservation Easement



View of Longley property terrain



Location of Longley easement along A.T. corridor

We are pleased to announce that the land trust has acquired a conservation easement on 17 acres of land adjacent to the A.T. at the Kennebec River crossing. The land was owned by the late Stephen Longley, the long-time, celebrated operator of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's Kennebec River Ferry Service. Mr. Longley shuttled some 19,000 hikers across the river over a twenty-year period and earned the trail name "The Ferryman". Mr. Longley graciously bequeathed his property by the Kennebec to the Maine Appalachian Trail Club in his will and MATC, wanting to permanently protect the area and conserve the significant values of the Appalachian Trail in Maine, has donated a conservation easement to Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust. MATC is a founding partner of the Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust and they do fantastic work to maintain the A.T. in Maine. We grateful to MATC for protecting the trail through the donation of this conservation easement.

Spruce Mountain – Four Ponds A.T. Hike



The land trust held the season's first Maine Hikes trip on the A.T. on May 15th. The destination for this hike was Spruce Mountain and the Maine Public Reserve Land's Four Ponds unit. We had a crew of five on a windy, cloudy day but fortunately the heavier weather had moved out and we were in dense spruce forests for most of the trek. The meetup spot was the Height of Land parking area (left photo) which overlooks the western Maine lakes and the Bemis Mountain range. Having just come down Bemis Mountain, the Appalachian Trail proceeds from the parking area to the east, up Spruce Mountain (2530') and down to large areas of montane spruce-fir forest in largely wet areas (middle photo). The terrain in this section is largely flat, and proceeds along the first two ponds, Moxie and Long, before heading up along the south side of Four Ponds Mountain. The A.T. skirts the northern edge of the state land while remaining just below the summit of the mountain. Views to the south over Long Pond – the largest of the four in the state land unit – stretch to the south and west, where fresh snow dusted the higher ridges. As the trail descended to the isthmus between Long Pond and Sabbath Day Pond, the third of the Four Ponds, the group reached the A.T.'s Sabbath Day Pond shelter. The distance to the shelter was 3.6 miles but the mild terrain made it feel much shorter. After a nice lunch and some musings on the scattered bear skeleton in the vicinity, the group headed back. The wind along the shore of the lakes increased and the intermittent rain showers turned to snow and sleet. Fortunately, they remained light for the duration of the return journey, and back at the cars everybody agreed that this was a great, unknown Appalachian Trail hike in Maine.





Maine Appalachian
Trail Land Trust
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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 - \$10, \$50, \$100 – because every bit helps and we provide real conservation value for your donation.

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 ____ \$50 ____ \$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.