

Summer 2016 Newsletter

Land Trust Launches Appalachian Trail Maine: Next Century Program

The Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust is pleased to announce that the ATMNC program is now underway! We've started this program to coincide with the 100th Anniversary of the National Park Service, which also happens to come at a critical juncture for A.T. conservation. Broadly speaking, we will be focusing on three areas – Next Century Priorities, Next Century Land Protection and Next Century Outreach. The initial phase has been started and will involve an updated release of the Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust's *Land Acquisition Priorities* document, which was completed in 2004. For many years this was the seminal document for conservation along the A.T. in Maine. It was used by conservation organizations, state and local agencies and the land trust itself to delineate which areas of the A.T. in Maine needed protection, which were already protected in some way, and how.



Since 2004, the conservation landscape has changed in Maine. Land has been conserved, the Appalachian Trail is now widely seen as the backbone of a conservation corridor, and many of the old threats to the landscape have been mitigated. But new threats to the A.T. have arisen - some of them on a global scale like climate change. We have new tools to tackle these threats; one of them is GIS. By using GIS to map the A.T. landscape in Maine, we can obtain data and determine conservation priorities. We can then incorporate the findings into the *Land Acquisition Priorities 2016* document. Using these tools, we will be able to create a web-based portal for partner organizations and others to use so they, too, can see this data and what the priority lands are along Maine's Appalachian Trail.

GIS isn't the only thing that's changed since 2004. The National Park Service (the owner of the A.T. lands), Appalachian Trail Conservancy (the organization which manages the trail) and other groups have come to the realization that the Appalachian Trail landscape is not just about a trail, and it's not just a place for hikers covering 2,184 miles from Georgia to Maine. The Appalachian Trail is a landscape that belongs to everyone. It can be used by communities for health and education. It can be a refuge for threatened animal and plant species in a time of changing climate. It is a repository for the heritage of the eastern United States. It is a means for people to get outdoors – to hike, to hunt, to fish, and participate in all of the traditional outdoor activities we usually think of. But it's also a place for geocachers, mountain bikers, ATV riders, snowmobilers, birdwatchers, trail runners, dog groups, outdoor clubs with a dating focus, senior hiker groups, history buffs, and countless others.

The Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust hopes that the A.T. in Maine can be a way to bring all of these groups together to protect a landscape we all love. We are going to need your support to complete this work, and not just in the way of donations (although that does help!). We need an active and engaged membership to ensure that the trail in Maine has a voice as we enter the Next Century of the National Park Service's existence. We can ensure that all of the citizens of Maine have a voice in the A.T.'s economic, health, recreational, ecological and community future.

We will be sending out additional information about ATMNC to our members in the next few months, but if you want to learn more please contact us or join us for one of our events on or off the trail!

TABLE OF CONTENTS



We are pleased to announce that the Quimby Family Foundation has awarded a grant of \$25,000 for the Appalachian Trail Maine: Next Century program! These funds will go towards implementation of all three facets of the program. Thanks to QFF for your assistance!

Community Calendar



- **In honor of the 100th Anniversary of the National Park Service**, we will be having a hike up Mount Abraham on August 27th. Please contact us at 207-808-2073 or RSVP for the hike by visiting our website at matlt.org. Details about meeting up and carpooling can be found on our events calendar page.
- The **Rangeley Trail Town Festival** will be held on September 3rd in downtown Rangeley! More info can be found at rangeleytrailtown.com. See you there!
- Don't forget - Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust will be the featured non-profit at **Portland Greendrinks** on September 13th! The location will be at Thompson's Point in Portland – a spectacular location on the water with indoor and outdoor facilities. There will be beer, Appalachian Trail Twister (!!!) and plenty of great people focused on a great cause. Grab your cup and join us!
- Our hike for the **Great Maine Outdoor Weekend** will be on September 17th. The destination will be **Saddleback Mountain via The Berry Pickers' Trail!** At long last, due to the amazing efforts of the Maine Appalachian Trail Club, this trail is open. If you would like to join us for this hike, please call 207-808-2073 or RSVP on the events page on our website at matlt.org. Accompanying us for this hike will be none other than Dave Field – longtime MATC president and the man responsible for routing most of the A.T. on its present course through Maine.
- Our **Maine Hikes** are still happening through the fall. Check our events page for more info about trips up White Cap Mountain, to Pleasant Pond Mountain and more!

Project Update



- **LightHawk Conservation Flight.** Maine A.T. Land Trust was fortunate enough to receive a donated flight over Maine's Appalachian Trail landscape from the 100-mile wilderness all the way to the High Peaks. LightHawk assists conservation organizations by connecting volunteer pilots (ours was Tom LeCompte – thanks Tom!) with land trusts who need a landscape-level perspective. In our case, we needed to introduce a Washington D.C.-based partner organization to our work and the Appalachian Trail landscape in Maine. This flight also helped with some stewardship needs, our report on the Mount Abraham summit fire (see article on page 4), and an opportunity to collect some spectacular photos!
- **Redington Forest.** The Redington Forest project is slated to close sometime in the fall. There have been delays in accessing some funding for the project, but that has given Maine A.T. Land Trust more time to work on the baseline documentation required for us to hold the conservation easement. Hopefully, there will be celebratory news in the fall newsletter!
- **Gulf Hagas-Whitecap.** 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, but this project will not be completed until the fall. More news then!
- **Berry Pickers' Trail.** It's open – see entry in the Community Update!
- **New A.T. Projects.** Though still confidential, we are working on new projects in the High Peaks, one in the Nahmakanta region and one west of the Kennebec River! Stay tuned for news...

Board Member Profile: Deb Carroll



I love hiking. Some might call it an addiction. While that may be true, it is an addiction that I can live with.

Although I was born in New York, I was fortunate to have grown up in Vermont and to have participated in a month-long program after my freshmen year of high school called “Summer Challenge,” led by several extremely cool teachers. We showed up on the first day, at an old barn near Lake Champlain on Shelburne Farms, and were handed rope, birch sticks, and a canvas bag, out of which we made our own backpacks. For the next month, we were given maps, food, and a plan, and dropped off at various trailheads along Vermont’s Long Trail. Between hikes, we did some rock climbing, rappelling, bushwhacking, camping, running, rope swinging into the lake, and a solo wilderness experience (the last most likely while the teachers took a break to party). I was hooked.

There were many years when I did minimal hiking. When my 3 children were little I stuck to the small mountains that they could handle, or that their father and I could handle with them on our backs. All 3 have developed a deep appreciation of the wilderness and an interest in social justice, as well as wonderful leadership skills and a desire to care for others.

Now that my kids have grown, I take to the woods every chance I get.

Although I don’t mind hiking by myself, I prefer the company of others when I head up the trail, and so I hike with my sisters and belong to 2 hiking groups. One of these groups is, of course, the Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust, and the other is a “MeetUp” group called the New England Over 40.

I hike for fun, and I hike to find peace. I love to smell the balsams and hear the songs of birds as I pass. I like the thick moss and the wildflowers, the trail signs, cairns, and blazes, the water crossings and the grand vistas. I even like the wooded summits with just piles of rocks marking our accomplishment. I enjoy the trail chatter between friends in front of me and in back of me, even when it’s just the hum of their conversation marked by occasional peals of laughter. I love it all.

I am grateful for the natural world around me, and indebted to those who have come before me to act as stewards for these amazing spaces. I have a profound respect for the mountains and the elements and believe that, ultimately, and in spite of our level of preparedness, it is the mountains and the elements that will decide the outcome of an adventure. I believe that we need to educate ourselves, our children, and others regarding stewardship and health, and I support the efforts of groups such as MATLT as they work to conserve natural spaces for public use. I am honored to have been invited to become a member of the Board of Directors.

Deb Carroll is the newest member of the Board of Directors of the Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust.

Mount Abraham Summit Fire



On Saturday, June 25th, a group ascending Sugarloaf Mountain as part of our Maine Hikes program looked towards Mount Abraham and saw flames. A long plume of black smoke was swirling from a peak to the south of the main summit, and since we had heard the sounds of helicopters earlier, our first thought was that there had been a crash. We quickly called 911 only to have the dispatcher inform us that there was actually a fire on this summit area of the mountain. The helicopters were dumping water on the blaze! A lightning strike on the previous Tuesday had ignited a smoldering, small fire that erupted when the winds picked up. In the absence of any rainfall, the fire burned for nearly a week before the Maine Forest Rangers were able to contain the fire. One of the interesting things about the summit of Mount Abraham is that the area is above treeline and any vegetation is very low to the ground. This was the reason the blaze was able to remain dormant for so long. The terrain proved difficult for the Rangers as the peak is over 4,000 feet in elevation and the nearest access road is well over a mile away. The Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust holds a conservation easement over this area, which is owned by the State of Maine and is an ecological reserve area. Mount Abraham contains the largest above-treeline area in Maine outside of Baxter State Park. We will be completing a report on the fire and effects on the mountain as part of our stewardship duties. Stay tuned for more photos and details of the report in the fall newsletter!

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The Appalachian Trail: A Journey Through American Heritage



Slate Quarry workers getting ready to be lowered into the quarry (early 1900s) Photo courtesy of Monson Historical Society.

One of the most important facts about the Appalachian Trail – one most people don't know – is that it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The landscape through which it winds, from Georgia to Maine, is one of the greatest repositories of national heritage elements that we as a nation possess. There are hundreds of sites along the A.T. in Maine which have been inventoried by the National Register of Historic Places, the Maine Department of Transportation and numerous historical societies in communities up and down the A.T. in Maine. As part of the **Appalachian Trail Maine: Next Century** program, we are working to inventory many of these historical and cultural relics which form an integral part of this landscape. There are historic homes, churches, railway depots, cellar holes, schools, walls, trails, mills, quarries, portages, monuments and more. While Maine and the A.T. landscape has a reputation of wildness and inaccessibility, some of the places where we now journey to for solitude were once places where people lived and worked. Part of the reason why the A.T. is such a great place in Maine is the presence of these historical reminders. The Maine A.T. Land Trust will be sharing the results of this work in our newsletters and online in the coming months.

Maine Hikes Summer 2016

Hiking season is in full swing! Six trips on the Appalachian Trail have been held since May and we have at least four more planned. Our hikes are for all abilities, have ridesharing and we'll lead you to the trailhead. Head over to our website (matlt.org) for more information and to see our calendar of events.

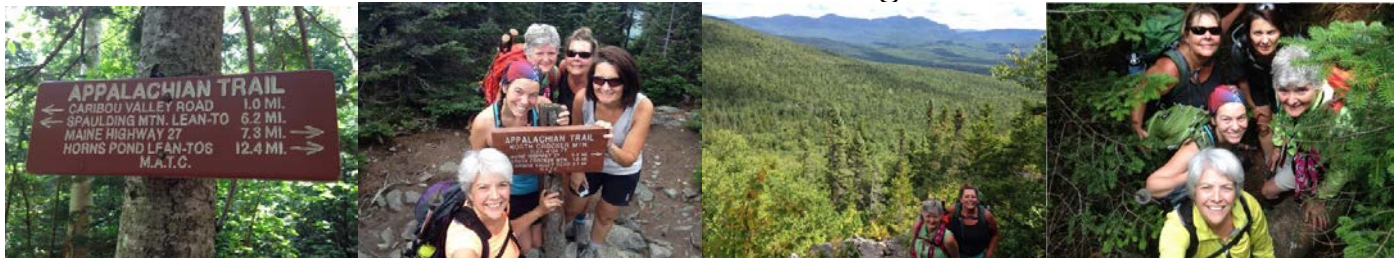
Goose Eye Mountain



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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 - \$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: _____

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