



**MAINE**

# AMC Maine Chapter 2021 Annual Report

November 2021



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### Chairs Report

We had optimistically planned for an in-person annual meeting this year, but due to the increased rate of COVID infections, made the decision to go virtual again this year. We hope we can go back to having an in-person annual meeting next year.

The Chapter is well positioned financially as our assets have increased from last year as our expenses were reduced this year due to pandemic restrictions. We anticipate a more typical level of spending in the coming year.

Chapter membership has grown this year by 6.5% and is approaching 6500 members. We have also gained followers in our social media accounts.

The Trails committee has had a very productive year, adding four new trail leaders in training, working joint projects with Portland Trails, the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, and local land trusts. They also led trail work excursions for August Camp and continue to support trail maintenance in the Maine Woods.

Although we did not hold Wilderness First Aid or leader training this year, the Leadership Development Committee is planning both for next spring in April.

Our outings trips were up this year over last year as leaders became vaccinated and more comfortable leading trips under the new AMC COVID guidelines. The Young Members group hosted a well-attended Baxter camping trip in July and a Bigelows backpack in October among other outings. We also joined with LL Bean and led eight local hikes for their Summer Across Maine program.

We have had a number of Executive Committee member retirements this year and have new members in the following positions: Malcom Pearson- Treasurer, Sarah Hunter - Newsletter Editor, Tom Obrien- Leadership Development Committee Chair

Our Regional Director and friend John Mullens is retiring after six years as director. Beth Zimmer from the New Hampshire Chapter will be the new director For the Maine and New Hampshire region.

Phil Coyne, Trails Committee Chair, was selected as the 2021 Appie of the Year, a well-deserved recognition.

The Horseshoe Pond Shelter in the Maine Woods, jointly funded by the Maine, Boston, and Worcester Chapters was completed this year. This project was for a new shelter and access path. The shelter will be dedicated to Andrew Norkin, longtime AMC trails director who passed away last winter. The dedication ceremony is being planned for next spring.

Bill Brooke  
Chair – AMC Maine Chapter



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### Treasurer's Report

The Chapters assets have increased by 20% from 2020. Our spending decreased by 50% from last year and income also decreased by 27%.

We anticipate spending will increase to a more typical level for 2022.

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Maine Chapter Assets	\$71,599	\$85,293
Income	\$22,018	\$16,140
Expenses	\$16,062	\$8,353

(As of Oct 31,2021)

### Committee Reports

#### Communications

Wilderness Matters newsletter email newsletter recipients increased by 14 % to 3310 recipients while monthly email communication recipients increased by 23% to 3702 emails .

Our average viewing rate for the email newsletter is 41% and 37% for the monthly email. In comparison to other organizations this is significantly higher than the typical email viewing rate of 18% for these types of communications.

For social media the Maine Chapter has 3277 FaceBook followers, 1951 followers for Instagram, and 2401 for Meetup.

Under the leadership of Phil Coyne, who also chairs AMC Maine's Trails Committee, AMC's social media pages have gained followers in all areas over the past year. AMC Maine's Facebook page currently has 2843 likes and 3259 followers, and our chapter's Facebook Community, created this past February, has already gained 171 members. AMC Maine's Meetup page has grown substantially to 3260 members, increasing by 67% over the last three years. We are very grateful to Phil for assuming two leadership roles for the Maine Chapter!

Long time newsletter editor Carey Kish retired this year and was replaced by Sarah Hunter.

#### Membership – Karen Brace

While members' gatherings have been on hold during the pandemic, a silver lining has been that more and more people are getting out to enjoy all types of outdoor activities. This trend lays the groundwork for outdoor enthusiasts to discover AMC's offerings.



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So far in 2021, AMC Maine's membership increased by 6.5%. Our chapter is currently approaching a total of 6500 members, as compared to the end of 2020 when the membership count was 6037. Looking back ten years, the Maine Chapter has added close to 1400 new members. We continue to work hard to get the word out to Mainers that AMC activities are open to people of any skill level, age or experience in the outdoors.

Membership initiatives include featuring our club's new QR code beyond its current use on AMC Maine stickers that were distributed during 2021. We anticipate publishing an AMC Maine rack card that also utilizes this code, which leads directly to the chapter's membership page. During the coming year we also hope to partner with other Maine organizations and retailers to work together toward our mutual goal of encouraging Mainers to get outside. We anticipate that our members can look forward to opportunities to gather for programs and social events beginning in the spring of 2022!

### Leadership Development – Kim Sanders

Tom O'Brien is the new Leadership Development Committee Chair replacing Kim Sanders who is retiring.

After not sponsoring Wilderness First Aid or Leader training for the last two years, both are planned for next spring.

A Hybrid Leadership Training is planned at Maine Audubon consisting of virtual training sessions and an in-person training day. There will be five two-hour virtual sessions in March & April with the in-person training following in April.

The WFA course is planned for Wilderness Medical Associates certification in late April of next year. This course will also be held at Maine Audubon in Falmouth.

### Outings

Outings trips increased 35% this year over last year but are down 42% from 2019. This year's increase was primarily due to trip leaders being more willing to engage with groups that are vaccinated and AMC's revised COVID guidelines for participants & leaders.

The Chapter supported LL Beans "Summer Across Maine" program by leading 8 local easy hikes on Sundays in July and August.

Currently there are 23 Outings leaders and three candidates that are working to become Maine Chapter Leaders.

Well attended online training workshops were held for Introduction to Hiking, Backpacking, and Introduction to Winter Hiking during the year.

### Trails – Phil Coyne

We had a successful year of trail work supporting local land trusts and AMC Maine lodges, and expanding and strengthening our volunteer corps of trail maintainers. I'm happy to report that many Maine trails and natural areas we love benefitted from the fine efforts and hard work of AMC volunteers.



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This year we expanded our role by leading trips in new areas.

- We teamed up with the Northern Forest Canoe Trail to lead a trip to Dead River.
- In tandem with Portland Trails and a member of AMC's professional trail crew, we offered basic and advanced skill-building activities.
- Also, with Portland Trails we offered trail maintenance to AMC Young Members.
- And we provided three, day-long trail maintenance opportunities to August Camp participants in the vicinity of Little Lyford Lodge & Cabins.

We continued supported of trail maintenance efforts in other areas:

- On Cutler and Pleasant Mountains and around AMC lodges
- And on adopted sections of the Appalachian Trail near Third Mountain, in the Bigelow range, and Gulf Hagas

Through these activities, a new generation of volunteer trail leaders stepped forward: Katie Barlow, Josh Barlow, Patsy Thompson Leavitt and Rod MacKay, and we continued to benefit from veteran trail leaders: David Lynch, Stephanie Lynch, David McCarthy, Robert Pantel and Peter Roderick.

Robert Pantel is now providing volunteer leadership to volunteers who maintain eight trails through the AMC Adopt-A-Trail program in Maine.

- Bill Brown – Lodge-to-lodge trail, Gorman Chairback to Little Lyford Lodge
- Rich Morse – Hedgehog Gate trail
- Robert Goldsmith – Long Pond trail
- Cindy Caverly, Kristina Sullivan and Jeanine Libby – Third Mountain trail from Long Pond trail to the AT
- Kristen and Kenyon Grant – Third Mountain trail from the AT to Indian Pond
- Joe Massery and Steve Ciras of the Worchester chapter - Henderson Brook trail
- Tara Davis – Gorman Loop trail
- And Robert Pantel - Head of Gulf trail

### Young Members – Steven Profaizer

With the arrival of vaccines and the return of the wilderness first aid courses I needed to complete my leader training, I was finally able to start leading Young Members trips as the summer arrived. I've now led several day hikes, a trailwork day, a weekend backpacking trip, and a weekend camping and hiking weekend in Baxter State Park.

I've been reaching out to some past participants when I post each new trip, and I've seen a large number of returning people each time – a clear sign that the events are a good experience for those in attendance. I've also incorporated some questions into my screening process about participants' interest in different event types and in becoming trip leaders. It's important to get more Young Members leaders for the long-term health of the group, but I've found I'm able to make it work in the meantime. The most important thing right now is to have regular events and start building a community that people want to be a part of, which we've made good progress on this year.



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During the last few weeks, I've connected with the new Young Members chairs in New Hampshire, and I'm hoping that provides opportunities for more interchapter support and events in 2022.

### Maine Woods Initiative (MWI) – Paul Hahn

The Chapter MWI Committee and its volunteers were again active at the Lodges. Over the course of the year, ending in October, there were six trail work trips. These trips worked on the Club's 130 miles of trails in the MWI. Establishing boundary lines and stacking firewood took place as well as extensive trail maintenance. Club volunteers also peeled the logs that were used to build the Horse Shoe Pond Shelter, which was completed using a professional crew. Volunteers had the opportunity during these work efforts to interact with Club staff. The Committee did not hold any meetings this year due to COVID and the ability to function electronically. The Club MWI Committee, at this time, also has not held meetings in 2021. The Chair reports continued outstanding support by Chapter trip leaders and volunteers, in support of the success of MWI.

### Conservation Policy Updates October 2021

The last year has been busy and productive for conservation policy. Highlights include:

Lawmakers appropriated \$40 million to the Land for Maine's Future program, to be spent over the next 4 years. LMF has not had an infusion of funds in nearly a decade.

Lawmakers allocated \$50 from the American Rescue Plan to invest in much-needed renovations and repairs at Maine's 48 state parks and historic sites.

AMC continued to oppose the NECEC power corridor throughout the year. Most recently, after studying the matter of retroactivity, we endorsed Question #1 on the November 2 ballot. We have consistently opposed the lease of public lands for the project without legislative approval, which violates Maine's constitution. In a lawsuit over the lease, a Superior Court judge ruled that the state did not follow the proper process; that ruling has been appealed to the state Supreme Court. Meanwhile, Carey Kish and staff scientist and Assistant Director of Research Dave Publicover testified in the lawsuit against the Army Corps of Engineers for issuing a permit without conducting a full Environmental Impact Statement, as they did for parallel projects in New Hampshire and Vermont.

AMC has joined the effort to ensure that three federally recognized Indian tribes in Maine, the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Penobscot Nation, and the Houlton Band of Maliseets, enjoy the same "rights, privileges, powers, duties and immunities" as all 574 other federally-recognized tribes in the United States. Legislation to implement the recommendations of a bipartisan task force on the issue will be taken up in the 2022 session. The current legal status of the tribes dates to the 1980 land claims settlement. The Aroostook Band of Mic Macs reached a



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settlement with the state that was never ratified, and therefore are not covered by the legislation.

The legislature took action on a raft of bills to address climate change: a phase-down of hydrofluorocarbons, a powerful greenhouse gas; promoting electric vehicles; increasing broadband internet access; addressing sea level rise; promoting healthy soils, which store carbon; encouraging renewable power generation through net energy billing; funding clean energy production; and requiring the Public Utilities Commission to consider climate impacts in its decisions. It's clear that there's more work to do on addressing transportation, one of the largest drivers of carbon pollution in Maine.

AMC Director of Conservation Land Management Steve Tatko was named to the board of the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund, which funds wildlife and conservation projects from the sale of dedicated lottery tickets.

The Land Use Planning Commission is undertaking a new planning process for the Moosehead lake area. The result is that lands previously designated for development by Plum Creek may be rezoned. We provided comments, urging the LUPC to recognize the many pressures on the region. They will publish a draft plan for public comment in midwinter. Down East has a good article on it: <https://downeast.com/our-towns/whats-next-for-moosehead/>

Eliza Townsend  
AMC Maine Policy Director

### 2021 Report to the Maine Chapter from AMC's Northern Regional Director

As we close out the 2021 program year, I'm pleased to update the Maine Chapter membership on AMC-wide actions and progress, especially AMC's re-focus on its AMC150 objectives, our continuing response to COVID-19, and the upcoming AMC Annual Summit.

Refocused AMC150 Objectives to Meet the AMC Mission. As we get closer to 2026 and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of AMC's founding, the AMC Board of Directors confirmed their support for the AMC mission, which remains unchanged:

"To foster the protection, enjoyment and understanding of the outdoors, where we envision a world where being outdoors is an integral part of people's lives, and where our natural resources are healthy, loved, and protected."

To achieve that mission, the AMC Leadership Team supported and the Board voted to refocus our work toward a three-year primary objective:





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“Facilitate and expand equitable access to and engagement with the outdoors for all people. Our existence and mission success rests on our ability to actively ensure that all people have access to our services and benefit from our mission impact.”

Thus, over the next three years, the Board, the Regional Directors, staff, and chapter leadership across AMC will work to implement that objective throughout the organization and all chapters including the New Hampshire Chapter.

Effects of COVID-19 and Our Continuing Response. As might be imagined, the Board, staff, and volunteers have continued to be responsive to the changing vagaries of Covid-19, working to develop and update guidelines to keep the membership, employees, volunteers, and trip participants safe. Even as I write this, our guidelines are again under review, so I do not include specifics. Be assured, however, that our leaders and volunteers will have the most up-to-date information and guidance and will only offer activities when circumstances and conditions warrant.

As I expect you know, Covid-19 also impacted our organization’s budget for both 2020 and 2021, primarily because we closed the high-country huts and lodges for the 2020 season and reduced their capacity for 2021. Thus, our income was severely reduced. Our CEO, CFO, and the AMC Leadership Team have worked hard to cut expenses in both years far beyond the initial response of cutting staff in the affected areas. Despite these efforts, we operated at a loss for 2020 and, although the year is not yet over, perhaps will again in 2021. Our overall financial outlook remains strong, however, helped by a robust financial market and a strong endowment. We look forward to a more financially normal year in 2022.

AMC’s 2022 Annual Summit. Responding to the current uncertainty still surrounding indoor events, AMC’s Annual Summit in January 2022 will again be virtual. As disappointing as that is, last year’s virtual event drew far more people than previous indoor Summits and the upcoming Summit is likely to again have stellar attendance.

The day will be chock full of the usual events: outdoor skill workshops, educational sessions, AMC property updates, volunteer service awards, and reports from the BOD including the 2021 year-end financial report. All of this is happening in your living room on January 22, 2022. Look for registration information coming up on outdoors.org.

New Regional Director. Finally, 2021 marks my sixth year on AMC’s Board of Directors, and it is time to step down and pass the reins to a new Regional Director. And I’m super pleased the new RD is Beth Zimmer, longtime New Hampshire Chapter member, leader, and volunteer. She is a winter hiking instructor, excursions leader, adventure travel leader, and recipient of the AMC Volunteer Recognition Award. Underneath all that, she is smart, kind, energetic, and positive. I know she will be an outstanding member of the Board of Directors and will work very well with the Maine Chapter.

My best wishes to the Maine Chapter Executive Committee, ably guided by Chapter Chair Bill Brooke and Vice Chair Jerry King, as they care for the chapter, its members, and the Maine



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woods and assemble an excellent series of hiking, biking, paddling, skiing, and trail work experiences for us all to enjoy!

Happy trails to all,

John Mullens  
Regional Director, North  
AMC Board of Directors