



MAINE

Maine Chapter
Appalachian Mountain Club
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WILDERNESS MATTERS

VOLUME XLVII • NUMBER 2 • SPRING 2022

Trail Work Opportunities Abound!



All trail work photos by Phil Coyne

Greetings Trail Enthusiasts! After two years of Covid detours, starts and stops, I'm excited to launch a full year of trail work opportunities. This will be another fun season of working the trails with others who love being out in the woods as much as I do. We will be fixing up trails in the usual places—Pleasant Mountain, Cutler Mountain, a section of the Appalachian Trail, and around the Maine lodges. We'll also be back at work at South Portland Land Trust properties.

For those thinking about joining us for trail work at the Maine lodges for the first time, you may be interested to know that the Maine Chapter sponsors these trail work trips. Volunteers receive a reduced room and board rate—\$130 for the long weekend. It's a great price, and it's lots of fun.

We are also offering two 2-hour introductory trail work sessions for those who would like to try their hand at trail work. These sessions will be held at South Portland Land Trust properties on Saturday, April 30 from 8:00-10:00 and 10:30-12:30. If you cannot make one of these sessions, fear not. Our trips require no previous trail work experience. We train all of our volunteers at the start of each trip.

Lastly, we need trail leaders! If you're interested, please reach out to me.

Regards,

Phil Coyne

Volunteer Trails Committee Chair, trails@amcmaine.org

Trail work trips planned so far:

South Portland Land Trust
Saturday, April 30

South Portland Land Trust
Sunday, May 1

Pleasant Mountain
Monday, May 2

AT section trip near Stratton
Saturday, May 7

Little Lyford Lodge
Friday, May 27–Monday, May 30

Cutler Mountain
Saturday, June 4

Gorman Chairback Lodge
Friday, June 24–Monday, June 27

Medawisla Lodge
Friday, June 24–Monday, June 27

Northern Forest Canoe Trail
August 5–7

Cutler Mountain
Saturday, August 27

Pleasant Mountain
Sunday, August 28

South Portland Land Trust
Saturday, October 22

Visit the calendar section of our website (www.amcmaine.org) to learn more about these trips and to register.



5 Tips for Spring Hiking *By Tom O'Brien*

Spring is a great time to hike, but it's important to remember that trails are particularly vulnerable early in the season. As the weather warms up, there are a few things we can do to help keep our trails and natural resources in great shape. Here are a few tips to remember for your next adventure.

1 Check trail conditions. If you are planning a trip to a popular area, be sure to check with a local land manager or on www.newenglandtrailconditions.com for the trail conditions. Is it icy? Muddy? Do you need shoes/boots that have good traction? Safety is always the priority, so choose the option that keeps you safe, but also allows you to minimize your impact.

2 Walk in the middle of the trail. Walking around patches of mud and ice damages sensitive trailside vegetation and contributes to trail widening; both factors can lead to increased run-off and erosion. Wearing appropriate footwear like waterproof shoes/boots and gaiters allows us to travel directly through mud and wet areas without risking wet feet.

3 Use caution at water crossings. The small stream you rock-hopped across in the fall can become dangerously high and fast-moving in the spring. If you are hiking after a rainstorm (or in the rain), a stream that is crossable in the morning can become

impassable by the afternoon. Pay attention to the weather during the week leading up to your hike, gather intel about water levels when you check on the trail conditions, and use good judgment when you encounter a water crossing. If possible, choose to explore trails without unbridged stream crossings in early spring.

4 Keep wildlife wild. Many animals are undernourished from a long winter and are desperately looking to replenish their fat stores. Extra care should be taken to make yourself aware of wildlife closures so as not to encroach. It's also important to never feed wildlife. This also means packing out all food scraps – even crumbs, peels, and cores.

5 Use leashes and pet waste bags. Keeping your canine friend on a leash will help ensure the safety of your pet and other visitors, as well as the delicate emerging vegetation along the trail. Using pet waste disposal bags helps us keep our trails and watersheds healthy.

Wilderness Matters

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Address corrections: Send to AMC Member Services, 10 City Square, Boston, MA 02129 | (617) 523-0655 | amcmembership@outdoors.org

Newsletter submissions and photographs: Send to Sarah Hunter, Editor, at newsletter@amcmaine.org.

Deadline for submissions to Wilderness Matters (Summer Issue) is June 1, 2022.

Submission info: Wilderness Matters is your chapter newsletter. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to contribute, be it stories, news, opinions, photos, or whatnot. We want to hear from you! Please email submissions to newsletter@amcmaine.org.

Submission guidelines: Articles, opinions, stories and should be limited to 400- 500 words maximum (word counts greater than that may be edited or may not be accepted) in an attached Word or similar document that is clearly labeled. Images should include a photo title, captions and any other identifying info plus proper photo credit. Use of Dropbox to send images would be great too. Thank you!

Maine Chapter Executive Committee

Chapter Chair: Bill Brooke, chair@amcmaine.org (207) 549-5100

Chapter Vice-Chair: Jerry King, vicechair@amcmaine.org

Secretary: Jeanine Libby, secretary@amcmaine.org

Treasurer: Malcolm Persen, treasurer@amcmaine.org

Past Chapter Chair: Cindy Caverly, pastchair@amcmaine.org,

Conservation Chair: Brian McLeod, conservation@amcmaine.org

Leadership Development: Tom O'Brien, MEadvocate@Int.org

Programs Chair: AVAILABLE

Membership Chair: Karen Brace, membership@amcmaine.org

Maine Woods Initiative: Paul Hahn, mwi@amcmaine.org

Newsletter Editor: Sarah Hunter, newsletter@amcmaine.org

Nominating Chair: Paul Hahn, nominating@amcmaine.org, (207) 222-2837

Outings Chair: AVAILABLE

Trails Chair: Phil Coyne, trails@amcmaine.org

Communications: AVAILABLE

Young Members Chair: Steven

Profaizer, youngmembers@amcmaine.org

Other Contacts

Maine Conservation Policy Director:

Eliza Townsend, etownsend@outdoors.org, (207) 699-9815

Regional Director:

Beth Zimmer, rd@amcmaine.org

Maine Woods Initiative Office

127 Moosehead Lake Rd., Greenville, ME 04441 (207) 695-3085

AMC Headquarters

10 City Square, Boston, MA 02129 (617) 523-0655

Message from the Chair: More Trips and Activities *By Bill Brooke*

We have seen a significant increase in trips this winter compared to last winter. Our Maine Chapter volunteer leaders led 14 trips from December through February, compared with only 6 trips during that same time period last year.

After a lapse of two years, leader training and Wilderness First Aid are both scheduled this year for March and April. The leader training program will feature four virtual sessions and a one-day in-person session. Several trainers from other AMC Chapters are assisting us with this training.

The Trails Committee had a busy year last year and has already planned 11 trips for this year.

Overall we expect to see more trips and activities for members in 2022 as COVID and COVID restrictions are easing.

If you would like to help by volunteering on a committee or as a committee chair, or by letting us know how we are doing, please contact me at chair@amcmaine.org.

Welcome Spring: Opportunities to Contribute to Community Science

On daily bike rides through my rural community this time of year I encounter one of my very favorite sounds—the lively chatter of spring peepers. It takes a long time for spring to take root in Maine, and when it finally does, a remarkable chorus rings through the wetlands. There are many other harbingers of spring, of course. Whether you watch for trillium or robins, alewives or ursa major, your observations can contribute to community science programs. Here are a few ways to get involved:



Photograph Flowers and Fruit on your Hike with iNaturalist

Building on our long-term Mountain Watch plant monitoring efforts across the Northeast mountains, AMC is using the **iNaturalist** app to document the timing of flowering

and fruiting along mountain trails. All you need is a mobile device with a camera—it even works when you don't have reception. Observations are needed every spring, summer, and fall to build out relationships between plant activity timing and each year's weather conditions. Visit www.inaturalist.org to learn more. Search for "AMC" on the **iNaturalist** projects page and join us today.

Globe at Night What does your starscape look like? You can participate in **Globe at Night** wherever you are and measure and submit night sky brightness observations. Learn more at www.globeatnight.org. And later in this issue, read about how AMC's Maine Woods and nearby Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument earned the designation as an International Dark Sky Sanctuary in 2020.

Nequasset Alewife Count Springtime is when the alewives migrate to Nequasset Lake to spawn. You can volunteer to count fish as they make their way up the ladder.. Learn more at www.kennebecestuary.org.

UMaine Extension Program: Signs of Spring Join volunteers across Maine to record the growth of milkweed, the nesting of robins, and more. Learn about trainings and volunteer opportunities at extension.umaine.edu/signs-of-the-seasons.



eBird Share your unique knowledge and experience, keep track of your bird lists, photos, and sounds with eBird, a global community science project. Learn more at www.ebird.org.

Find us on 

www.facebook.com/MaineAMC/

Changing of the Guard: Goodbye John, Welcome Beth



Farewell From the Departing Regional Director

Six years ago this month, I became AMC Regional Director-North to work with the Maine and New Hampshire Chapters, taking over for Sam Jamke. This year, this month, the transition happens again as I say farewell and hand the reins to Beth Zimmer. Although I feared differently at the beginning of my tenure, those six years have flown by in a flurry of meetings and decisions; working with the AMC leadership, staff, and many volunteers; helping Chapters grow and develop to meet the changing realities of AMC membership; and, of course, navigating the Covid challenges.

Certainly, the biggest impact on our Board of Directors work over that timeframe was helping AMC and the Chapters respond and adapt to the changing requirements of Covid. From fiscal concerns with the loss of income from the closed huts and lodges, to the changing requirements of Covid-era Chapter-level activities, to thoughtfully trimming AMC employees, the Board and staff spent countless hours adjusting to the new realities to keep the organization and its Chapters strong.

Perhaps the greatest personal learning during these six years has been directly observing the quality, sincerity, and intellect represented in AMC's volunteer Board. While there were certainly disagreements and heartfelt discussions, it was always clear that everyone wanted the best for the organization. To that end, Board members brought an amazing range of personal expertise to our deliberations and decision making.

The overriding perspective of those years, however, was the responsibility and opportunity to provide the organization-wide lens to individual Chapter decision making. Working with the Maine Chapter leadership and Executive Committee in that process underscored the rich quality of active volunteers within the Chapter. Their enthusiastic, positive, and willing approaches to guide Chapter direction and activities is contagious and holds great promise for the Chapter's future vitality and growth.

Thanks to the Chapter Chairs during these six years—Doug Chamberlin, Kathleen Redmond-Miller, Cindy Caverly, and Bill Brooke—for their leadership in keeping the Chapter vibrant. I look forward to hearing more great things about the Maine Chapter.

Hope to see you on the trails!

John Mullens
Regional Director-North (Retired!)

Beth Zimmer, Incoming Regional Director-North

As your new Regional Director-North, let me both introduce myself and perhaps try to answer a question I am often asked: "What is a Regional Director?"

I have been a four-season hike leader and instructor on the New Hampshire Chapter's Excursions (Hiking) Committee since 2012. In this role, I have led well over a hundred activities that ranged from hiking and backpacking trips to map and compass and navigation workshops.

I served for three years as Secretary for the NH Executive Committee, followed by four years as Co-Chair for the NH Excursions Committee. During this time, I was honored to receive the AMC Volunteer Leadership Award. As I neared retirement from my job as a middle school guidance counselor, I was invited to be a leader at August Camp. And in 2018, I trained to become an Adventure Travel Leader. This new role has allowed me to share my love of the outdoors and hiking while leading domestic and international travel.

I now embark on a new volunteer journey, serving as AMC's Regional Director - North (New Hampshire and Maine). Regional Directors (RDs) are members of the AMC Board of Directors and serve as a bridge between the Chapters and the larger AMC organization. RDs attend Board meetings, Chapter Chair meetings, and many more - always trying to help bring an organizational perspective back to the Chapters and volunteers, and just as important, to bring the volunteer and Chapter perspective back to the larger AMC Board of Directors and staff.

Beyond budgets, finance and facilities, there is much work to do. Supporting DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion), continuing our conservation efforts, and supporting club-wide leader development are just a few.

John Mullens, my predecessor, has left me with big shoes to fill. During his six years as RD he touched the souls of many. I want to thank John sincerely for his six years of tireless work and dedication as RD North - and for setting such a positive example for me to follow!

Beth Zimmer
Regional Director-North

SPRING CALENDAR: OUTINGS | EVENTS | MEETINGS

These listings—presented in date order by category—include only those posted online prior to the submission deadline for this issue of Wilderness Matters. For the most complete and accurate information and up-to-date listings—and so you don't miss spontaneous outings—please periodically check the calendar online at www.amcmaine.org/calendar.

Please note: there is a new registration process in place. When you click on the registration button, you will need to log in with your email and AMC password to be able to register. If you don't have an AMC account, you will have to create one to complete the registration form which initiates the registration process. You do not have to become a member of AMC but you do have to have an account. The form you fill out is then emailed to you and the leader receives a copy as well. The leader will follow up with an email to you by email or phone.

For general questions or comments regarding these calendar listings, please contact the Outings Chair at outings@amcmaine.org.

All participants must present a copy or image of their vaccination record for COVID 19 or proof that they have received a negative PCR test within 72 hours of all in-person events. Participants are required to bring a mask to wear during any emergency or any situation that requires people to be within close proximity for an extended period of time.

Please be courteous when contacting trip leaders by doing so before 9:00 p.m. unless otherwise specified. Thanks!

BIKING

April 30-May 1: White Mountain Bikepacking Trip. Gorham, NH. <http://www.amcmaine.org/calendar/#137078>. Grab your shoulder-season camping gear and your bike and join us for a scenic 60-mile bikepacking loop that connects the (flat) Presidential Rail Trail, a bit of pavement with wide shoulders, and two (very hilly!) seasonal gravel roads (Old Cherry Road and Jefferson Notch Road) around the foothills of the Northern Presidential Range. This overnight route is great for all levels of bikepacking experience. If you appreciate the challenge of a good hill (total ascent 4,171 feet) and you enjoy strapping overnight gear onto your bike - or want to try it for the first time - join us! Leader: Sarah Hunter, raisinghunters@gmail.com Co-Leader: Gil Moreno.



HIKING

April 9: Puzzle Mountain. Grafton Loop Trailhead, Newry, ME. <http://www.amcmaine.org/calendar/#138105>. Puzzle Mountain is a moderate, 6.4-mile RT hike. The trail crosses over several exposed ledges with spectacular views of Sunday River ski area, Grafton Notch, and the Presidential Range. Leader: Susan Surabian, 207-431-7548 before 9 p.m., suebeau1@gmail.com

June 11: Alpine Garden Hike. Mount Washington, NH. <http://www.amcmaine.org/calendar/#138142>. Experience the beauty of the Alpine Garden! We will drive up the Mt Washington Auto Road to the Cow Pasture parking area. We will then hike down the Huntington Ravine Trail to the Alpine Garden Trail. While hiking the Alpine Garden Trail to the Lion Head Trail, we will spend time looking at and identifying the flowers and plants of the Alpine Garden. This moderate, slow-paced, 2.4-mile round-trip hike is limited to 7 participants. Leader: Peg Nation, 207-583-2720 (best time to call: before p.m.), mjnation11@earthlink.net. Co-Leader: Stephen Brezinski 207-353-9854 (best time to call: Before 9 p.m.), sbrez1@comcast.net.

INSTRUCTION

April 23: Wilderness First Aid (WFA). Maine Audubon, Falmouth, ME <http://www.amcmaine.org/calendar/#137237>. Basic Wilderness First Aid (WFA) skills are needed when you are more than one hour from medical care. This training goes way beyond standard Red Cross first aid. Learn to assess and treat injuries in backcountry situations using the resources you have available. The class includes patient assessment of a variety of situations, including disabling injuries, hypothermia and other environmental hazards, fractures, sprains and more. CPR is an additional option and additional fee for this course. This course is two full days, and will be taught at Maine Audubon in Falmouth, Maine through Wilderness Medicine Associates, a three-year certification. The fees cover instruction and materials, and do not include lodging or meals. The course costs \$250 for AMC members, and \$299 for all others. This course fills quickly. Contact Kim Sanders with any questions, 207-712-0862, kimberlyannsanders@gmail.com.

TRAIL WORK

April 30: Basic Trail Care Skill-Building - South Portland Trail Days. South Portland, ME. <http://www.amcmaine.org/calendar/#138081>. Under the guidance of a trained AMC volunteer trail crew leader, learn basic trail care such as pruning, raking, removing invasive species and working with trail surface materials. All participants must register in advance. Two 2-hour sessions will be offered: 8:00-10:00 am and 10:30 to 12:30 am. Join us for one session, or both. Please arrive 10 minutes early so we can start on time. Leader: Phil Coyne, trails@amcmaine.org.

May 1: Trail Work at South Portland Land Trust. South Portland, ME. <http://www.amcmaine.org/calendar/#138083>. Maine Chapter trail work trip at South Portland Land Trust. Type of work: easy maintenance, trimming vegetation, cleaning water bars, removing rocks, etc. We can supply tools, but if you have your own please bring your own. Please also bring your own trail work gloves, water, and snacks. Wear appropriate clothing (long pants/long sleeve shirt, boots, hat), sunscreen, bug spray, etc. Leader: Phil Coyne, Trails@amcmaine.org.

May 2: Trail Maintenance at Pleasant Mountain. Bridgton, ME <http://www.amcmaine.org/calendar/#138084>. Trail Maintenance at Pleasant Mountain, Bridgton Maine. Type of work: easy maintenance, trimming vegetation, cleaning water bars, remove rocks, etc. We can supply tools, but if you have your own please bring your own. Please also bring your own trail work gloves, water, and snacks. Wear appropriate clothing (long pants/long sleeve shirt, boots, hat), sunscreen, bug spray, etc. Leader: Phil Coyne, trails@amcmaine.org.

May 27-30: Memorial Day 2022 Trail work at Little Lyford Pond Lodge and Cabins. Little Lyford Pond, ME. <http://www.amcmaine.org/calendar/#137756>. Join us for a fun Memorial Day weekend of trail work in Maine's beautiful 100-Mile Wilderness. We will remove blowdowns, prune brush, clear drainages, and enjoy the scenery and great food at Little Lyford Lodge. We will stay in the bunkhouse. Pre-registration is required, along with a lodging reservation. Trail work scholarships are available. Leader: Robert Pantel, 207-841-3469 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., robert.pantel@gmail.com.

June 4: Celebrate National Trails Day with Trail Work at Cutler Mountain. Hiram, ME. <http://www.amcmaine.org/calendar/#138089>. Celebrate National Trails Day and join the Maine Chapter for a spring cleanup trail work trip on Cutler Mountain. We will hike approximately 3.0-3.5 miles round-trip while working along the way. Type of work: easy maintenance, trimming vegetation, cleaning water bars, remove rocks and branches, etc. We will supply tools, but if you have your own, please bring your own. Please also bring your own trail work gloves, water, and lunch/snacks. Wear appropriate clothing (long pants/long sleeve shirt, boots, hat), sunscreen, bug spray, etc. Leader: Phil Coyne, trails@amcmaine.org. Co-Leader: Patsy Leavitt.

June 24-27: Maine Woods Trail Work near Gorman Chairback Lodge. Gorman Chairback, ME <http://www.amcmaine.org/calendar/#137558>. Trail work trip at Gorman Chairback Lodge and Cabins. We will remove blowdowns, prune brush, and clear drainages for the prime hiking season. Contact Leader for details. (reference Group Trip #593168). Leader: David McCarthy, 207-363-2791 before 9:00 pm, drmccarthy@aol.com.

June 24-27: Trail Work at Medawisla Lodge. Medawisla Lodge, ME <http://www.amcmaine.org/calendar/#137564>. Join us for a fun weekend of trail work next to Maine's beautiful 100-Mile Wilderness. We will remove blowdowns, prune brush, clear drainages, and enjoy the scenery and great food at Medawisla Lodge. Contact Leader for details (Reservation # 594337). Leader: Phil Coyne, trails@amcmaine.org.

August 27: Painting Party on Cutler Mountain. Hiram, ME <http://www.amcmaine.org/calendar/#138090>. Join the Maine Chapter for a painting party and light trail work trip on Cutler Mountain. We will hike approximately 2-3 miles round-trip while working along the way. NOTE: This trail is steep and strenuous; we will hike slow while we work our way up and no one will be left behind. Type of work: blaze painting and some easy maintenance (trimming vegetation, cleaning water bars, remove rocks and branches, etc.) Maine Chapter will supply tools, wire brushes, paintbrushes, and paint. If you have your own tools and supplies, please bring them. Please bring your own trail work gloves, water, and lunch/snacks. Please wear appropriate clothing, keeping in mind that you will likely "wear" some paint home (long pants/long sleeve shirt, boots, hat), sunscreen, bug spray, etc. Leader: Phil Coyne, trails@amcmaine.org. Co-Leader: Patsy Leavitt.

August 28: Trail Maintenance at Pleasant Mountain. Bridgton, ME <http://www.amcmaine.org/calendar/#138085>. Trail Maintenance at Pleasant Mountain, Bridgton Maine. Type of work: easy maintenance, trimming vegetation, cleaning water bars, remove rocks, etc. We can supply tools, but if you have your own please bring your own. Please bring your own trail work gloves, water, and snacks. Wear appropriate clothing (long pants/long sleeve shirt, boots, hat), sunscreen, bug spray, etc. Leader: Phil Coyne, trails@amcmaine.org.

October 7: Trail and Boundary Work - Medawisla Lodge and Cabins. Shawtown TWP, ME <http://www.amcmaine.org/calendar/#137596>. With hundreds of miles of property lines and trails, the AMC in Maine has lots of volunteer work opportunities. We will stay in the bunkhouses at Medawisla Lodge and Cabins for this trip. There will be the usual variety of jobs to choose from, including trail work, boundary work, and work around the lodge and cabins. Come join the fun during peak foliage season. Difficulty: Moderate-Strenuous. Leader: Peter Roderick, 207-441-5521 before 9 p.m., roderick1027@gmail.com. Co-Leader: Josh Barlow 207-873-4205 before 9 p.m., joshcbarlow@gmail.com.

Become an AMC Trip Leader!

Become a Volunteer AMC Maine Chapter Leader for one or more of these activities:

HIKING
 BACKPACKING
 BIKING
 PADDLING
 SNOWSHOEING
 XC SKIING

You can start the process of becoming a leader anytime of the year and you choose how little or how much you want to do. The AMC provides leadership training and Wilderness First Aid Certification to active leaders. Find out how you can get involved!

Contact us at: outings@amcmaine.org for more info!

This could be you!

Photo by Steph Krzyzewski

THE BICYCLE COALITION OF MAINE INVITES YOU TO HELP SHAPE MAINE'S BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FUTURE



For the first time ever, Maine is creating a [Statewide Active Transportation Plan \(SATP\)](#). This is an exciting opportunity to shape Maine's bicycle and pedestrian future. You are invited to learn more about the SATP and how you can get involved. The Bicycle Coalition of Maine has been hosting webinars about how the SATP fits into the MaineDOT's "family" of long-range plans, what is included in it, and how the public can provide input. The next public forums will be held on April 6, May 4, and June 7. Visit www.bikemaine.org to learn more and to register.

The Dark Sky: A Natural Treasure *By Karen Brace*

In early February of this year, a group of AMC volunteers ventured to Medawisla Lodge in the North Woods for a Maine Chapter meeting. It was the first time that our executive committee had gathered in person in over a year; we, like everyone, had resorted to Zoom for our communications. Many of the newer volunteers were meeting each other for the first time.

We arrived, settled in, and participated in the first segment of the planning session. After a delicious lodge dinner, our Chapter Chair extended an invitation: "Who wants to ski?"

Nighttime had fallen. It was cold and dark, but we came prepared. We suited up in warm clothes, grabbed our headlamps, clipped into our cross-country skis, and set off on a path toward a nearby frozen pond. In single file, surrounded by the stillness of the night, we made fresh tracks through deep snow, allowing the powder to cover our skis.

When we reached the middle of the broad pond, we turned off our headlamps and looked up at the stars, the silhouettes of the mountains, and the bright moon that illuminated the endless forests of the North Woods.

There is no ambient light to interrupt the darkness that stretches over AMC's 100,000 acres in this part of Maine. As one might imagine, the stars that pop out against the pitch-black backdrop are countless. They were indeed a sight to behold that February night.

The treasure of the night sky above these forested acres will be protected into perpetuity, thanks to the work of AMC staff. The Maine Woods International Dark Sky Park, the only dark sky park in New England, received its official designation in May 2021. While much effort went into procuring this designation, the work to sustain this great resource is ongoing.

Dr. Doug Arion, the founder of [Mountains of Stars](#), encouraged AMC to pursue the Dark Sky place designation through the [International Dark Sky Association](#) (IDA). Jenny Ward, Outreach and Partnerships Manager for AMC's Maine Woods Initiative, took the idea and ran with it. It took a year to establish the Dark Sky Park designation, which requires that all lighting in the area meet specifications to minimize light pollution. Community partnerships, educational outreach, and language about dark sky protection in the organization's land management documents were all additional requirements of the IDA designation.

The wide dark sky park periphery extending outward from AMC's core property includes Greenville, so in 2019, as the idea for the project developed, Jenny went to visit the new town manager to explore possible community partnerships. At the time, the contract with the town's power delivery company was up for renewal. The timing was perfect. As part of the contract renewal, the electric provider replaced all the streetlights in Greenville with fully shielded (pointing downward) fixtures and LED bulbs that cast warm, soft light (less than 3000 Kelvins). Savings to the town in electricity costs amounted to

around \$12,000 annually. The project was a win-win.

Greenville's school gymnasium was determined to be one of the greatest light infractors. A grant has enabled the purchase of new lights for the gym, and they will be installed later this spring. North Maine Woods Association gatehouses on the woods roads near Little Lyford and Gorman Chairback Lodges also needed

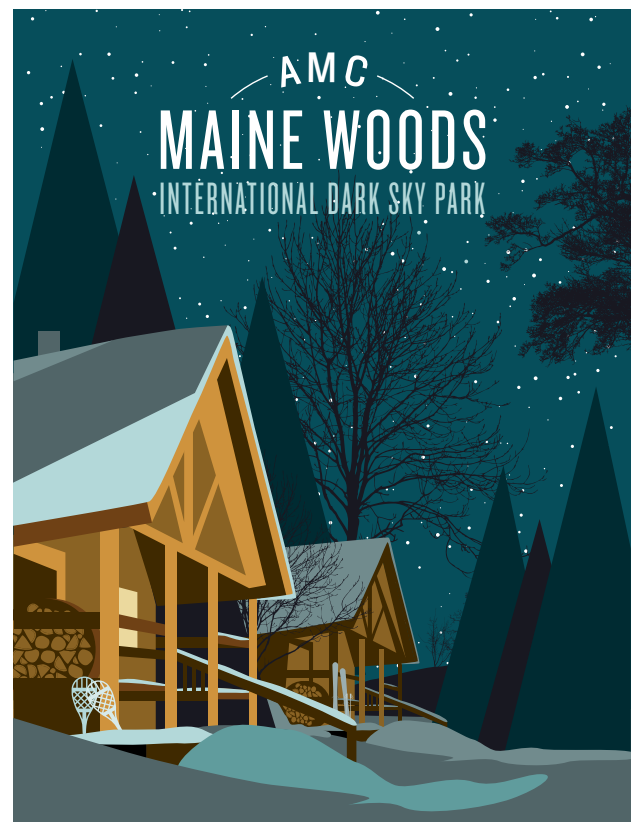
updating. Working with the North Maine Woods Association, AMC helped secure external funding for those lights.

Area businesses have climbed on board, replacing lights that had previously been too bright and misdirected. The new hospital in Greenville will feature compliant lighting. Jenny sits on the town planning board which is in the process of amending ordinances to ensure compliance with all new lighting. Educational programming is underway through the AMC's Piscataquis County Education program and a partnership with Mountains of Stars.

Steve Tatko, Director of Maine Conservation and Land Management, spoke at a Dark Sky Park celebration last fall: "It is my wish for each of you to come and to stand on one of the banks of these many rivers in this unbroken forest and to have the chance to be humbled by the sky that you see above you. I truly can't think of any better way to know a place and its past while carrying on a sense of hope for the future, our future, when under that blanket of sky."

The seven members of AMC's Maine Chapter who gathered at Medawisla in February were indeed humbled, standing on our skis in the middle of the frozen pond under that blanket of sky. We saw firsthand how the natural resource of the dark sky is worth protecting.

Jenny Ward is now collaborating with local volunteers to plan a Regional Dark Sky Festival for October 2022, in conjunction with [Destination Moosehead Lake](#). The event is planned around the new moon, so the wonders of the dark sky can be appreciated by all. The next issue of *Wilderness Matters* will contain more information on this Dark Sky Festival.



Volunteer Opportunities *Your Maine Chapter Needs You!*

The Maine Chapter can only be successful through the volunteer efforts of its membership. Please consider taking that first step to express an interest or ask a question about one of the positions. Inquiries can be addressed to Paul Hahn, Chair of the Nomination Committee at nominating@amcmaine.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Vice Chair The Chapter Vice Chair supports the Chapter Chair in leading the Chapter Executive Committee and participates in AMC Board of Directors Chapters Committee meetings (non-voting). They represent the organization at the local level and are an essential link between the AMC staff, the Board, and the local Chapter members and volunteers.

Communications Committee Chair The Communications Chair is responsible for managing all aspects of the Chapter's social media,

email, and printed communications. They work closely with AMC staff to ensure all Chapter communications are following current guidelines and best practices.

Programs Committee Chair The Program Chair helps deepen member engagement with Chapter activities at the local level. They organize educational and informative programs of interest to Chapter members and help coordinate Chapter events.

Outings Committee Chair The Outings Committee Chair works with Chapter volunteer trip leaders to plan chapter trips, provide support for existing leaders, recruit and develop new trip leaders, and with the Leadership Development Committee to plan and support leader training and Wilderness First Aid courses.

AMC Maine Policy Updates

By Eliza Townsend, Maine Conservation Policy Director

As the newsletter goes to print, we are in the midst of the second legislative session. Ordinarily the “short session” is dedicated to issues of an emergency nature, but this year it’s tackling more than a few substantial issues. The House and Senate are once again meeting at the State House, while committees continue to consider bills remotely, a system that has opened the opportunity for people across the state to participate.

Two good bills are moving forward with relatively little opposition. LD 736 expands the number of acres of public lands that can be set aside as ecological reserves, protecting biodiversity at a time when more than a million species worldwide face extinction. LD 1964 upgrades water quality protections for 800 miles of Maine’s rivers and streams, including such iconic places as the East Branch of the Penobscot above Ambajesus Lake, tributaries of the Seboeis within the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, Orbeton Stream and the Sandy River, Nahmakanta Stream and the Little Narraguagus.

A strong majority of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources voted to close a loophole that allows out-of-state construction debris to be shipped to Maine for processing before ultimately ending up in the Juniper Ridge landfill in Alton. Leachate from the landfill is polluting the Penobscot River with carcinogens and neurotoxins.

Water quality is also at stake with LD 906, which seeks to solve the problem of foul, discolored water that the Passamaquoddy Water District treats with trihalomethanes, which are carcinogenic in large quantities. This is one of three bills AMC supports that are of great importance to the Wabanaki people. LD 1907 would form a commission to identify state lands and waters of significance to the Wabanaki and explore strategies to improve their access to and relationship with the lands and waters that shape their identity.

LD 1626 establishes that the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Penobscot Nation, and the Houlton Band of Maliseets enjoy the same “rights, privileges, powers, duties and immunities” as all 570 other federally recognized tribes in the United States. The 1980 land claims settlement gave the tribes status similar to a municipality and has meant that they have been unable to take advantage of 151 federal laws passed in the last 42 years. The 1980 settlement also created a process for the tribes to expand their land holdings in Maine by buying from willing sellers and set aside federal funds for that purpose, but the tribes have not acquired the agreed-upon acreage. This bill removes two critical obstacles: a) time limits on the tribes’ acquisition of trust land and b) the ability of both the state and local governments to veto potential acquisitions. The Wabanaki make clear that their identity and culture is inseparable from the lands and waters that have sustained them for 10,000 years. We are confident that they can steward those resources as well as the State of Maine has done.

One of the major issues dominating the session is the discussion of what to do with Maine’s revenue surplus. AMC strongly supports adequate funding and staffing for the agencies that steward our natural resources and most special places. We must move swiftly to slow climate change and address its impacts as well as meet the unprecedented demand for outdoor recreation and respite. We must not lose the unique natural character of the Unorganized Territories, now facing extraordinary development pressure.

We also support a pilot project to make climate change education available to more Maine students, consistent with Maine’s Climate Action Plan. Since 2012 AMC has partnered with Piscataquis County schools to offer climate change education to about 200 students per year using an investigative approach and local data.

Moosehead Regional Plan

On that note, we anticipate that the Land Use Planning Commission will shortly return to the Moosehead Regional Planning Project, an opportunity to shape the future of a beautiful place that serves as a dividing line between the settled areas of the state and the vast forest to the north. AMC is fully engaged in the process and will keep you informed of opportunities for comment. Related, the commission has voted to hold a public hearing on plans to redevelop the ski area at Big Moose Mountain.

NECEC

The fate of the New England Clean Energy Connect power transmission corridor, which AMC has long opposed, remains unclear. Following the decisive vote by Mainers to stop the project, the Department of Environmental Protection suspended its permit and ordered that construction stop and sites be stabilized. Avangrid, Central Maine Power’s parent company, responded with a lawsuit against several state agencies and the legislature. Though a judge ruled against their argument, they appealed the ruling. Likewise, CMP has appealed the ruling that found that the lease to cross public lands was issued in violation of the process called for in Maine’s constitution. AMC is party to a third lawsuit challenging the permit issued by the Army Corps of Engineers, also being appealed. Finally, the Board of Environmental Protection has scheduled a hearing on the appeal of the DEP’s original permit for May.

Stay Connected

Maine’s forests, lands, and waters drive our economy. They absorb and hold carbon and support biodiversity. They are critical to our physical, social, and mental health. Our vast and largely undeveloped Unorganized Territories are unique. All are worth conserving. If you would like to raise your voice on the issues affecting them, sign up for our Conservation Action Network at <https://www.outdoors.org/conservation/action-center/>

AMC Maine Chapter Receives Conservation Award Donation from Kittery Trading Post

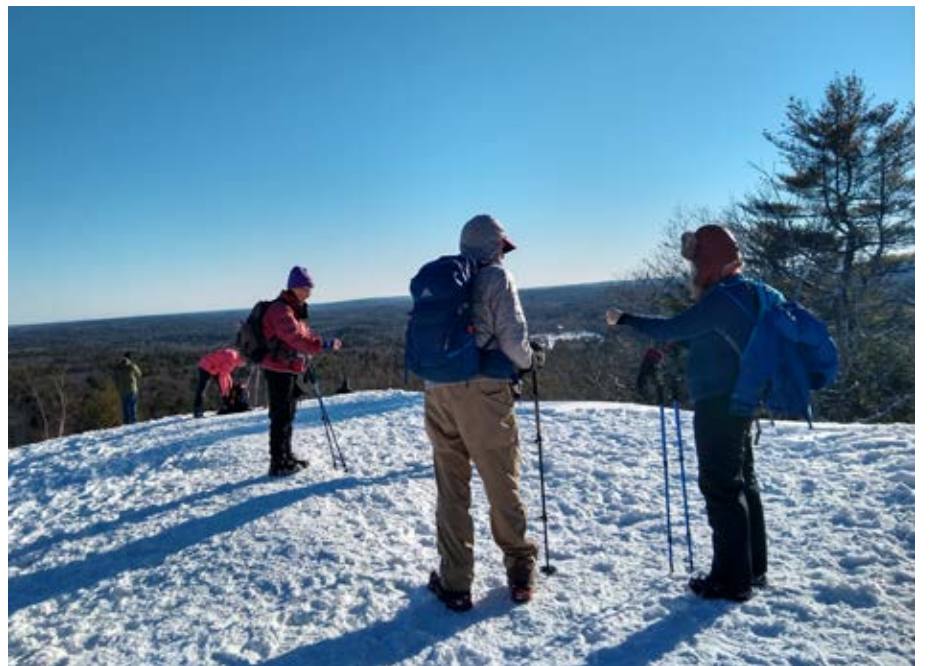


Another Great Winter Out on the Trails!



▲ **Camden Hills:** Eleven AMC hikers trekked across Camden Hills State Park on December 18, led by Steven Profaizer and Peter Roderick. The group began their 10-mile traverse of the park at Mount Battie in the south and then hiked over Mount Megunticook and Cameron Mountain on their way to Bald Rock Mountain at the northern edge of the park. Photo by Steven Profaizer

▼ **Ladies Lodge-to-Lodge Ski:** An adventurous group of women enjoyed a 3-day trip in Maine's 100-Mile Wilderness. The trails were beautiful, the food was delicious, and the huts were cozy. Photos by Sarah Hunter



▲ **Bradbury Mountain:** We rescheduled our Bradbury Mountain hike for beginners three times due to inclement conditions, but we finally got out there in January. There was not enough snow to try out snowshoes, but microspikes sure did come in handy as there was plenty of ice and hard packed trails. We always have a couple extra pairs on hand for our beginner winter hikers, and they were put to good use. In addition to the introduction to microspikes, participants learned how to stay comfortable on cold winter hikes. And the beauty of the winter woods was enjoyed by all. – Michelle Moody, Trip Leader