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Maine Appalachian Trail Club



The MAINEtainer

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Club offers Legislature wind power advice

By Tom Lewis, Chair, MATC Wind Committee

The Maine Appalachian Trail Club (MATC) is a volunteer run, nonprofit corporation organized in 1935 to assume responsibility for the management, maintenance and protection of approximately 270 miles of the Appalachian Trail (AT) in Maine – from Grafton Notch to Katahdin. The MATC is not a hiking or outing club. It exists solely for the protection and perpetuation of the AT, as a National Scenic Trail and the only hiking trail specifically recognized by the Maine Legislature as a “primitive trail” under the Maine Trails System.

Since 2006, MATC has intervened in licensing proceedings for two grid scale wind energy projects and has commented upon others. Where MATC has opposed such projects, it has done so in order to protect the scenic values of the AT and the experience of remoteness that the AT offers to hikers who come from across this country and beyond to travel through the beautiful mountainous areas of the State.

Since the 2008 enactment of the Maine Wind Energy Act, much has been learned about the impacts of grid scale wind power development on both the natural and human environments, in particular, the major impacts on the landscapes of rural Maine. MATC is not opposed to wind power *per se* but feels strongly that projects must be appropriately sited.

The Wind Energy Act set new rules for a new industry and ventured into previously unlegislated territory. With that type of legislation, it is simply good public policy to review it in light of experience gained. At the direction of the Legislature, the

State’s Office of Energy Independence and Security (OEIS) undertook such a review early in 2012 and produced the *Maine Wind Energy Development Assessment: Report and Recommendations – 2012*. Unfortunately, that Report was delivered to the Legislature late in the session and was not acted upon.

Using the OEIS Report as a starting point and expanding upon it, MATC is issuing the attached report on the Wind Energy Act and has prepared draft legislation to implement changes to the Act, which will address the inadequate attention to scenic landscapes of Maine’s mountains and lakes.

The recommended changes are not radical and will not stop wind power development in Maine. Most of the concepts are found in the OEIS report and some are already part of Maine’s environmental protection laws but not now applied to wind power projects.

Maine has become the center of wind energy production in New England. It is time to look at how the siting of wind projects has affected Maine’s scenic landscapes which are so much a part of the “Maine brand” and to recalibrate the Wind Energy Act to better balance wind power development with protection of Maine’s “quality of place.”

MATC’S REPORT ON THE MAINE WIND ENERGY ACT after Four Years of Experience with Recommendations for Changes to Achieve a More Balanced Public Policy

Introduction

Since enactment of the Wind Energy Act in 2008 (the “Act”), much has been learned about the impacts of grid scale wind power developments on both the natural and human environments. We have also been able to measure the actual contributions of wind power to the electric needs of the region; to better understand whether the wind power goals of the Act are realistic and desirable in light of their impacts; and to observe a changing market for the fuels which fire traditional electric generating plants. As with any new legislation that boldly ventures into what is largely unlegislated territory, experience naturally leads to adjustments designed to respond to the enhanced knowledge base. This is especially

so in the case of the Act; drafted by a special task force that worked largely without public participation and enacted in the closing days of the legislative session with less public attention than most legislation of comparable importance.

Many of the legislative changes proposed here echo the recommendations found in the *Maine Wind Energy Development Assessment: Report & Recommendations – 2012* that was prepared by the Governor’s Office of Energy Independence and Security pursuant to direction of the Maine Legislature. Given that it was delivered to the Legislature late in the 2012 session, no action was taken on the report. It will be referred to in the following as the

Continued on page 2

MATC's recommendations on the Wind Energy Act

Continued from page 1

"Wind Energy Assessment" or "WEA."

The Maine Experience

Since 2008, 11 grid scale wind power projects have come before the primary State permitting agencies, the Department of Environmental Protection and the Land Use Regulation Commission.¹ Of these, nine have been approved, one has been withdrawn and only one, Bowers Mountain, has been rejected.² Maine leads New England with seven wind power projects in operation that represent 190 turbines capable of producing 376 MW. There are three other projects that have been approved but have not yet come on line.

The overwhelming rate of approval for wind power projects does not mean that they have been without opposition. Many of the projects have encountered substantial resistance ranging from well established regional/state conservation organizations; to newer "grass roots" organizations with a wind power focus; to groups of individuals who live near the area where the proposed project will be located. These groups have engaged wind power developers in the administrative law process that we use in licensing and, in some cases, have engaged in the judicial appeal process.

The past four years of permitting experience and the "give and take" that the administrative law process is built upon have brought out a number of realities that the Act does not now adequately address. We now know that:

- Almost all wind power projects are proposed for ridgelines. Some are in mountainous regions such as western Maine and some are in lower land areas but on ridges that rise above the landscape. The reason for this is that the wind resource tends to be better on ridges. The consequence of this is that the wind turbines are prominent on the landscape and often in areas that are valued by local residents and visitors for their natural beauty.
- The height of grid scale wind turbines (we include support towers, nacelles and blades in "turbines"), more than 40 stories, and the expanse of many projects, covering miles of ridgelines, mean that the projects are visible to the naked eye from many miles away; more than 35 miles. They can be a highly significant feature of the landscape as far as 15 miles away. It is widely anticipated that that height of wind turbines will increase to 50 stories, i.e., more than 500 feet, as developers attempt to take advantage of stronger/steadier winds at higher elevations.
- All wind power projects permitted in Maine

have red flashing lights on many of the turbines as required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). These have significant effects on the "night sky."

- The Act does not address the issue of cumulative visual impacts of wind power projects on the viewer. It is now evident that when more than one project can be seen from a scenic resource there is a cumulative effect that cannot be accounted for by considering each project in isolation.
- Some wind power projects have significant effects on scenic resources that are valued by local residents but which have not been designated by the State or federal government as having special significance.
- The Act, when defining scenic resources of state-wide significance, relies in part upon lake studies that were undertaken by the State more than 20 years ago; were not exhaustive; and were never intended to be used for this type of regulatory purpose.
- Wind power projects produce turbine noise that can be very disturbing for nearby residents. The Act leaves the noise issue entirely to the permitting agency rather than establishing minimum setbacks from residences.
- The Act is silent on the issue of funding decommissioning costs. Some developers have represented to permitting agencies that the scrap value of the turbines will be adequate to fund decommissioning. More recently, permitting agencies have begun to require the establishment of decommissioning funds.
- The Land Use Regulation Commission regularly held adjudicatory hearings under the Maine Administrative Procedures Act when it was considering permit applications for grid scale wind power projects. The Maine DEP has never held an adjudicatory hearing on a wind power project, no matter how controversial.
- The Act does not allow the permitting agency to consider economic harms to the local economy that can result from wind power projects. There have been a number of projects where opponents have alleged that the adverse effects of the project on tourism and sporting guests would harm the local economy.
- Wind turbines have caught fire in other parts of the country and abroad and have caused fires to spread on the ground beneath the turbines. Nowhere in the Act or in the applicable permitting standards is there a requirement that the developer provide for a fire fighting plan and access to the turbines for fire fighting equipment.
- The on-shore wind goals of the Act are unrealistic. It is clear that the goals for 2015 will not be achieved.

Many of the issues raised by this body of experi-

ence over the past five years were not anticipated by the Act. It is prudent and in the public interest to revisit certain assumptions made five years ago and to amend the Act to address these issues. The Maine Appalachian Trail Club (MATC) supports the changes to the Act described in this Memorandum and contained in draft legislation. MATC has not proposed amendments that address all of the issues noted above but, rather, has focused on the issues that are related to the visual impacts of grid scale developments because these are the most important and relevant to MATC's mission of protecting the Appalachian Trail and the experience that it offers.

Proposed Amendments to Wind Energy Act

1. Protection of the visual resources and the viewer's experience.

Under the Act, developers of expedited wind power projects are *de facto* required to provide a visual impact assessment (VIA) if the project is within 3 miles of a scenic resource of state or national significance. (35-A M.R.S. §3452(3),(4)) The permitting authority *may* require a VIA if there is a potential for significant adverse effects on scenic resources of state or national significance up to 8 miles from the project. When we get beyond 8 miles from the project any effects on scenic resources must be considered "insignificant." Further, the statute provides that a finding that the wind turbines are a highly visible feature on the landscape is not by itself sufficient for the permitting authority to conclude that the project will have an unreasonable adverse impact on scenic character and uses associated with scenic character.

Informed by experience rather than photo simulations and academic studies, we now know that 400 foot tall wind turbines (soon to be up to 500 foot tall) located on ridge tops and in mountain environments can be prominent features of the landscape at much greater distances than 3 miles. The legislation being proposed contains these elements:

- A presumption that any wind power project located within 8 miles of a scenic resource of state or national significance must submit a VIA.
- An option for the permitting authority to require a VIA if the project is more than 8 miles but within 15 miles of a scenic resource of state or national significance and there is substantial evidence that a VIA is needed to determine the effects of the project on such resources.
- A rebuttable presumption that a wind power project within 15 miles of Acadia National Park, the Appalachian Trail, a federally designated Wilderness Area, the Allagash Wilderness Waterway or Baxter State Park will have an unreason-

Continued on page 3

Proposed amendments to the Maine Wind Energy Act

Continued from page 2

able adverse effect on the scenic resource.³

- If the project is more than 15 miles from a scenic resource of state or national significance and the permitting authority believes that a VIA is necessary because of special circumstances of the scenic resource or the project site, the authority may notify the developer and give the developer an opportunity to challenge the permitting authority's requirement for a VIA by providing evidence that a VIA is unnecessary.⁴

2. Accounting for cumulative visual impacts of development.

The 280 plus miles of the Appalachian Trail (AT) in Maine is renowned for its “wilderness” character.⁵ If wind projects continue to be developed in the view shed of the AT at the current pace, the AT hiker's experience of Maine will be a walk through a wind farm. Today's north bound hiker crosses through Grafton Notch State Park and heads up over the Baldpate Mountains where he/she is greeted at the summit of East Baldpate with a clear view of the Record Hill project in Roxbury, about 18 miles distant. This project will continue to be seen from open summits east of the Baldpates for miles of hiking along the AT. When the hiker gets to western Maine's high peaks area, beginning with Saddleback, he/she begins to see the Kibby Wind project and will likely be able to see the recently approved but not yet built project near Mount Blue State Park. The Kibby project is intermittently visible for several days of hiking from Saddleback Mountain through the Bigelow Range, its closest point to the AT being approximately 24 miles from The Horns in the Bigelow Preserve. Other wind projects, built and planned, are visible farther up the AT. At least one project is now visible from Katahdin, the northerly end of the AT.

This experience on the AT is a good example of “cumulative visual impacts” discussed in the *Report of OEIS Assessment of Cumulative Visual Impacts from Wind Energy Development* (March 2012), which is part of the *Wind Energy Assessment*. The authors describe this as:

“A dispersion of turbines throughout the landscape may lead to the “everywhere” problem (everywhere I go in this region, I'll continuously see wind turbines).”⁶

The authors go on to note that landscape architects and scenic experts identify this type of cumulative scenic impact as follows:

“Sequential: More than one wind project would be seen as the viewer travels along a linear route (e.g., hiking trail or scenic highway) or planer surface (e.g., a large water body).”⁷

The authors assert that time and resource constraints precluded them from developing recom-

mended regulations to address cumulative visual impacts. They also acknowledged that there did not seem to be a consensus among those who commented to them on this issue whether regulations should focus upon the “everywhere” (or sequential) problem or the “too many here” (concentrations of turbines creating an unacceptable impact on the viewer's experience) problem.

If Maine is going to protect its “quality of place”⁸ from the cumulative visual impacts of numerous wind power projects then it must step back from the “silo” permitting approach that it has been using under the Act and account for the cumulative visual impacts of numerous projects. If we fail to assess the cumulative visual impacts of wind power development on our mountain environments and continue to license projects one-by-one then we will at some point come to realize that we have fundamentally changed the landscape of inland Maine without being aware that we were doing that.

The legislation proposed here requires the permitting agency to consider both types of cumulative impacts: “everywhere” and “too many here.” It anticipates that the agency will develop regulations that will guide applicants in how to account for cumulative visual impacts and that will guide decision makers in how to evaluate cumulative visual impacts.

Measuring and evaluating cumulative impacts is not a novel concept in environmental permitting. The regulations developed under Maine's Site Location of Development Law have for many years directed the Maine DEP to consider:

“The potential primary, secondary, and cumulative impacts of the development on the character, quality, and uses of the land, air, and water on the development site and on the area likely to be affected by the proposed development.”⁹

Because of the special treatment of the visual impacts of wind power projects found in the Act, the Site Location Law regulation cannot today be applied to those projects. Legislation is needed to require consideration of cumulative visual impacts.

3. Protection of resources of local significance.

If a municipality has identified a local natural or cultural feature or place of historic significance and has taken some official action to recognize and protect that resource, such as including it in the municipality's comprehensive plan as a resource to be protected from incompatible development, that resource should be acknowledged in the Act and given the same consideration as resources of state or national significance. The proposed legislation accomplishes this by adding these resources to the definition of “Scenic resources of state or national significance” found in 35-A M.R.S. §3451(9).

Protecting scenic resources of local significance is not a novel concept in Maine law. The Maine DEP rules (Ch. 315) under the Natural Resources Protection Act offer protection for local scenic resources as well as state and federal scenic resources.

4. Updating of lakes reports and protection of great ponds with outstanding fisheries and wildlife values that are also the location of commercial sporting camps.

In defining scenic resources of state or national significance, the Act restricts its protection of great ponds to ponds in the organized area that were identified in a 1989 State Planning Office report as having outstanding or significant scenic quality and to ponds in the unorganized area that were identified in a 1987 LURC report as having outstanding or significant scenic quality. While use of these 23 and 25 year old reports is probably all the drafters of the Act had to work with, limiting the protections of the Act to these great ponds does not go far enough; i.e., the reports are under inclusive. When one reads the reports it becomes clear that they were not the result of an exhaustive study of the scenic values of the lakes studied and that the reports were not intended to be used in the way that the Act uses them. The Maine Wildlands Lake Assessment (June 1, 1987), p.3 states:

“It should be pointed out that these ratings are in fact minimum ratings. It is understood that complete information concerning the resource values for many lakes is not presently available and, if it were, many of these lakes might receive a higher value class rating. (emphasis in original)”

The Legislature should direct the appropriate state agency to update and supplement with new data the two lakes reports with a special emphasis on scenic values. While that work is ongoing, we should enact a “gap filler” that will allow interested persons to present evidence to the Maine DEP during the permitting process which demonstrates that lakes impacted by the wind power project have the qualities that qualify them for protection.

We know from permitting experiences under the Act that Maine guides and sporting camp operators view the impacts of wind power projects on their businesses very negatively. Their “clients” come to remote lakes to fish and hunt in a “wilderness” environment. Often, the sporting camps on these lakes are themselves an attraction because they are historic, unique to Maine and symbolic of a by-gone era. There are great ponds in the two referenced studies that are identified as having outstanding fisheries and wildlife values and which support sporting camps but which are not identified in the

Continued on page 4

Wind Energy recommendations

Continued from page 3

studies as having outstanding or significant scenic values and are, therefore, not protected under the Act. These lakes deserve protection and the proposed legislation affords them protection by including within the definition of “scenic resources of state or national significance” great ponds identified in the studies as having outstanding fisheries and wildlife resources and on which there is at least one commercial sporting camp established before 2008, the year when the Act became effective.¹⁰

5. Require funded decommissioning plans as a condition of approval in all wind power projects.

The proposed legislation requires the permitting authority (Maine DEP), to make fully funded decommissioning plans a condition of approval and to develop rules which set out the requirements for such plans. The plans should include performance guarantees such as bonds and letters of credit that will cover the cost of decommissioning during the construction and early operational years of the project and a segregated decommissioning account that is funded through operational revenues in the later years of the project. Developers should be required to provide the permitting authority with professionally prepared estimates of the costs for decommissioning and a periodic accounting of the decommissioning account.

Conclusion

It is sound public policy to review complex legislation such as the Maine Wind Energy Act in light of gained experience. The proposals for change made here by the Maine Appalachian Trail Club are not radical. Some are grounded in the State’s *Wind Energy Assessment* and some simply import into wind power project permitting the same review standards that are applicable to other large scale developments in Maine. All of the proposals made here grow out of experience.

Footnotes

- ¹ Pursuant to Public Laws 2012, Ch 682, the Maine DEP will henceforth be the permitting agency for all grid scale wind power projects in both the organized and unorganized parts of the State.
- ² The Maine Land Use Regulation Commission rejected the Bowers Mountain project in 2011. No appeal of the denial was taken by the developer. The developer has returned to Maine DEP with an application for a smaller project.
- ³ The *Wind Energy Assessment, Recommendation 10* advocates for removing from the Expedited Permitting Area “regions and view sheds that are most critical to the state’s recreational and tourism economy” that would be “unacceptably degraded” by wind power projects within 15 miles

unless the wind power project is not visible from the project.

Here, we have called out the “jewels” among our scenic resources.

⁴ Moving the current 3 mile limit to 8 miles and the current 8 mile limit 15 miles, with an option of going beyond 15 miles, is the recommendation made by the *Wind Energy Assessment, Recommendation 18*.

⁵ The AT has been designated by Congress as a National Scenic Trail and is part of the National Park system. It is also the only trail specifically recognized by the Maine Legislature as a “primitive trail” under the Maine Trails System. 12 M.R.S. § 1892.

“Primitive trails” are those “providing for the appreciation of natural and primitive areas and for the conservation of significant scenic, historic, natural or cultural qualities of the areas through which the trails pass and offering primarily the experience of solitude and self-reliance in natural or near-natural surroundings.”

⁶ Report, p. 4.

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ See The Brookings Institution and GrowSmart Maine, *Charting Maine’s Future* (2006) and *Charting Maine’s Future: Making Headway* (2012). There is an economic development component to protecting Maine’s natural beauty.

⁹ MDEP Reg. Ch. 372. At the federal level we note that projects requiring National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review must include in their environmental impact statement a discussion/analysis of the project’s “cumulative impact.”

That term is defined in the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality as follows: Cumulative impact is the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time. 40 CFR § 1508.7.

¹⁰ The *Wind Energy Assessment* recommends study of protecting sporting camps. See Recommendation 15.

Editor’s note: The above memo and report were submitted by the MATC wind power committee to club directors and the Legislature’s joint Energy, Utilities, and Technology Committee in mid January.

Chainsaw Training Workshops planned for April and October

By Craig Dickstein

MATC’s Sawyer Training program continues to enjoy success. This past year, 18 new sawyers were trained and 8 sawyers were re-certified.

Since the beginning of the program in 2004, we have trained more than 150 individuals (many returning multiple times for re-certification) and, as of this writing, we have 80 currently certified. Both the spring and fall sessions continue to be fully subscribed. Many thanks to those individuals who have supported this valuable program.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy’s Sawyer Certification Program teaches Trail volunteers how to safely operate a chain saw to remove downed trees and cut materials needed for Trail projects.

We offer free training courses, complimentary personal protective equipment (PPE), and reimbursement of first-aid/CPR certification costs for MATC member trail maintainers.

For others, the fee is \$130 without complimentary PPE and FA/CPR reimbursement.

The Maine Appalachian Trail Club has set the 2013 Chainsaw Safety Workshop schedule as follows. Please keep an eye on our website (www.matc.org) for possible updates to this schedule.

- April 13/14 at the MATC Base Camp property in Skowhegan
- October 5/6 at Larry Clark’s tree farm in Windham

The workshops will be for both new certification and re-certification. The re-certification course will be one day only, the Saturday of the noted weekend. The one-day re-certification class is for Sawyers with a *current* Level B certification.

If your current certification will expire in the next twelve months, or has recently expired, we urge you to sign up for a workshop and renew your credentials. If you have not taken advantage of this valuable training and wish to use a chainsaw on the Trail, then join us for a fun and worthwhile two days.

Space is limited. Please contact Craig Dickstein as soon as possible at

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PO Box 128, Caratunk, Maine 04925

MATC's Friends of the Appalachian Trail in Maine to host inaugural event

An evening with Carey Kish, trail maintainer, and Sunday Telegram columnist will be held at the Frontier Cafe in Brunswick, 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 21

The Maine Appalachian Trail Club's (MATC) newly created group, The Friends of the Appalachian Trail in Maine will host an evening with outdoors writer, A.T. thru-hiker and MATC trail maintainer Carey Kish. (photo).

This inaugural event titled "An Adventurous and Inspiring Evening Along the Appalachian Trail in Maine" will be held at The Frontier Café, 14 Maine Street, Fort

general admission basis.

Carey Kish is a member of MATC and maintains five miles of the Appalachian Trail in Maine. Kish is a long-time multi-sport adventurer who has thru-hiked the 2,150-mile Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine.

The former president and founding member the Maine Outdoor Adventure Club, a Wilderness First Responder, and a Registered Maine Guide, Carey has led countless hiking, backpack-

ing and whitewater rafting trips in Maine, and is also an avid mountain biker, sea kayaker, and downhill and cross-country skier. A professional writer and photographer, Kish is editor of the 10th edition of the *AMC Maine Mountain Guide* and the *AMC Maine Chapter Wilderness Matters* newsletter.

He is also a hiking & camping columnist for the *Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram*. His work has appeared in *AMC Outdoors*, *Maine Invites You*, *The Sunrise Guide*,

VisitMaine.com, *Maine Magazine*, *Port City Life*, *New England Ski Journal*, *Acadia Journal*, and *Maine Cyclist*.

The Friends of the A.T. in Maine promotes and supports MATC. The Maine Appalachian Trail Club manages and maintains 267 miles of the Appalachian Trail in Maine. Founded in 1935, MATC is an all-volunteer, donor-supported nonprofit that welcomes new members and inspires respect for this natural treasure. Visit MATC at www.matc.org or on Facebook, www.facebook.com/MaineATC.

Katahdin District had great year

The Katahdin District consists of 55.8 miles of the A.T. and 4.0 miles of side trails. A total of 66 individuals worked 1048 hours on the trails and campsites this year. They traveled 741 hours to get to their respective work sites. This comes to a total of 1,789 hours of volunteer work in the Katahdin District.

There are 12 trail section assignments in the Katahdin District, the longest being 11.3 miles, the shortest is 2.6 miles and the average is 5.0 miles. The maintainers made 23 work trips this year: 6 maintainers made 1 work trip, 4 maintainers made 2 work trips, 1 maintainer made 3 work trips, and 1 maintainer made 6 work trips.

We had an average snowfall during late winter and early spring, which made for good conditions for spring trail maintenance.

The weather was generally good all summer into early fall. The usual trail work of clearing blowdowns and clipping back brush and branches and painting white blazes and blue blazes on side trails was done, as was cleaning waterbars and drainage ditches.

Some bog bridges were replaced or moved back into position, and a few step stones were added to muddy areas of the trail.

Most trail signs are in good shape. A relocation of the A.T. in Baxter State Park was opened in May 2010 from Daicey Pond to Katahdin Stream Campground and goes near Grassy Pond.

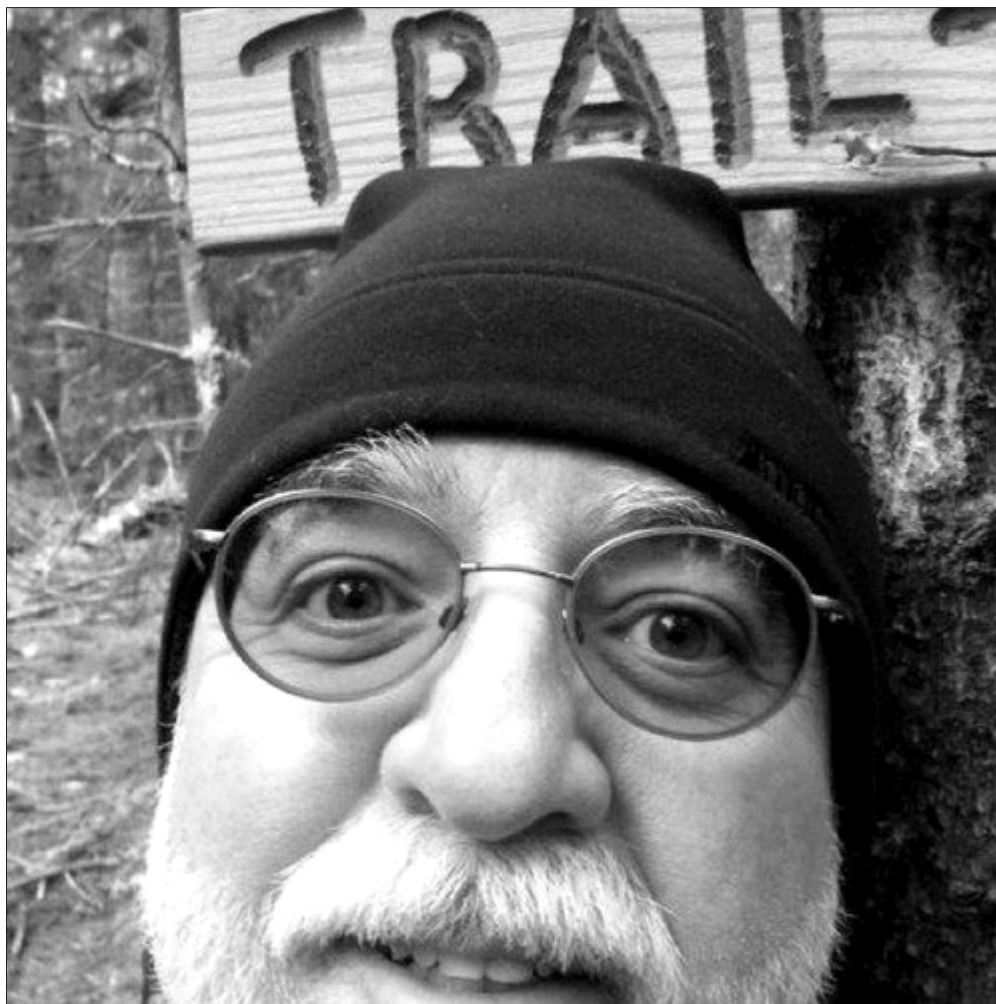
This relocation eliminates a 0.6 mile road walk on the Baxter Park Tote Road. The blue blazed Highwater Trail was opened in 2008 and goes along Nesowadnehunk Stream as a bypass to the fording of the stream in 2 places. Beaver activity is occurring at both outlets of the northern and southern Deadwaters of Rainbow Stream but the trail is not affected.

The Maine Trail Crew worked 3 weeks in June on the Hunt Trail (A.T.) in Baxter State Park building 104 feet of ditch and drain, built 100 square feet of stone retaining wall, built 2 stone waterbars, installed 1 check step, built 2 sediment basins and spread 34 yards of gravel on the trail. The Maine Trail Crew also worked 3 weeks on the western end of Rainbow Lake and installed 179 step stones in a notoriously wet and muddy section of the trail.

The Maine Trail Crew also worked 3 weeks on the A.T. near Nahmakanta Stream placing 47 step stones, and built a 12 foot and a 15 foot geotextile "burrito" in muddy areas along this section of trail.

All 7 campsites received maintenance by the

Continued on page 10



Andross in Brunswick on Thursday February 21, at 6:30 p.m. Attendees are invited to meet Kish in the Café at 6:30 p.m. before his presentation at 7:00 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

Seating in The Cinema Stage is limited to 85. While attendees are strongly urged to sign-up in advance by email (friends@matc.org) or on the MATC/Maine Appalachian Trail Club's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/MaineATC, seats are available on a first-come, first-served,

120 Whitecap District Maintainers spend 2,159 hours working their trail, Ron Dobra reports

It was a fairly stable year for the roster of Whitecap District maintainers, now numbering 34. New appointments were made to Scott and Brenda Martel, who live in Lily Bay on Moosehead Lake, and who have taken on the section between Gulf Hagas Mtn. and West Peak.

Filling the vacancy left by very veteran maintainer Eric Anderson who retired last spring were Martin Wallace and spouse May Ellen McAllister Wallace, handling the section from Little Wilson Falls to Big Wilson Stream.

In total work trip reports, 120 individuals accounted for 2,159 hours of work directed to the trail, not including travel time. That is impressive.

Club work trips included two to finish up the 300 feet of bog bridge replacement on Fourth Mtn. Bog; replacing the foundation logs at Leeman Brook Shelter; and fixing the roof at Logan Brook Shelter. In addition, several members helped pack in and pack out our ridgerunner, Krisdin Diehl, to her Gulf Hagas work camp.

The Maine Trail Crew spent six weeks in the



Lester Kenway and Ron Dobra milling a Leeman Brook Lean-to foundation replacement

district, both up Chairback Mountain hardening the trail and rerouting around a wet mess in the Gap, as well as working on the Gulf Hagas Rim Trail. They were joined at times by MATC members.

Finally this summer, an opportunity was made and utilized when two members of the NPS/ATC trail assessment team were available to walk and assess the district, as required every so many years, and I was able to facilitate that activity. This is the basis for future trail crew projects and funding, and I was glad to get it done.

This hiking season is looking again at a lot of extra activity. The trail crew alone has slated twelve crew weeks for a continuation of the Rim Trail work, and new hardening efforts in the area of Long Pond Stream shelter; the Cloud Pond area; and Fourth Mtn.

We are also “on the list” to have two newly designed moldering privies to replace the badly deteriorating ones at Carl Newhall and Logan Brook Shelters...all we need do is get them up there and build them....stay tuned for work trip postings.

Whitecap District Maintainer Vacancies

Gulf Hagas Mtn. — from the Gulf Hagas cut-off trail about half way up the mountain on the AT to a maintainers trail. About 2 miles; old assignment is being broken in half. In good shape, but would expect three visits per year.

Access is via Gulf Hagas or an AMC gated road with high clearance vehicle.

Leeman Brook Shelter maintainer. Access is from route 15 or North Pond Tote Road.

Ron Dobra, Overseer,
Whitecap District
ghsron@gmail.com
695-3959



Ed and Sheri Langlais building a bog bridge at Fourth Mtn.

Lester offers us tips for building better bog bridges

By Lester C. Kenway

Bog bridges (called puncheon outside New England) are a relatively quick solution for trails that traverse wet areas. Although wooden bog bridges do not last as long as rock/gravel turnpike, and are a little more difficult to walk on, they are superior for areas with deep organic soils where rock and gravel are scarce, or areas that periodically see large amounts of surface water flow that would wash away gravel surface material.

Bog bridges consist of sections of wooden planks set across base logs, set end to end down the trail. In remote areas planks can be made on site from native trees, and can be made by sawing logs in two halves with a chainsaw, or built with logs that have been flattened on one side with either a chainsaw or hand tools. In accessible areas, conventional planking or custom sawn live edge planks can be used for bridges.



Rot resistant woods are preferred for bog bridges:

Northern White Cedar lasts 20+ years; Red Spruce 12+ years; Eastern Hemlock 12+ years, and pressure treated lumber 20+ years.

It is important to use planks that are strong enough to avoid premature breakage. In general, if a plank flexes more than an inch or so when loaded by a 200 lb. person with pack, it will be subject to breaking after a few seasons.

Cedar needs to be a minimum of 4 inches thick and 6 inches wide to span 8 feet.

Base logs work best if they are from 4" to 6" thick and from 2.5 to 4 ft. long.

Base logs smaller than this are likely to be unstable, will not give adequate flotation in wet soils, and will not be large enough to take spikes without splitting.

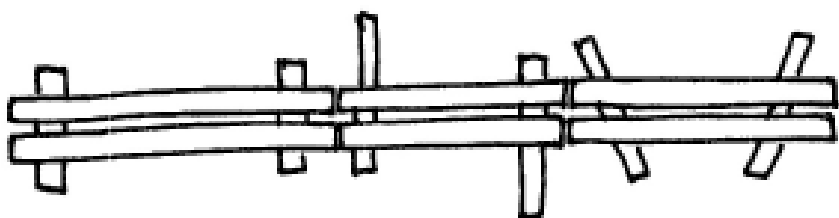
Larger base logs will elevate the bridge higher off the ground, making it difficult for hikers to get up on the bridges, and exposing them to higher falls if they slip or lose their balance. If base log material is greater than 6" in diameter, it can be ripped in half with a chainsaw in order to avoid a "park bench" style bog bridge. Rotate each base log so a smooth level surface is up.

When laying out the bridges, first identify small drainage channels or streams, along with deep mud holes that must be spanned and bridge these areas first.

Next, layout the bridges end to end, until high ground is reached at the edge of the bog. Be sure to extend the bridges at least 8 feet onto the high ground, since the impact of the hikers leaving the bridges tends to compact the ground and extend the muddy trail.

In general mud holes less than 8 feet in length are better fixed with step stones or filled in. If a series of short wet areas are encountered, it is better to make one continuous bridge, rather than several short bridges that would be tedious to climb.

Base logs can be set at slight angles or slightly off-center to accommodate the terrain. Longer base logs should be used in very deep organic soils to provide better stability and flotation for the bridges. A tool such as a mattock should be available for leveling and setting in the base logs.

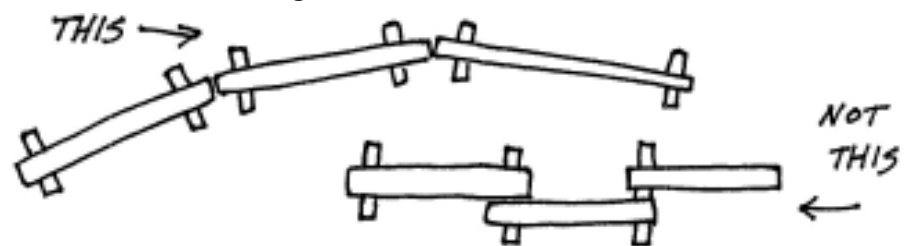


When terminating a string of bog bridges at the edge of the wet area, use a smaller base log or no base log at the end in order to reduce the height a hiker

has to step up onto the bridge.



Bridges should be constructed as complete units. This allows them to be changed out easily when the time comes. This also allows the bridges to be set in a smooth curve, making them look nicer, and easier to walk on.



Avoid leaving long overhangs on the planks. The cantilever effect of the overhang usually leads to end-breakage, and premature failure of the bridge.

The distance from the center spike to the end of the plank should not exceed 8". Overhangs of even modest amounts (12" to 14") can create a "teeter totter" or "diving board", which can be hazardous.



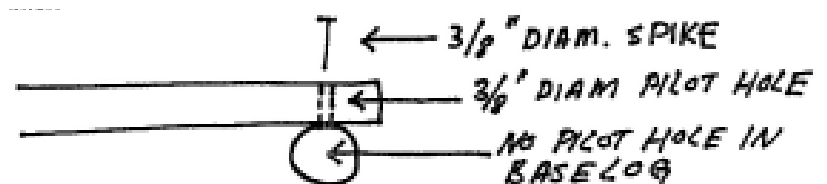
The life of the plank can be extended by trimming the plank's ends in a slight overhang to discourage end penetration of water.



Use spikes that are twice as long as the plank being fastened. For a 4" thick plank use an 8" spike (these are usually available in 3/8" diameter wire).

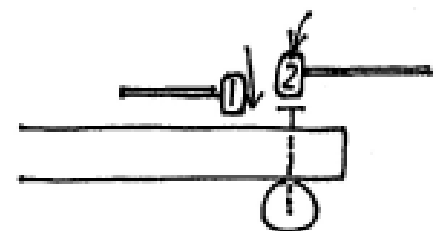
Galvanized spikes are generally twice the cost, but have the advantage of having much greater friction than plain steel. This helps prevent the planks from working apart as they get walked on over the years. The zinc coating will prevent rust during the life of the bridge. Rusted spikes promote the rotting of wood around the spike, leading to premature failure of the bridge.

For a 3/8" spike, drill a 3/8" pilot hole through the plank, but not into the base log. The pilot hole will greatly assist in the driving of the spike, lessening



the chance that the spike will be bent. The hole will assure that the large spike being driven 8" or less from the end of the plank will not split the wood. Be sure to have a hacksaw on hand in case a spike is bent by an enthusiastic and inaccurate hammer.

Planks often times jump up the spike as it is being driven. Hit the plank once or twice after the spike is driven to make sure that the plank and base log are tight together when you are finished.

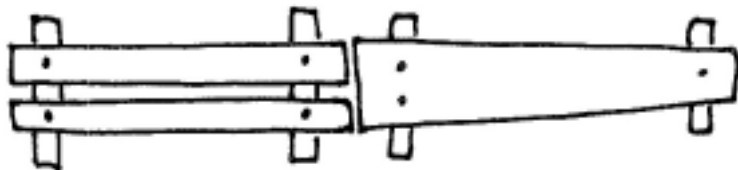


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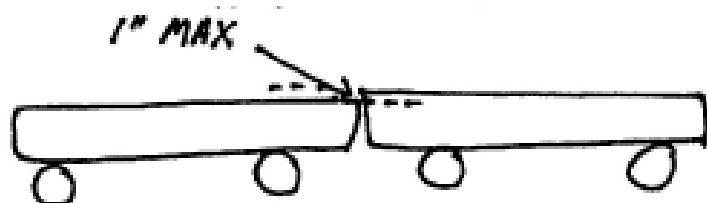
Tips for better bog bridging

Continued from page 7

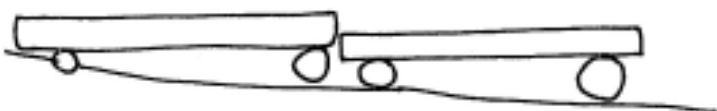
For planks less than 8 inches wide, use one spike at each end. For wider planks, use 1 spike on the narrow end, with 2 spikes on the wide end, or 2 spikes on each end.



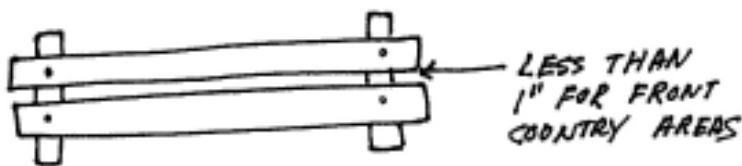
If the terrain is fairly level, make a point to make the bridges meet at the same height in order to avoid tripping hikers. Avoid joints that differ more than 1 inch in height.



If the terrain is sloping along the trail, construct the bridges as if they were long stair treads. Avoid bridges that slope more than 2% (2" over 8 ft.). Wet slippery bridges that slope with the trail are likely to hurt someone.



If planks are less than 8 inches wide, use two planks for each bridge. For backcountry locations, a space of 1 to 2 inches between planks is good. In front country situations, where small children will use the bridges, the space should be less than 1 inch to prevent small feet from falling through the gap.



Push the bridges tight together as you build them. This will lend stability to the chain of bridges, and help keep them in place. If you suspect periodic flooding of the area you can spike together the base logs to keep the bridges from wandering, or use very long base logs to brace against trees, boulders, and stumps to anchor the bridges.

Good luck with your bog bridge project. These tips were discovered while building many thousands of feet of bog bridge during the past 25 years.

Happy bridge building!

Annual meeting April 20 at UM Farmington Candidate volunteers to be elected

By Laura Flight

On Saturday April 20, 2013, the Maine Appalachian Trail Club's annual meeting will be held at the University of Maine in Farmington

All executive committee members will be elected. The nineteen-member committee consists of four officers—a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, as well as a Corresponding Secretary.

In addition, each of the five District Overseers sit on the Executive Committee—Baldpate, Bigelow, Kennebec, Whitecap, and Katahdin, as well as an Overseer of Lands. Eight Directors round out the remaining positions. You can see the full list and those currently in those positions at: <http://www.matc.org/matc-organization/matc-committees/>. The current executive committee members are also listed on the back page of each issue of the *MAINEtainer*.

What does the MATC Executive Committee do? The committee is the governing body responsible for managing, maintaining and protecting the Appalachian Trail in Maine.

We meet every other month in face-to-face meetings to discuss matters of the Club that range from proposed trails intersecting the AT, events such as the Monson and Rangeley Trail Town celebrations, membership and dues topics, rules and regulations that apply to the AT, working with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), grant applications, and much more.

None of this could not be accomplished without MATC's dedicated army of volunteer maintainers, monitors, and sub-committee members; so if you fall under one or more of these categories, thank you for your time.

Have you ever considered seeking a position on the Executive Committee? Maybe one of your New Year's resolutions was to give back more; here is your opportunity!

Many of you prefer to quietly contribute by keeping your section clear of blow-downs, finely lopped, and draining freely, or monuments and boundaries located and documented—and the MATC values your services tremendously.

But if you have thoughts about wielding your planning and administrative services in addition to your axe and hazel hoe, please let us know.

The Nominating Committee includes: Laura Flight at campsite@matc.org, 215-5306, Milt Wright, baxterpk39@myfairpoint.net, 207-685-4677, or Bruce Grant, brucegme@gmail.com, 207-564-3098.

Lester has asked that the Nominating Committee be prepared to finalize and present our nominations at the March 1, 2013 Executive Committee meeting.

MATC Annual Meeting Schedule

The annual meeting will be held Saturday, April 20, in the Lincoln Auditorium at the University of Maine Farmington.

8:00 AM — Registration, Coffee, and socializing and 2011 MATC in review

9:00 AM — Annual Business Meeting of the Club: a welcoming talk by Lester Kenway, President; approval of the 2010 Annual Meeting minutes from Janice Clain; a Treasurer's Report from Elsa Sanborn; adoption of a budget after presentation from Tom Lewis, chair of the Finance Committee; Dick Doucette's report on his Corresponding Secretary work; Lester Kenway will provide highlights of the past year.

10:00 AM — Committee Reports, and member recognition and awards

11:00 AM — Overseer's Reports

12:00 PM — Lunch

1:00 PM — Concurrent Meetings will be held between Trail Overseers and Maintainers, and Lester will meet with new members in welcome sessions

2:00 PM — An Open Forum on current issues before the Club. Member comments and questions are welcome.

3:00 PM — End of Day

Myron Avery advises walkers on the responsible use of trails

A Message to Those Who Walk in the Woods

FOREWORD

This publication is prompted by a situation of paramount concern to all who turn to the woods and forested hills of the eastern Atlantic States for recreation. It is a matter most vital to those who walk, camp, use, or maintain trails. The situation merits your most careful consideration. Your aid is urgently sought in the solution of the problems here set forth.

If these difficulties are not soon eliminated, users of trails and those who walk in the woods will inevitably find the areas and opportunities for their recreation very considerably restricted. Conceivably, if the problems are not solved, the recreational use of large sections of privately-owned lands will be a matter of the past.

This appeal and this message to you and to all woods walkers is definitely intended to

forestall such an eventuality and such a calamity.

This message is a part of a very definite campaign being conducted by associations of walking and outdoor clubs. It has been prepared and is being distributed by the outdoor clubs associated with *The Appalachian Trail Conference*. This group has undertaken to lead in an effort to solve the problems. It speaks not for itself alone but for all groups. Its program is intended to call attention to the careless, unnecessary and often regretably wanton acts, which have precipitated this situation. You can aid this campaign by your personal example in giving heed to the monitions herein contained; you can urge compliance by others; further, you can aid in placing this leaflet in the hands of those who may thereby be prevented from creating these difficulties.

owners, or by their agents, have exhibited a degree of independence, claimed rights or privileges and have instanced near insolence. For this folly, walkers as a whole suffer. If questioned, be at pains to identify yourself fully and state your objectives and outdoor connections. Make no claim of right or privilege; treat the situation as if your property were that affected.

There is a distinct value in the exhibition of insignia, showing connection with or affiliation with outdoor clubs or organizations. Many of these are known by general repute. The connection is often accepted by the owner as a sort of guarantee of conduct, which will not impair his interests. There may exist personal distaste to displaying insignia; here again personal preference must be subordinated in an organized campaign to hold the privileges we now have. The display of Club insignia or connection, coupled with the proper conduct of your party, may convince an uncertain landowner that he can have no proper objection to the crossing of his land by organized groups. You may have thereby created an impression of responsibility. The isolated instance does count.

Further, it is most important to realize that the use of a marked trail, such as *The Appalachian Trail*, or otherwise, confers no right to use land against the owner's objection; if you attempt to claim such rights, you do these projects a distinct disservice. Next in importance to a full realization that there is no question of rights (you have none) or privileges in the use of the woods but of *responsibilities* and *duties*, there is a marked need for the exercise of restraint.

Unfortunately, once in the woods, some individuals seem to react too strongly to the freedom of the surroundings. Acts are committed which in their own homes would be unthinkable. There is a real need to check this exuberance. Yelling, singing, conduct designed to attract attention, are totally unnecessary. It merely invites attention with very detrimental results.

Perhaps the greatest single menace to continued use of the woods by "hikers" is *fire*. The landowner views your cigarette or pipe as a potential menace. So should you. Smoking, while walking in the woods, is a distinct hazard; if you do so for your own pleasure, you risk a fire which may result in a ban on further use of many areas. The landowner does not know your high standards of individual care; he does not know that, unlike the flicking of a cigarette from your automobile, you will restrain this habit and not toss your cigarette into a brush pile. Certainly, you will not add to the landowner's concern by smoking in his presence. Act on the principle that there is no closed season on fire hazards.

The walker who consciously and deliberately refrains from smoking in the woods, has made a distinct sacrifice which will enure to the benefit of all walkers. As his tribe increases, so will our privileges.

A word as to campfires. Herein is a source of much irritation. Primarily a fire should never be built without the permission of the landowner. The major trouble lies with the so-called "lunch fire." If you regard this element as a necessity — despite the ease with which it can be dispensed with, you are deliberately contributing to the problems here. It is a

THE MESSAGE¹



THIS booklet deals with "Trail Etiquette". It hopes to arouse in users of the woods a full appreciation of a critical situation. Progress can be made if there is a full realization of this problem.

There is, first, a need of the development of a definite sense of duty and of responsibility. Each individual must realize that his acts are not solitary, isolated instances of human conduct; they tend to create impressions and atmosphere which affect not the one individual alone but all with similar interests. Each person must regard himself as an emissary — his primary duty is to create goodwill. Any desire to display individuality or independence must be subordinated to common good.

The plain fact is that by reason of these instances of thoughtless and irresponsible conduct by the so-called "hiker", many areas of land are no longer available. Those who maintain trail systems know all too well this problem. It is becoming increasingly serious. It must be checked now. We cannot believe that these excesses come from organized groups or hiking clubs. These are too well trained to commit any of the nuisances here discussed. Unfortunately, the irate and injured landowner cannot understand any distinction. These things are precipitated by some individual or individuals. To the landowner, they are all "hikers". You and your

group are thus penalized for the acts of others. This is our reason for addressing this "appeal" to you — not that you need the monition but that you may aid in restraining others from the commission of acts, which are attributed to you as a "hiker".

The situation cannot be glossed over. Your personal freedom from fault is insufficient. Indifference and failure to act to check offenses by others will produce, in the long run, the same results as if you personally had breached the monitions here set forth.

First and paramount is the attitude of the walker toward the landowner. In the north-eastern states, most land is privately owned; in such publicly-owned areas as exist, the user is the guest of the people at large. The latter situation should not inspire any thought of less need for restraint. At all times one must remember that there is no inherent right to walk, camp or use privately-owned lands. There seems abroad too often some theory of a public right to use, as one pleases, a wooded area. Any such thought is totally erroneous; you have no more right to use this than to appropriate the well-kept lawn of your neighbor. There is no inherent right to trespass to climb a mountain. Use of such areas is only by tolerance of the owner; in all circumstances, this factor must be kept in mind. Presumably, such toleration will be continued unless experience demonstrates unfortunate occurrences.

Too often hikers, when questioned by land-

¹ By Myron H. Avery, Chairman, *The Appalachian Trail Conference*.

Katahdin District report

Continued from page 5

maintainers this season. Leantos at Hurd Brook, Rainbow Stream, Wadleigh Stream and Potaywadjo Spring are all in good shape as are the tent sites at Rainbow Spring, Nahmakanta Stream and Antlers' Campsites. Boat and canoes continued to be stored in the corridor, which is owned by the National Park Service and several public and private owners. This was the 11th year of the Abol

Ridge Runner program. Some of the duties were to meet A.T. hikers that were heading to Baxter State Park to finish their thru hike and to inform them of the rules and regulations of Baxter State Park.

I would like to thank everyone that volunteered their time and effort in the Katahdin District in 2012. Your work is very important in maintaining and protecting the A.T. in Maine. Thank you.

— Rick Ste. Croix, Overseer, Katahdin District, Maine A.T. Club

Myron Avery's advice to walkers

Continued from Page 8

simple matter to carry lunch foods which require no cooking; every walker would do so. This suggestion may invoke objection; the issue is whether you will accept some restrictions or contribute to the precipitation of a situation where all privileges will be revoked. Traces of your fires remain to inform the landowner of what occurred there. *Build no fires; state that you do not; your host, the landowner, will therein find your presence less objectionable.*

Again, there is the matter of the impression generally created by walkers. As to this, each user of the woods must consider himself a "goodwill ambassador." There must be a definite attempt to elevate the popular impression of hikers and the reason why they indulge in this form of recreation. It is for their physical, mental and spiritual well-being. It is definitely not because more expensive forms of recreation are denied them by financial limitations. One camps because of personal preference, for the pleasure of camping, not because one cannot afford public accommodations. Unfortunately, it must be appreciated that we labor under the impression created some years ago by the gentlemen of the open road. Your conduct and what you do will end to dispel this impression. Avoid the creation of any impression that the person who walks seeks something for nothing.

By and large, one who participates in trail work thereby meets his obligations. The program of organized hiking groups and trail maintaining systems deserve some support.

There is a further matter which needs emphasis. This again calls for restraint of personal freedom which the being out-of-doors seems to inspire. This relates to your personal appearance — beards, clothing, or, or late, the absence of clothing. One may well inquire if particular attention to these points does not account for the exalted status enjoyed by skiing. Unfortunately, for hiking, anything and your oldest clothing is considered appropriate. With changing fashions, many walkers consider it in order to utilize the opportunity, while walking, for sun-bathing also. This facility again one can easily obtain elsewhere under proper circumstances. Grafting sun-bathing on walking has not tended to improve the status of walkers. Many property owners look askance at the instances of extremely abbreviated clothing —

particularly feminine. Sun-bathing is very much in order in proper circumstances; seldom is the trail that situation. Forgoing this opportunity will mean that trails can be used with less objection.

There are perhaps many other matters, as to which a prospective users of a maintained trail system would wish to make inquiry. For this information, prospective trail users will find of value "*Suggestions for Appalachian Trail Users*," obtainable from *The Appalachian Trail Conference*, Washington D. C., at the cost of 25 cents. From this publication there is reprinted the portion dealing with the problem of the misuse and vandalism at open shelters:

"By reason of their general accessibility and use, it is imperative that each trail user exercise the utmost care to preserve the attractive surroundings of the structure. Vandalism and carelessness in use present many maintenance problems. The monitions of the following notice should be most scrupulously observed:

"This lean-to has been built here with the cooperation of *The Appalachian Trail Conference*. It is a part of *The Appalachian Trail* and is for use *only* by users of *The Appalachian Trail*. It is not for the use of fishermen or of picnic parties. Facilities for their accommodation are provided elsewhere.

"The continued existence of this structure depends upon its treatment. Leave the lean-to in a neat and pleasing condition. Do not cut or deface live trees. Dispose of all refuse. Carefully avoid those careless and thoughtless acts which might mar the usefulness and appearance of these structures. Treat this lean-to with the care and concern which you would give your personal property. Try to leave the lean-to not in as good but in better condition than when you came here.

"Above all: see that your fire — to the last spark — is out.

"In addition, particular care must be taken to avoid excess weight or strain or damage to the framed-wire bunks.

"If the shelter has a register, be at pains to indicate your presence there. It seems unnecessary to enjoin against carving initials or writing on the shelter walls.

"Be economical in the use of wood. Increasing Trail use decreases available fire wood. In some areas fuel is becoming a serious problem. Waste must be avoided. The effective cooking fire is small. Do not build bonfires. No live trees may be cut in either the

Shenandoah or Great Smoky Mountains National Parks. In other localities, no trees must be cut within view of a shelter, under any circumstances.

"Except in suitable closed containers, no surplus food is to be left in lean-tos or shelters. Violation of this essential precaution causes damage by porcupines and mice.

"Always replace, with interest, the protected supply of dry wood at every shelter or lean-to. Violation of this monition, abuses of sanitation or the appearance of a shelter and its surroundings are capital crimes in the realm of Trail use.

"Trail usage awards the party earliest in arrival time prior claim to lean-to capacity. However, show hospitality and cordiality to later arrivals. Offer assistance and a maximum use of facilities; avoid creating an impression that the last arrival is an intruder and unwelcome. Later arriving travelers should, in turn, be at pains to manifest recognition of the prior claims of the earlier party.

"Do not pour water into a made fireplace or a stove. With forethought the fire can be permitted to die out while breaking camp.

"Tin cans are to be flattened before being deposited in the garbage pits provided at most lean-tos."

There are many other points which could be stressed in the campaign to avoid the problems being presently experienced by trail users and maintainers which menace our common interests.

* * * * *

This leaflet will have served its purpose if it leads to your appreciation of the extreme seriousness of this situation. The organized walking groups seek your aid. You will heed these monitions; you will urge others to do so. *The Appalachian Trail Conference*, on request, will make available to you, at small cost, copies of this leaflet to distribute among prospective trail users.

If we are to continue to be able to resort to the woods and use trails without restriction, there is need for action. Indifference, heedlessness and delay will exact a heavy toll.

Editor's Note: The final paragraph, listing the member clubs of the Appalachian Trail Conference, has been omitted due to space constraints.

It is my intention to supply the MAINetainer with articles, letters, publications and the like, written by Myron H. Avery. These are stored at the Maine State Library and are gratefully reprinted with their permission.

Some of these publications may be printed throughout multiple issues of the MAINetainer. This will be done as the editor sees fit as some may be quite lengthy. No changes have intentionally been made to these writings.

No time-line will be followed; the articles will be printed without regard to chronology unless otherwise indicated. The MATC hopes that you enjoy a glimpse into the character and writings of Myron Avery. — Ray Ronan, MATC Historian

Thru hikers

I remember hair-haloed golden bodies
 Steaming, streaming, sweating, streaked
 Herculean legs in nut gold marble
 Topped by emaciated, early Christian martyr
 torsos
 Stopped, twisted and pack-burdened
 propped with a tree-limb

I remember the cat-piss reek of ancient mil-
 dews
 steep, humid uphill, no showers and no
 laundry at the peaks
 Now the deodorant becomes too heavy
 and they pack calorie-laden cheese

I remember bandanas

I remember, my three-year-old eyes gazing,
 reflecting up towering legs,
 giants, elementals of the dirt
 then down,
 terminating strangely in scarred, mud-caked
 boots,
 heavy, clunky
 Feet transforming from Earth to flesh, flesh to
 Earth as they rise and fall

I remember dirt ringed necks
 and dirt filmed hair
 like the caked dust around the grease fittings
 on my father's tractor

I remember sensuous stories of pulled pork
 and apple cobblers eaten in Southern
 towns
 a la mode.

I remember their eyes, slightly feral,
 Too full of dreams
 tremulous smiles, just waking after a long,
 solitary journey
 Eyes too long alone on sun-tipped slate,
 memorizing air, enraptured in silence
 Or the buzz of cicadas
 Eyes always too hot, too cold, too wet or too
 bug-bitten
 Hungry eyes, and sun chapped lips, making
 love to my two day old onion bagel,
 encrusted in Hannaford's Crunchy and
 Smuckers' Grape Jelly.
 I preferred strawberry

More than anything
 A three year old celadon nymph, barefoot
 I was determined to live behind such eyes.
 Home again, I begged
 My mother bought me a kaleidoscope of
 bandanas and thick, wool socks

— Rebecca Clark

Maintainers: use care when creating access trails

By Lester C. Kenway

What is a "Maintainer's Trail?"

A "Maintainer's Trail" is simply an informal route of access from a lakeshore or a logging road to the Appalachian Trail. It serves as an intermediate point of access to avoid a long hike along the AT from recognized road crossings.

Some traditional examples would be hiking from Mahar Landing on Pemadumcook Lake, or walking the Rainbow Tote Road to Rainbow Stream Lean-to.

For many years, old tote roads were followed, or minimal trails were marked with plastic flagging. Except for occasional blow downs, very little clearing was done. In recent years. I have been hearing of maintainers clearing substantial trails with chainsaws and brush cutter saws. These "Maintainer Trails" are cleared as wide if not wider than the Appalachian Trail Itself. We need to acknowledge the impacts of these trails:

1. Except for the area where the "Maintainer Trail" connects with the AT, these trails are on private

land, often without the knowledge or permission of the land owner.

2. When these trails are cleared wide and marked, they will begin to be used by other people. Since these trails are not marked on any maps, they can cause confusion at the junctions with the AT.
3. Most of these trails are not designed to sustainable standards. Trails that follow the "fall line" will start to concentrate drainage as the path is compressed by foot travel. Drainage will result in soil erosion.
4. Some of these routes utilize "skid trails" that will be revisited on 10 year harvesting cycles.

Best Practices:

1. Confer with your Trail Overseer before you build a "Maintainer Trail"
2. Take time to leave uncut brush at the beginning or end of a "Maintainer Trail"
3. Clear the absolute minimum to establish your "Maintainer Trail." Ideally you will be walking though brush most of the way. Brush will control erosion.

Fill in Form, Print and Mail		
MATC ORDER FORM		
Quantity	Description	Price
	Official Guide to the Appalachian Trail in Maine, Fifteenth edition, published in 2009, softbound, including seven trail maps, printed on all-weather plastic paper. Member \$24.00 - Non member \$30.00	
Maps may be ordered separately: Members \$6.00 each Map, Non Members \$8.00 each Map		
	Map #1 - Katahdin to Nahmakanta Lake (Nesowadnehunk Stream, Abol Bridge, Rainbow Lake Area)	
	Map #2 - Nahmakanta Lake to West Branch of the Pleasant River (Jo-Mary, White Cap Mtn., Gulf Hugas)	
	Map #3 - West Branch of the Pleasant River to Monson (Barren-Chairback Range, Wilson Valley Area)	
	Map #4 - Monson to the Kennebec River (Piscataquis River, Moxie Bald, Pleasant Pond Area)	
	Map #5 - Kennebec River to Maine Highway 27 (Pierce Pond, Carry Ponds, Bigelow Mtn. Area)	
	Map #6 - Maine Highway 27 to Maine Highway 17 (Sugarloaf, Saddleback Mtn., Sabbath Day Pond Area)	
	Map #7 - Maine Highway 17 to Maine-New Hampshire State Line (Bemis Mtn., Grafton Notch, Mahoosuc Notch Area); Also includes the new Grafton Loop Trail.	
	Unfolded Maine AT Maps -MATC members \$10.00, Non-members \$12.00 Map 1 Katahdin to South End of Nahmakanta Lake 13"X30" Map 2 Nahmakanta Lake to West Branch of the Pleasant River 13"X30" Map 3 West Branch of the Pleasant River to Monson 13"X22.5" Map 4 Monson to the Kennebec River 13"X30" Map 5 Kennebec River to Maine Highway 27 13"X30" Map 6 Maine Highway 27 to Maine Highway 17 13"X30" Map 7 Maine Highway 17 to Maine/New Hampshire State Line 13"X37.5"	
Other Items		
	"Along Maine's Appalachian Trail" Book by David Field Non-Members..... \$21.99, plus \$3.50 shipping; (ME residents should add \$1.10 sales tax.) MATC Members \$18.69 plus \$.93 tax and \$3.50 shipping.	
	MATC Decal	\$3.00
	MATC Shoulder Patch	\$4.00
	MATC Pin	\$7.00
	MATC Note Cards (set of 8).....	\$8.00
	MATC Baseball Cap.....	\$25.00
	MATC T-Shirts - (Green logo on sand or tan - Color subject to availability) Long Sleeve - (Indicate size Small, Medium, Large, Extra-Large)..... Short Sleeve - (Indicate size Small, Medium, Large, Extra-Large)	\$20.00 \$15.00
The listed prices include sales tax, postage & handling -- TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED		
Name: _____		
Address: _____		
City, State, Zip: _____		
Credit Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____		
Check one: _____ Member _____ Non member E-Mail: _____		
Check or money order made payable to: MAINE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB Mail to: Elsa Sanborn, PO Box 8087, Bangor, 04402-8087 or treasurer@matc.org .		

The MAINetainer

is the newsletter of the Maine Appalachian Trail Club. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of MATC, its members, officers, or directors. *The Mainetainer* is published five times a year. Our mission as a club is to construct, maintain, and protect the section of the Appalachian Trail extending from Katahdin to Route 26 in Grafton Notch, and those side trails, campsites, and shelters accepted for maintenance by the club. We seek to make accessible for hiking the wild region of Maine through which the trail passes. *The Mainetainer* welcomes letters, feedback, and information from members and friends of the trail. Send your comments, photos, and information to:

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