



# Moosehead Lake Region Trails Report 2017

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## Planning, Acquisition, Construction, & Activity –2017

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Highlights for 2017 included the completion of two new trails—Williams Mountain in Misery TWP and Baker Mt. in Beaver Cove. While these two trails, and the Blue Ridge Trail System, are not quite ready for promotion due to ongoing trailhead and access work, the hard work of constructing the trails is essentially complete. More information on the Baker Mt Trail and Williams Mt. Trail can be found on page 2 and page 3, respectively.

At the Blue Ridge Trail system developing north of the Katahdin Iron Works (KI) Road between Rum Pond and the Appalachian Mountain Club’s boundary, 2017 work focused on accessory trail development leading to the main Blue Ridge Trail. The “Rum Brook Trail” and “Headwaters Trail” both will serve to eventually link the Blue Ridge Trail to the KI Road and a to-be-

developed trailhead (more info on pages 2 and 3.

Acquisition of remaining state-held trail easements, which serve as the underpinning for the trails located on Weyerhaeuser lands, were nailed down by the close of 2017 and will be finalized over the first months of 2018. Final trail easements will cover upcoming trail projects for Prong Pond (hiking), a linkage between the Eagle Rock Trail and the Little Moose Public Lands boundary, four season trail and connectivity improvements near Hedgehog Pond, and a 3+ mile hiking trail link connecting the Blue Ridge Trail system to the Appalachian Trail thereby creating backpacking linkages. More details on these and other projects are shared throughout this report.

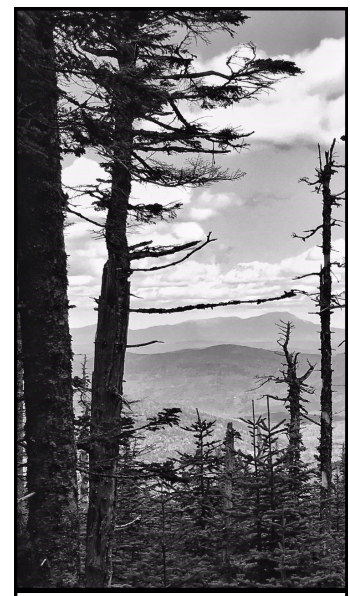


Image of a View Towards Mt. Katahdin as Seen from the Baker Mt. Trail.

## Trails Crews Active All Season



Trail crews from the Maine Conservation Corps and Appalachian Mountain Club started in the region in June and wrap up in early November. Crews typically work 8-10 days in the field, living and working together as a unit. Housing often entails living the entire work session (or “hitch”) out of tents near the work site. Crew members come from all over the US and for many, this is their first introduction to Maine and/or the Moosehead Lake Region. Shown to the left is a section of newly constructed trail on the Headwaters Trail (Blue Ridge Trail system).



**Milled-cedar bog-bridging near Cranberry Pond. These structures provide a bike-able (albeit narrow) surface over wet soils**

## The Blue Ridge Trail System: Pieces Coming Together

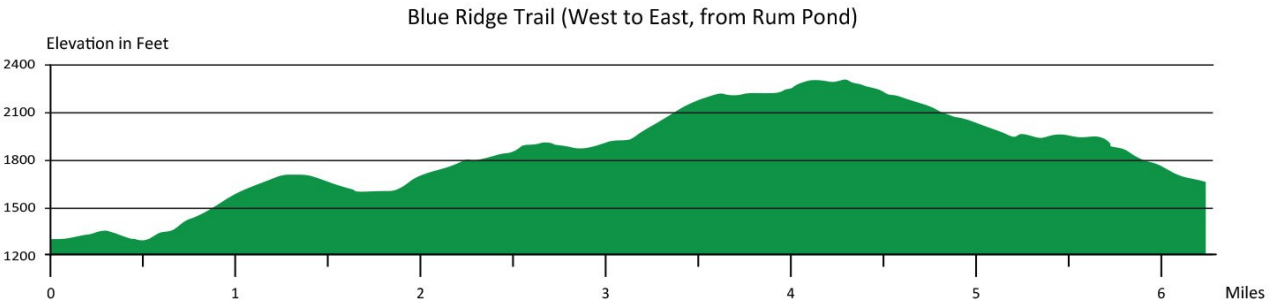
The Blue Ridge Trail system, developing north of the Katahdin Iron Works (KI) Rd. east of Greenville, will provide hiking, remote pond fishing access, backcountry mountain biking, trail running, and multi-day regional backpacking via linkages with other trails. As of October 2017, over 8 miles of trail are constructed or under construction. The trail is designed to serve hikers, backpackers, trail runners, and to the extent possible intermediate and above mountain bikers.

While by no means flat (see profile below—with some slopes in excess of 10%), the trail does not use stone staircases or rock water bars along steeper pitches. Rather, it snakes up hillsides trying to keep slopes from being too steep for too long. Nonetheless, the climbing and at times narrow & rock-littered terrain make it a challenging mountain bike trail.

Highlights on the western end of the trail include Rum, Cranberry, and Notch Ponds. These ponds will provide remote camping and fishing opportunities. Further to the east, more views emerge. The entire trail runs through a working forest setting, with portions of the trail exposing trail users to various stages of forest growth as well as different forest harvesting/management techniques. Summer trailheads are planned for (but not yet donated and developed) near Rum Pond, next to Vaughn Stream as it crosses the KI Rd., and near Hedgehog Pond off the KI Rd.

### Below: Elevation Profile for the Blue Ridge Trail from Rum Pond to the AMC/Weyerhaeuser Line

This generalized profile shows only the main Blue Ridge Trail running along the long ridge eastward from Rum Pond. Not shown are the Rum Brook and Headwaters trails, which will help link the trail shown below with the KI Road. These trails, especially the Headwaters Trail, will have more gradual elevation gain/loss. Additionally, the Rum Brook Trail will serve to form a 5k loop with a portion of the Blue Ridge Trail.



## Baker Mt. Trail Constructed

Fall 2017 saw the completion of the Baker Mt. Trail from where the project left off in 2016, at a snowmobile trail crossing between Lily Bay Mt. & Baker Mt. In essence, the Baker Mt. Trail is a continuation of the Number Four Mt. Trail, which originates 4.3 miles north of where the trail begins to leave the Lily Bay Mt./Baker Mt. saddle for Baker's summit. As such, to hike to Baker's summit is a nearly 13 mile round trip hike. However, aside from a steep section on Number Four Mt.'s north flank, the route is not overly steep for a mountain trail.

Plans call for the Bureau accepting and then developing a trailhead site for Number Four Mt./Baker Mt. as well as a remote campsite location a little over 2 miles north of Baker Mt.'s summit.

The developed trail is located across lands held by Weyerhaeuser and the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) - with AMC land being recently acquired from Weyerhaeuser. AMC also owns the remaining summit ridge area of Baker Mountain south into their Maine Woods property. A future trail extension by AMC is possible, though not formally as part of this trail project.



**An AMC Trail Crew Member Performs Initial Clearing Work on Baker Mt. Trail**

## Planning for New Trailheads Taking Final Shape

Trailheads are where trail users leave the world of sedans, SUVs, and pickups and enter the mystical world of the woods. They are portals to adventure and serve as places to educate visitors about trail details and trail etiquette. To date, only one trail funded through the work with Weyerhaeuser has a constructed trailhead. The Eagle Rock Trail, a 3.7 mile remote hiking trail built in 2014, has a trailhead parking area located at the end of the East Moore Bog Road off the North Road—all within the

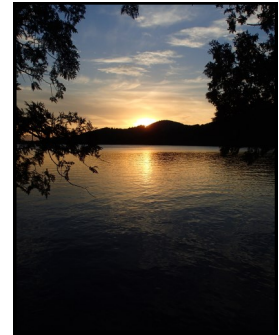
Bureau's Little Moose Public Lands outside Greenville.

However, acquisition and planning work is near completion to develop several new trailheads supporting trails in the region. New trailheads are planned for:

- ◆ #4 Mt. Trail in Frenchtown (trail constructed)
- ◆ Prong Pond Trail in Beaver Cove (trail planned)
- ◆ Rum Pond in Bowdoin College Grant West TWP

(Blue Ridge Trail—predominantly constructed)

- ◆ Vaughn Stream on the KI Rd. in Bowdoin College Grant West TWP (Blue Ridge Trail system—under construction)
- ◆ Hedgehog Pond in Bowdoin College Grant West TWP (Hedgehog Pond Trail—planned)
- ◆ Williams Mt. Trail in Misery TWP (trail constructed)



**Rum Pond—Not Far from One of Several Proposed Trailheads**

## Moosehead Trails Aids Regional Trail Maintenance

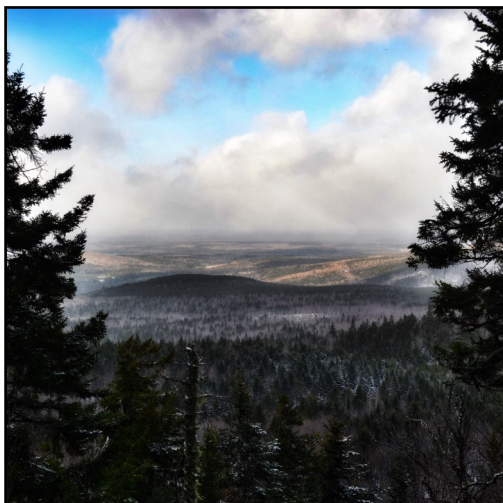
A local group, Moosehead Trails, has formed and has already made a difference for the region's trails. 2017 volunteer days took place at Lily Bay State Park, Little Moose Public Lands, and Mount Kineo State Park. The group hopes to continue growing and recruiting more volunteers in 2018 and beyond. Those looking to learn more should contact:

Erica Kaufmann,  
Erica@fsmaine.org



**Trail Volunteer at Notch Ponds Trail, Little Moose Public Lands**

*Trails need volunteer champions and stewards. Consider what you can do and step forward for trails!*



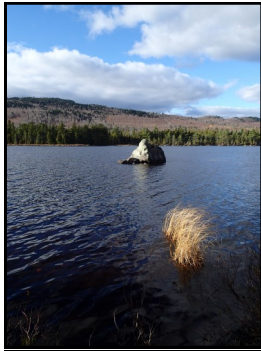
## Williams Mt. Trail Constructed, Nearing Opening

While the new Williams Mt. Trail (3.2 Mi. round trip) is constructed, there currently is no trailhead. Soon, one will be developed at the start of the trail, located four miles south of Rt. 6/15 between Rockwood Village and Jackman on the west side of the (gravel) Capital Rd. (also known as the Williams Mt. Rd.).

The hike provides the opportunity to climb above the working forests and remote ponds characterizing the lands between Misery Ridge and the Moose River. Near the summit, a small lollipop loop provides views across much of the remote lands unfurled below (see image to left).

Slightly further up to the summit, a former fire warden cabin and fire tower sit as testaments to the now-abandoned fire detection system in which wardens watched over Maine's forests from often remote lookouts. The cabin and the tower are best viewed and not ventured into/on.

## “50 Acre Donation” Supports Trailheads and Campsites



**Hedgehog Pond—  
Proposed Site for  
both Trailhead  
Access to the Blue  
Ridge and AMC  
Trails as well as  
Short Walking Path  
Pond Access**

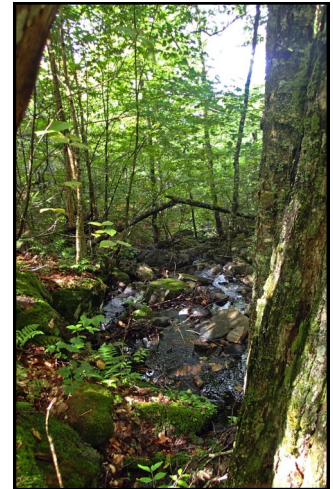
The Moosehead Lake Region Concept Plan not only provides for trail easements to be donated and funding to be made available for those trails, it also directs Weyerhaeuser to donate 50 acres to the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands for purposes including campsites and campgrounds, additional trailheads if needed, boat launches, and water access. The Bureau is directed to work with both Weyerhaeuser and the Forest Society of Maine to identify how and where the acreage will be used.

There are a number of sites proposed to support trails. These include 8 campsites

parcels associated with hiking trails and two sites (Williams Mt. and #4 Mt.) where acreage is proposed to be acquired to provide a small vista area in which views can be kept open.

Another trail-related site includes proposed parking and path access to a viewing area on Long Pond Mountain in Sandwich Academy Grant TWP.

Water access campsites are another set of sites proposed for acquisition and development. Seven sites on four water bodies are proposed. Proposed sites are located on Moosehead Lake (Big W TWP), Long Pond (Long Pond TWP), Cold Stream Pond (Parlin Pond TWP & Misery TWP), and Lucky Pond (Spencer Bay TWP). Sites on Long Pond and Moosehead Lake will help strengthen the experience along the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, which runs from Old Forge, New York to Fort Kent, ME. In the Moosehead Lake Region, it follows the Moose River and Moosehead Lake as it heads for the Upper West Branch of the



**Water Source for  
Proposed Campsite on  
the Outlet of Cranberry  
Pond, Off the Blue Ridge  
Trail.**

Penobscot River and the Allagash Wilderness Waterway.



**View over Long Pond from Proposed Byway  
Vista Site**

## “50 Acre Donation” Water Access Sites

There are 17 individual water access sites proposed for acquisition as part of the Moosehead Lake Region Concept Plan. For the most part, these small (approximately 1/2—1 acre) sites are designed to capture existing use and enable continued and improved access to the water for fishing and boating. The vast bulk of the sites are suited to hand-carry launching of canoes, kayaks, and smaller boats. Sites are well distributed across the region. Cold Stream Pond, Misery and Upper Misery Ponds, and Little Chase Stream Pond comprise the proposed sites within Misery TWP. Possible sites within Chase Stream TWP include Dead Stream Pond, Round Pond, Ellis Pond, Island Pond, and Horseshoe Pond.

Other sites include Otter Pond (Sandwich Academy Grant TWP), Parlin Stream (Long Pond TWP), Spencer Pond and Lucky Pond (Spencer Bay TWP), as well as Indian, Brown, and Hedgehog Ponds (Bowdoin College Grant TWP),



**Otter Pond—One of Numerous Pond  
Access Sites Proposed for Donation**

## Katahdin Iron Works Road Poised to have Substantially Increased Trail Opportunities.

Leading from Greenville, past Gulf Hags and Katahdin Iron Works State Historic Site, and out to Rt. 11 in Brownville, the Katahdin Iron Works Rd. (KI Rd.) is both a gravel logging road and a portal to outdoor adventures—with more options becoming available soon. Currently, the road provides access not only to the aforementioned destinations

**When all is said and done, the KI Road will serve both as a “toe in the wild” opportunity and as a jumping off point for sustained adventures.**

but also numerous trout ponds and hunting grounds, as well as AMC’s significant system of trails and lodges.

Trail construction at Blue Ridge and associated trail linkages as well as anticipated trailhead, water access, and campsite developments will add to the destinations available off this important access route to a portion of the 100-Mile Wilderness Region. With recent approval to link to the Appalachian Trail via a to-be-

constructed 3.4-mile trail (Vaughn Stream Trail), the opportunity to establish a 30+ mile backpacking network takes shape. This linkage will be comprised of the Appalachian Trail in the Barren Mt.—Gulf Hags region, existing and potential trails on the Appalachian Mountain Club’s land, and trails developed on Weyerhaeuser land through

this trail initiative. The experience of backpacking this loop would entail mountain views, pond and stream side camping, travel through both preserved and working forest lands, and crossing multiple

landowners.

For those not seeking long-distance hiking, trail and access protections will expand day-use opportunities. Day-hiking of varying distances will be available at several new trailheads as will trail running and rugged mountain biking. Paddlers and anglers will find designated access at several pond located close enough to the beaten path for relative ease of travel yet out-of-the-way enough to impart a sense

of the region’s wildness. Bird and wildlife watchers will find trail and vehicle access to numerous, diverse settings ideal for observation and photography. Winter users will find new snowshoeing options and improves access to AMC’s miles and miles of groomed Nordic ski trails.

2018 should largely wrap-up project trail work in this area, though work acquiring and developing donated trailheads, access points, and campsites may need to follow a little later. Regardless, project work—coupled with significant community investments in regional signage—will result in the KI Rd. being an even more valuable portal to a variety of outdoor pursuits nestled just east of Greenville and Moosehead Lake.



**Elephant Mountain from Blue Ridge**

**Remember: the KI Rd. is a privately-owned road used for commercial forestry. Be on the lookout and yield to logging trucks.**



**Vaughn Stream near Proposed Campsite**



**Snow Dances across Cranberry Pond**

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Trail planning and development continues to benefit from the participation of numerous groups and individuals. Weyerhaeuser, the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Forest Society of Maine, the Moosehead Lake Region Chamber of Commerce (active and retired individuals), the Town of Greenville, the Maine Land Use Planning Commission, Lily Bay State Park, and an array of local individuals have given time and energy towards aspects of planning and developing new and improved trails.



Hikers Take in the View from Eagle Rock.



### Partnership with Weyerhaeuser

With the Moosehead Lake Region Concept Plan as the guiding document, Weyerhaeuser (previously Plum Creek) has worked collaboratively with the Bureau of Parks and Lands to support trail development. When all is complete, just over 121 acres of new trail easements will be in place to support over 28 miles of new, non-motorized trails. In total, a sum of \$1 million will have gone into planning, construction, and improvement of regional hiking, biking, and winter use trails. In all, including new trail easements and new trail segments on Bureau lands, over 35 new miles of trail are anticipated across the region.

