

Conservation Values of the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument

General Description of the lands comprising the monument:

- **Approximately 87,500 acres** of primarily spruce-northern hardwoods forest, beech-birch-maple forest, and spruce-fir-broom moss forest is protected from future residential, commercial, and industrial development. The only development allowed would be that associated with recreation and conservation.
- More than **30 miles of rivers and streams**, including portions of:
 - The **East Branch of the Penobscot River**. This stretch of the river has six significant named rapids and waterfalls;
 - The **Seboeis River**;
 - **Wassataquoik Stream**, which flows out of Baxter State Park (BSP) and through two existing Maine Public Reserved Land parcels.
- **At least seven ponds** including Messer and Little Messer.
- **More than seven mountains**, several with spectacular views of the Katahdin range to the west, and the eastern slopes of other mountains located mostly within BSP.
- **Important plant and wildlife habitat** including wetlands, unusual plants and natural communities, and habitat for iconic and rare animals including moose, black bear, lynx and pine marten.

Important Conservation Role in the Landscape

- The land is **connected to other public and private conservation lands**, including Baxter State Park, the Appalachian Trail, the Debsconeag Wilderness, the 100 Mile Wilderness, and the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, and to lands protected from development by conservation easements south and west of BSP.
- The western portion of the land is part of the Beginning with Habitat “[Baxter Region Focus Area of Statewide Ecological Significance](#).” This focus area was identified by federal, state and private conservation entities using data from a variety of sources.
- The elevation diversity on the land combined with the general north-south orientation of the East Branch provides opportunities for plants and wildlife **adapting to climate change** to migrate up to higher elevations or further north.
- The East Branch watershed is **important salmon habitat** and will be even more important now that the Veazie dam on the main stem of the Penobscot River has been removed.

Uncommon and Iconic Ecological Features

- **Nine natural communities** on the property are rare in Maine. These include silver maple floodplain forest, spruce-heath barren, bluejoint meadow, and maple-basswood-ash forest.
- **Five plant species** are rare in Maine; one of them, Squirrel corn, is one of five or fewer known occurrences in the state.
- Patches of **mature forest**, including some that have never been cut, are found in several areas on the property.
- High value **salmon and native brook trout habitat** is found in this watershed.
- The area is **critical habitat for the federally listed threatened Canada lynx**.
- **Moose, black bear, fisher, deer and river otter** live in the area.
- At least **75 species of birds** have been identified on the property, including Spruce Grouse and 14 types of warblers.

Quiet Recreation Opportunities

The land provides many recreation opportunities associated with Maine's North Woods, including:

- **Hiking** – Trails along the East Branch and Wassataquoik provide easy day hiking opportunities to spectacular rapids. Several of the mountains have trails to their summits that provide expansive views. For the long distance hiker, approximately 35 miles of the International Appalachian Trail are located on the property. Other back country, multi-day hiking loops could be developed.
- **Whitewater paddling** – The upper stretches of the East Branch include multiple rapids for experienced white water paddlers.
- **Flat water paddling** – The lower reaches of the East Branch and the Seboeis River provide quiet water paddling opportunities.
- **Fishing** - All the rivers and streams on the property provide great trout fishing.
- **Biking** – Former logging roads on the property provide extensive opportunities for biking.
- **Cross-country skiing and snowshoeing** – Excellent trails for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing already exist and could be further developed.
- **Wildlife watching** – Opportunities to find and watch moose and other wildlife abound on the land. Bird watching, particularly for northern forest species, could be a very popular activity.

Above information based on written materials by Bart DeWolf, PhD, Maine Natural Areas Program, Dave Publicover, Ph.D., and Beginning with Habitat.

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