

GUIDELINES FOR SCIENTIFIC STUDIES IN BAXTER STATE PARK

Baxter State Park was donated to the people of the State of Maine by Governor Percival Baxter for the dual purposes of maintaining a portion of Maine's forest as forever wild and to provide primitive recreational opportunities to people of the State of Maine he so loved. The goals and objectives of the Authority and its staff, therefore, are to protect, preserve, and maintain the Park for those purposes.

As a set of unique ecosystems, the Park provides valuable opportunities for scientific research and study. The Authority welcomes scientific research which will assist it in understanding the Park's natural systems in order to preserve, protect, and maintain the Park, and which may also provide a basis for comparison with other natural systems.

Scientific researchers should be aware that there are three different areas within the Park. The largest area is the Sanctuary—comprising approximately 150,564 acres. It was set aside by Governor Baxter as a place where flora and fauna would be kept forever wild with negligible human impact and as reflected by these words, “Life will live, flourish, and die in nature's endless cycle,” and “The hunting of animals will be done with cameras rather than guns.” Therefore, research that adversely impacts the natural systems of this area will not be approved.

A second area is the Scientific Forest Management Area (SFMA)—consisting of 28,594 acres. This area was donated by Governor Baxter as a showplace for forestry management and research. Further hunting and trapping are allowed in this area. Scientific research that might not be acceptable in the Sanctuary could potentially be conducted in the SFMA under certain circumstances such as ensuring there are no long-term impacts to the natural systems.

Finally, there is a third area—comprising 51,500 acres (22,906 acres outside of the SFMA)—where hunting and trapping are allowed. Scientific research not tolerated in the Sanctuary might be found to be acceptable here, but with greater scrutiny than occurs in the SFMA.

The Authority wishes to emphasize that there is a balance between the Governor's clear and unequivocal desire that the Park, particularly the Sanctuary, be kept forever wild, and the need to better understand the Park in order to preserve, maintain, and protect this ecological gem. A better understanding of ecosystems is beneficial. In proposing research in the Park, researchers must be conscious of these considerations in planning any studies. Therefore, in respect to these objectives, the following criteria are used in evaluating requests for scientific research;

1. Impact to the Park. Emphasis and priority will be given to research projects that have a minimal impact on the natural resources of the Park, but consideration will be given to any reasonable scientific studies. The Park will not allow research that involves removal or destruction of geological specimens or features; construction of permanent

structures; alteration of terrain; permanent markings; or removal, destruction, or loss of life of plants and animals in the sanctuary.

According to Park donor, Percival P. Baxter, the Park is to be left in its natural wild state. The removal of any natural object, no matter how benign the impact, changes the natural state of the Park. As we enter the 21st century, the scientific interest in the Park is at an all-time high. Annually we receive requests from many researchers seeking approval for collecting organisms or objects found in the Park. At the same time the demand for primitive camping and hiking opportunities increases every year. The rapidly growing necessity for humans to be able to visit an area where, in policy and in practice, human influence is deliberately minimal, and nature rules in all its complexity, is precisely the need BSP is designed to meet. Our preservation mandate requires compromises on everyone's part including researchers. The essential question we will be asking ourselves, when considering any research proposal, but particularly one involving collecting will be, "How does this proposed action further our efforts to protect and preserve this area for all generations?" The applicant must be able to show that the project cannot be undertaken elsewhere and collection is essential to the project yet removal of the item will be benign. Considering this rationale, it should be evident that there will rarely be an instance where the value of collecting outweighs the value of preserving the Park in its natural state. It should be mentioned here that the likelihood of a permit being granted for collecting is slightly higher in the regions of the Park known as the Scientific Forest Management Area and the additional areas in which hunting and trappings are allowed. These areas represent a more actively managed approach to natural resources and generally speaking, conducting research and collecting is more appropriate in the SFMA.

2. Funding. In general, the Park will not fund scientific research from its annual budget. The Park will consider funding research that will provide data and management recommendations for specific management issues within the Park. If funding is requested, applications must be made two (2) years prior to expecting funding.
3. Applications. Applications for permission to conduct research in the Park must be made in adherence with the following categories and lead-time. The Park will circulate the proposal to a Director's Research Committee.

CATEGORY I: Requires only short-term approval (minimum of two (2) weeks notice) of Park Director. Projects in this category include any based purely on unobtrusive visual or auditory observation such as bird census, photographing fir waves, etc. This category applies to studies requiring no Park provided quarters or services, no collecting or waivers of any other Park Rules & Regulations, and no temporary site alteration (flagging, etc.).

CATEGORY II: Requires six (6) month lead-time for project approval in order to allow the Director's Research Committee and the Director to review the proposal and make recommendations. Category II proposals may, by design, request waiver of certain Park Rules & Regulations (use of playback tapes, use of snowmobile in staff

only zones, etc.), and use of Park facilities/services. The greater complexity of study design and requests necessitates more lead-time so all responsible parties are informed and have a chance to offer their recommendations.

CATEGORY III: Requires nine (9) month lead-time for project approval in order to ensure full involvement of the Authority, the Park Director, and the Director's Research Committee. Category III proposals include all requests for any sort of collecting in Baxter State Park. Category III proposals also include re-introductions and any other proposed research deemed controversial enough by the Director and DRC to warrant the required lead-time.

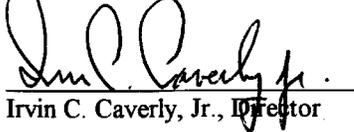
Compliance with the deadline guarantees thorough consideration of the proposal, not necessarily approval. Failure to comply with the lead-times specified in these categories is sufficient reason alone for the Park Director to deny approval of the proposal.

The application must contain the following:

1. Title
 2. Name Reseacher
 3. Researcher's credentials
 4. Benefits to be derived from the research
 5. Detailed description of research
 6. Area(s) of the Park for the research
 7. Impact on the Park
 8. Budget
 9. Timetable for research and completion of project
 10. Limited to five (5) pages
4. The Director's Research Committee. The DRC will meet in the spring and fall of each year to review applications and make recommendations to the BSP Director. Whenever possible Committee meetings will be held at the University of Maine at Orono. Agendas will precede the meetings by two (2) weeks.
 5. Permit. Research will only be allowed in the Park after a detailed description of the proposed research and the issuance of a permit by the Park's Director. The Director, upon advice of the Director's Research Committee, may attach conditions to the permit.
 6. Staff Coordination. The Park Director shall assign a staff member to monitor the research site and program. The researcher shall coordinate implementation of the research project with the appropriate Park staff.
 7. Rules, Regulations, and Fees. Researchers in the Park shall be subject to the existing Park Rules & Regulations, and fees and include justification for using Baxter State Park.

8. Revoking of Permit. The Park Director, at his discretion, at any time, may revoke the research permit by informing the researcher of the revocation, orally or in writing, and, if orally revoked, such shall be confirmed in writing.
9. Liability. The Park will not be liable for the researcher's equipment or property installed or left in the Park during the course of the project.
10. Final Report. Following the completion of a research project, all researchers are required to submit a complete report to the Baxter State Park Director identifying the results of that research project. This report must be submitted to the Director by December 31, of the year in which the research occurred. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in denial of subsequent research proposals from both the individual researcher and the supporting institutions. All reports will be kept on file for reference material at Park Headquarters, the University of Maine, and the Maine State Archives in Augusta.

Policy Statement:


Irvin C. Caverly, Jr., Director

1-12-96
Date

Approved by:


Ray B. Owen, Chair Date


Drew Ketterer Date


Charles Gadzik Date