



Baxter State Park Implements AT Hiker Permit Card System for 2016

The Baxter State Park Authority has hosted the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail since it was established by Myron Avery in 1933.

For the past decade the increasing numbers of AT long distance hikers entering the Park has been drawing the attention of Park management as the Park has applied increased resources to administer this group's unique needs.

In 1991, the total number of recorded AT long distance hikers in Baxter State Park was 359. In 2015, 2,137 AT Long Distance hikers were registered in the Park. Use of the Park by AT long distance hikers increased an average of 8% annually over this period.

Processes to limit daily access to Katahdin trails to manage visitor experience in the Park's wilderness and to protect the Park's alpine zone have been in place for 30 years for Park visitors from Maine and elsewhere, with the exception of AT long distance hikers.

To improve our management of AT long distance hikers in the years ahead and to be equitable to all Baxter State Park visitors, the Park will be implementing a new AT Long Distance Hiker Permit System in 2016.

All Northbound Thru Hikers, Section Hikers and Flip-Flop AT Hikers entering Baxter Park in 2016 will be required to secure an AT Long Distance Hiker Permit Card. Southbound AT Hikers will not be required to obtain a card.

Permit Cards must be acquired in person by the AT long distance Hiker. There will be no limit to the number of AT Long Distance Hiker Permit Cards available in 2016, and there will be no charge for the cards.

To acquire an AT Long Distance Hiker Permit Card, an AT long distance hiker will need to provide their name and trail name. The card will be dated at the time of issue and again at Katahdin Stream Campground in Baxter State Park at the time of the AT hiker's completion of their Katahdin climb.

Northbound Thru, Section and Flip-Flop AT hikers entering through the Togue Pond or Matagamon Gates will be required to show their card to the Gatehouse Attendant. An AT Long Distance Hiker Permit Card will also be required for AT long distance hikers staying at The Birches facility at Katahdin Stream Campground.

The number of AT Long Distance Hiker Permit Cards that have been issued will be posted daily on the Park's **Facebook** page and website (www.baxterstateparkauthority.com).

The Park will maintain a list of the AT long distance hikers who were issued a completion date on their card. This list will be published on the Park website at the close of the summer hiking season each year.

AT Hiker Long Distance Hiker Permit Cards will be available at a number of locations including:

- Park Headquarters in Millinocket
- Directly from the BSP/AT Steward at Abol Bridge
- Katahdin Stream Campground in Baxter State Par