



**MEMORANDUM**

Date: September 27, 2024

To: Baxter State Park Authority

From: Park Director Kevin Adam

**Subject: Park Operations Update July 1 to present**

**Finance:**

FY25, Q1 – (July - September) financial position: Will be presented in December, the quarter had not ended when this report was submitted.

**Daicey Pond Project Finance Update through September 25, 2024:**

<b>Daicey Pond Project Budget Detail through 9/25/2024</b>			
	Actual through 9/12/2024	Project Budget	Remaining Budget
<b>Revenue</b>			
Endowment	\$273,500.00	\$273,500.00	\$ -
BSP	\$ -	\$270,593.00	\$ 270,593.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$273,500.00</b>	<b>\$544,093.00</b>	<b>\$ 270,593.00</b>
<b>Expense</b>			
*Personnel and Fringe	\$133,282.60	\$299,618.62	\$ 166,336.02
<b>All Other and Capital</b>			
Building Materials	\$ 95,431.85		
Minor Equipment	\$ 19,076.27		
Safety supplies	\$ 1,172.95		
Supplies	\$ 15,458.22		
Waste Containers	\$ 2,557.02		
<b>Total All Other and Capital</b>	<b>\$133,696.31</b>	<b>\$244,474.38</b>	<b>\$ 110,778.07</b>
<b>Total Expense through 9/25/2024</b>	<b>\$266,978.91</b>		
<b>Net Revenue less Expense through 9/25/2024</b>	<b>\$ 6,521.09</b>		
<b>Remaining Budget through 9/25/2024</b>			<b>\$ 277,114.09</b>
<b>Financial Note:</b>			
Personnel Expense includes Project Superintendent, SOM Conservation Aid, Tri-State Staffing			

## **Human Resource:**

The end-of-season logistics for seasonal employees and supervisors are being coordinated. Most campgrounds will close on October 15, 2024, except for Katahdin Stream and Kidney Pond, which will close on October 22, 2024. The Gate staff, Extended Roving Rangers, and Daicey Pond Staff are expected to end on November 30, 2024.

## **Reservations:**

The Reservations Subcommittee has been established to review a prioritized list of potential changes for the upcoming 2025 season. The subcommittee's first meeting is scheduled for October 4, 2024, with the aim of developing a proposal for changes by December 1, 2024, in time for the January 15, 2025 season opening. The areas of focus include DUPRs, access before camping check-in, rolling reservations and extensions, and online reservation start time. Park staff members Lori Morrison, Bryan Buhler, and Katrina Kinkead will be involved, in addition to Advisory members.

The winter lottery will be held on Friday, November 1, 2024. Planning is underway and communication will begin during the second week of October.

The Park Headquarters reservation office will close on weekends starting October 19<sup>th</sup> for the off-season. Weekday hours will continue as Monday – Friday, 8 am - 4 pm

## **Information and Technology:**

Firewalls have been installed at the gates, and internal staff internet traffic is directed back to the Park Headquarters to mitigate the risk of outside cyber attackers and unnecessary network traffic.

Cabling at the Matagamon Gate was replaced to resolve internet issues causing data loss and latency. Performance has now returned to expected levels.

The first version of the BSP Technology Infrastructure and Purchased Services Topology has been finalized and is presently undergoing review. This document will serve as a blueprint for the physical and logical layout of the BSP network.

## **Information & Education (I&E)**

Interpretive Specialist Cassandra Knudsen organized a robust schedule of educational programs in the Park. The following programs were provided to our visitors in July, August, and September:

7/12 Nature Walk - by Joe Roy of Maine Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, Beginning with Habitat program

7/19 Lookout for Loons- by Kidney Pond Ranger Robin Stevens (in advance of the Maine Audubon annual loon count)

7/27 Wildflowers- by volunteer (and Customer Representative Sara McQuarrie

8/10 Freshwater Bioblitz- by volunteer (and Customer Representative) Sara McQuarrie

8/24 Geology walk at The Ledges- by Senior Geologist at Maine Geological Survey Lindsay Theis

8/25 Geology Walk at Howe Brook- by Senior Geologist at Maine Geological Survey Lindsay Theis

9/6 Alpine Plant Adaptations- by BSP Interpretive Intern Katie Fink

9/7 Fantastic Fungi- by BSP Interpretive Intern Chloe Tar

9/13 Bats- by BSP Interpretive Specialist Cassandra Knudsen



*(Left: Park visitors learning about freshwater aquatic ecosystems and organisms with Sara McQuarrie)*

Visiting artist Jadyne Ladeau is currently in residence at Kidney Pond, and finishing her stay on Sunday, September 29th. On Saturday and Sunday (9/28 and 9/29) she will have an open house of her works at the Kidney Pond library, as well as a painting demonstration.

On September 13-15, I&E staff (assisted by a Customer Representative from the Reservations Office) tabled at the Trail's

End festival in Millinocket. Staff answered many questions about the park and provided handouts and Junior Ranger activity books to festival attendees from near and far.

I&E staff updated the Park's Wildnotes publication, adding information on the Park's rules and regulations, and essential information for those wishing to plan a Katahdin hike. Newsletters for BSP staff in August, September, and October featured carnivorous plants, the Bear's Head Tooth (a fungus), and autumn leaf colors. They also provided information on educational programs, the K100 event, avoiding aquatic invasive introductions and spread, and reported on the progress of the iNaturalist project. The team also provided regular educational posts on the Park's Facebook page, covering Park history, natural resources, and information on safety and Park operations. The I&E staff also focused educational efforts on bear safety (and food storage) following occurrences of bears getting food from parked vehicles at Roaring Brook Campground.

Staff continue to contribute to the iNaturalist projects for the park, in many instances tracking the phenology of some species as they progress through late summer and fall. The project now has over 3,500 observations of almost 800 identified species. A final tally will be compiled at the end of the camping season.

Park rangers and the I&E staff and interns have continued performing "mountain patrols" on Katahdin, providing information and support to hikers, and collecting observations of alpine species for iNaturalist. *(Right: an educational post from the Park's Facebook page in June.)*

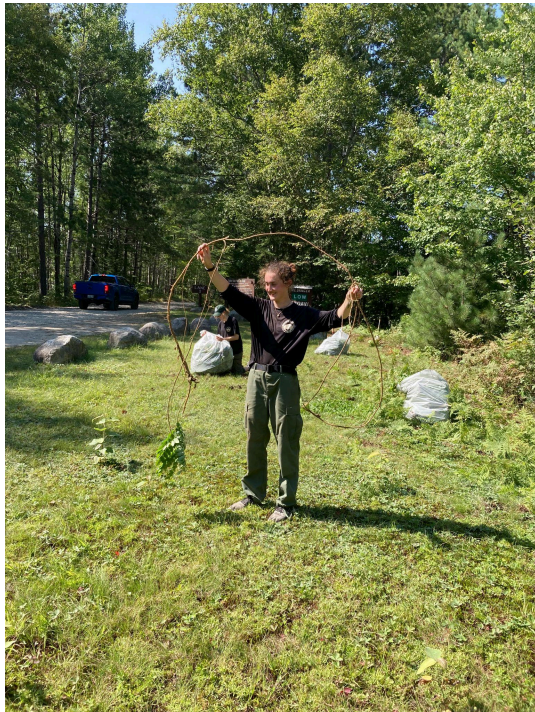
### **Natural Resources and Research**

BSP staff completed the deployment of acoustic bat detectors in the Park. The detectors are provided by Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife. Sites surveyed included recurring sites requested by IF&W (Abol Pond, Togue Pond, South Branch Pond, and along Trout Brook), new sites in the SFMA and around Katahdin Lake, and a pilot site in Katahdin's Great Basin. Results will be analyzed along with data collected around the state by IF&W and their research partners; early results show the detection of 7 out of the 8 bat species that occur in the state.

In July Park staff and volunteers participated in Maine Audubon's annual loon count, and staff have since compiled and submitted the data to Maine Audubon. In total 45 loons were observed in the Park through this survey, which represents a high number for the Park (and slightly below

last year's 51 loons counted). Once again Interpretive Specialist Cassandra Knudsen (Interpretive Specialist) turned out many participants, this year to survey 27 waterbodies- another record number since this data collection began in 2002.

Research and natural resource monitoring in July and August included rare plant surveys (by Maine Natural Areas Program and Native Plant Trust), water quality sampling (by Maine Department of Environmental Protection), Forest Inventory and Analysis plots by Maine Forest Service, spruce budworm trapping by Maine Forest Service, fish surveys in the north end of the Park by Maine Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, and ground truthing of a late succession/old growth model by Our Climate Common. Staff continued the mechanical control work of bristly locust (*Robinia hispida*) in the Park.



*(Left: intern Chloe Tardanico with the long roots of Bristly locust at a control site.)*

*(Right: State botanist Eric Doucette searches for a rare aquatic plant while loons look on.)*

The Park's Research Committee met virtually in August to review a research proposal from recent Park collaborator Andrea Tirrell. Andrea and her team proposed to include Katahdin in a newly funded, multi-year study of genotypic and phenotypic plant adaptations across alpine areas in the northeastern United States. The committee approved the project, which entailed the collection of a small number of seeds from several species that are common on Katahdin's tablelands, and researchers completed the collection shortly thereafter. The seeds will be grown in a common garden experimental design, with early results expected in about 3 years.

### **Scientific Forest Management Area (SFMA)**

The summer/fall harvest in the south end of the SFMA began in mid-June under the daily oversight of Forester Dee George. The Lynx Road has been temporarily closed to visitor vehicles



due to trucking for this harvest, and visitors have also been alerted that Wadleigh Brook Trail passes through areas of active harvest this season. The primary products from this harvest to date have been, firewood (for the Park), hardwood pulp, and spruce/fir sawlogs and studwood.

The Park contracted Horizon Forestry to complete approximately 100 acres of pre-commercial thinning (in blocks along Boody Bog road). Fourteen Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) plots were surveyed (as part of a new 10-year cycle of CFI sampling). From June to August, Forestry Intern Lou Packer (who is enrolled in a Forestry Master's program at the University of Maine) joined staff, assisting with tasks such as CFI data collection, timber harvest layout, general forest inventory, pre-commercial thinning, data entry, and harvest assessments and inspections. Lands Manager Shane Miller worked with SFMA Advisory Bob Seymour to analyze the CFI data from the last 10 years, and interpret the results for the purposes of long-term planning (and informing the near-complete draft of the 10-year management plan for the SFMA). SFMA Staff and the Advisory Committee have finalized a draft of a policy for the use of herbicides as a silvicultural tool in areas of the SFMA with failing forest regeneration. The Park Advisory Committee and the board of Friends of Baxter State Park have been provided an opportunity to review and comment on the draft before the Authority's review.

In September SFMA contractors A&A Brochu finished a complete replacement (including abutments) of the Murphy Brook bridge crossing on Brayley Ridge Road. The contractors are also preparing to partially replace (using the existing abutments) the bridge along this road that crosses Halfway Brook this fall.



*(Right: new bridge over Murphy Brook in the SFMA)*

Barrie Brusilla, forester and manager of the Austin Cary Lot forest, worked with Friends of Baxter State Park and the Harpswell Heritage Land Trust to provide a public tour of the property on September 21st. The event was fully attended by people with a wide variety of interests, who learned from Barrie and several other natural resource professionals who assisted with the tour. Shane Miller and Dee George provided a tour of the SFMA for BSP staff in August.



*(Left: forester Barrie Brusilla leading a tour of the Austin Cary Forest in Harpswell, Maine)*

## Maintenance

Maintenance Coordinator Matt Martin installed an on-demand propane water heater in the second Ranger Cabin at Roaring Brook. This cabin had never previously had hot water. Additionally, he replaced a water heater at Trapper John and two water heaters at the SFMA Hemlock Camps, all of which had reached the end of their useful lives. Matt took steps to improve the plumbing at all these locations and with a technician from Dead River completed the final inspection, leak testing, and sign-off on the work.

Matt investigated a plumbing drain issue related to the septic system that serves the Visitor Center and Trapper John cabins. It was discovered that the leach field, installed in 1993, had failed due to tree root intrusion. Maintenance Supervisor Keith Wehmeyer worked with Edward MacArthur, a local septic designer, on the design and permitting of a replacement leach; the new field will use pre-cast concrete to mitigate future root issues. The field is being installed the week of 9/23 by Adam Qualey, a local contractor.

Matt has also done various propane projects including appliance repairs and tank swaps. Additionally, Matt hiked to Chimney Pond to assist in the replacement of the propane platforms on the Ranger Camp and Crew Cabin with construction being led by Supervisory Carpenter David Fogg and assisted by Chimney Pond Campground Ranger Andy Borth. Matt will make an additional hike to finish the project and reconnect tanks on 9/30. Matt also replaced the entry door to the Ranger office at Nesowadnehunk with assistance from Ranger Sean Sturmer.

When not occupied elsewhere Matt has assisted with the Daicey Pond project, leading the demolition of Cabin 4 placing the concrete disc footings for the new cabin, and installing foam backer rods between logs on multiple cabins.

Field Heavy Vehicle and Equipment Tech Frank George brought the New Holland farm tractor to the shop and completed a service. Later in the month, he used the tractor to mow the edge of the Tote Road from the southern boundary of the Park to the Lynx Road on the North End. Frank has serviced multiple vehicles since the last update, completing a brake job, radio and electrical repairs, and bodywork. He has replaced bearings on multiple trailers and serviced several lawnmowers, water pumps, and other small engine equipment. Frank also hauled gravel from the Park's East Branch pit to the SFMA for emergency road repairs and made multiple trips to various park locations to check solar batteries. Matt, Frank, and Maintenance Mechanic Jamie McQuarrie made additional trips to the SFMA to service generators, equipment, and tarp a shed roof due for replacement next season.



**Figure 1. Propane Platform, Chimney Pond**

McQuarrie spent multiple days at Trout Brook Farm mowing the field with the Farm Tractor. Trout Brook Farm and Nesowadnehunk Field are each mowed once every two years in accordance with the Park's operating plan. Jamie made multiple field repairs to park vehicles and small engine equipment and assisted Frank with other repairs in the shop as well. Jamie has played a critical role in assisting the Daicey Pond cabins project, frequently traveling to local sawmills and other locations to pick up and deliver materials to Daicey and keep the project moving. He has also spent time at Daicey assisting with chinking between logs and helping Matt place the footings for Cabin 4.

Maintenance and Transportation Supervisor Keith Wehmeyer has been working with the New England Outdoor Center to coordinate the replacement of the bridge over Rum Brook on the Logan Pond Road in the Park. This road is not used for Park operations but has an easement for the Millinocket Middle School and Nature Conservancy to access its properties. It is also a major snowmobile connector to locations outside the park. The replacement of the bridge is not being funded by the park, but Keith is overseeing the replacement with the assistance of Land Manager Shane Miller. In-stream work will be completed before 10/1.

Keith is also facilitating stream restoration surveys and planning on three crossings on the North End of the Park: South Branch Campground, Dry Brook, and Littlefield Brook. These crossings were chosen by Keith, along with Shane and Chief Ranger Matt McGuire. Surveys and restoration planning are being completed by Stream Restoration Specialist Alex Abbott. These three surveys are in addition to the survey work already done at Bear Brook on the Roaring Brook Road, with restoration plans expected to be received over the winter. Once the surveys are completed and plans received park staff will be able to budget and prioritize the crossing projects.

Keith has also been planning a new solar installation at the Visitor Center with work beginning this fall and being completed in the Spring. The new installation will allow for increased power capacity at the Visitor Center and the addition of internet access for staff to use to assist operations. Keith has also spent multiple days doing cedar shingle work at Daicey Pond as time has allowed.

In addition to all other department planning and coordination, Keith has continued to oversee and schedule the pumping of the Park's outhouse and septic tanks. So far over 20,000 gallons of waste has been pumped this season from 40-plus outhouses and 4 septic tanks. He is also working with Inventory and Supply Associate Deanna Madore to coordinate propane and vehicle fuel deliveries throughout the park.

From 9/18 through 9/20 Keith attended Maine Development Foundation's Institute for Civic Leadership kickoff at Outward Bond locations in Wheeler Bay and at Burnt Island. This is the beginning of an 8-month program that meets twice monthly. The Institute for Civic Leadership curriculum is designed for leaders from all sectors to learn individually and as a cohort. Participants hone collaborative, facilitative, and inclusive leadership skills through carefully designed exercises.



## **Daicey Pond Project**

Park Supervisory Carpenter David Fogg and the Daicey Pond Crew comprised of Crew Leader Jesse Laport, Dawson McKenney, Andrew Brandt, and Josh Roeder, have completed all structural repairs on Cabins 1, 3, 5, and 9. Cabin 9 received major repairs with the multiple sill logs, entire sections of walls, and the complete roof structure being replaced. All cabins with completed structural repairs have also had exterior chinking, roof trim, and window and door opening modifications completed. These cabins are ready for metal roofing installation which will begin on 9/25 with work being done by a local contractor. Roving Rangers Alex Mangus, Robert Sweinhart, Daicey Pond Ranger Mike Downs, and the Maintenance Department have assisted as time has allowed.

Cabin 4 is one of two complete rebuilds at Daicey. Footers and sill logs were placed during the third week of September and the main portion of the structure and roof are nearing completion.



*Figure 2. Cabin 9, Daicey Pond*

## **Trails**

At the time of the last report in mid-August the BSP Trail Crew had wrapped up their second of three forty-hour work weeks at Chimney Pond, the Baxter Youth Corps was wrapping up their summer program building abutments for a bridge on OJI, and the first of two contracted Maine Conservation Corps was finishing their 8-week contract here in Baxter State Park. Since then, the BSP Trail Crew continued their efforts in remote regions of the park, the second MCC crew



completed their contract, and a couple of Adopt-a-Trail volunteers have visited the park to maintain their assigned trails.

### **BSP Trail Crew**

Starting on Monday, August 12th, the Trail Crew returned to Chimney Pond for their third 40-hour work week. At that time the crew was able to divide and conquer to work on two different projects. Trail Specialist Kris English led a rotating cast of crew members in rebuilding the stone retaining wall that supports the streambank on the eastern side of the Upper Saddle Brook crossing. This wall is a critical piece that supports the 30' bridge over the flood channel crossing.



*Figure 3. The first tiers begin to take shape underneath the Upper Saddle Brook Bridge*

While Kris led the retaining wall project, Trail Supervisor Brennan Turner visited the crew to get them started on replacing and repairing some of the bog bridging on the Chimney Pond Trail around Basin Ponds. The crew prioritized the replacement of bog bridging that was critically damaged in recent flooding events and then removed individual sections that were showing excessive rot and deterioration. In total, approximately 71' of bog bridging was replaced, and 32 stones were set in the retaining wall.



**Figure 4. A newly rebuilt section of elevated bog bridging on the Chimney Pond Trail**

Following the completion of our third 40-hour hitch at Chimney Pond, the trail crew came off the mountain and spent the next two weeks attending to a myriad of smaller projects. The crew replaced the remainder of the bog bridging at the Grassy Pond outlet along the AT totaling approximately 90' of bog bridging. They also returned to Sandy Stream Trail to continue our efforts of replacing the rotten bog bridging around the pond. The crew replaced approximately 50' of bog bridging, but several hundred feet of old boards remain to be replaced in future seasons. Additionally, two crew members broke away from the rest of the crew to brush back the trail corridor of the Kidney Pond Trail from its crossing of Nesowadnehunk Stream to the junction with the Sentinel Mountain Trail. Finally, in their two-week-long break from backcountry projects, the crew and Supervisor Turner worked together to set up a highline over the new OJI bridge project and were able to harvest, prep, and fly local timbers to the bridge site and into place on the abutments built by the Baxter Youth Corps earlier this season. Two out of eight total stringers



are set, and the other six are on site and ready for the next phase. The crew will continue to work on this project in October, but the project will be completed by the Baxter Youth Corps in the summer of 2025.



***Figure 5. Spruce bridge stringer is high-lined into position to form the ramp of the new OJI bridge crossing.***

Starting on Wednesday, September 4th, the Trail crew began its first of two “8-day hitches” in the backcountry. When tackling big projects that are far from the trailhead, the trail crew will often work what's commonly called an “8-day hitch”. These are eight ten-hour days, typically worked from Wednesday to Wednesday, and are camped out in the field. This is an effective way to get lots of work done without losing a significant amount of time hiking in and out of the project each day. The first 8-day hitch was on the Hunt Trail, where the crew continued our work on the Hunt Trail Relocation that was started sometime around 2016. The crew was tasked with building a large arcing stone staircase that carries the trail around a challenging climbing turn, but despite the cold nights, repeated bear sightings, and some rainy days the crew was able to build an exceptional structure that will prevent erosion and minimize hiker impact for decades to come. 15 stone steps were set, and many square feet of riprap were placed to prevent erosion around the staircase.





***Figures 6. Crew Member Mia Hayes drills and splits granite for the stone staircase project.***

Following the completion of the 8-day Hunt Trail hitch, the trail crew had six days off, before returning to Chimney Pond for our second and final 8-day hitch. The crew began their hitch by continuing their efforts on the retaining wall underneath Upper Saddle Brook Bridge. The crew found that it was difficult and unsafe to continue building the wall underneath the bridge, and the decision was made to postpone bridge replacement until next season when we would have more time to demolish the bridge, finish building the retaining wall, and replace the bridge without the time crunch of the impending conclusion of the trail crew season. We placed temporary shims



underneath the existing undercut streambank and armored it with stone. We will return to this project early in the 2025 summer season.



***Figure 7. Upper Saddle Brook Bridge and the armored streambank***

Once the decision was made to postpone the bridge replacement, the trail crew and Supervisor Turner took a day to climb up onto the Tablelands to perform some maintenance on the braided Saddle Trail, and to hide some of our tools and supplies on the mountain. The bag of string fencing stakes that were flown up onto the mountain earlier this season has been stashed behind boulders out of sight from the trail, and the flight bag hiked off the mountain. Additionally, the crew was able to disassemble and hide the steel tripods from last year's Highline operation. Once the equipment was hidden, the crew took time to repair and improve some of the scree walls that delineate the Saddle Trail to keep hikers on the trail and reduce impact on the surrounding area. These scree walls will be paired with additional improvements that will encourage hikers to stay on the trail and slow down the impacts of rain-induced erosion.





**Figure 8.** Crew Leader Emily builds a scree wall to delineate the trail and encourage hikers not to walk on the social trail seen to the left.

The crew wrapped up their time at Chimney Pond a couple of days early, and the crew is currently up in the north end of the park removing blowdowns from the Frost Pond and Wadleigh Brook trails. They will conclude their final 8-day hitch on September 25th. Their last two weeks of the season will be spent working on the OJI bridge.

In between visiting and leading the trail crew Trail Supervisor Brennan Turner has been inspecting bridges, surveying trails, planning future projects, installing new trail signs, replacing worn-out structures along Togue Beach, and checking in on the Maine Conservation Corps trail crew.

### **Maine Conservation Corps**

Our second contracted Maine Conservation Corps crew arrived on Monday, September 2nd. They spent two weeks working in the north end of the park. During their two weeks in Baxter State Park the MCC crew was able to brush back the corridor and refresh the paint blazes of the Center Ridge Trail from the Pogy Notch Junction to the summit of Peak of the Ridges. Once they had completed this priority project, they were then able to climb to the summit of North Traveler and descend into the valley between North Traveler and the Traveler to brush back the dense

spruce forest that had completely obscured the trail. Finally, they brushed back the corridor and refreshed paint blazes for approximately five miles along the Pogy Notch Trail south of South Branch Campground. This crew did an exceptional job and completed a lot of maintenance that had been deferred for many years.

### **Adopt-a-Trail Volunteers**

Since the last report, volunteers have reported 17 hours of maintenance on the Rum Pond and Marston Trails. More hours may be reported later this season.

### **Operations**

In addition to the daily and weekly operational routines, project work completed by Law Enforcement (LE), Supervisory, and Campground Rangers includes:

- Hazard tree removal
- Chimney Pond compost run
- Firewood stacking
- Outhouse painting and repair work
- Blazing on the Dudley Trail
- Gravel work on trails and campsites
- Mowing at Trout Brook Farm
- Russell Pond helipad maintenance
- New flagpoles at Togue Pond Gatehouse and Russell Pond
- Ongoing removal of blowdowns from trails
- Chainsaw maintenance
- Kidney Pond Library chimney replacement
- Plumbing at Trout Brook Farm year-round camp.

LE Ranger Laura Whitney was sworn in as a Certified Law Enforcement Officer by Director Kevin Adam. Laura completed the final 80 hours of supervised field training and firearms proficiency and can now enforce state laws in addition to BSP rules. Laura will attend the 18-week Basic Law Enforcement Training Program (BLETP) at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy, located in Vassalboro, later this winter. The 18-week BLETP is required for all full-time Maine law enforcement officers.





*Figure 9. Director Kevin Adam swearing in LE Ranger Laura Whitney.*

Baxter State Park Law Enforcement and Campground Rangers assisted the Maine Forest Service (MFS) with the Clifford Ridge wildfire off the park's southwest boundary in the vicinity of Rainbow Lake. Five staff members provided fire suppression and mop-up efforts over two days on this remote lightning-generated fire. The location of the fire on a series of steep ledges prevented the MFS from



*Figure 10. LE Rangers Laura Whitney and Justine Rumaker conducting mop-up*



being able to fully utilize aerial water drops. As a result, Baxter staff were critical in putting out the fire. MFS and Baxter State Park continue to coordinate for fire suppression within and near the park's boundaries.

At the end of August and through most of September the southern end of the Park has seen regular bear activity. A sow and two yearlings caused damage to vehicles and became a nuisance at Roaring Brook campground. LE Rangers used non-lethal methods including shotgun bean bag rounds, noisemakers, and paintball rounds to keep the bears away. In order to protect the animals and visitors LE and Campground Rangers heavily patrolled the area and conducted



education and outreach regarding food storage. Handouts were provided to visitors at the Togue Pond gatehouse and Roaring Brook. Additional areas of bear sightings include Abol Campground, the section of the Tote Road between Abol and Katahdin Stream, the Hunt and OJI Trails. Lean-to 5 at Russell Pond was recently closed due to bear and coyote predation on a moose carcass in the vicinity of that site.

*Figure 11. Bear damage to a camper's vehicle.*

**Law Enforcement Rangers issued a summons and/or warning for the following violations in Baxter State Park during the reporting period:**

- Camping without a reservation
- Camping in an unauthorized area, w/o reservation
- Use or possession of a UAV
- Fish w/worms in ALO Water
- No animals in the Park
- Fraudulent Obtaining of ME Resident Fishing License
- Camping in an unauthorized area, w/reservation
- Imprudent Speed, vehicle crash
- Theft

**Appalachian Trail**

The Park has registered 1,963 AT hikers through September 22, with 1,519 traveling Northbound and 444 traveling Southbound. These numbers are consistent with 2023 numbers for this time of year. Information provided at the AT Kiosk, the Katahdin Stream Ranger Station, and the daily

5:00 PM talk to AT hikers camping at the Birches, has reduced incidents and allowed the Park to provide constructive messaging and assist hikers with logistics. Supervisory Ranger Bruce White, Campground Rangers Pete Sweeney and Brandon DeCleene, AT Ranger Don Bolduc, and ATC Golden Road Ridegerunner Melonie Schuck, have played critical roles in educating and assisting AT hikers.

### **Search and Rescue**

BSP staff were involved with 20 search and rescue and/or medical incidents during the reporting period. Helicopters were used in two incidents, a medical evacuation from Wassataquoik lean-to and another related to a broken arm off of the Abol Trail. Mountain patrols continue throughout the week with an emphasis on preventative search and rescue (PSAR), responding to incidents on the trails, and collection of trail activity data.