



## GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH WITHIN BAXTER STATE PARK

### CRITERIA FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

Baxter State Park (BSP) 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 the people of Maine. The goals and objectives of the Baxter State Park Authority and park staff, therefore, are to protect, preserve and maintain the park for those purposes.

Baxter State Park provides valuable opportunities for scientific research and study. The BSP Authority welcomes scientific research that will assist it in understanding the park's natural and cultural systems in order to preserve, protect and maintain the park, and which may provide a basis for comparison with other natural systems or changes over time.

The essential questions the Research Committee will be asking when considering a research proposal is "How will this research further our understanding of the park and our efforts to protect and preserve this area for future generations?" This, and Governor Baxter's guidance, form the foundation for the following criteria used to evaluate proposals:

1. *Benefit to the Park.* Will this research further our understanding of the park or benefit management efforts?
2. *Specificity.* Is this research specific to Baxter State Park? Can the research objectives be met without inclusion of BSP as a site?
3. *Impact.* Does this research involve collecting specimens? What effect will the research have (or potentially have) on any natural resources or visitor experiences in the park?

For any research proposal involving specimen collection, the applicant must be able to show that collecting is essential to the project and that removal of the materials will be benign. The value of collecting must outweigh the value of preserving the park in its natural state. If the research is approved, the applicant will also be required to obtain a conditional use permit.

4. *Park Rules.* Will the researcher be requesting a waiver of certain Park Rules and Regulations (e.g., use of callback recordings, use of snowmobiles outside of the Tote Road, etc.)?

The applicant must demonstrate that such activity is critical to the project and will have no negative impact to park resources, or a minimal impact that will be outweighed by the value of the research to the park. If the research is approved, the applicant will also be required to obtain a conditional use permit.

## THE PROPOSAL PROCESS

Those considering research in Baxter State Park must submit proposals by **February 1st** of each year. Proposals for multi-year projects need only to be submitted and reviewed once.

Research proposals are only accepted electronically. Visit the BSP website (<https://baxterstatepark.org/activities-requiring-permits/>) or contact the [Natural Resources Director](#) for application instructions.

The BSP Research Committee meets on the **first Friday in March** of each year to review and make decisions on research proposals. Researchers or their designees are invited to present their proposals at this meeting and to answer the Committee's questions. Based on the initial application, review, presentation and discussion, the Committee will make a recommendation to the Natural Resource Director to accept or deny the research request, and the Natural Resource Director makes a final decision.

Proposals must include:

- Research/study title
- Application submission date
- Name(s), title(s), and affiliation(s) of Principle Investigator(s)
- Name(s), title(s), and affiliation(s) of key project personnel and collaborators
- A brief summary of all researchers' credentials, including relevant experience conducting research in wilderness/backcountry settings. CVs or resumes may be included as attachments in addition to the summaries.
- A description of the proposed research (limited to 3 pages), including:
  - Research objectives
  - Data collection methods
  - Study sites in the Park and how they will be accessed, and other logistical considerations (crew size, accommodation needs)
  - Time table for research and project completion, including dates of interim and final reports to BSP
  - Data and specimen archiving plan with access for BSP
  - Expected final products (e.g., published journal articles, maps, web-based applications)
  - Funding sources
- Answers to the following questions:
  - Does this research require work in Baxter State Park specifically? (i.e., can the research objectives be accomplished without work in BSP?).

- What impacts will the research have on the natural resources, operations, and visitors of the Park (including both known and potentially unintended impacts)?
- What benefit will the research have for Baxter State Park?
- Will the proposed research involve collection of natural materials? If so, explain why it is essential to the study and how its impacts will be minimized.
- Will the proposed research require a waiver to any park rules, regulations, or policies (besides the collection of natural materials)? If so, explain why the waiver is essential to the study and how negative impacts will be avoided. Refer to the park website for the rules and regulations ([baxterstatepark.org/rules-and-permits](http://baxterstatepark.org/rules-and-permits)).

*For projects affecting vertebrates, proposals must include evidence of review and approval by the applicant's governing Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.*

*For projects affecting visitors or staff, proposals must include evidence of review and approval by the applicant's governing Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects.*

## 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 years in advance, and include a proposed budget including all other funding sources.

## RESEARCH REPORTS

All researchers are required to submit a complete report to the Baxter State Park Natural Resource Director summarizing the results of that research project. This report must be submitted by **no later than one year from the last data collection or field session in the park**. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in denial of subsequent research proposals from both the individual researcher and the supporting institution. All reports will be kept on file for reference material at park headquarters.

Researchers are invited and encouraged to present their findings at the March meeting of the Research Committee following the submission of their final report.

For multi-year projects, the researcher shall, at the end of each research season, submit a progress report with any preliminary findings by **December 31st of each year**. The researcher may be asked to present a progress report to the Research Committee at its March meeting the year following each research season.

Final reports must include:

1. Project title
2. Abstract
3. Methods
4. Discussion of findings
5. Recommendations or need for future research

6. Instructions for access to data and specimens

Progress reports must include:

1. Project title
2. Stage of project (e.g. year 1 of 3)
3. Preliminary findings/observations
4. Synopsis of work expected to take place the following year and remaining until project completion.
5. If a need is anticipated, a request to change any methodology, timetable, etc.