

THE INTERNATIONAL APPALACHIAN TRAIL IN MAINE

INTRODUCTION

The Maine section of the IAT/SIA is 130 miles (211kms) long. Heading north from the Katahdin Lake East (KLE) Access trailhead of Baxter State Park, the route passes through boreal forests and follows trails, old logging roads, an abandoned railroad bed, and rural public roads to the potato fields of Aroostook County. Beyond Fort Fairfield, the trail enters New Brunswick.

Getting to Baxter State Park (BSP)

By bus: busses leave from Logan Airport and Boston's South Station to Portland Maine and from Portland to Bangor. Transfer to Cyr Bus Service. Buy one ticket from Boston to Medway, Maine (near Millinocket) at South Station from Concord Coach Lines; 1-800-639-3317–
www.concordcoachlines.com.

By train: Instead of taking the bus in Boston, you can take the Amtrak Train which leaves several times daily from Boston's North Station to Portland's combined train and Concord Coach Lines bus station. www.amtrak.com.

Cyr Bus Service: Services Bangor, Medway, Houlton, Mars Hill, Bridgewater, Monticello; (207) 827-2335 and 1-800-244-2335.

Medway: Cyr buses stop at a gas station convenience store (1) right off of I-95. Traffic flows toward Millinocket on Maine 157, then on to BSP, so hitchhiking is usually fairly easy. You can also call Katahdin Taxi, (207) 723-2000 or 1-800-USA-TAXI, which will take you to the Baxter State Park entrance. Medway has few services along ME 157. Lodging: Katahdin Shadows Motel and Campground, 1-800-794-5267 or (207) 746-5162.

Millinocket: Post Office 04462: (207) 723-5921 Most major services are available in the Millinocket area, especially in the strip mall east of town on ME 157, where you'll find lodging: Best Western (207) 723-9777; Pamola Motor Lodge, 1-800-575-9746 and Motel; grocery stores, a pharmacy, fast-food chains, a bank with ATM, and the administrative offices of Baxter State Park. In-town lodging: Appalachian Trail Lodge, (207) 723-4321.

IAT-SIA Official Route (Maps to assist following the trail route description are available on the Maine Chapter's Website: www.internationalatmaine.org.)

The International Appalachian Trail begins at the Katahdin Lake East (KLE) Access of Baxter State Park that can be reached via the Katahdin Lake Trail from the Avalanche Field parking area located **1.5** miles south of the Roaring Brook Campground on the Roaring Brook Road. From Avalanche Field, follow the Katahdin Lake Trail **3.1** miles to Katahdin Lake Wilderness Camps. The South Katahdin Lake Trail begins here and reaches the Baxter State Park KLE Access in **1.8** miles. [The facilities and trails mentioned above are in Baxter State Park. Pets are not allowed in the park and reservations are required at all overnight facilities within the park. Reservations can be made by contacting: Reservations Clerk, Baxter State Park Authority, 64 Balsam Drive, Millinocket, ME 04462, telephone (207) 723.5140 or www.baxterstateparkauthority.com for park information, rules, and rates.]

After signing out at the Registration Box, follow the old logging road **0.4** mile to the intersection with the Gardner Rd. (IAT/SIA post), from which one can see Katahdin to the west and Barnard Mt. to the north. Follow the Gardner Rd. north about **2.4** miles, cross Katahdin Brook downstream of the large ditch in the road using the bypass that has been flagged and tagged. Continue up a long grade to an intersection with a logging road (IAT/SIA post). Turn right and continue east on the logging road, circling Barnard Mountain and continuing to the intersection of the old Wassataquoik Tote Rd. at **5** miles (IAT/SIA post). Follow the Wassataquoik Tote Rd. south **0.5** mile to the Wassataquoik lean-to and campsite.

From the Wassataquoik campsite, the trail continues south on the Wassataquoik Tote Rd, crossing Katahdin Stream and following the top of a steep esker. At **0.5** mile (IAT/SIA post) a trail to the left leads down to the Wassataquoik Stream ford (**see note below about fording in high-water**). Cross the stream a few yards upstream where it is shallower. Walking across the stream aim for an IAT tag on a large tree. After the ford, the trail follows the east bank of the stream for about **1** mile. The trail then turns east, crosses a gravelly area and the mouth of a tributary (some wading may be required) and ascends a steep bank where it shortly joins the Keep Path, the location of the original Appalachian Trail to the summit of Katahdin. The trail, running southeast, edges close to Wassataquoik Stream one last time and crosses a small tributary before turning northeast. At about **0.5** mile from the tributary, the trail leaves the Keep Path and turns northeast and climbs up to the col between Deasey Mt. and a small unnamed hill to the south.

The IAT skirts the nose of Deasey Mt. starting in second growth hardwoods, passing the house sized boulder, "Earl's Erratic", crossing Owen Brook (water source) and wandering through an old growth forest of hemlock, pine, spruce and birch. After **2.3** miles, the trail turns north (laminated sign) and climbs over the east ridge of Deasey on. At **2.7** miles a short spur trail (east) leads to a fine viewpoint overlooking the East Branch of the Penobscot River. The trail then descends slowly through a stand of old hemlock for **0.4** mile to the abandoned Warden's cabin. From the cabin the trail begins a steep, **0.8** mile climb towards the summit of Deasey Mt., turning right (northwest) just below the summit. A short spur trail leads to the summit of Deasey and the historic "Ground Cab" fire lookout, which provides fine 360° views. From the junction with the summit spur trail, the IAT drops into a col before climbing back to the summit ledges of Lunksoos Mt. in **1** mile, with views of Sugarloaf and Chase Mountains and the East Branch Penobscot River Valley below. From summit ledges, the IAT descends **1** mile towards the Lunksoos lean-to campsite, reaching an old, overgrown tote road in **0.6** mile that it follows west to the campsite (IAT/SIA post just before entering campsite). A side trail to a spring is located on the left, a short distance before the campsite.

From the Lunksoos campsite, the IAT follows an abandoned logging road west **0.5** mile to the Messer Pond/Orin Falls Rd. (IAT/SIA post). The IAT turns north and follows this road **3** miles to a logging road entering on the right (IAT/SIA post). Follow this logging road east about **1.2** miles, fording Little Hathorn Brook below the former location of a bridge, to the intersection with the Eagle Lake Tote Rd. Turn left on the Eagle Lake Tote Rd. and follow it north. In about **0.25** mile, the Tote Rd. approaches the East Branch of the Penobscot River near the site of the old Little Spring Brook Fish Hatchery, the first Atlantic Salmon hatchery in the United States. For the next **5** miles, the IAT follows the Eagle Lake Tote Rd., more or less paralleling the East Branch of the Penobscot River to the Grand Pitch Lean-to and campsite.

About two miles of this section crosses private land that is not an “official” part of the IAT/SIA. The landowner has not been known to prohibit walking across this section. You will also pass an intersection with the trail to Bowlin Camps, an historic set of sporting camps on the other side of the river (via snowmobile bridge) that accepts hikers for a meal or overnight stay in a camp or bunkhouse. Toilets, a shower, and laundry facilities are also available. Contact the camps for availability and rates: www.bowlincamps.com; 207.528.2022. After the junction with the **Bowlin Camps trail**, continue a short distance on a flat section. After approximately thirty yards uphill, the IAT (Eagle Lake Tote Road) turns right. Look for trail tags on trees and distance sign on town line (blue marked trees)

From the Grand Pitch campsite, the IAT continues north on the Eagle Lake Tote Rd., following the river closely for about **2** miles and passing several rapids and MFS river campsites. At Haskell Deadwater, the road/trail turns west, leaving the river. After **2.5** miles the trail returns to the East Branch near the site of Thoreau’s 1857 Checkerberry-tea Camp. In another **0.7** mile, the trail rejoins the Messer Pond/Orin Falls Rd. (IAT/SIA post) and continues northerly for **2** miles to the Grand Lake Road and Matagamon Wilderness Campground and store. (A map of this section is available online.) The Matagamon Wilderness Campground, the first store outside Baxter State Park, and a commercial campground, (camping supplies, coin operated showers but no laundry or public phone) is located on the north side of the Grand Lake Road immediately after crossing the bridge across the East Branch of the Penobscot River. Continue along the paved Grand Lake Road to Shin Pond Village, a distance of about **13.7** miles.

Wassataquoik Stream Crossing: During high-water it may impossible to safely cross Wassataquoik Stream. When this is the case, hikers should continue south on the Wassataquoik Stream Rd. about **3.5** miles to where an overgrown tote road enters from the east. Follow this path, more or less paralleling Wassataquoik Stream, for **1.5** miles until it meets the Eagle Lake Tote Rd., just south of the Wassataquoik Stream. After crossing the bridge, follow the road to the right, up a steep grade for about **0.1** mile to where the Deasey Mt/Keep Path leaves to the left. Follow this road northwest for **3** miles where it rejoins the IAT below “Earl’s Erratic”. A small portion of this alternate route is located on private land and is not an “official” part of the trail, but the landowner has not been known to prohibit walking on its land.

Drinking Water: Water is available along or adjacent to the trail and campsites. Hikers should not assume that it is always safe to drink without treating with a disinfectant, filtering, or boiling for at least 5 minutes.

NOTE: RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED AT ALL BAXTER PARK OVERNIGHT FACILITIES. RESERVATIONS MAY BE MADE BY CONTACTING:

THE BAXTER STATE PARK AUTHORITY
RESERVATION CLERK
65 BALSAM DRIVE
MILLINOCKET, MAINE 04462
www.baxterstateparkauthority.com
207-723-5140

Shin Pond, Maine:

Shin Pond is the home of the Shin Pond Village Campground, as well as stores, restaurants, and

lodging. Camp Wapiti, a sporting camp, is located **2** miles west of Shin Pond at the end of dirt road located just to the north of the bridge over Shin Pond Brook. Just south of the bridge, on the right, is the Wilderness Variety Store. At this point, the Grand Lake Road becomes State Highway 159 and heads southeast out of the village toward Patten, Maine. Stay on Route 159 and in **3.1** miles reach the Shin Pond Pub, located on the left (east) side of the road at the junction of Highway 159 and the Owlsboro Road. To continue toward Mars Hill, turn east on the Owlsboro Road and follow it **4.6** miles to State Highway 11. From this point on to Bridgewater, each trail/road junction is marked by an official Maine Department of Transportation road sign with directional arrows. It is **9.1** miles south to Patten, Maine.

Patten, Maine:

*Post Office (04765) is located **4.6** miles south, just off Route 11 in the village of Patten. Also available in Patten are a grocery store, bank, and restaurant facilities as well as a small motel and bed and breakfast. The Patten Lumberman's Museum is located on Route 159 is well worth a visit.*

Turn north on Route 11 and reach Halls Corner and the Moro Road (Town Line Road) **4.8** miles north of Owlsboro Road. Follow the Town Line Road due east towards Smyrna Mills. After traveling east on the Town Line Road for **7.6** miles, pass a yellow farmhouse on the left, north side of the road. Just beyond this house, look for an IAT/SIA campsite sign with a tag, on the north side of the road. Follow the farm field road, at that point, up the hill to the north for **0.5** miles. Near the top of the hill, turn west at the tag and, in 300 yards, the Roach Farm Campsite and lean-to (sleeps six) are located. Water is located by following the field road to the edge of the woods and then south on the edge of the field to a small pond. Return to the Town Line Road and turn left. In another **3** miles, reach a junction with Route 2. Turn left, north, on Route 2 and continue to the village of Smyrna Mills in **0.5** mile.

Smyrna Mills, Maine

Smyrna Mills includes a post office (04780, and The Yellow House B & B (207) 757-8797)

Immediately after a junction with State Route 212 in Smyrna Mills, cross the East Branch of the Mattawamkeag River on the highway bridge and in **0.1** mile more, the Bangor and Aroostook Railway line is reached. Continue east on Route 2 to the Smyrna Center Road on the left. Up to this point, the entire trip has been within the Penobscot River drainage. Soon after passing the Smyrna Center Road, cross from the Penobscot River drainage into that of the Saint John River; the IAT will remain in this watershed all the way to the slopes of Mt. Carleton in New Brunswick. At **2.3** miles beyond the Smyrna Center Road, Interstate 95 crosses above Route 2 on a highway bridge. Just beyond the overpass is the Brookside Motel and Restaurant. From here it is **0.8** mile farther to the Ludlow Town Line where a paved town road (Ludlow Town Line Road) enters on the left (North) side of Route 2. Leave Route 2 at this point and follow this town road to the north for **0.4** mile to the Ludlow Road and turn to the right (East) on the Ludlow Road. From the Ludlow town line on Route 2, it is about **10** miles farther east to the town of Houlton, Maine, on the Ludlow Road.

Houlton, Maine

A large town (population 5,267) which is a regional shopping hub and has a full complement of shopping, banking, lodging, post office (04530) and other services.

All services (except PO) available around Ludlow Rd. / I-95 area: ATM Pharmacy, Burger King, Hospital (near McDonalds), Pizza Hut, IGA grocery (3), Chinese restaurant. Ivey's Motel and Lounge, (207) 532-4206 or 1-800-244-4206; Shiretown Motor Inn, 1-800-441-9421, www.shiretownmotorinn.com, pool, laundry, restaurant/bar. Wal-Mart, Big Stop Diner in Irving Station, York's Dairy Bar, ATM's N and S of interchange, Exxon food mart (2).

South of I-95 toward Houlton proper: KFC, Callnan's (subs, sandwiches, pizza), Bank. (ATM), dentist.

Continue east on the Ludlow Road for **4.0** miles to the intersection with the McGlenn Road. To reach the Wright Farm Campsite, turn north on the McGlenn Road for about **0.4** mile and turn right (east) onto a dirt road. The campsite is located another 300 yards east along this dirt road at the base of a communication tower. Water at this site can be obtained at the Heminway house (first house on left on the McGlenn Road). Please return to the IAT via the dirt road and the McGlenn Road. Proceed east on Ludlow Road **5.8** miles until reaching US Route 1 in Houlton, then turn north on Route 1 and proceed for **1.6** miles to the London Lane. Turn west (left) onto London Lane and walk **0.5** miles west to the intersection of London Lane and the State's multi-use recreational trail. Turn north on the trail and follow it to the town of Mars Hill. (There is a five mile section of the multi-use trail that is not an official part of the IAT, but the landowner does not prohibit persons from walking across it.) The Monticello-Trestle campsite will be reached in **10.5** miles. The famous Blue Moose Restaurant is also located just off this section of trail where it passes near US Route 1, in Monticello.

Monticello, Maine: *Post Office (04760); (207) 538-9741 Groceries: PJ's One Stop, pizza, subs (1); Village Store, B, LD, pizza, subs (2), public phone outside.*

The Monticello-Trestle Campsite is located 100 yards north of the high trestle over the north branch of the Meduxnekeag River. From the campsite continue north on the multi-use recreational trail **10** miles to where the multi-use trail crosses Route 1, just North of the Village of Bridgewater.

Bridgewater, Maine: *Bridgewater is similar to Monticello with a post office (04735) and convenience stores.*

Continue across Route 1 northeast along the multi-use recreational trail and in **1.7** miles you will cross the Bridgewater Corner Road. Then continue generally north into the valley of the Prestile Stream, crossing a small tributary called Three Brooks at **1.2** miles. There is a mowed grassy area just north of the bridge, which may be used for camping (no fires). In another **0.5** mile, cross the Robinson Road and the little village of Robinsons. The trail follows along the western bank of a small pond formed in Prestile Stream by the dam at Robinsons. Follow the multi-use trail **3.3** miles to the town of Mars Hill. Mars Hill Mountain can be seen from the town.

Mars Hill: *PO 04758; (207) 429-9177 Banks with ATM, IGA Supermarket (3), Mars Hill Pharmacy. Restaurants: Mobil Station with Subway, House of Pizza, Al's Diner, Mars Hill Dairy Bar. Laundromat. Bear Paw Inn, (207) 425-6241.*

Mars Hill Campsite and shelter

It is requested that you e-mail (BChapman@firstwind.com) or call (207-425-7929) the Wind

Farm in advance so they know who is on their premises.

When entering a tower pad, stay clear of the tower. Head to or from the access road. Trail entrances/exits are marked with two ribbons on a tree or bush. IAT tags will be on trees every so often.

Some of the tower pads have a number marking on a small stake. There is a small tower number above the door of each tower.

Directions:

Come into Mars Hill village either on the railroad bed or Route 1. Route 1 turns to the left past Al's Restaurant - the Right Aid store across the street. Go on to Route 1A which continues straight (Mars Hill One Stop to the left). Continue on 1A, across the bridge, until reaching Boynton Road on the right. At the end of this road, by going left one may get to the border trail without climbing the mountain. To get to the lean-to and walk the mountain, turn right onto E. Blaine Road. A short distance farther, take the left onto Graves Road. Continue past the parking lot and go to the right to the access road leading up the mountain that starts near the lift. There is another trail to the left in front of the lodge, but this trail is not recommended.

Climb the mountain using this road. At the top, go to the right on the gravel road for the lean-to (about **0.4** mile), or to continue toward the border walk ahead to the Wind Farm access road, that is close to Tower #25. Turn left on this road.

Leaving the lean-to, walk toward the nearby Tower (#27). There is a trail down a slope to the Tower pad. There is only one other tower to the south.

Continue north on the access road. After walking **1.4** miles past several towers and a couple of Hills, a service road is located on the left at Tower #17. Stay to the right hand road, walk less than **1** mile past six more towers up a hill. Rounding the hill going by Towers #12 and #11 on this road, two TV/Cell towers can be seen higher up to the left. The access road continues to the right to Tower #9, but stay to the left to Tower #10 (less than **1** mile from service road). Walk onto the pad past the tower, staying a few yards away to the left. Just north of the tower, where the woods begin, the ribbons marking the IAT will be visible. This short stretch goes fairly straight to the edge of a cliff from which Tower #9 can be seen straight below, and a great view to the north is present. A few yards before this cliff, the IAT goes into the woods to the left and is marked by ribbons.

Follow this trail through the woods for **0.7** mile and come out to the pad for Tower #8. Coming out of the woods, ribbons pointing a path to the pad will be seen. Once on the pad, walk to the access road and turn left onto the North Access Road.

Walk down this road **0.4** mile past Tower #7 and a little way past Tower #6. Passing Tower #6, look down the bank for the two red ribbons that mark where the IAT goes into the woods. An option would be to stay on the wind farm road, walk around the gate and turn right onto the main road (East Ridge Road).

It is **0.7** mile to the East Ridge road. After a short distance the trail will be near the North Access Road across which Tower #4 can be seen. The trail then goes farther downhill and comes to an

old farm road. Go right and leave the woods after a short distance into a grassy field. Continue near the tree line until reaching the East Ridge Road. Turn right and walk to the U.S./Canada border. Turn left onto the Border Trail. Hikers must stay on the U.S. side of the border clearing and call the U.S. Border Patrol in Houlton (207-532-6521) before walking on the border section to tell them when you plan to be hiking there.

Border Trail

A little more than **2** miles on the trail will bring you to the Easton customs border station. Continue almost **4** miles on the border trail. There is a large gate blocking a road on the Canadian side. **1** mile farther brings you to a large beaver pond. As you approach the pond, look for marking tape to the left. A rough path along the base of the pond will take you around the dam back to the border again. The Fort Fairfield lean-to is about **3** miles farther. **Hikers using the Fort Fairfield Campsite are allowed to use a cook stove only. No open fires are allowed.** Water is available at the nearby brook west of the lean-to. From the lean-to walk **0.6** miles north along the border. Turn left onto a dirt road leading to the Sam Everett Road and then to Rte. 167, a total of about **3** miles. Turn right and walk a little more than **1** mile to the border. After crossing the border into Canada follow the New Brunswick Trail Guide.

Fort Fairfield, Maine: PO 04742. (2.5m W) Last US town before crossing. Services: IGA(3); Irving Mainway(2); Banks; Taxi-Aroostook Cab Co. (207) 764-1600

Customs: North bounders check in on the Canadian side; south bounders check in on the American side.