**Moosehead Lake** can be dangerous. Moosehead Lake is New England’s largest freshwater lake, and the cool, deep waters of the lake are exceptionally clean. The lake is a nursery for landlocked salmon, brook trout, and other fish. The lake is also a habitat for a diversity of waterfowl, including mallards, Canada geese, and wood ducks. Moose give a wide view of the lake and surrounding forests. Settlers and Roustabouts European settlers first came to the Moosehead region in the 1850s, after Maine became a state. Skin-deep winters, long summers, and the area’s abundant resources attracted early settlers. Timberframe houses and camps, as well as the region’s pristine stands of spruce, fir, and balsam fir, made it a paradise for woodsmen and outdoorsmen. Settlers cleared the land for farming, timbering, and fishing, and their descendants continue to shape the region’s natural beauty and plentiful resources.

**Property History**

**Glaciers and First Inhabitants**

The landscape around Moosehead Lake was shaped by the last of the ice sheets that covered most of the northeastern United States approximately 100,000 to 12,000 years ago. The ice sheets carried off most of the soil, leaving exposed bedrock that still underlies most of the region today. As the glaciers receded, the Freshwater Lake stage came to an end, leaving evidence of early mammals, including large mammals such as moose. The region’s earliest inhabitants were the Penobscot people, who lived in the area for thousands of years before European settlers arrived. The Penobscot people were skilled hunters, gatherers, and fishermen, and they lived in longhouses along the lake and its tributaries. They fished for salmon, trout, and other freshwater fish, and they gathered walnuts, acorns, and other wild foods. The Penobscot people also traded with other tribes in the region, and they were skilled navigators of the lake and its tributaries.

**Four Seasons of Outdoor Adventure**

The Moosehead Lake region provides diverse recreational opportunities throughout the year. While opportunities are many, here are just a few:

- **Spring:** Hiking, birding, and visiting islands; this is prime time for warblers, and the lake’s cool waters attract landlocked salmon and brook trout.
- **Summer:** Boating, fishing, and exploring the lake’s islands; the lake’s cool waters and abundant wildlife make it a great place for kayaking and canoeing.
- **Fall:** Wildlife viewing, birding, and autumn foliage; this is prime time for warblers, and the lake’s cool waters attract landlocked salmon and brook trout.
- **Winter:** Ice fishing, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing; the lake’s cool waters and abundant wildlife make it a great place for ice fishing and snowmobiling.

In the Moosehead Lake Region, outdoor recreation opportunities are endless. Whether you’re looking for a peaceful retreat or an adventurous adventure, the Moosehead Lake region has something for everyone.
Trails

On all trails, wear sturdy footwear, carry water and extra layers, and take care near cliffs—particularly in damp and slippery conditions. If traveling to Mt. Kineo via the boat shuttle in Rockwood, confirm departure times before hiking and gauge plans accordingly.

- Mt. Kineo State Park is not accessible by road. Most visitors arrive via a commercial boat shuttle from Rockwood (a crossing of 0.8 miles) that operates during summer. From the boat landing on Mt. Kineo, turn left and follow the shoreline path leading past several campsites and onto the summit. The Mt. Kineo summit has a converted fire tower (used until about 1960 by the Maine Forest Service) with an observation deck that offers 360-degree views.

- Indian Trail (0.9 miles to summit from Carriage Trail) climbs steeply along open ledge to the summit;

- Bridle Trail (1 mile to summit from Carriage Trail) provides a less steep route to the summit for hikers, from second intersection off the Carriage Trail;

- Carriage Trail (2.2 miles from boat landing to Hardscrabble Point) follows the west shore of the peninsula;

- North Trail (1.9 miles from Hardscrabble Point to summit) provides a more gradual ascent up the eastern side of the peninsula.

- Little Kineo offers a primitive trail in a remote setting. Hikers enjoy a relatively easy hike with great views in many directions from several open ledges. The trail to the summit is 0.9 miles, one-way.

Snowmobile and ATV Trails: Shared-use roads provide access for ATVing, snowmobiling, horseback riding, and mountain biking. Roads that have designated recreational uses are signed as shared-use. These and trails specific to ATV and Snowmobile use are noted on the map. Road users should be prepared to encounter both pedestrians and vehicles. The Bureau does not encourage snowmobiling on lakes because of potential hazards.

For maps and additional information about ATVing and Snowmobiling contact the Bureau of Parks and Lands at (207) 287-4957. Within Maine Only: 1-800-462-1019.

Other Points of Interest

- Moosehead Lake Shoreline Public Lands

TRAILS

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Moosehead Shoreline Trail Heads

- Maine Shoreline Public Lands (The Nature Conservancy), spanning more than 40,000 acres, contains numerous forests and the highest concentration of pristine, remote ponds in New England, some nature.org/Maine

Other Points of Interest

- Moosehead Lake Shoreline

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