Landowner Relations

Outdoor Partners & Keep Maine Clean Programs

Warden Corporal David Chabot
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Landowner Relations
Landowner Relations
Facts & Stats about Maine

Maine population = 1.3 million

70% participate in outdoor recreation

Economic value of outdoor recreation
- $8.3 billion per year
- 76,000 jobs

Economic value of Maine’s forest products
- $8.5 billion per year
- 33,000 jobs
Maine has a total of 22.6 million acres of land, most of it privately owned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Privately-owned</th>
<th>All Land</th>
<th>Forested Land</th>
<th>Trails</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>20.3 of 22.6</td>
<td>15.9 of 17.6</td>
<td>ATV: 6,000+ miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Acres</td>
<td></td>
<td>million acres</td>
<td>million acres</td>
<td>Snowmobile: 14,000 miles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Landowner Relations
Facts & Stats about Maine

3,500 Miles of Coastline
6,000 Lakes & Ponds
5,100 Rivers & Streams

Land open to the public
11.6 million acres

Privately owned
10.3 million acres
State and federal
1.3 million acres
Only a fraction of the land we use for recreation is publicly owned

STATE LANDS

FEDERAL LANDS
Why Focus on Landowner Relations?

More landowners post their land each year, almost always in response to the following:

- **Trespassing** (on foot, by motor vehicle, or by recreational vehicle)
- **Littering/illegal dumping**
- **Land abuse**, including damage from vehicles or cutting of trees
- **Off-trail riding**
- **Excessive noise**
- **Illegal hunting**, (driving deer, illegal stands, baiting, poaching, or shooting too close to a dwelling)
- **Lack of appreciation for their generosity**/feeling like they’ve been taken advantage of
- **Failure of bystanders/witnesses to report violations**

*Participating in – or not reporting – these activities puts everyone’s access at risk.*
What if we had reverse posting?

Think about how that would affect...

• **Our economy:** Businesses, local/state government, tourism, hunting, fishing, trapping, snowmobiling, ATVing, hiking, camping, foraging, photography, and outdoor recreation in general all benefit from public access to private land.

• **Your life:** Could you take your dog for a walk, could your kids play outdoors, could you enjoy your same day-off activities and vacations?

• **Your friends and family:** who else would be affected?

• **Fish and wildlife:** Without management access, imagine the increased nuisance, sick wildlife, waters with no fish.
In 2011, the Maine Legislature called for the creation of a prominent and adequately staffed public-private landowner relations program, now known as the Outdoor Partners Program.

The statute dictates our program's:

- Goals (encouraging respectful behavior and positive landowner-user relationships)
- Staffing (landowner relations coordinator)
- Elements (guidelines for structure and funding)

Read the full text at mefishwildlife.com
The Outdoor Partners Program aims to preserve Maine’s tradition of shared access to privately-owned land by:

• Encouraging landowners to allow recreational use

• Educating private land users and promoting high standards of landowner courtesy

• Building relationships between landowners and users
Individuals + MDIFW + Partner Businesses

**Individuals** can purchase a $15 annual membership, either online (as a hunting/fishing license add-on or separately in the MDIFW online store) or from any MDIFW registration agent.

**MDIFW applies those funds to:**

- **Enhanced law enforcement** in areas where problems occur
- **The landowner sign program** which offers an alternative to No Trespassing signs and aids landowners in managing access to their land
- **Equipment to investigate and prosecute landowner abuse and criminal trespass complaints**
- **Promotional & educational programs** designed to promote and maintain access

And in appreciation, Outdoor Partner businesses offer members discounts and benefits!
Outdoor Partners Benefits

- Kittery Trading Post
  10% discount*

- Mac’s Trading Post
  10% discount*

- Ben’s Trading Post
  10% discount*

- Indian Hill Trading Post
  10% discount*

- Fort Kent PowerSports
  10% off clothing, parts, and accessories

- The Maine Sportsman
  One-year subscription for $20

- North Woods Sporting Journal
  One-year subscription for $25

- North Maine Woods
  Free day pass or $10 off a season pass

- Maine Wildlife Park
  Free admission for two adults

- Swan Island
  Free admission for two adults

*applies to most merchandise with some exceptions
Outdoor Partners Program

How it Works

Working with landowners to resolve specific issues to help maintain access.
Outdoor Partners Program

How it Works

Improving signage to ensure the public understands what they are allowed and not allowed to do.
Outdoor Partners Program

How it Works

Managing landowner relations kits for wardens and forest rangers across the state to use when dealing with land abuse cases.
Outdoor Partners Program

How it Works

Providing public outreach and education for private land users to increase awareness and promote high standards of landowner courtesy.
Outdoor Partners Program

How it Works

Providing tools and resources for landowners
Keep Maine Clean Program
Example 1: Squatters

Two individuals squatting on private property

- **Trash removed:** 12.7 tons
- **Approx. cost to remove:** $2,300
- **Summons:** Littering and Aggravated Criminal Mischief
Example 2: Yard Cleanup Idea

An individual decided to clean his yard. He put everything in the boat and drove to Tacoma Lakes, then backed the boat into the water with no plug – so the boat would sink.

- Approx. cost to remove: $400
- Summons: Littering over 15 pounds
Maine’s Litter Control Act (1971) imposes steep penalties for littering – any place in Maine, in any way, to any degree.

**Highlights:**

Garbage may not be disposed of on any:

- Public lands, waters, or rights-of-way (except in a container or on a property designated by the state or town for garbage).
- Private land without permission

*This includes littering or dumping from a car or boat.*
Penalties for littering:

<15 lbs./27 cu. Ft: $100-500 fine; up to $1,000 for second offense
Points on your license, if you are the driver of a car that litters (you and the passenger who threw the trash are both liable)

>15 lbs./27 cu. ft: $500+ fine; $2,000+ fine for subsequent offenses. Triple the landowner’s damages or $200, whichever is greater; the injured party’s court costs and attorney’s fees; 100+ hours of community service – either litter removal or restoration of abused/polluted land; removal of the litter dumped, when practical; vehicle suspension of 30 days to 1 year; suspension of all MDIFW-issued registrations and permits for 30 days to 1 year; suspension of any state agency-issued licenses or permits, unless the license/permit is necessary for primary employment and unrelated to the littering.

>500 lbs/100 cu. ft for a commercial purpose (presumed if littering or dumping from any commercial vehicle): Class E crime, fine of $100 to $25,000 per day, option to offset fines with a project valuable to environmental/public health, but of no value to the violator.

>1,000 lbs./100 cu. ft: all of the above, plus forfeiture of anything (aircraft, boats, vehicles, cranes, etc.) used in the dump or attempted dump.
Keep Maine Clean picks up where the law leaves off, giving extra assistance to landowners.

*The program’s mission is to:*

- Help private landowners remove illegally dumped litter
- Alleviate the costs associated with illegal dumping
- Show landowners we care about them and their property
- Investigate all complaints of illegal dumping and prosecute those responsible
- Keep Maine clean and beautiful
Keep Maine Clean Program

How It Works

To carry out this mission, we recruit volunteers to pick up trash in fields and forests while engaging in outdoor recreation. Volunteers and sponsors include outdoor recreationists, the media, businesses, and nonprofit organizations, and anyone who supports the concept of a cleaner Maine outdoors!

Members gain access to insider information including contests, sponsor and volunteer stories, landowner relations tips, and more. And all funds donated to *Keep Maine Clean* are deposited in MDIFW’s Landowner Relations Fund.
• This program, started in 2013, gives users a tangible and fun way to show landowners their appreciation, with prizes awarded to volunteers who pick up the most truckloads of litter.
Each year, on 100+ sites, volunteers have picked up 36,000 to more than 200,000 lbs. of trash including 1,000-2,000 tires.
Landowners who open their land place their trust in you. Here’s how you can earn it every time:

• Always ask for permission, even if the landowner has not posted signs requesting it.
• Learn what matters to the landowner and abide by all their conditions and special requests.
• Provide detailed information. Consider using MDIFW’s printable Landowner/Land user Courtesy Cards
• Know your boundaries. Learn, and stay within, the geographic boundaries of the property you have permission to use. There is no excuse for trespassing.
• Keep it clean. You are a guest, so leave the land as you found it, if not better.
• Keep it legal. Always obey the law, be safe and ethical, and report any land abuse you see.
• Say thank you.

...and show your support by becoming an Outdoor Partner or volunteering for a Keep Maine Clean event!
Thank you

Learn more at mefishwildlife.com/outdoorpartners

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