



MAINE OUTDOOR HERITAGE FUND SUMMARY APPLICATION FORM

Date:	7/29/14	Funding Category (1, 2, 3 or 4):	2	Sponsoring Agency:	Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry
Project Title:	Appalachian Trail Stewardship - Franklin County				
Project Description: (Brief 1-2 line description of the project's purpose to be used for reporting in public announcements)					
Our project will advance conservation and outdoor recreation on the Appalachian Trail (A.T.) in Franklin County, Maine, during the 2015 hiking season and beyond, through stewardship, trail reconstruction and environmental education.					
Resubmittal (Y/N):	N	Followup (Y/N): (If Y, include Project Number & Title)			
Location:	Little Swift River Pond, Saddleback and Bigelow Mountains			Start Date:	5/15/15
				End Date:	10/25/15
Project Coordinator: (designate only 1 project coordinator per project)					
Name: Holly Sheehan			Organization: Maine Appalachian Trail Club. Inc. (MATC)		
Phone: (207) 518-1779			Email: matc@gwi.net		
Address: (city, state, zip) 231 Maine Avenue, Portland, ME 04103					
Partner(s): (Partners help to plan or implement the project, letters of understanding between partnering organizations MUST be included)					
Organization & Email: Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Claire Polfus, cpolfusappalachiantrail.org				Partner Letter Included: yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Organization & Email: Bureau of Parks and Land, Bigelow Preserve MGR, Steven.H.Swatling@maine.gov				Partner Letter Included: yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Organization & Email: Student Conservation Association (SCA), gking@thesca.org				Partner Letter Included: yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Project Summary: (Provide a brief summary, what work the project involves). Further detail provided with full proposal.					
Stewardship of the A.T. will be realized through strong agency partnerships and volunteerism, as follows: (1) Trail Reconstruction - MATC's Maine Trail Crew will rebuild a trail section between Route 4 and 17, at Little Swift River Pond and campsite which attracts fishermen, families and long distance backpackers. Hikers are currently forced to walk through standing water and mud on the degraded trail. Over six-weeks the crew comprised of paid, skilled leadership, SCA interns and volunteers from around the world will rebuild the footpath. (2) From May- October, MATC's Bigelow and Saddleback Mountain Caretakers will live at and manage the Piazza Rock and Horns Pond campsites and patrol the alpine summits & ridgelines - teaching Leave No Trace (LNT) and stewardship, with a focus on groups from colleges, high schools, camps and scouts.					
Project Objectives: (Provide brief description of objectives, what the project will accomplish). Further detail may be provided with full proposal.					
1) Trail Reconstruction - The crew will dig drainage ditches, build waterbars and harden the footpath over 2.5-miles. Within this a 400-ft. section which has washed-out to bare ledge will be rebuilt entirely. The section will be excavated. A parallel trail will be built and elevated as the new footpath; the old footpath will act as a drainage ditch. 2) Two Caretakers will deliver LNT knowledge, ethics and skills to more than 8,000 visitors focusing on youth. They will protect water resources, alpine plants, wildlife, deter vandalism, be a resource to emergency personnel and natural resource professionals conducting scientific research. 3) New Volunteerism on the Appalachian Trail - over 2,000 hours will be donated.					
Budget Section: (Ensure the data below matches the data on the budget form section of the grant proposal)					
Cash Match In Hand:	\$25,000	(List on Budget Form Sources and Amounts)			
Cash Match Pending:	\$17,914	(List on Budget Form Sources, Amounts and Committal Dates)			
MOHF Request:	\$25,000	(Includes Administrative Fees if Applicable)			
In-Kind Services:	\$33,680	2,000 hours of donated labor- (valued at \$16.84/hour per Independent Sector)			
Total Budget:	\$101,594	(Cash Match In Hand + Cash Match Pending + In-Kind Services + MOHF Request= Total Budget)			
To Be Completed by Sponsoring Agency: (Check 1, 2, OR 3 and indicate if agency does NOT endorse project)					
1. <input type="checkbox"/> Agency Project (funding will be directed to Agency)					
2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass Thru Project (funding will be processed with a special services contract initiated by MOHF Secretariat)					
3. <input type="checkbox"/> Pass Thru Project - Agency Partner - (same as #2 AND agency is involved with planning/implementation of the project)					
4. <input type="checkbox"/> Agency does NOT endorse project (meets MOHF guidelines; however agency Does Not endorse it)					

Signature of Commissioner or Director of Applying Natural Resource Agency

Date

Project Title: Appalachian Trail (A.T.) Stewardship: Franklin County

Organization: Maine Appalachian Trail Club. Inc., (MATC)

Contact: Holly Sheehan, Club Coordinator

Sponsoring Agency: Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry

Fund Distribution Category: (2) "Acquisition and management of public lands, parks, wildlife conservation areas and public access and outdoor recreation sites and facilities."

Detailed Project Description and Background:

Project conserves the best of Maine's Outdoor heritage and demonstrates multiple and significant benefits relating to category designation:

Organization's mission and actions: Maine Appalachian Trail Club is a non-profit organization established in 1935. Our purpose is to construct, maintain and protect 267-miles of the Appalachian Trail along with 40-miles of side trails, shelters and campsites from Katahdin to Grafton Notch. MATC is more than a hiking club. Club volunteers build bog bridges and rock steps, construct shelters and toilets, clear downed trees, post signage, monitor corridor lands, and provide education to trail users. Our Maine Trail Crew builds bog bridges, stone steps and other tread way improvements that are beyond the scope of volunteer trail maintainers. Two MATC Caretakers based at Saddleback and Bigelow Mountains, as well as a Ridgerunner, at Gulf Hagas, provide Leave No Trace education to hikers. Volunteers are our foundation - each year a small army of committed Maine people log more than 20,000 hours taking responsibility for the Appalachian Trail in Maine.

Project Description: Stewardship of the A.T., in 2015, will be in Franklin County through multiple courses of action and will be managed and powered by volunteers along with strong agency partnerships, as follows:

Trail Reconstruction: MATC's Maine Trail Crew will rebuild a 2.5-mile trail section, between Route 4 and Route 17, at and approaching Little Swift River Pond and campsite. This site is popular among fishermen, families and long distance backpackers. It's the only low-land hike along the A.T. in western Maine. Along this trail, hikers currently have no choice but to walk through standing water and mud on the degraded trail; many skirt the trail to keep their feet dry which widens the footpath, tramples vegetation and habitat. Over six-weeks the crew will build drainage improvements - including waterbars, drainage ditches and trailside ditches. Within this 2.5-mile project, a 400-ft. section which has washed-out to bare ledge will be rebuilt entirely. This section will be excavated. A parallel trail will be built-up and elevated as the new footpath, with the old footpath serving as a drainage ditch.

The Maine Trail Crew will be a paid leader/volunteer model that is common throughout the A.T. Under the direction of a skilled crew leader volunteers along with members from the Student Conservation Association will staff the crew. Volunteers will be recruited nationally through the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's website and other online resources. They will come from around the world, join the project for between one and six weeks and represent all age groups – youth to seniors. MATC will provide Maine Trail Crew volunteers with transportation to and from Bangor International Airport, training and education, supervision, encouragement, tents, packs and meals.

MATC's Bigelow and Saddleback Mountain Caretakers will be in-the-field from May to October and reach more than 8,000 people with Leave No Trace education and training. They will patrol the Saddleback and Bigelow Mountain summits, which are home to rare, exemplary natural alpine communities; they will teach environmental stewardship and educate hikers about the management and use of public lands. The Caretakers will prevent and respond to impacts such as: abandoned fires; soap pollution in mountain streams/ponds; illegal camping; trash; hikers walking off-trail trampling alpine plants; vandalism; and more.

The Bigelow Caretaker will live at Horns Pond campsite, at a pristine sub-alpine pond within the 36,000 acre Bigelow Preserve. The Horns Pond Trail ascends 4.8-miles into a "cloud forest" to the campsite. It is one of the busiest on the A.T., hosting up to 50 overnight campers per night. At the high elevation campsite soils are thin; the Caretaker will manage a solar composting system, recycling human waste. Beyond the Horns Pond Trail the A.T. continues along the crest of the Bigelow range to South Horn, West Peak (4,150') and Avery Peak (4,088').

The Saddleback Mountain Caretaker will live at Piazza Rock Campsite located nine miles south of Rangeley. Piazza Rock Campsite attracts a wide variety of hikers – families, college groups, and long distance backpackers - most trek on to the majestic Saddleback Mountain (4,121'), Saddleback Junior and Poplar Ridge.

The Caretakers will focus on the thousands of youth on organized backpacking trips from summer camps, high schools, colleges and scouts. MATC will mail out a pre-season wilderness packet to 75 organizations sponsoring trips which teaches Leave No Trace principles and A.T. guidelines. For example, to: limit group size, hike on durable surfaces; and carry out trash. MATC will manage a group registration system. Groups will email their itinerary and we will contact them if overcrowding is imminent, and provide advice on an alternative route. Caretakers will deliver Leave No Trace awareness workshops to youth groups at campsites. Caretakers and Club volunteers will lead youth groups in conservation projects. For example, MATC has lead Dixfield High School outing club over four years in building tent platforms and repairing shelters. The Caretakers will evaluate groups for their LNT skills and behaviors. MATC will mail these evaluations to the sponsoring organizations – following up with positive feedback and correcting for behaviors that negatively impact the environment. This work will build relationships with organizations sponsoring youth groups that continue from year to year.

The Caretakers will be a resource to emergency personnel. In the event of a missing person, fire or medical emergency their extensive knowledge of the trails and backpackers may be helpful to Maine wardens, the Forest Service and medical professionals. Caretakers will also be a resource to scientists. They will be trained to assist the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's Northern Natural Resource Manager to survey rare plants in the alpine zone at Saddleback Mountain, as well as with a phenology monitoring program related to climate change. In addition, Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife will rely on the Bigelow Caretaker to help monitor fish in the stocked sub-alpine pond (Horns Pond).

Project addresses natural resource concerns on a trail that is State-wide, national and international:

The Appalachian National Scenic Trail provides close-to-home outdoor opportunities for Maine residents while linking to regional, state-wide and national trails in fourteen U.S. State, as well as Canada where at its end the range enters the Atlantic Ocean. In Maine, the A.T. connects with public lands including the Bigelow Preserve, Mahoosuc Management Unit, Grafton Notch State Park, Four Ponds Management Unit, Appalachian Mountain Club lands, Nahmakanta Lake Management Unit and Baxter State Park. The A.T. provides for one of the only long distance hiking opportunities in Maine. (See enclosed map)

Project Need/Urgency

Fifty-four extraordinary miles of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail are in Franklin County, nearly 20% of the A.T. in Maine. The Franklin County section is known as the “High Peaks” region and has the reputation for being one of the most rugged, remote and beautiful parts of the entire 2,179-mile footpath. The communities of Rangeley, Phillips, Kingfield and Stratton border this 230,000 acre region. It stretches from Saddleback Mountain in the south to the Bigelow range in the north and is home to eight of the fourteen highest mountains in Maine. The High Peaks region has been identified locally and nationally as a critical ecological area and a priority conservation site. The elevation changes create an ecological landscape with varied habitats and unique communities that bring animals and plants into proximity that are otherwise separated by hundreds of miles. Rare and vulnerable species thrive here and the extensive undeveloped tracks of land support wildlife that requires large areas of roaming land. The region is home to rare, uncommon and threatened birds such as Bicknell’s Thrush and is native for rare, arctic-alpine and sub arctic-alpine plants making conservation of this region critical. It offers one of the most challenging 3-day back-packing trips with an elevation gain that totals more than 10,000 feet. The A.T. traverses the crest of the high-peaks, is unique to the eastern United States and has been attracting tourists and outdoor enthusiasts to western Maine for many decades.

This project addresses needs in Maine identified in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The project meets the SCORP’s goals of “quality of place”, “tourism”, “health” and “conservation”. The Executive Summary for the SCORP (2009-2014) states, “Investment in natural, place-based assets is seen as part of enhancing the valuable Maine “brand” that makes the state a desirable place to visit or live in. Attractive outdoor recreation opportunities, a huge part of Maine’s quality of place, are therefore a vital asset.”

The SCORP describes how outdoor recreation areas promote health and are a tool for combating obesity; enhancing tourism; allowing people the opportunity to fall in love with nature; and building a constituency for conservation. A SCORP “implementation strategy” is to “Improve infrastructure at and connectivity between our parks, lands, preserves, etc. ...Recognize and address maintenance challenges.” (See enclosed SCORP documentation)

The Appalachian Trail is free to the public and attracts many thousands of visitors annually from around the world as well as local Maine people. Statistical analysis of the numbers collected suggests more than 92,000 user days per year. It is critical that the trail infrastructure is maintained, that it is safe and accessible. The Little Swift River Pond project for 2015 was identified as a priority need in MATC’s Capital Improvement Plan, as required by the National Park Service. Recurrent trail usage on thin, unstable soils and severe weather cause soil erosion that makes on-going trail reconstruction work urgent. There is currently a backlog of well over 40 years of trail reconstruction work needed on the Appalachian Trail in Maine. Our project improves this targeted, degraded trail-section; at the same time this project safeguards the extraordinary summits of Saddleback and Bigelow Mountains and teaches Leave No Trace knowledge, skills and ethics to people recreating outdoors in Maine. (See enclosed documentation of MATC’s Capital Improvement Plan, 2012-2018)

Project Objectives and Outcomes:

- **Trail Reconstruction** – 2.5-miles of trail will be improved for drainage - including waterbars, drainage ditches and trailside ditches.. A 400-ft. section will be rebuilt entirely.

- **Education/Stewardship** - two Caretakers will protect the natural environment through Leave No Trace education reaching more than 8,000 visitors; MATC will also reach at least 75 youth groups with pre and post season outreach; and Caretakers will assist scientists with three environmental monitoring projects.
- **New Volunteerism** on the Appalachian Trail - over 2,000 hours will be donated.

Project Measurement and follow-up:

Outcomes will be measured by the Maine Trail Crew Committee visually assessing the trail for safety, erosion, drainage and by counting stone steps and waterbars. A volunteer Trail Maintainer will bi-annually inspect this trail-section, trim brush, clear downed trees and report conditions.

Results from the Caretaker's work will be measured by assessing the environmental and social impact in the patrol areas and comparing this to previous years. Specifically, Caretakers will keep a log noting the number of encounters with hikers; the number/amount of illegal fires, abandoned gear/trash, damage to alpine plants, degraded wildlife habitat, illegal campsites, human and dog waste. Caretakers will fill out an evaluation of youth groups rating their Leave No Trace behaviors. Caretakers will report incidents, such as lost persons, theft, or graffiti, through the online A.T. "Incident Reporting System" to management/law enforcement.

The number of volunteer time (2,000 hours), names and residences will be recorded.

At the end of the season, the Caretakers and Maine Trail Crew leaders will report on their experiences and attend a "wrap-up" meeting with the project's Committees.

Project Timetable (2015):

March 1 – Hire Caretakers, Crew Team Leader, Base-camp Coordinator, SCA interns

January – June – recruit volunteers for the Maine Trail Crew

May 22-28- Training and Pack-in for the Bigelow and Saddleback Mountain Caretakers

June 1-5 – Maine Trail Crew Training and CPR/1st Aid training for all staff

June 26 – August 5 – Little Swift River Pond trail work

July 27 & 28 – Mid-season Training on Bigelow Mountain

August 21 – Maine Trail Crew end of season debrief

September 21 – Pack-out Saddleback Mountain Caretaker

October 20 – Pack-out Bigelow Mountain Caretaker

October 21 – Caretaker end of season debrief

Plans for Communication This project, MOHF's partnership and the results will be shared with the public through Mail Chimp, Face Book, on our website and in our newsletter. In addition we will widely disseminate a press release. This will be managed by MATC's public relations consultant, Susan Tompkins, from Rising Tide PR. (See documentation from our 2014 project)

Key Personal: The project will be managed by committees comprised of MATC volunteers, paid staff and agency partners. Lester Kenway, a trails consultant, MATC President, and Chairman of the Maine Trail Crew will provide project oversight of Little Swift River Pond trail-work. Mr. Kenway was formerly employed as a trails supervisor by Baxter State Park and the Maine Conservation Corps. He has supervised trail maintenance on the A.T. since 1975. The Caretakers will be managed by the Caretaker and Ridgerunner Education committee. Daniel Simonds, MATC Executive Committee member is the committee Chairman and Site Supervisor. He is a licensed forester from Rangeley. Steve Swatling, the Bureau of Parks and Public Land's Bigelow Preserve manager, will share his extensive experience in resource protection. Baxter State Park's Naturalist, Jean Hoekwater, will deliver a workshop on Maine mountain ecology and be a resource throughout the season. Maine Appalachian Trail Club's year-round staff member, Holly Sheehan, a Leave No Trace master educator will provide support, recruit volunteers for the Maine Trail Crew and organize the Caretaker training. Elsa Sanborn, MATC Treasurer and a Certified Public Accountant, will manage payroll and financial duties.

Project maximizes degree of Matching Funds: MATC will secure more than 1/3 of cash in hand. The Betterment Fund, BP&L and Appalachian Trail Conservancy have pledged funds. Pending funds are from L.L. Bean. (See documentation from Betterment Fund and ATC)

Partnership (See enclosed letters):

- Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands – will provide funding and training;
- Appalachian Trail Conservancy – will provide funding, assistance with volunteer recruitment and lead the scientific studies; and
- Student Conservation Association – will provide three interns.

Conclusion: Through strong partnerships our project "Appalachian Trail Stewardship: Franklin County" will conserve the best of Maine's outdoor heritage and achieve outstanding natural resource and recreational benefits – perfectly meeting MOHF's guiding principals. This project will benefit backpackers from around-the-world who began their hike in Georgia; families on day-trips to swimming holes; college freshmen summiting Saddleback; solo-hikers seeking solitude. MATC trail volunteers with rock bars in-hand will build stone steps and waterbars through wet, muddy terrain; and our Caretakers will invite youth to stay on durable surfaces in the alpine zone while pointing out Bigelow Sedge. This work will engage people in the work of conservation; it will enable hikers with a variety of abilities and motivations access to expansive forests, deep lakes, wildlife, alpine flowers, glacial cirques and sweeping views. These connections to nature will help people realize how their actions impact our wilderness-resources in western Maine and we will build a constituency for wild places.

Budget (See Enclosed)

Other – maps (Enclosed)



Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund Project Application Budget

Project Title: Appalachian Trail Stewardship - Franklin County

1. Funding Description: <i>Identify Cash Secured and Pending Sources. If more space is needed, list in rows 31 & 32:</i>	MOHF Request	Cash Secured Betterment	Cash Secured ATC	Cash Secured MATC appeal	Cash Pending L.L. Bean, BP&L, RTP	In-Kind Services	Total Budget
2. Personnel Expenses							
Salary & Benefits	\$14,055	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$12,000	\$0	\$41,055
3. Other Expenses							
Contractual Serv (SCA)	\$4,657	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,914	\$0	\$9,571
Supplies	\$679	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,679
Travel	\$1,022	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,022
Other: (List)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Admin.	\$1,944	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,944
Crew support	\$2,457	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$33,680	\$38,137
Housing	\$186	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	\$3,186
Total Other Expenses	\$10,945	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,914	\$33,680	\$60,539
4. Capital/Land Acquisition <i>(Equipment GT \$5,000 or Land)</i>							
Describe:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5. Subtotal	\$25,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$17,914	\$33,680	\$101,594
6. Indirect Costs <i>(Enter Rate)</i>							
StaCap/DiCap or Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Total Budget	\$25,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$17,914	\$33,680	\$101,594

Cash Secured Sources & Amounts that are not described in H, J and L:

Cash Pending Sources & Amounts and Commital Dates:

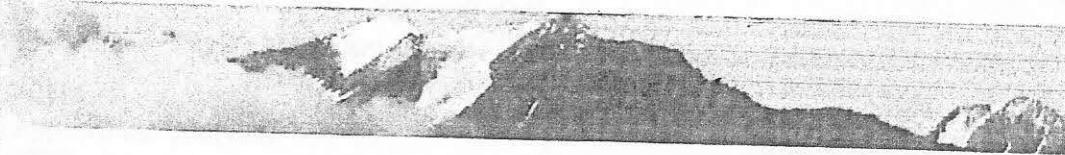
L,L Bean \$6,000 1/1/15; BP&L \$6,000 11/1/14; Recreational Trails Program \$5,914 1/30/15

InKind Services, Descriptions& Amounts: 2,000 hours volunteer labor @\$16.84/hr per Independent Sector

Scoring Calculations for Matching Funds Section of Grant Evaluation Form - Must exceed 33% to meet requirement:

Cash In Hand:	\$25,000	Match Met
Total Cash:	\$42,914	Match Met
Cash & In Kind:	\$76,594	Match Met

July, 2014



July 14, 2014

Lester Kenway, President
Maine Appalachian Trail Club
P.O. Box 283
Augusta, ME 04332

Dear Mr. Kenway,

On behalf of the Student Conservation Association (SCA), I want to express our deep interest and commitment to partnering again with the Maine Appalachian Trail Club (MATC) in 2015 to reconstruct and enhance targeted sections of the Appalachian Trail.

The feedback we have received over the years from the SCA trail team members serving with the MATC has been extremely positive, and these members uniformly value the commitment, support and direction provided by the MATC. Likewise, the project work itself inherently provides enriching service learning and leadership development experiences for our young adult members. We hope that these types of opportunities will continue in 2015.

SCA's values our long standing partnership with the MATC and we look forward to continuing to collaborate in the future to develop and protect the recreational resources of the Appalachian Trail while developing the next generation of conservation stewards and leaders.

Please let me know if I can provide any additional information at this time.

Sincerely,

Gary King
Director of Partnership Development
SCA Northeast Regional Office
689 River Road/P.O. Box 550
Charlestown, NH 03603
603.504.3230
gking@theSCA.org



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY
129 MAIN STREET
P.O. Box 327
FARMINGTON, MAINE 04938

WALTER E. WHITCOMB
COMMISSIONER

Lester Kenway, President
Maine Appalachian Trail Club
P.O. Box 283
Augusta, ME 04332

July 14, 2014

Dear Mr. Kenway,

I am pleased to work in partnership with Maine Appalachian Trail Club's Caretaker program in the Bigelow Mountains. As the Bigelow Preserve Manager and representing the land owner, the Bureau of Parks and Lands (BP&L), my role will be to serve on the committee that manages the Caretaker to provide training and technical assistance.

The Horns Pond Trail is a nearly five-mile trail leading hikers to the Horns Pond Campsite and onto the summits and ridgelines of the Bigelow range. In this region, BP&L and MATC jointly manage and fund the Horns Pond Caretaker. The Caretaker patrols the Bigelow range, protecting the resource and providing backcountry education to thousands of hikers. In addition, together the two organizations manage a composting toilet at the Horns Pond campsite. Soils are thin at this high elevation site. MATC volunteers, the Caretaker and State Conservation employees minimize environmental impact through a labor-intensive composting system where human waste is broken down and recycled at Horns Pond.

I wish MATC the best of luck in obtaining funding for the work of providing stewardship of the Bigelow Mountains. This project will benefit the flora, fauna and thousands of hikers who trek up the trail and enjoy the Bigelow Preserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Steven H. Swatling".

Steven H. Swatling SR, Bigelow Preserve Manager

BUREAU OF PARKS AND LANDS
TOM MORRISON, DIRECTOR

PHONE: (207) 778-8231
FAX: (207) 778-5932



APPALACHIAN TRAIL
CONSERVANCY

Holly Sheehan
Maine Appalachian Trail Club
PO Box 283
Augusta, Me 04333-0283

July 16, 2014

Dear Holly,

I am writing on behalf of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy to express support for the Maine Appalachian Trail Club's application for funding from the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund. MATC is our closest partner in Maine and their work is reliable and vital to the Appalachian Trail in Maine.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) is a forty-three thousand member organization dedicated to the preservation and protection of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail from Maine to Georgia. Since its inception in the 1920's the AT has relied upon the work and support of legions of volunteers to keep it open and passable to hikers and trail enthusiasts. ATC partners with federal and state agencies as well as thirty-one trail maintaining clubs to maintain the footpath and to manage the impacts of visitor use. In Maine, these duties are ably carried out by the volunteers and seasonal staff of MATC.

The Maine Trail Crew is exceptional in the quality of work they produce. For years these crews, along with many volunteers, have improved miles of some of the most challenging sections of footpath on the A.T. In addition, MATC's caretakers provide important education to thousands of A.T. visitors every year and help to preserve the unmatched backcountry experience of hiking the A.T. in Maine. The caretakers also provide important information for ATC's rare plant and phenology monitoring programs that track the impacts of hiker use and climate change on the Trail's natural resources.

ATC's contribution to the MATC trail reconstruction project near Little Swift River Pond campsite the 2015 season will be roughly \$10,000, depending on final budget decisions. While ATC gladly provides some funding support to MATC for these important programs, we are unable to provide all that is needed. We therefore fully support their application for further assistance.

If you have any questions, please call me at your leisure.

Sincerely,

Claire Polfus

Maine Conservation Resources Manager
Appalachian Trail Conservancy
155 Front St. Apt 1
Farmington, ME 04938
207.778.0700

Join the Journey™