

## 20 Reasons to Oppose The Proposed National Park in Northern Maine

- 1) **Land is not worthy to be a park.** There are 59 national parks in the United States. All of them have spectacular beauty or uniqueness- Think of the mountains and spectacular beauty of Acadia, Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Denali, Glacier, Grand Teton and the mountains, wildlife, and geysers of Yellowstone. The proposed park is a nice piece of property but can't come even close to matching the above named parks. In fact it is actually a typical piece of northern Maine productive timberland and should be regarded as such. It does have the Penobscot and Seboeis Rivers and Wassataquoik stream. These water bodies are nice but nothing exceptional. If this area qualified for a national park then I guess all of Maine would qualify. Baxter State Park already has a monopoly on the beauty in that area. If established, it would probably be the first National Park ever set up to look at a state park.
- 2) **Economic loss to forest industry.** This park will create a tremendous loss to the forest products industry in Maine. In 2013 Todd Gabe, Professor of Economics, at the University of Maine, produced a report that showed that the Maine forest products sector contributes to the statewide economic benefit of \$8 billion, including multiplier effect. The industry in Maine processes an average of 6.25 million cords of wood annually. If you divide the \$8 billion by 6.25 million cords you will see that each cord harvested generates \$1280 to the state GDP by the time it is finished. The park will take 75,000 acres out of production (150,000 acres if you include the recreation area). An average acre of Maine woodland grows, conservatively, .35 cords per acre per year. Now if you take the .35 multiplied times 75,000 acres equals 26,250 cords of wood that this area of woodland should produce. Multiply 26,250 by \$1280 per cord equals \$33,608,152 (round off to \$34 million) that should be generated each year to the Maine economy and will be lost if a park is created. You should double it to \$68 million per year if you add in the recreation area. I believe the park will never replace these dollars that should already be generated by this productive woodland.
- 3) **Fire, insect and disease danger.** Since the National Park system has a policy that everything should remain natural and doesn't allow timber to be harvested, the parks soon become full of over-mature, insect infested and diseased trees. Here is a quote from the National Park Website: "while large destructive fires are unacceptable in regions with extensive encroachment by communities, they are mandatory in a region such as Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, if it is to be maintained in a natural manner." " Since the late 1970's some 300 natural fires have been allowed to burn themselves out". After the trees die and are left standing the area is very susceptible to forest fires. In just recent years fires burned 800,000 acres (1250 sq. miles) in Yellowstone, 136,000 acres (212 sq. miles) in Glacier, and 257,000 acres (402 sq. miles) in Yosemite. The fires don't stop at the boundary

lines so privately owned timber surrounding the park will be endangered by the park which will become a breeding ground for fire, insects, and disease. In fact we are expecting another Spruce Budworm infestation in the very near future and we will not be able to combat it on park lands. In 1974 Baxter State Park suffered a major blowdown from a windstorm. When logging companies tried to salvage the wood they were stopped by court actions from environmental groups who insisted the area be left "natural" Despite warnings from foresters that a forest fire danger was created, the salvage was stopped. Consequently, in 1977 lightning struck in the blowdown area and 1900 acres burned within the park and another 1500 acres burned on Great Northern Paper land when the fire crossed the boundary. The park will set up the same scenario to happen again.

- 4) **Loss to local taxes.** The creation of the park will take approximately \$150,000 out of the local tax base since parks don't pay taxes.
- 5) **Job creation?** Park advocates say that the 75,000 acre park will create 400-1200 jobs. This is hard to believe since Baxter State Park, which has 200,000 acres, employs 21 full time and 40 seasonal workers. These low paying seasonal jobs will be replacing high paying forest industry jobs that average \$51,219 per year.
- 6) **Danger of park expansion.** There is a real danger that the proposed 75,000 acre park will expand. Don't forget that Restore has been trying to create a 3.2 million acre park in northern Maine for years. Roxanne Quimby used to be on their board and although she now denies any involvement with them, her own park, which started out at 75,000 acres is already up to 150,000 acres if you include the recreation area. In 2006 Baxter Park increased by 6015 acres and immediately the environmental groups wanted to shut off all the roads.
- 7) **Millinocket is a prime site for a mill.** It is a terrible shame what has happened to the mills in the Millinocket area. Although those mill jobs have been lost, the wood is still in great demand from many mills all over the state of Maine and the wood is needed. If the park is built it may very well preclude a mill being built in the future at Millinocket and that would be a shame because that area is a prime area to build a mill- it may not be a paper mill but chances are good that a wood using mill will someday be built there. There is a great work force, it is located at the end of the Golden Road surrounded by a huge timber resource and right next to the interstate and has a railroad system- all good reasons to locate a mill there.
- 8) **Losing control to the Federal Government.** The state of Maine will be turning local control over to the Federal Government which is not a good thing. Proponents are saying they will create a committee that will tell the federal government how to run the park. Are you kidding? Remember what kind of input the state had last summer when the feds shut Acadia National Park down. The National Park Service wouldn't even let people hike the trails- and Mainers had nothing they could do about it. One of the main reasons Governor Percival Baxter created Baxter Park was to keep the Federal Government out. In a May 5, 1937

letter he wrote to attorney Sheldon Wardwell: "No one feels more strongly against the Federal Government invading the State than I do and whatever parks we have in Maine in my opinion should be State rather than a National Park".

- 9) **Buffer strips.** Most parks have buffer strips set up around them so the park users won't be disturbed. This means even more land will be lost to timber production. A precedent has already been set here in Maine with buffers along the Appalachian Trail (Saddleback) and The Allagash Wilderness Waterway.
- 10) **Loss of access for hunting and snowmobiling.** Hunting will definitely not be allowed in the park. Snowmobiling will probably not be allowed- in fact Roxanne Quimby just recently shut down the beautiful Lookout trail for public use. She may allow hunting, snowmobiling and other recreational uses on the proposed recreation area. Keep in mind that all these traditional recreational uses were already allowed on that land until Roxanne Quimby bought it and closed it down. All of the other big landowners in the area always have and still do allow those activities.
- 11) **Access fees.** Some people think that access to a National Park is free- it isn't. In fact, the National Park Service fees are going up dramatically this year because it is so deeply in debt. Meanwhile, all the north Maine woods are open to the public- much of it for free and some with small gate fees.
- 12) **No plan.** There is no plan for the park- at least the public hasn't seen one. The park proponents tell us that they estimate that 15% of Acadia National Park will visit this new park- that would be about 375,000 visitors- divided by ninety days equates to about 4166 visitors per day- based on a 90 day tourist season. That is pretty crowded for a 75,000 acre park with only a few dirt roads, and no infrastructure. Acadia National Park has paved roads, hotels, running water, restaurants, electricity, campgrounds, and beautiful scenery. The proposed park has none of the above.
- 13) **Conservation easement.** If one of the objectives is to prevent development, over two million acres of the north Maine forests have already been put under conservation easement to protect the natural resource values, protect it from development and make it available to the public for recreation. Why not protect this land by putting it under conservation easement and sell the development rights? The land would be available for recreation, it would remain in the tax base, the wood would still be available to the mills and the wildlife and other resources would be protected. Everyone comes out a winner!
- 14) **Wilderness or high use park?** Plum Creek created a huge conservation easement in the Greenville area to protect 360,000 acres. Included in the plan were two resorts so that tourists would have a place to stay. Environmentalists fought it very vigorously yet they are supporting this proposed 75,000 acre park. Is this because they want a primitive wilderness type park and not a high use park like Acadia

National Park? If that is the case there won't be many tourists without the infrastructure to support it.

- 15) **Emission restrictions.** There is an issue of air quality when it comes with industry being near a National Park. Robbins Lumber is located in Searsmont, Maine and is located within 50 air miles of Acadia National Park. They have a two-megawatt diesel electric generator for back up power for the mill. Because of their proximity to the park, Robbins is only allowed to run its generator 1200 hours per year. The proposed park is just a few miles away from Millinocket. Will the park endanger the possibility that a mill could be built in Millinocket in the future?
- 16) **Log truck access.** The new park may prohibit logging trucks to take their products to the mills. Will the park lands "land lock" other landowners or shut off current roads? Will the access roads be taken by eminent domain? The proponents say that land will only come from willing sellers. However, if access to your land is shut off eventually you will become a "willing seller".
- 17) **Too much park land.** How much park land do we need? In the United States there is already 266 million acres tied up in parks, wilderness areas, wildlife refuges and other preserves. That is 13.3 times the size of the entire state of Maine.
- 18) **World population growth.** We need to look at the big picture. The world's population is currently at 7.3 billion and expanding at the rate of 20 million people per year. The world is going to have to wisely use all of its natural resources. We must have multiple use if we are going to be able to feed, clothe, and house all these people. We can't afford to be tying up huge areas for single uses. Again, with conservation easements you can have recreation, timber production and no development.
- 19) **Federal Government is a terrible land manager.** By far, the worst land manager in the United States is the Federal Government and the worst of the Government is the National Park Service. For proof of this just go out West and visit our National Parks and National Forests. You will see millions of acres of dead and dying timber and burned over forest land. So why turn privately owned land to the National Park Service to manage it like that? Is this what we want Maine to look like?
- 20) **Can't afford another park.** The National Park Service is currently \$11.5 billion behind in its maintenance of the lands and roads it manages and is laying off many of their workers. They can't afford to take on another park.