

THE INTERNATIONAL APPALACHIAN TRAIL IN MAINE

Following the spine of the Appalachian Mountains from Mount Katahdin in Maine to Crow Head in Newfoundland/Labrador, the IAT/SIA is a 1900 mile journey and is a showcase of breathtaking mountain scenery, pastoral countryside, and rugged coastline. The southern terminus of the trail is in Maine's storied Baxter State Park. Heading north through boreal forests the route follows trails and roads to the potato fields of Aroostook County. Beyond Mars Hill, the IAT enters New Brunswick and tracks northeast through Mount Carleton Provincial Park. Up and over the highest point in the Canadian Maritimes, the trail leads north to Quebec's rugged Gaspé Peninsula. The journey continues across the Chic Choc Mountains to Cap-Gaspé in Forillon National Park. After traveling by bus or train to Sackville, New Brunswick the journey on foot begins again with a walk to the Confederation Bridge to Prince Edward Island. After crossing Prince Edward Island on the Confederation Trail and a new section of the IAT/SIA, a ferry returns you to the mainland at Pictou, Nova Scotia. There the trail is a road walk through the rural countryside to the causeway to Cape Breton Island. The trail on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia is 150 miles of scenic beauty and ends at the ferry terminal at North Sidney where a hiker boards the ferry to Port Au Basque, Newfoundland/Labrador. The trail continues northward over the highest point in the Lewis Hills and through the mountains of western Newfoundland/Labrador to Crow Head at the very northern tip of the Island of Newfoundland. Here the IAT/SIA reaches the northernmost point of the Appalachian Mountains in the Western Hemisphere.

Maine

The International Appalachian Trail begins at the Katahdin Lake East (KLE) Access of Baxter State Park, which 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 KLE Access in **1.8** miles. 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 Gardiner Rd. north about **2.4** miles, crossing a washed-out bridge over Katahdin Brook and 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 about fording in high-water**). 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 the Wassataquoik one last time and crosses a small tributary before turning northeast. At about

0.5 mile from the tributary, the trail leaves the Keep Road 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 old growth forest of hemlock, pine, spruce and birch. After **2** miles, the trail meets the former Deasey Fire Warden’s trail and climbs easily for **0.4** mile up 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 Luksoos lean-to campsite, reaching an old, overgrown tote road in **0.6** mile which it follows west to the campsite (IAT/SIA post just before entering campsite).

From the Lunksoos campsite, the IAT follows an abandoned logging road **0.5** mile west 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, crossing the remains of the washed out Little Spring Brook Bridge, to the intersection with the Eagle Lake Tote Rd. Turn left on the Eagle Lake Tote Rd, following it north. In about **0.25** mile, the Tote Rd approaches the East Branch of the Penobscot River passing a Maine Forest Service campground 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, passing several rapids and two Maine Forest Service (MFS) campsites before reaching the Grand Pitch Lean-to and campsite. About **2** 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.

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 more rapids and MFS 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 Matagammon Wilderness Campground and store. ([A map of this section is available online.](#)) The Matagammon Wilderness Campground, a store and commercial campground, 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 Mtn/Keep Rd 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. However, 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
64 BALSAM DRIVE
MILLINOCKET, MAINE 04462
INTERNET: www.baxterstateparkauthority.com
TELEPHONE: (207) 723-5140

Shin Pond, Maine

Shin Pond is the home of the Shin Pond Village Campground, as well as restaurants and lodging. Camp Wapiti, a sporting camp, is located **2** miles west of Shin Pond at the end of a 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 with a large barn on the left, north side of the road. Just beyond this house, look for an IAT/SIA campsite sign, with a blaze, on the north side of the road. Follow the farm field road, at that point, up the hill to the north for **5** miles. Near the top of the hill, turn west at the blaze and, in 300 yards, the Roach Farm Campsite and lean-to is 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).

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.

Continue east on the Ludlow Road for **4.0** miles to the intersection with the McGlinn Road. To reach the Wright Farm Campsite, turn north on the McGlinn 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 McGlinn Road). Please return to the IAT via the dirt road and the McGlinn Road. Proceed for another **4.7** miles on the Ludlow Road to a junction with the McSheffery Road, about **2** miles beyond the Houlton Town Line and the closest approach on this route to the facilities located in that town. To reach Houlton follow the Ludlow Road for **1** mile to Route 1. To continue on the IAT toward Mars Hill, turn left on the McSheffery Road (signed) and after **1.5** miles reach a junction with London Lane. London Lane starts out as a gravel drive into a residence and continues through a gravel pit. It is not paved until the railroad. Turn right on London Lane and, in **0.6** mile, this road meets an abandoned railroad recreational trail. Turn left (north) and follow this trail for **10.5** miles through Monticello to the Trestle campsite.

Monticello, Maine

Monticello is a small village with a post office, convenience store, and a fine restaurant, The Blue Moose.

The Trestle/Monticello campsite is located 100 yards north of the high trestle over the north branch of the Meduxhekeag River. From the campsite, continue north on the recreational trail to the first gate which is 1.8 miles north of the campsite. Then turn right and proceed to Hoyt Road a few yards from the trail. Turn right (north) and follow Hoyt Road .8 miles to its intersections with West Road. Turn right (east) and follow West Road **1.8** miles to Route 1. Turn left (north) on Route 1 and follow Route 1 for **6.0** miles to the point where the recreational trail intersects Route 1 just beyond Bridgewater Village.

Bridgewater, Maine

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

Leave Bridgewater, and reach the abandoned Bangor and Aroostook rail line in **0.5** mile. This part of the abandoned rail line has been set aside as a multi-use recreation trail. At the junction turn right to the northeast and follow the rail line. In **1.7** miles, cross the Bridgewater Corner Road and then continue generally north into the valley of Prestile Stream, crossing a small tributary called Three Brooks at **2.8** miles from Bridgewater. 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 alongside the western bank of a small pond formed in Prestile Stream by the dam at Robinsons. Follow the railroad ROW **3** miles to the town of Mars Hill. Mars Hill Mountain can be seen from the town; follow local streets to the base of the Mountain.

Mars Hill, Maine

General Notes:

It is requested that you e-mail (rfonbuena@upcwind.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.

Trails entrances/exits are marked with two ribbons on tree or bush. IAT blazes 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.

From the lean-to, continue 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 on the access road. After walking past several towers and a couple of hills a service road is on the left at Tower 17. Stay to the right hand road, 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. 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. It goes **0.7** mile and comes 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.

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. Follow near the tree line until the East Ridge Road. Go right and walk to the U.S./Canada border. Turn left onto the Border Trail.

Border Trail

A little more than **2** miles on the trail will bring you to the Easton customs border station. At almost **4** miles on the border trail, after passing the border station, look for a gate blocking a road on the Canadian side. Due to an impassable beaver pond ahead on the trail, a detour here must be made here. On the American side, take the Curtis Road heading west passing a nearby farm. Go right onto the Ladner Road and continue almost **1** mile, then turn right (north) onto the Gray Road. In about two miles the road ends. Turn left onto the Fuller Road. At about **2** miles west on this road, turn right onto Forest Avenue. At about **5** miles on Forest Avenue, turn right onto the Page Road. (Forest Avenue continues straight into the town of Fort Fairfield) Continue on Page Road easterly, past Monson Pond, which will soon be visible to the right. Stay on the road a short distance past the dam where it then turns to the left onto a good gravel road heading east, back to the border. (Do not take the road that continues along the pond.) The gravel road turns into a field road after passing a residential driveway. Stay on this field road. Shortly there will be a tree plantation just before the border trail. Turn left (north). The Fort Fairfield Lean-to is about a mile farther. From the lean-to walk to the Ft. Fairfield border station.

Fort Fairfield, Maine

A small town located one mile west of the border Customs station, Fort Fairfield has grocery and convenience stores, restaurants, and a post office (04742).

After leaving the border crossing at Fort Fairfield, follow the trail north on the border for **1.9** miles where it intersects an abandoned railway bed. At this point turn right on the old rail line and enter the Canadian province of New Brunswick. Stay on the railway line along the Aroostook River for about **7** miles then cross the St. John River at Perth, New Brunswick, the first available supply point after leaving the border.