Maine’s Lakes & Mountains

Overview

The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands manages portions of the Grafton-Mahoosuc lands in the Maine’s Lakes and Mountains region, which encompasses Franklin and Oxford counties, and adjoining areas of New Hampshire. The Grafton-Mahoosuc lands lie in the Maine’s Lakes and Mountains district, which includes Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge and many other contributors. The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands manages portions of the Grafton-Mahoosuc lands for public recreation, wildlife habitat and marketable forest products. BPL’s forest practices are green-certified by two independent auditors—the Forest Stewardship Council and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands controls the lands to maintain landscape scale ecosystems. BPL’s forest practices are green-certified and help support the costs of maintaining Public Lands.

Timber Management on Public Lands

The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands (BPL) actively manages its public lands to ensure multiple sustainable benefits: resource protection, public access, wildlife habitat and marketable forest products. The BPL has been the recipient of two independent audits — the Forest Stewardship Council and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative — for its efforts to maintain sustainable practices. The BPL’s forest practices are green-certified by two independent auditors—the Forest Stewardship Council and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. The Bureau promotes sustainable management and provides arrangements for public use, public access and public recreation, wildlife habitat and marketable forest products. The Bureau’s forest practices are green-certified and help support the costs of maintaining Public Lands.

When to Visit

The materials and gorges are relics most immediately associated with the spring, when warmer weather allows for water to flow. The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands offers a fascinating glimpse into Maine’s geologic history and provide an ongoing demonstration of the processes that shaped the land. Visiting the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands during the summer offers multiple sustainable benefits: resource protection, public access, wildlife habitat and marketable forest products. The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands manages portions of the Grafton-Mahoosuc lands for public recreation, wildlife habitat and marketable forest products.

Popular Stops

Step Falls Preserve

A one-hour roundtrip walk alongside a series of cascading pools offers a tranquil setting. Please help sustain the spectacular beauty of this setting.

Mother Walker Falls

This V-shaped gorge, named for a legend, is a State-designated scenic byway from Newry (2 miles) to Starks (8 miles). It’s short walk from Route 26. Hikers enjoy the area through warm-weather months, and many visitors come to fish for the spectacular foliage. During winter, visitors enjoy the area through snowshoeing and snowmobile travel. The preserve can be explored by foot, snowshoe and snowmobile.

Partners and Supporters

The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands and the Mahoosuc Public Lands enjoy a premier recreational destination being one of Maine’s most spectacular natural areas. The lands offer rugged terrain for backcountry hikers and include 16 of the most challenging whitewater runways in Maine. The preserve can be explored by foot, snowshoe and snowmobile.

Other Points of Interest

Frenchman’s Hole area

A great place to explore the natural beauty of Maine’s Lakes and Mountains. Frenchman’s Hole is a State-designated scenic byway from Newry north to the New Hampshire border due to its impressive mountains, gorges and waterfalls along the Bear River valley.
Grafton Loop Trail
(38 miles, 3 or more days, challenging), a high-elevation, backcountry trail with seven primitive campsites, connects a ... construction made possible by hundreds of volunteers, numerous partners, and the gracious support of private landowners

Bull Branch Road Trailhead
are reached via a 0.3-mile spur reached approximately 3.5 miles from the trailhead. The Grafton Loop Trail continues on from the summit, descending southeastward.

Old Speck Trail
(7.6 miles, 7 hours, challenging) affords ... north and south of the Rt. 26 trailhead) provide backpacking opportunities. Popular day hikes include the Table Rock Trail and the AT (to the summit of Old Speck).

West Side of Route 26
Trails

Goose Eye Trail
(3.1 miles one way, 3 hours, moderately challenging) shares a trailhead with the Carlo Col Trail and provides access to Goose Eye Mountain and the AT.

Carlo Col Trail
(2.6 miles one way, 2 hours, easy) leads up a gentle incline to join the AT at Carlo Col (a col is a gap between two mountain peaks).

Goose Lean-to and Speck Pond Lean-to. Hikers who attempt ... Public Lands. The most difficult stretch lies between Full

Baldpate Mountain Trail
(5.8 miles round trip to West Peak; 7.6 miles round trip to East Peak; allow 7 hours round trip; challenging) is reached ... 680 feet). Turning north, the trail loses only 240 feet in altitude before climbing nearly a mile to East Peak (elevation 3,812 feet), which offers outstanding views in all directions.

Mahoosuc Notch Trail
•
(2.3 miles one way to AT junction, 1.5 hours, very challenging) joins the AT just south of Mahoosuc Notch. Some hikers consider Mahoosuc Notch

Table Rock Loop Trail
•
(2.4 miles round trip, 2 hours, easier hike for less experienced hikers). Table Rock, 900 feet

Table Rock Trail and the Grafton Loop Trail (which spurs off the AT both

Wright Trail
•
(8.5 miles round trip, 8 hours, challenging) leads hikers through mature forests to the bald east peak of Goose Eye Mountain, where stunning views unfold in all directions. Expect a rigorous hike on this rugged trail lead-

Eye Trail
(2.0 miles round trip, 1.5 hours, easy) leads directly to the summit of West Peak. The moderate hike up West Peak begins near the Rt. 26 trailhead.

Note: the Grafton Loop Trail also intersects Rt. 26 further south near the Eddy Rd. in North Newry (designated parking ... can reach the trailhead for the southwestern portion of the Grafton Loop Trail by walking approximately 0.75 miles south

Cataracts Trail
•
(0.4 miles, 0.5 hours, easy) leads up to where the waters of Frye Brook cascade over several falls in the gorge between Baldpate and Surplus mountains. A day-use area adjoining the falls makes for a pleasant lunch stop.

•
•

Note: the Cataracts Trail does not provide official, main

East B Hill Road Trailheads
•
orange-blazed Eyebrow Trail. Passing through magnificent hardwoods, the trail rises gently until it reaches the steeper precipice section. Portions of the orange-blazed ascent ... may not be suited for small children, especially in wet conditions.

•

The Appalachian Trail (AT) north for 0.1 miles, and then choose between the steep, boulder-strewn, orange-blazed Table Rock Trail (not appropriate for pets or young children) or continue on the moderately steep AT to the next trail junction. After approximately

Table Rock Loop Trail
•
(2.3 miles one way, 1.5 hours, challenging) joins the AT just south of Mahoosuc Notch. Some hikers consider Mahoosuc Notch

Table Rock Trail
•
(2.0 miles round trip, 1.5 hours, easy) leads directly to the summit of West Peak. The moderate hike up West Peak begins near the Rt. 26 trailhead.

East Side of Route 26
Trails

Wright Trail
•
(8.5 miles round trip, 8 hours, challenging) leads hikers through mature forests to the bald east peak of Goose Eye Mountain, where stunning views unfold in all directions. Expect a rigorous hike on this rugged trail lead-

Goose Lean-to and Speck Pond Lean-to. Hikers who attempt ... Public Lands. The most difficult stretch lies between Full

Baldpate Mountain Trail
(5.8 miles round trip to West Peak; 7.6 miles round trip to East Peak; allow 7 hours round trip; challenging) is reached ... 680 feet). Turning north, the trail loses only 240 feet in altitude before climbing nearly a mile to East Peak (elevation 3,812 feet), which offers outstanding views in all directions.

Mahoosuc Notch Trail
•
(2.3 miles one way to AT junction, 1.5 hours, very challenging) joins the AT just south of Mahoosuc Notch. Some hikers consider Mahoosuc Notch

Table Rock Loop Trail
•
(2.4 miles round trip, 2 hours, easier hike for less experienced hikers). Table Rock, 900 feet

Table Rock Trail and the Grafton Loop Trail (which spurs off the AT both

Wright Trail
•
(8.5 miles round trip, 8 hours, challenging) leads hikers through mature forests to the bald east peak of Goose Eye Mountain, where stunning views unfold in all directions. Expect a rigorous hike on this rugged trail lead-

Goose Lean-to and Speck Pond Lean-to. Hikers who attempt ... Public Lands. The most difficult stretch lies between Full

Baldpate Mountain Trail
(5.8 miles round trip to West Peak; 7.6 miles round trip to East Peak; allow 7 hours round trip; challenging) is reached ... 680 feet). Turning north, the trail loses only 240 feet in altitude before climbing nearly a mile to East Peak (elevation 3,812 feet), which offers outstanding views in all directions.

Mahoosuc Notch Trail
•
(2.3 miles one way to AT junction, 1.5 hours, very challenging) joins the AT just south of Mahoosuc Notch. Some hikers consider Mahoosuc Notch

Table Rock Loop Trail
•
(2.4 miles round trip, 2 hours, easier hike for less experienced hikers). Table Rock, 900 feet

Table Rock Trail and the Grafton Loop Trail (which spurs off the AT both

Wright Trail
•
(8.5 miles round trip, 8 hours, challenging) leads hikers through mature forests to the bald east peak of Goose Eye Mountain, where stunning views unfold in all directions. Expect a rigorous hike on this rugged trail lead-

Goose Lean-to and Speck Pond Lean-to. Hikers who attempt ... Public Lands. The most difficult stretch lies between Full

Baldpate Mountain Trail
(5.8 miles round trip to West Peak; 7.6 miles round trip to East Peak; allow 7 hours round trip; challenging) is reached ... 680 feet). Turning north, the trail loses only 240 feet in altitude before climbing nearly a mile to East Peak (elevation 3,812 feet), which offers outstanding views in all directions.

Mahoosuc Notch Trail
•
(2.3 miles one way to AT junction, 1.5 hours, very challenging) joins the AT just south of Mahoosuc Notch. Some hikers consider Mahoosuc Notch

Table Rock Loop Trail
•
(2.4 miles round trip, 2 hours, easier hike for less experienced hikers). Table Rock, 900 feet

Table Rock Trail and the Grafton Loop Trail (which spurs off the AT both

Wright Trail
•
(8.5 miles round trip, 8 hours, challenging) leads hikers through mature forests to the bald east peak of Goose Eye Mountain, where stunning views unfold in all directions. Expect a rigorous hike on this rugged trail lead-

Goose Lean-to and Speck Pond Lean-to. Hikers who attempt...