

Allagash

wilderness waterway

The Trip

Ability, desire, and time are among the most important factors to consider when planning the type of trip you wish to undertake. Some visitors will want to engage a guide, outfitter, or experienced canoeist. Others may wish to arrange for float plane transportation into or out of the Waterway. Information on outfitters, guides, and float plane services is available from North Maine Woods.

The longest trip through the Waterway starts at Telos Lake and ends at West Twin Brook, a distance of about 92 miles. This takes 7 to 10 days. It is well to allow extra time, since some days strong winds make canoeing on the large lakes difficult. With extra time built into your schedule, you will not be tempted to venture onto the lakes during dangerous conditions.

Shorter trips may be taken from Telos north to Churchill Dam, which is mostly lake, or from Umsaskis Lake to West Twin Brook, which is mostly river.

For a side trip, consider that 3 miles west of Lock Dam lies the mouth of Allagash Stream. An experienced canoeist can make the 6-mile trip with pole and paddle up this stream to the unforgettable solitude of Allagash Lake. This lake and stream are closed to airplanes, motors, and mechanized equipment of any type. Only canoes are permitted here.

The water level in the side streams, including Allagash Stream, is highly variable. There may be a lack of adequate flow of water for canoeing, especially late in the season. Very early in the season, flows may be too heavy to canoe.

A short portage from Lock Dam will take you along the traditional route with a 12-mile paddle across Eagle Lake, a 2-mile run through the Thoroughfare, and 5 more miles of lake to Churchill Dam. Below the dam is a 9-mile trip through Chase Rapids, dropping into Umsaskis Lake. Chase Rapids is famed for its "white water" canoeing. It takes an experienced person in the stern, able to guide a canoe through the rocks when water is running high. On bright days after 2:00 p.m., canoeists will experience considerable glare from the sun as they run the rips. Sunglasses help.

The trip across Umsaskis Lake to the Thoroughfare at Long Lake is 5 miles long. Here the private American Realty Road crosses the Waterway.

Another 5 miles through Long Lake will carry you into the 10-mile run downriver to Round Pond, which is 3 miles wide.

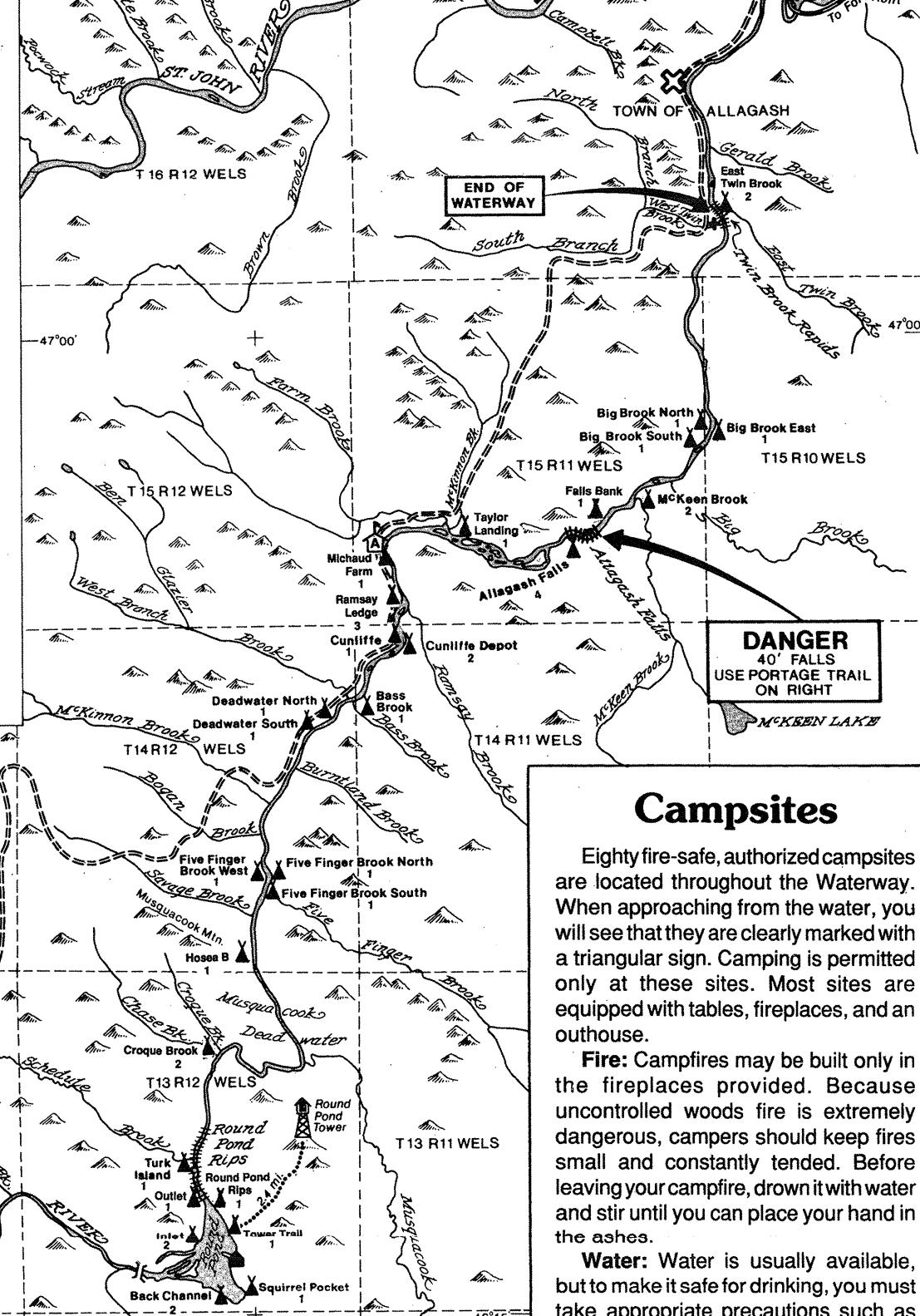
An 18-mile paddle to Allagash Falls, a third-of-a-mile portage, and a run of 8 miles will bring you to West Twin Brook.

West Twin Brook is the end of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, but many prefer to continue another 5 miles to Allagash Village at the confluence of the St. John and Allagash Rivers. It is about 15 miles downriver to St. Francis and another 15 miles to Fort Kent.

Water levels vary throughout the season, but there is usually good recreational water for all types of canoeists from May through October.

The rules governing the Allagash Wilderness Waterway have been established to protect the Waterway and its users. These rules contain important information on several subjects, such as the limitations placed on the use of boats, motors, and canoes. Please refer to the rules when planning your trip. If you need a copy of the rules, please contact Northern Region, Bureau of Parks and Lands, 106 Hogan Road, Bangor, Maine 04401; Phone (207) 941-4014.

All unburnable solid waste must be carried out. Please help keep the Waterway beautiful by requesting and using trash bags which are generally available at checkpoints.



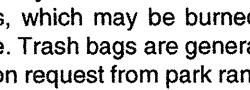
Campsites

Eighty fire-safe, authorized campsites are located throughout the Waterway. When approaching from the water, you will see that they are clearly marked with a triangular sign. Camping is permitted only at these sites. Most sites are equipped with tables, fireplaces, and an outhouse.

Fire: Campfires may be built only in the fireplaces provided. Because uncontrolled woods fire is extremely dangerous, campers should keep fires small and constantly tended. Before leaving your campfire, drown it with water and stir until you can place your hand in the ashes.

Water: Water is usually available, but to make it safe for drinking, you must take appropriate precautions such as boiling or adding a purifying agent. Springs and wells should not be regarded as safe drinking water.

Washing: Dishes and clothing should be washed in a container away from lakes and streams. Personal washing should also be done from a basin or bucket. Used wash water should be disposed of in a pit toilet or in a pit dug in the ground at least 300 feet from the lake/river and campsites. This will help prevent waste, soap, and detergents—which stimulate the growth of algae—from entering and degrading Allagash water.



Along the Way

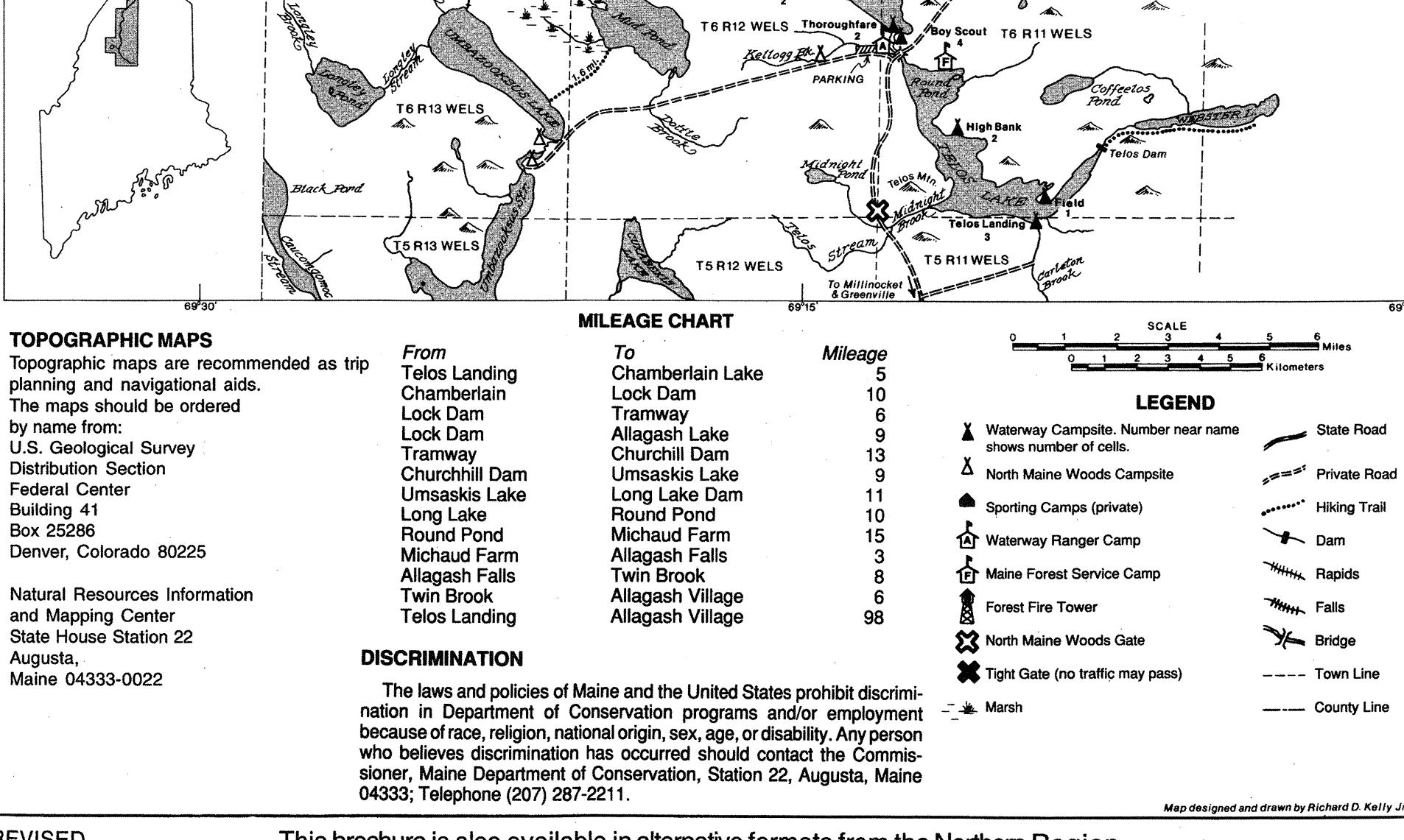
Lock Dam: The earthen dam was built in 1841 to divert the flow of Chamberlain Lake water into the East Branch of the Penobscot River.

The Tramway: The original cable tramway was built in 1902-1903 to transport logs from Eagle Lake to Chamberlain Lake, a distance of three-quarters of a mile. At peak production, a half-million board feet of logs were handled in a single day.

Abandoned Railroad: The Eagle Lake and Umbazooksus Railroad was built in 1925-26 and hauled 125,000 cords of pulpwood each year from Eagle to Umbazooksus Lake. The remains of the two giant oil-burning steam locomotives, which made the round trip between the lakes every three hours, are a startling sight as they stand near the shore of Eagle Lake.

Chase Rapids: The most taxing stretch of water on the Allagash extends between Churchill Dam and Umsaskis Lake. The 9-mile course through the rips can be a high point for white water canoe enthusiasts. Portage service is available for this stretch of white water.

Allagash Falls: For many, forty-foot Allagash Falls is the climactic climax of the trip. The falls is 13 miles from the point where the Allagash joins the St. John River near the Maine-New Brunswick border.



REVISED

1996

This brochure is also available in alternative formats from the Northern Region, Bureau of Parks and Lands, 106 Hogan Road, Bangor, Maine 04401; telephone (207) 941-4014.

Map designed and drawn by Richard D. Kelly Jr.

is closed to all hunting during this period. Firearms may be transported across the Restricted Zone from May 1 to October 1 provided that they are securely wrapped in a complete cover, fastened in a case, or carried in at least two pieces. Brook trout, togue, and lake whitefish are plentiful, and licensed fishermen are encouraged to try their luck. Booklets containing hunting and fishing laws are available from the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

The Allagash does not have populations of warm water species of fish which, if introduced, would threaten the present cold water fishery. Allagash Falls forms a natural barrier to the upstream migration of these fish. Please do not dump pails of bait in the Waterway. Your cooperation will preserve good fishing for the future.

Winter Use

The Allagash is used in the winter by hardy individuals seeking sport and adventure. This use has increased with the advent of the snowmobile. With the exception of a single trail used for access to Chamberlain Lake, there are no marked trails in the Waterway.

Extreme care should be exercised in the thorough-tires, since the current keeps the ice thin, with some water remaining open all winter. General snowmobile safety practices should be carefully observed, as help is not readily available. Please practice low-impact winter use, and build warming fires below the high water mark to avoid scaring the shore. Campsites are open for winter camping, with the same rules and regulations that apply to summer use.

Assistance

Emergency assistance and information are available from the Waterway Rangers, Forest Rangers, and Game Wardens who regularly patrol the Waterway. No telephone communication is available. Emergency messages may be transmitted by radio into the Waterway through the Waterway radio operator at (207) 435-7963.

For emergency assistance statewide, call the nearest office of the State Police: Gray 1-800-482-0730; Houlton 1-800-924-2251; Thomaston 1-800-359-0819; Augusta 1-800-452-4664; Orono 1-800-432-7381.

Further Information

For answers to your questions and additional information about rules, regulations, permits, fees, and conditions mentioned in this brochure, please contact the following organizations:

Northern Region Bureau of Parks and Lands
106 Hogan Road
Bangor, ME 04401
Tel. (207) 941-4014

North Maine Woods, Inc.
P.O. Box 421
Ashland, ME 04732
Tel. (207) 435-0213

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
State House Station 41
Augusta, ME 04333
Tel. (207) 287-2811

Low-Impact Camping

Human use of a wilderness area is bound to have some impact, but you can reduce your impact by careful planning and thoughtful use. Please consider the following tips, and consult a handbook on low-impact camping before your trip.

- Choose reusable over disposables, especially for dishes and silverware.
- Avoid disposables, such as lighters, flashlights, butane cylinders, and Sterno cans.
- Camp stoves have less impact on the wilderness than do campfires made from wood gathered there. Choose refillable liquid-fuel stoves and lanterns over dangerous butane cylinder models.
- If you make a campfire, use only small, downed wood and tend the fire.

- Burn only paper waste. Plastic, foil, and food just do not burn up and must be cleaned out of fireplaces.
- Use only no-phosphate soaps/detergents to wash dishes, clothes, and yourself in a basin away from the water. Dump waste water into a pit toilet, if available, or your own small pit at least 300 feet from the water.
- If you need plastic to keep things dry, use and reuse durable plastic.

- Avoid trenching; choose higher ground for wet weather tenting.
- Sleep on a pad or air mattress, not gathered leaves or evergreen needles.
- Wear shoes and boots with low-profile treads that churn up less soil.
- Buy food in bulk and avoid individual and excessive packaging.
- Use powdered soft drinks to avoid cans, bottles, and foil-lined boxes.
- Bring food in reusable containers and resealable plastic bags; reuse them.
- Seal food waste in a separate bag to take home and compost.
- Rinse and flatten cans; take them home to recycle.

Recreational Activities

Besides the enjoyment of camping, canoeing, and just being away from it all, visitors will find other recreational activities in the Waterway. Hiking trails to fire towers will afford visitors a fine view of the surrounding lakes and woodlands. Hunting in season, with proper licensure, is allowed. Firearms may not be discharged in the Restricted Zone from May 1 to October 1 each year and the Restricted Zone to October 1 each year and the Restricted Zone

Consider this list of equipment in planning your trip:

Sleeping bag and pad
Hat
Tarp
Rangear
Boots, mocs, sneakers
Extra clothing
Canoe patching material
Towels
Soap (no phosphates)
Canoe patching material
Pole, 10'-12'
Supply of 1/4" rope
Extra paddles
Ax
Knife
Whiststone
Kraiback/packbasket
Trovie
Zipper seal bags
Life preservers - At least one Coast Guard-approved life-saving device per person (required by law)

Photo by Gil Gislason

Climate and Environment

Visitors to the Waterway will encounter variable weather throughout the year, but cool weather is the rule. Warm clothing is needed at all times for nights and rainy days. Be prepared to go ashore if a wind comes up or a rain shower occurs.

Wild animals are abundant in the Waterway, and we urge you to enjoy them at a safe distance. For your safety and their well-being, store food and waste securely and never try to feed or touch wild animals.

The black fly season starts about June 1, and usually begins to abate by July 1, except in wet years. Most common insect repellents will afford protection. Tents with floors and screens can be obtained from the lakes and rivers, but usual purification procedures must be followed.

Canoe Trips

Because "ice-out" does not occur until mid-May, canoe trips will not be attempted before May 15.

Children can safely make the trip under proper supervision, and many young campers enjoy the experience each year.

Pontage service is available at scheduled times from the Waterway Ranger at Churchill Dam for canoeists who do not wish to run Chase Rapids.

Canoists will find that the canoe route through the Waterway is not marked by signs. U.S.G.S. topographic maps make the best navigational references, and the relevant quadrangles are identified on the map section of this brochure together with the address where they may be obtained.

Gear

A canoe trip in the Allagash need not be a survival test. Prior camping experience will be a good guide to determining your basic needs. It is well to remember that once you are in the Waterway, there will be no opportunity to get items you have overlooked.

Organized Groups

To preserve the Allagash wilderness experience, group size is strictly limited to 12 persons. Groups of more than 12 people must travel and camp separately.

Boy Scout and Girl Scout groups are reminded to obtain a local or national tour permit in compliance with scouting regulations. Trip leaders of organized children's groups are required by law to obtain a permit from the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

Parking

Vehicles may be left in designated parking areas. Return transportation to these and other points of departure may be arranged privately in the towns of Allagash Village, St. Francis, and Fort Kent. A list of transporters and outfitters is available from North Maine Woods.

Registration

Everyone entering the Waterway must register at the first local opportunity. Visitors entering over private roads may register with North Maine Woods checkpoints or with the first Waterway Ranger encountered. (See map for location of Ranger Stations.)

Photo by Gil Gislason

Background

The land along the Waterway is divided into two parallel zones for management purposes. The inner zone, extending back 500 feet from the high water mark, is owned by the State of Maine. Non-recreational activity is strictly limited in this zone; seasonal camps, commercial timber cutting and construction activity are prohibited. In an outer zone extending one mile from the high water mark, timber harvesting operations in visible areas in commercial forests are conducted according to management plans approved by the state. This control zone is intended to protect the natural character of the Waterway without unduly infringing upon the forest industries of Maine.

The Allagash is not a wilderness in the sense of being untouched by human hands. It is a wilderness in that any time of year visitors may experience living under largely natural conditions, in striking contrast to the modern world's human environment. The Waterway's limited facilities will be appreciated by visitors who seek solititude and self-reliance. There is no public transportation; access is limited to gravel roads, and camping facilities are primitive.

The key to an enjoyable and successful Allagash trip is careful advance planning. Thoughtful attention to the planning of an Allagash trip is often remembered as part of the pleasure of the trip itself.

Access

Automobile access to the Waterway is gained over private roads beginning in Maine and Quebec. All roads in this area are owned and maintained by the private landowners. Remember that these roads

are designed for rapid movement of logging trucks and fire equipment, and that these large trucks have limited maneuverability and the right of way at all times. In order to manage public access to their private roads and forest lands, the private owners of approximately three million acres of forest land in Maine north of Baxter State Park and west of State Route 11 have developed an organization known as North Maine Woods. This organization monitors vehicle access in the area through a system of checkpoints. Most visitors to the Waterway will pass through one or more of these checkpoints and should contact North Maine Woods beforehand to request a map of the area, pertinent rules and regulations, and information on road conditions and fees. Vehicle access points provide the easiest access for people with mobility impairments. Many people with disabilities use the Waterway and enjoy the wilderness each year. The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands will make every effort to accommodate special needs; please contact us for more information.

Access to the Waterway by air is allowed at a few designated sites only, in accordance with regulations available from the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands.

Photo by Gil Gislason

Parking

Vehicles may be left in designated parking areas. Return transportation to these and other points of departure may be arranged privately in the towns of Allagash Village, St. Francis, and Fort Kent. A list of transporters and outfitters is available from North Maine Woods.

Registration

Everyone entering the Waterway must register at the first local opportunity. Visitors entering over private roads may register with North Maine Woods checkpoints or with the first Waterway Ranger encountered. (See map for location of Ranger Stations.)

Photo by Gil Gislason

Background

The land along the Waterway is divided into two parallel zones for management purposes. The inner zone, extending back 500 feet from the high water mark, is owned by the State of Maine. Non-recreational activity is strictly limited in this zone; seasonal camps, commercial timber cutting and construction activity are prohibited. In an outer zone extending one mile from the high water mark, timber harvesting operations in visible areas in commercial forests are conducted according to management plans approved by the state. This control zone is intended to protect the natural character of the Waterway without unduly infringing upon the forest industries of Maine.

The Allagash is not a wilderness in the sense of being untouched by human hands. It is a wilderness in that any time of year visitors may experience living under largely natural conditions, in striking contrast to the modern world's human environment. The Waterway's limited facilities will be appreciated by visitors who seek solitudo-

nus and self-reliance. There is no public transportation; access is limited to gravel roads, and camping facilities are primitive.

Access

Automobile access to the Waterway is gained over private roads beginning in Maine and Quebec. All roads in this area are owned and maintained by the private landowners. Remember that these roads

are designed for rapid movement of logging trucks and fire equipment, and that these large trucks have limited maneuverability and the right of way at all times. In order to manage public access to their private roads and forest lands, the private owners of approximately three million acres of forest land in Maine north of Baxter State Park and west of State Route 11 have developed an organization known as North Maine Woods. This organization monitors vehicle access in the area through a system of checkpoints. Most visitors to the Waterway will pass through one or more of these checkpoints and should contact North Maine Woods beforehand to request a map of the area, pertinent rules and regulations, and information on road conditions and fees. Vehicle access points provide the easiest access for people with mobility impairments. Many people with disabilities use the Waterway and enjoy the wilderness each year. The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands will make every effort to accommodate special needs; please contact us for more information.

Access to the Waterway by air is allowed at a few designated sites only, in accordance with regulations available from the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands.

Photo by Gil Gislason

Parking

Vehicles may be left in designated parking areas. Return transportation to these and other points of departure may be arranged privately in the towns of Allagash Village, St. Francis, and Fort Kent. A list of transporters and outfitters is available from North Maine Woods.

Registration

Everyone entering the Waterway must register at the first local opportunity. Visitors entering over private roads may register with North Maine Woods checkpoints or with the first Waterway Ranger encountered. (See map for location of Ranger Stations.)

Photo by Gil Gislason

Background

The land along the Waterway is divided into two parallel zones for management purposes. The inner zone, extending back 500 feet from the high water mark, is owned by the State of Maine. Non-recreational activity is strictly limited in this zone; seasonal camps, commercial timber cutting and construction activity are prohibited. In an outer zone extending one mile from the high water mark, timber harvesting operations in visible areas in commercial forests are conducted according to management plans approved by the state. This control zone is intended to protect the natural character of the Waterway without unduly infringing upon the forest industries of Maine.

The Allagash is not a wilderness in the sense of being untouched by human hands. It is a wilderness in that any time of year visitors may experience living under largely natural conditions, in striking contrast to the modern world's human environment. The Waterway's limited facilities will be appreciated by visitors who seek solitudo-

nus and self-reliance. There is no public transportation; access is limited to gravel roads, and camping facilities are primitive.

Access

Automobile access to the Waterway is gained over private roads beginning in Maine and Quebec. All roads in this area are owned and maintained by the private landowners. Remember that these roads

are designed for rapid movement of logging trucks and fire equipment, and that these large trucks have limited maneuverability and the right of way at all times. In order to manage public access to their private roads and forest lands, the private owners of approximately three million acres of forest land in Maine north of Baxter State Park and west of State Route 11 have developed an organization known as North Maine Woods. This organization monitors vehicle access in the area through a system of checkpoints. Most visitors to the Waterway will pass through one or more of these checkpoints and should contact North Maine Woods beforehand to request a map of the area, pertinent rules and regulations, and information on road conditions and fees. Vehicle access points provide the easiest access for people with mobility impairments. Many people with disabilities use the Waterway and enjoy the wilderness each year. The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands will make every effort to accommodate special needs; please contact us for more information.

Access to the Waterway by air is allowed at a few designated sites only, in accordance with regulations available from the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands.

Photo by Gil Gislason

Parking

Vehicles may be left in designated parking areas. Return transportation to these and other points of departure may be arranged privately in the towns of Allagash Village, St. Francis, and Fort Kent. A list of transporters and outfitters is available from North Maine Woods.

Registration

Everyone entering the Waterway must register at the first local opportunity. Visitors entering over private roads may register with North Maine Woods checkpoints or with the first Waterway Ranger encountered. (See map for location of Ranger Stations.)

Photo by Gil Gislason

Background

The land along the Waterway is divided into two parallel zones for management purposes. The inner zone, extending back 500 feet from the high water mark, is owned by the State of Maine. Non-recreational activity is strictly limited in this zone; seasonal camps, commercial timber cutting and construction activity are prohibited. In an outer zone extending one mile from the high water mark, timber harvesting operations in visible areas in commercial forests are conducted according to management plans approved by the state. This control zone is intended to protect the natural character of the Waterway without unduly infringing upon the forest industries of Maine.

The Allagash is not a wilderness in the sense of being untouched by human hands. It is a wilderness in that any time of year visitors may experience living under largely natural conditions, in striking contrast to the modern world's human environment. The Waterway's limited facilities will be appreciated by visitors who seek solitudo-

nus and self-reliance. There is no public transportation; access is limited to gravel roads, and camping facilities are primitive.

Access

Automobile access to the Waterway is gained over private roads beginning in Maine and Quebec. All roads in this area are owned and maintained by the private landowners. Remember that these roads

are designed for rapid movement of logging trucks and fire equipment, and that these large trucks have limited maneuverability and the right of way at all times. In order to manage public access to their private roads and forest lands, the private owners of approximately three million acres of forest land in Maine north of Baxter State Park and west of State Route 11 have developed an organization known as North Maine Woods. This organization monitors vehicle access in the area through a system of checkpoints. Most visitors to the Waterway will pass through one or more of these checkpoints and should contact North Maine Woods beforehand to request a map of the area, pertinent rules and regulations, and information on road conditions and fees. Vehicle access points provide the easiest access for people with mobility impairments. Many people with disabilities use the Waterway and enjoy the wilderness each year. The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands will make every effort to accommodate special needs; please contact us for more information.

Access to the Waterway by air is allowed at a few designated sites only, in accordance with regulations available from the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands.

Photo by Gil Gislason

Parking

Vehicles may be left in designated parking areas. Return transportation to these and other points of departure may be arranged privately in the towns of Allagash Village, St. Francis, and Fort Kent. A list of transporters and outfitters is available from North Maine Woods.

Registration

Everyone entering the Waterway must register at the first local opportunity. Visitors entering over private roads may register with North Maine Woods checkpoints or with the first Waterway Ranger encountered. (See map for location of Ranger Stations.)

Photo by Gil Gislason

Background

The land along the Waterway is divided into two parallel zones for management purposes. The inner zone, extending back 500 feet from the high water mark, is owned by the State of Maine. Non-recreational activity is strictly limited in this zone; seasonal camps, commercial timber cutting and construction activity are prohibited. In an outer zone extending one mile from the high water mark, timber harvesting operations in visible areas in commercial forests are conducted according to management plans approved by the state. This control zone is intended to protect the natural character of the Waterway without unduly infringing upon the forest industries of Maine.

The Allagash is not a wilderness in the sense of being untouched by human hands. It is a wilderness in that any time of year visitors may experience living under largely natural conditions, in striking contrast to the modern world's human environment. The Waterway's limited facilities will be appreciated by visitors who