

What is the AMC?

The [Appalachian Mountain Club](#) (AMC) was founded in 1876, and we promote the protection, enjoyment, and understanding of the mountains, forests, waters, and trails of the Appalachian region. We are over 100,000 members, advocates, and supporters; 16,000 volunteers; and over 450 full time and seasonal staff. Our 12 chapters reach from Maine to Washington D.C. We began developing hiking trails in what is now the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF) in the late 1800s. The club maintains most of the AT from Kinsman Notch, N.H., to Grafton Notch, Maine, through a combination of efforts from hundreds of volunteers, professional trail crews, and shelter caretakers. AMC offers hikers overnight accommodations at eight huts, 14 shelters and tentsites, Joe Dodge Lodge at Pinkham Notch and the Highland Center at Crawford Notch. In addition to the AT, the AMC maintains another 350 miles of other trails in New Hampshire. All told, we maintain more than 1500 miles of trail in the Northeast for the public to enjoy.

The AT in the White Mountains

As you will quickly see, things are a little different here in the Whites and the Mahoosucs!

- ❑ HIGH USE --The WMNF sees more visitors annually than Yellowstone and Yosemite National Parks combined! The AT in the Whites is one of, if not the most popular section of the whole 2100 miles. AMC works closely with the WMNF, ATC, and other organizations to limit the resource impacts of increasing numbers of backcountry visitors. Concentrating backcountry use at developed overnight sites with adequate water and sanitation facilities, such as shelters, tentsites, and huts, is one way to protect the backcountry environment and fulfill our conservation mission.
- ❑ Forest Protection Areas (FPAs) -- These are designated by the US Forest Service to protect heavily used areas in the Whites from overuse. FPAs are found above tree line, around shelters, huts, and all other places where overcamping could be a problem (roads, ponds, fragile ecosystems, etc.). Camping is prohibited in all Forest Protection Areas. For more info, get a copy of the FPA brochure from any Forest Service or AMC staff.
- ❑ Local Trail Names, Blazing, & Signs -- People have been hiking in these mountains since before the turn of the century, and much of the AT here follows trails that existed before a trail from GA to ME was ever conceived. Therefore, you will be hiking not only on the AT, but also the Fishin' Jimmy Trail, the Twinway, and the Mahoosuc Trail, to name just a few. Keep your eyes open for the white blazes, which may be spaced farther apart here than you're used to - the AT is the only white blazed trail in the WMNF. Be aware of the different trail names used. Don't trust mileages on trail signs - some signs are old and inaccurate. Rely on the AT Guide, Data Book or this pamphlet for mileages.
- ❑ Rugged terrain - You may notice your legs burning and feet swelling a bit more than in the past. The trail here is steep and rocky in many places - slow it down a little and enjoy the scenery these grand mountains present.

- ❑ Getting through the Presidentials can be tricky! Consult the data sheet on the back for more information and figure what you can do for mileage. Features near or above timberline in the Presidentials are indicated in ***bold, italicized*** type. If space at the huts is not available, you may need to hike down to get shelter. Take the time to plan your trip, including several options in case of bad weather or no space at the huts or shelters. In this way, you'll be better able to enjoy this spectacular, rugged, and unique section!

AMC Shelters/Tentsites

The AMC maintains 13 shelters/tentsites along the Appalachian Trail which offer low- or no-cost accommodations similar to those you have seen already during your many miles of hiking. Because some of these sites see 50+ visitors on a given night, caretakers are present at many sites to educate hikers, manage composting toilet systems, and maintain the area. (Liberty, Garfield, and Guyot, are the most popular.) The shelters that have a caretaker and a fee associated w/ them are denoted on the data sheet on the reverse of this brochure.

AMC Huts

The AMC operates eight backcountry huts which provide dinner, lodging, and breakfast during the summer and early fall season. AT Thru-hikers staying at AMC facilities are offered AMC member rates. Advanced full-service reservations start at \$94 plus tax (603-466-2727, 9-5 Mon.-Sat.) or ask a hut crew member or shelter caretaker to radio and make the reservation for you. If you're on a low budget and you want to stay at a hut, you can do the "work-for-stay" option (sorry - no reservations). See the following "work-for-stay" section. In the spring and late fall, several huts operate on more limited self service--lodging and kitchen facilities available--but no meals provided with overnight rates starting at \$27 plus tax.

Work for Stay Option

AMC has a long tradition of providing room & board to AT thru-hikers in exchange for work at AMC facilities in the White Mountains. This arrangement has worked well for many years, with AMC crews and caretakers appreciating the extra help and thru-hikers enjoying a dry roof and somebody else's cooking. The AMC-staffed shelter sites will again be participating in this program. Here are the guidelines for the "work-for-stay" option:

- ❑ The work-for-stay option is available at the huts and shelters Work-for-stay is not available at Pinkham Notch Visitor Center/Joe Dodge Lodge, Camp Dodge Volunteer Center, or the Highland Center
- ❑ Work may not be available and is at the discretion of the AMC staff at the site.
- ❑ Work-for-stay is available on a first-come/first-served basis. No reservations.

- ❑ If work is available, each site can accommodate two thru-hikers per night (four at Lakes of the Clouds Hut).
- ❑ Expect to work two hours at the huts and one hour at shelters, usually after breakfast.
- ❑ Discuss what is expected of you with the hutmaster, shelter caretaker, or Dodge crew when you arrive so terms are clear.
- ❑ To give all thru-hikers a chance to work off their stay, please limit your use of the work-for-stay option to no more than three huts and no more than three shelters. Also, stays are limited to one night.
- ❑ **While every attempt will be made by the hut crews and shelter caretakers to provide work for the allotted number of thru-hikers each night, there will be times when work is not available and the full fee may be charged.**

Lakes of the Clouds Hut

Because of the size and location of Lakes of the Clouds Hut, four thru-hikers per night can be accommodated here on a work for stay basis. The Backpacker Space (aka The Dungeon) is available for thru-hikers only at the regular rate of \$10 per night. Space is available on a first-come first-serve basis. Sorry, reservations are not accepted.

Highland Center at Crawford Notch

This is the AMC lodge and education center in Crawford Notch. No work-for-stay is available here. Bunkroom lodging w/dinner and breakfast averages t \$91 plus tax, midweek. Reservations are recommended. Shapleigh Bunkhouse bed & AYCE breakfast averages \$46 plus tax.

Pinkham Notch Visitor Center/Joe Dodge Lodge

This is the center of AMC work here in the White Mountains. No work-for-stay options are available. Fuel and hiker supplies are available at the Visitor Center store. Dinner and bunkroom lodging w/AYCE breakfast averages \$60 plus tax. Reservations are recommended.

Randolph Mountain Club

The RMC operates several facilities in the northern Presidentials (Gray Knob, Crag Camp, each \$15 for RMC members; \$20 for nonmembers, The Perch \$8, RMC members; \$10, nonmembers.) that may be used as low-cost alternatives or as bail out sites in bad weather. These sites are about 1,000 vertical feet down off the ridge, but they are worth the extra effort.

NH State Parks

Both Franconia and Crawford Notch State Parks operate campgrounds somewhat off the trail that thru-hikers may use. Reservations can be made through Reserve America at 1-877-nhparks (1-877-647-2757).

Southbounders

The Green Mountain Club has caretakers and a \$5 overnight use fee at three AT sites in Vermont: Little Rock Pond, Griffith Lake (includes Peru Peak Shelter), and Stratton Pond. Camping is not allowed within ½ mile of these sites and is only allowed at the designated sites or as specified by the caretaker on duty within these areas.

Northbounders

Baxter State Park in Maine is implementing a free permit system in 2016 for northbound, long-distance (100+ miles) hikers entering the park on the AT to better integrate AT long-distance hikers into their Visitor Management System. Permits can be obtained at Katahdin Stream Campground, park headquarters in Millinocket, and from the A.T. Steward at Abol Bridge. Hikers can also pre-register for the permit at a kiosk at the AT Visitor Center in Monson as well as get any questions about the park answered. The Visitor Center will be open 7 days a week at times convenient for thru-hikers.

It is strongly advised that you complete your thru-hike by October 15. After this date, adverse weather conditions may prevent you from climbing Katahdin and the park is open for day use only: no overnight camping is allowed anywhere within the park. After October 15, opportunities to climb Katahdin will be determined on a day-by-day basis, depending on access and weather conditions. More information for AT thru-hikers entering Baxter State Park can be found at:

<http://www.baxterstateparkauthority.com/hiking/at.htm>

We always welcome suggestions and/or comments from thru-hikers regarding your experiences here in the Whites and Mahoosucs and the usefulness of this pamphlet! Feel free to give any feedback you may have to AMC hut crews or shelter caretakers, or drop us a note. You can write to us at: AT Thru-Hiker Feedback, AMC, PO Box 298, Gorham, NH 03581.

Notes on Using Data Sheet

The *italicized, bold portion* of the data sheet denotes the section of trail along the Presidential Range. This portion of the AT lies almost completely above treeline and is exposed to some of the worst weather in the lower 48 states. Camping areas are down off the ridge, often at some distance and elevation loss from the AT. Be aware that the Alpine Zone is an FPA and is EXTREMELY FRAGILE and sees a high amount of use. Please walk on the rocks and stay on the trail above treeline. Use care and planning when traversing.

N to S	Features	S to N
0.0	Grafton Notch, Maine 26	119.4
4.6	Speck Pond Shelter - \$10	114.8
9.7	Full Goose Shelter – No fee	109.7
14.1	Carlo Col Shelter – No fee (.3 mi. W)	105.3
19.4	Gentian Pond Shelter – No fee	100.0
24.4	Trident Col Tentsite – No fee (.2 mi. W)	95.0
31.3	US 2; Gorham, NH	88.1
32.9	Rattle River Shelter – No fee	86.5
38.9	Imp Shelter - \$10	80.5
46.2	Carter Notch Hut – Ave. \$98 (work option) (.1mi. E)	73.2
51.7	Pinkham Notch Visitor Center – See page 2	67.7
56.0	<i>Osgood Campsite – No Fee</i>	63.4
58.8	<i>Madison Hut,– Ave. \$109 (work option), Valley Way Tentsite (.6 mi. W) No Fee</i>	
59.7	<i>Thunderstorm Junction – Lowe’s Path to Gray Knob Cabin - \$20 (1.1 mi. W); Spur Trail to Crag Camp Cabin - \$20 (1.2 mi. W)</i>	59.7
60.3	<i>Israel Ridge Path to The Perch - \$10 (.9 mi. W)</i>	59.1
66.1	<i>Lakes of the Clouds Hut–See page 2 (work option)</i>	53.3
70.7	<i>Mizpah Hut- Ave. \$109 (work option) Nauman Tentsite \$10</i>	48.7
77.1	US 302, Dry River Campground - (1.5 E)	42.8
80.1	Ethan Pond Shelter - \$10	39.3
84.2	Zealand Falls Hut - Ave. \$109 (work option)	35.2
88.2	Guyot Shelter - \$10 (.7 mi. E,)	31.2
91.1	Galehead Hut - Ave. \$109 (Work option)	28.3
93.9	Garfield Shelter - \$10	25.5
97.6	Greenleaf Hut Ave. \$109 (1.1 mi. W) (work option)	21.8
101.4	Liberty Springs Campsite - \$10	18.0
103.9	US 3, Franconia Notch; Lafayette Campground - (2.1 mi. W)	15.5
106.7	Lonesome Lake Hut - Ave. \$109 (work option)	12.7
108.5	Kinsman Pond Shelter - \$10	10.9
112.5	Eliza Brook Shelter – No Fee	6.9
119.4	Kinsman Notch, NH 112	0.0

Welcome AT



Thru-Hikers

Thru-Hiker’s Guide to
Appalachian Mountain Club Maintained Trails & Facilities in the
White Mountains & Mahoosucs

Introduction

Congratulations! Whether you are traveling toward the mighty Katahdin or the beautiful Springer, making it to the White Mountains is a grand accomplishment. Your 100+ miles of travel through the White and Mahoosuc Mountains will quite possibly be some of the most spectacular and memorable miles of your hike.

This pamphlet was written by a thru-hiker for thru-hikers to help make your hike along the AMC maintained section of the AT in the North Country as enjoyable as can be.

Happy Hiking!

Chris “Buzz” Kaldahl
GA-ME ’94
AMC Shelter Caretaker ’95-’96
ATC Stewardship Council member 2009-11