



STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2027

our mission

To **preserve, protect, and enhance** Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument and **inspire** a community dedicated to the Monument's future.

introduction

Known for its awe-inspiring landscape, dark skies, and pristine rivers and streams, Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument is entering a period of increased attention and visitation following the opening of Tekakapimək Contact Station. As a philanthropic and educational partner to the National Park Service, this is a moment full of possibility for Friends of Katahdin Woods & Waters to protect this special place for all generations, while galvanizing new champions for its future.

In this exciting next chapter, Friends of Katahdin Woods & Waters will work hand in hand with the National Park Service, Wabanaki tribal communities, and Katahdin region communities to ensure the National Monument reaches its full potential.



vision

In partnership with the National Park Service, Katahdin region communities, the Wabanaki Nations, and our members, we work toward a future where . . .

- The ecological integrity of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument is protected.
- The National Park Service is fully supported in its work and mission.
- Katahdin region communities are thriving, with the National Monument and communities working together toward shared goals.
- Youth are building lifelong connections to the National Monument through meaningful place-based programming.
- Wabanaki culture and practices of caring for the land are understood by visitors and inform the future of the National Monument.
- Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument is an iconic destination within Maine and the National Park System.

To support our vision of the future, Friends of Katahdin Woods & Waters commits to become an organization with...

- Strong, mutually beneficial partnerships with the National Park Service, Wabanaki tribal communities, and Katahdin region communities.
- Broad membership and deep community support to sustain effective programs and impactful investments that enrich both people and place.
- A staff that is knowledgeable and connected to the communities we serve.
- A board of directors that reflects the many interests in the National Monument and is committed to their role in the success of the organization.

values

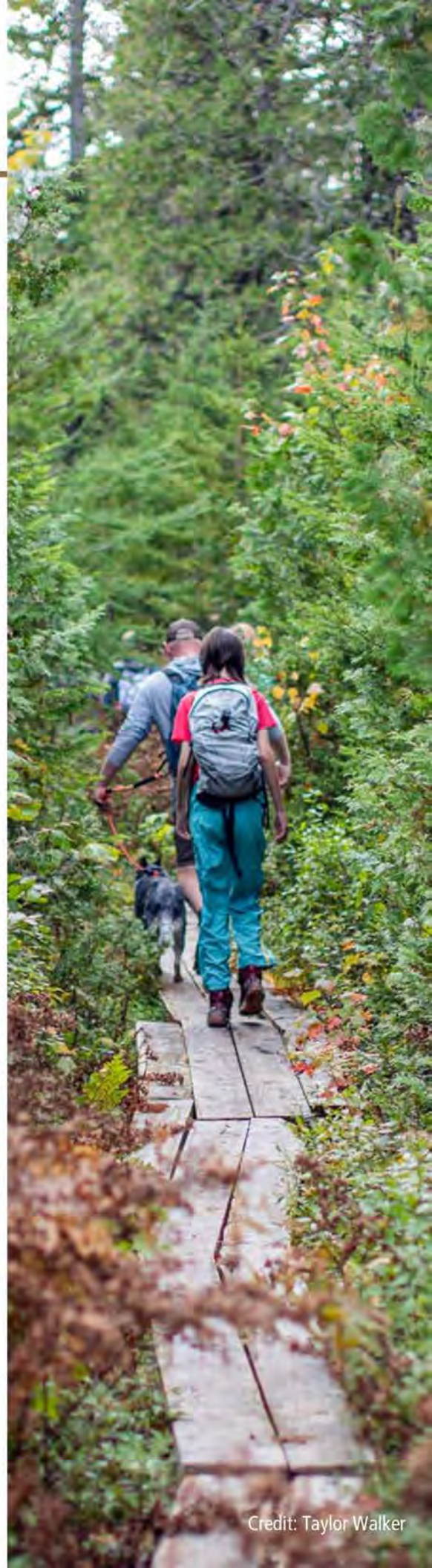
Generational Responsibility. Friends believes its work should inspire exceptional care of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument and its surrounding lands into the future.

Collaboration. Friends infuses its work with a collaborative approach and is willing to learn, lead, and support on the path to developing positive outcomes in partnerships.

Belonging. Friends' programming will reflect diverse voices and be accessible to as many people as possible. Friends will be inclusive and equitable in its internal and external practices.

Integrity. Friends embraces ethical leadership, fiscal responsibility, and transparency in its operations to foster a culture of integrity and inspire trust.

Adaptability. Friends is committed to being dynamic and nimble to best take advantage of new opportunities that could advance the mission of the organization and its partners.



priorities

Build relevance and understanding of the National Monument through community and educational programs. Friends will support National Park Service efforts in education to increase knowledge and understanding of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. Friends will also create opportunities, including at Tekakapimək Contact Station, for learners to develop lifelong connections to the natural world and their communities. These efforts will contribute to a vibrant recreation economy while inspiring new champions and future caretakers of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument.

Ensure the ecological vitality of the National Monument with strategic investments, partnerships, and advocacy. Friends will explore land acquisition opportunities that strengthen resource protection, enhance the visitor experience, and/or facilitate management of the Monument. Recognizing the need for scientific information and data for good decision-making, Friends will strive to support scientific initiatives in the Monument. Advocacy efforts will serve our mission and vision.

Work closely with the National Park Service to identify and develop improvements to visitor experience. To make Katahdin Woods and Waters a treasured place for visitors, continued improvements to the infrastructure and recreational experiences available within the National Monument are critical. A strengthened relationship with the National Park Service based on a deeper understanding of long-range plans and needs can fuel the next set of projects that Friends and its members support.

Expand the depth and breadth of Friends' support network to achieve vision. In its next chapter, Friends will increase its annual fundraising and awareness among individuals whose relationship can grow alongside the organization. Emerging from a significant capital campaign poses exciting opportunities for converting campaign donors to annual supporters, while also making space for renewed focus on membership contributions that support core operations. By cultivating deeper relationships within our community, offering new legacy giving programs, and welcoming a broader support base, Friends can embrace new opportunities while maintaining core operations.

goals & strategies

Education and Community Goal

Friends will inspire new champions and foster lifelong connections to nature and the Monument.

Strategies

1. Support the National Park Service's education efforts to build stronger connections with schools and visitors.
2. Inspire learners through direct Katahdin Learning Project programming.
3. Work with community partners to craft Friends programs that are meaningful and relevant.
4. Build connections to the land among adults and community members.



Credit: Taylor Walker

Credit: Northern Oak



Outcome Highlights

- 2,000 students reached annually
- 5+ recreation programs running
- Program committee formed
- Tekakapimek fully utilized
- With NPS, regular volunteer opportunities offered

goals & strategies

Long-Term Conservation Goal

Investments in land, infrastructure, and research will ensure the health of the Monument into the future.

Strategies

1. Improve visitor experience in partnership with the National Park Service with learning during General Management Plan (GMP) process.
2. Pursue land acquisition opportunities and scientific research partnerships that improve connectivity, protect natural resources, and enhance our understanding of the Monument.
3. Engage in advocacy efforts that address critical threats to monument lands, enhance Monument access, and support NPS appropriations.



Credit: Ross Knowlton



Credit: Nolan Altwater

Outcome Highlights

- New round of Park Priority Projects is identified through GMP
- Research fellowship established with partner organization
- Southern access improves connectivity
- Land goals are formalized

goals & strategies

Fundraising Goal

Annual fundraising will grow to fully support the organization's ambitions and meets its mission-driven needs, with total raised for operations in FY27 at least \$200,000 greater than FY23.

Strategies

1. Increase visibility and understanding of Friends' work among priority constituencies and new audiences.
2. Raise funds needed from major individual and foundation donors and steward their long-term support.
3. Enhance sense of belonging and purpose among Friends members and sponsors through events.
4. Create a legacy giving program that aligns long-term goals with enduring support.



Credit: James Florio



Credit: Taylor Walker

Outcome Highlights

- Website, branding, and data updates enhance messaging, awareness, and visitation
- 200 new donors and 60% donor retention rate reached annually
- Legacy society has 15+ members
- Endowment giving options established

goals & strategies

Organizational Capacity Goal

Organizational evolution supports Friends' people and culture to amplify our strengths and accelerate our impact.

Strategies

1. Grow and cultivate the board to effectively guide and promote the organization through its next chapter.
2. Build the organization's DEI practices and understanding.
3. Increase capacity and invest to achieve excellence in internal systems, planning, project management, and protocols.



Credit: Taylor Walker



Credit: Ross Knowlton

Outcome Highlights

- 16+ board seats are regularly filled and leadership secured
- Committees are high functioning with strong community representation
- DEI practices reflect values
- New staff position hired, high employee satisfaction

mission

To preserve, protect, and enhance Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument and **inspire** a community dedicated to the Monument's future.

vision

- Ecological integrity is upheld
- NPS is fully supported
- Wabanaki inform future

- Katahdin Region is thriving
- Youth build lifelong connections
- Iconic destination for visitors

core work

Preserve, Protect & Enhance

- Lands & connectivity
- Advocacy
- Park projects
- Annual park support

Inspire

- Katahdin Learning Project
- Promotion
- Community events
- Philanthropy



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