

Our Activities

Sporting Camp & Resource Inventory

The Foundation maintains a database of all commercially active sporting camps, plus those that have already been converted to private, non-public, use. The inventory includes a survey of the outstanding wildlife, habitats, ecosystems and scenic values.

Land Acquisition and Leasing Activities

We offer financing to owners and operators of sporting camps for a limited range of purposes. These include providing capital to upgrade camp facilities in order to make them suitable for today's visitors, and in the case of sporting camps located on leased property, assisting in the acquisition of the underlying land in the event the land owner elects to offer the property for sale.

We also acquire property directly in the event it is offered for sale by the landowner, and then lease it to a camp operator with sustainable terms, when the camp operator would be unable to obtain standard commercial financing.

Conservation Easements

We build coalitions to acquire conservation easements in order to protect the undeveloped, pristine surroundings that make sporting camps such special places.

Education and Coalition Building Activities

We educate the public about Maine sporting camps traditions and the important role sporting camps play in Maine's cultural heritage and economic well-being. We stress the importance of conservation efforts to preserve Maine's natural resources and the undeveloped, pristine surroundings that sporting camps rely upon.

Assistance to Camp Owners and Operators

We provide technical business and marketing assistance to sporting camp owners to help them better manage and market their sporting camps in an economic environment where it appears that interest in traditional sporting camp activities such as fishing and hunting may be declining.

We work with other organizations, including the Maine Office of Tourism, the U.S. Small Business Administration Maine Cooperative Extension and the Maine Woods Consortium, to develop appropriate workforce training on topics ranging from general business, marketing, new product development, business planning, budgeting and hospitality service functions.



Traditional Sporting Camp as shown in this 1906 postcard

A Cooperative Program of the Fishing, Hunting, Conservation, Tourism, Cultural History, and Economic Development Communities



Maine Sporting Camp Heritage Foundation

P.O. Box 136

Hampden, Maine 04444-0136

info@sportingcampfoundation.org

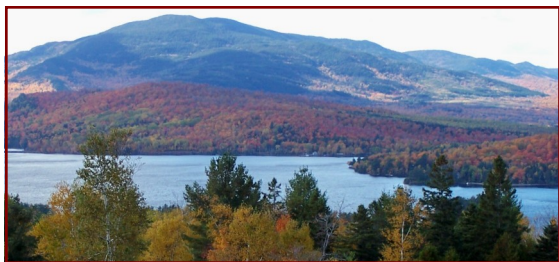
www.SportingCampFoundation.org

The Maine Sporting Camp Heritage Foundation is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501c3 charitable organization. Contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.



Preserving Maine's Treasured Places, Memorable Experiences, and Authentic Outdoor Heritage





Moosehead Lake, one of Maine's special places

Sporting Camps: Unique Maine Icons

The traditional Maine Sporting Camp is an integral part of Maine's cultural heritage. For over 150 years when Henry David Thoreau visited and then wrote about Maine, Sporting Camps have served the public's need for nature-based recreation by offering rustic lodging, meals and recreational access to Maine's most beautiful and remote natural locations.

In addition to their role in Maine's cultural heritage, Maine Sporting Camps are a vital part of the State's economy. Maine's traditional sporting camps are world-renowned destinations for persons seeking recreational opportunities in one of the largest remaining wilderness areas in the lower 48 states, and visitors to these camps help sustain the economies of many small rural communities in Maine's most economically distressed regions.

Many Sporting Camps feature hand-hewn log cabins that have been in continuous use for over 100 years. An architectural style has emerged that is unique to Maine, known simply as the "Maine Sporting Camp Style."

All these add together and create the unique **"Maine Sporting Camp Experience."**

A Challenging Future

In 1904 there were at least 300 sporting camps in operation in Maine. By 2007, this number had dwindled to fewer than 40. As more sporting camps are lost, this unique part of Maine's cultural heritage comes dangerously close to losing its critical mass and disappearing altogether — taking with it the valuable services sporting camps provide to the public and their vital contribution to Maine's economy.

Maine's sporting camps face serious challenges. Changes in land ownership and land management policies; high land valuations and taxes; lack of long term land leases; increased government regulation; lack of access to commercial capital; and encroaching development — All threaten the future of Maine's remaining Sporting Camps.

For example, sporting camps are typically located on waterfront property that can be sold at prices far higher than what commercial sporting camp operations can support. As a result, many sporting camps have already been purchased by individuals who later converted the camps into private vacation properties with no access available to the general public.



Seaplanes are often necessary to reach Maine's most remote sporting camps

Preserving the "Maine Sporting Camp Experience"

The Maine Sporting Camp Heritage Foundation was founded to preserve traditional sporting camps and the natural resources they rely upon.

The Foundation's core mission is to preserve this part of Maine's cultural heritage so that the public will continue to have access to some of Maine's most remote and beautiful locations, and will be able to enjoy the traditional outdoor experiences that sporting camps offer.

An important outcome of preserving the "Maine Sporting Camp Experience" is the preservation and strengthening of the local economies that depend on the continued operation of one or more traditional sporting camps.

In addition, further economic deterioration and increased unemployment in the communities whose economies depend to a large extent on visitors who seek traditional outdoor experiences at Maine sporting camps will be limited.

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For more info, Contact:
John Rust, President
(207) 337-5858