



SERVING THE WESTERN MOUNTAINS OF MAINE WHERE THE KIDS GROW STRAIGHT AND TALL AND THE WOMEN ARE ALL GOOD LOOKING.



Cold temps and a foot of snow open Loaf

By David Hart
 Irregular Staff

CARRABASSETT VALLEY — After a foot of the white stuff blanketed the slopes of the high Maine ridges and peaks, Sugarloaf opened its rugged terrain for the 2009-10 winter season on Sunday, Nov. 28. The mountain recorded eight inches at the base, and better than 12 inches at the top of the SuperQuad, with drifts topping two feet.

Skiing and riding was available on Tote Road, with lift access on the SuperQuad, and was opened to expert skiers and riders only on the opening day.

Snow coverage was described as variable and unmarked hazards may exist. Some walking may be required. Lift ticket prices that day were \$25 for all ages.

Those conditions will change rapidly as the temps have now dropped and all the new snowmaking improvements have been completed thanks to Boyne investments.

“We’re certainly excited to have all of the new snow, but we’re even more excited to have some good snowmaking temperatures back,” said Rich Wilkinson, Sugarloaf’s Director of Mountain Operations. “With all of the improvements we’ve made to our snowmaking system over the past few years, we expect to be able to bring new terrain into the mix fairly quickly.”

Daytime temperatures were in the 20s on Saturday, meaning Sugarloaf was able to resume snowmaking operations on Tote Road. Forecasts are calling for continued cold temperatures throughout most of the week; the resort expects to add additional terrain soon.

“It was truly great to see people back on the slopes today enjoying the snow,” said spokesman Ethan Austin. “While these early season conditions might not be for every skier, I think most people really enjoyed just getting

— Please see **Loaf** on page 12

A skier enjoys the fresh snow and snowmaking above Bullwinkle’s on the Tote Road on opening day at Sugarloaf Sunday. (Ethan Austin photo)

TransCanada seeks to expand wind farm

Two public hearings are set: Dec. 16 in Augusta and March 17 in Carrabassett Valley

AUGUSTA — TransCanada is asking the Land Use Regulation Commission to expand the expedited wind energy permitting area by adding an approximately 631-acre parcel located in Chain of Ponds Township.

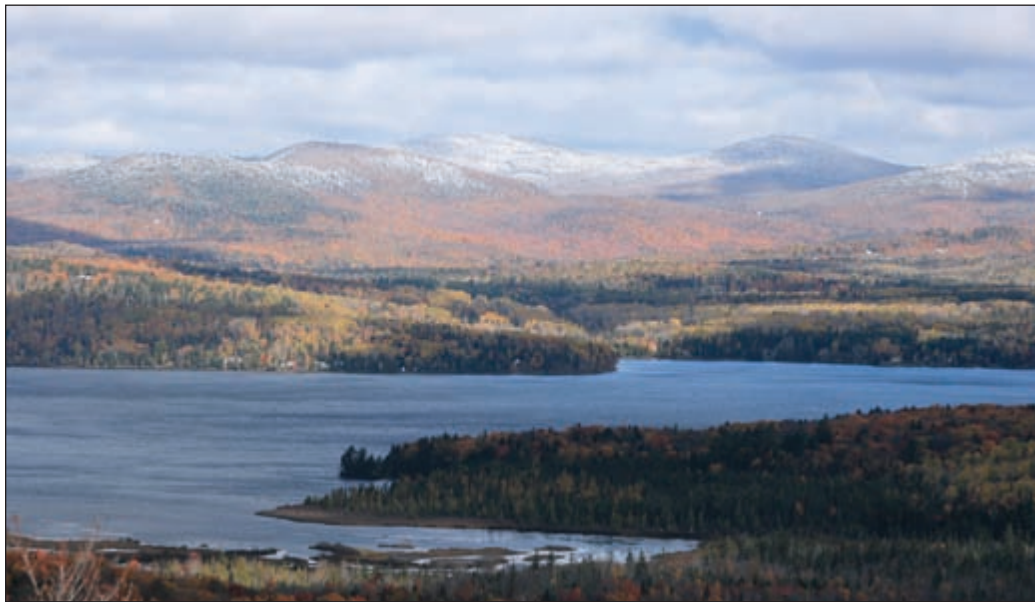
Wind energy development is an allowed use with a permit and no sub-district rezoning is required in expedited wind energy areas.

TransCanada is in the process of building a 44-turbine wind project

north of Eustis; 22 turbines have been erected and are operational, the remaining 22 are expected to be complete and online next year. The company proposes additional turbines for the land in Chain of Ponds.

A two-part public hearing will be held, and the public can testify at either or both parts of the hearing. LURC requests, if possible, that those testifying

— Please see **Wind** on page 12



One half-mile of shoreline on South Bog (foreground) has now become part of Rangeley Lake State Park. (Photo courtesy Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust)

‘Sonic boom’ source identified

By David Hart
 Irregular Staff

FRANKLIN COUNTY — Inquiries were made about an explosive sound on Nov. 19 which rocked much of county from Farmington to Kingfield. Curious residents called local dispatchers between 5:30 and 6 p.m. to try to figure out what had exploded.

The only response dispatchers could suggest was that the loud rumblings and sudden boom must have come from military aircraft flying overhead. The boom, some residents said, rattled their windows or sounded like a tree falling on their home.

The next day after contacting several military bases that fly missions in the Military Operations Area known as Condor, none took responsibility including the two Air National Guard bases in Massachusetts and Vermont.

Brook Davis, public affairs official for the Eastern Air Defense Sector called last week after investigating the incident. EADS monitors the air space on the east coast as well as all training

missions in Condor.

According to her records, there were two F-16s in flight over Farmington and Kingfield at the time of the incident. These jets belonged to the 158th Fighter Wing of the Air National Guard based in Burlington, Vt. F-16s, she said, have the single tail; F-15s have two tails.

Lt. Lloyd Goodrow of the Burlington ANG initially said he did not have jets out that night, but that response was based on inquiring if three jets were in the area.

On Monday, when it was confirmed to be the 158th jets, he said the “three jets” was the basis of his response and felt bad he gave misleading information. “I feel really bad about my answer to the question.”

Pilots that night all recorded non-sonic missions in a practice scramble conducted overhead. “I don’t know how to attribute the complaints of a sonic boom,” he said.

— Please see **Sonic** on page 17

Land acquired for Rangeley Lake State Park

AUGUSTA — The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, under the Maine Department of Conservation, has acquired more than one-half-mile of shoreline on Rangeley Lake as part of a recent acquisition of land for Rangeley Lake State Park, located in the town of Rangeley.

The 29-acre parcel, acquired at a price of \$595,000, previously had been surrounded by the state park land and now is a part of a continuously protected shoreline, according to BPL officials. Funding for the acquisition came through the Land for Maine’s Future Program.

The parcel, which includes sensitive wildlife habitat, adds to the total acreage set aside in conservation under the administration of Gov. John E. Baldacci.

“The state park system is indebted to the Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust for making this acquisition possible,” MDOC Commissioner Patrick McGowan said Monday. “We could not have pulled this off without them. Enlisting the partnership and support of private groups such as Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust is an absolutely necessary part of Maine’s conservation

strategy during tough budget times.”

“Rangeley Lake State Park is an important tourism asset that helps sustain Rangeley’s economy,” Alan Stearns, BPL deputy director, said. “Four miles of uninterrupted shoreline protection will keep Rangeley attractive for visitors, paddlers, campers, hunters and fishermen for generations to come. This acquisition is part of western Maine’s tourism future.”

“The successful completion of this exciting conservation acquisition strongly demonstrates the value of public/private partnerships in achieving shared conservation goals,” Nancy Perlson, RLHT executive director, said. “RLHT is committed to conservation and community and the addition of this important parcel supports our continuing effort to protect wildlife habitat and scenic shoreline while enhancing recreational opportunities that support the regional economy.”

Rangeley Lake State Park, located in the beautiful western-mountain vacation region of

— Please see **Rangeley** on page 17