

**Background:
Downeast and Acadia
Research, Education and Conservation Roundtable**

- Scientific studies show that the Downeast and Acadia region contains many of the cleanest, most natural and least developed watersheds and wildlife corridors on the East Coast of the United States. Past work in Hancock and Washington Counties by FBC and other land trusts has identified and protected vast tracts of critical wildlife habitat and open space, allowing public access.
- This work has been welcomed by the communities and has been financially supported at significant levels by the Land for Maine's Future program. This growing inventory of conserved lands provides opportunities for public recreation and also, **importantly**, for scientific research and education
- Over the years, the outstanding natural quality of Downeast Maine has attracted the attention of many prominent educators and research scientists in the field of ecology and wildlife biology. In recent years, the Schoodic Education and Research Center (SERC), managed by Acadia Partners as a National Park Learning and Research Center, has become a magnet for ecology scientists and students from all over the U.S.
- This year's Downeast and Acadia Research, Education and Conservation Roundtable presents an opportunity for college and university researchers, land trusts, local governments, state conservation leaders and interested community members to discuss and explore ways to advance the vision of scientifically sound and community supported, landscape-scale conservation in Downeast Maine.
- This preliminary roundtable is not designed to include representatives from every organization or community. We look to this year's participants to provide ideas for a much more comprehensive list of **"Who should be in?"**. A larger conference is being planned for 2011.
- The facilitator will purposely focus our discussions on how the increasing inventory of ecologically significant protected lands of our region can complement the emergence of this region as an environmental research and education region of national and even global significance.
- The Roundtable is purposely **designed to be as unstructured as we can make it**. There will only be a short introductory presentation. The facilitator's assignment is to control but not lead the discussions. We want to receive guidance and insights from each participant so we will need to be mindful of the time.
- At the end of the day, we expect that the group will have provided significant guidance around the following questions:
 - Who are the key constituencies and partners for this coalition?
 - What significant ecology and research education efforts are underway in the region?
 - How can land conservation work in the region best serve the needs of ecology research and education?
 - What form and structure should the coalition take?
 - How should we communicate with the key constituents and the public?
 - What topics should we consider for the 2011 conference?