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NEWS RELEASE

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PRIVATE PARKS IN MAINE ARE INVESTING IN NEW CAMPSITES, CABINS AND OTHER UPGRADES THIS YEAR

LEWISTON, Me., April 2009 – Private campgrounds and RV resorts in Maine and across the country are collectively moving ahead with capital improvement projects this year, despite the recession, according to private park operators and industry officials.

“Our members are forward-thinking, and they are actually anticipating an upswing in camping and other affordable outdoor recreational activities this year,” said Richard Abare, executive director of the Maine Campground Owners Association in Lewiston.

Abare added that the recession is temporary, and most campground and RV resort operators believe that it behooves them to move forward with their improvement plans if they want to remain competitive with other travel and tourism options.

Of course, Abare cautioned that not every campground is investing in capital improvements this year, and some may hold off until they get a better sense of where the economy is going. However, there are numerous examples of parks in Maine and across the country that are making substantial investments in improvements and, in some cases, expansions. Consider these examples:

- **Balsam Cove Campground in Orland:** The owners of this campground, located on Toddy Pond, are investing more than \$400,000 in improvements, which is being used to upgrade 63 campsites with new water, sewer and electrical hookups; the addition of five pull-through sites with 50 amp electrical hookups; and 10 other new campsites with hookups. Other improvements include a 25-by-50-foot pavilion to accommodate outdoor dinners and arts and crafts classes. The park has also added a small gazebo at the waterfront for bands and other entertainment as well as a pirate ship and sand box in

the children's play area. The money is also being used to pay for new horseshoe pits, road improvements and additional campsites.

- **Bayley's Camping Resort in Scarborough:** This 727-site park is finalizing a \$3 million expansion that includes the addition of 200 new, 2,500-square foot campsites and 100 upgraded campsites with 50-amp electrical service wireless Internet service. The park has also built new fishing docks and a new restroom facility, created a new access road and new walking trails.
- **Narrows Too Resort in Bar Harbor:** This 200-site park, owned by Chicago-based Equity Lifestyle Properties (ELS), has just completed a multimillion dollar renovation project that included reconfiguring the property to optimize ocean views and drainage; redoing all campsites and equipping them with 50- and 100-amp electrical service; building a new clubhouse, store and bathhouse; remodeling the arcade building and resetting its cabins so that they are a stone's throw from the ocean. "With the reconfiguration, there are several sites that have the feeling you're virtually hanging over the ocean. They are quite spectacular," said Pat Zamora, an ELS spokeswoman.
- **Paradise Park Resort in Old Orchard Beach:** This park is investing \$650,000 to expand from 172 to 230 sites. All of the new sites will have water and sewer service, 30 and 50-amp electrical service and cable television hookups. The park is also adding a new pool and spa along with a new 1,800-square foot bathroom and laundry facility. "Our 2009 outlook is very strong," said park manager Jim Halle. "Reservations are ahead of 2008 and we have seen an increase in demand for our park model rentals versus past years."
- **Pinederosa Campground in Wells:** The owners of this 162-site campground have recently completed construction of a new 84-site campground in Wells that will open in May. The new campground features a meandering layout unlike any other campground in the area. All campsites in the new park feature water, sewer, cable TV and 50 amp electrical service.
- **Sand Pond Campground in Sanford:** This park, which has 1,900 feet of waterfront, plans to spend about \$150,000 in a park expansion this year that will include the addition of 50 spacious campsites with water, sewer, Wi-Fi and 50-amp electrical service; an in-ground swimming pool; new playground equipment; a large community fire pit and a baseball field. Last year, the park spent a similar amount adding another 25 campsites as well as 40 by 90-foot covered pavilion, which can seat up to 300 people for outdoor functions.

The push by private park operators to improve their facilities has been going on for many years. In fact, three quarters of private park owners made an average of \$147,508 in improvements to their parks in 2007, according to the National Operations and Economic Survey of RV Parks & Campgrounds, which was sponsored by the ARVC Foundation and conducted by the Arizona Hospitality Research & Resource Center at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff.

For additional commentary, statistics and sources on the latest camping trends in campgrounds, RV parks and resorts or for leads on parks in your news coverage area that are making improvements this year, please contact Richard Abare of the Maine Campground Owners Association at (207) 782-5874 and Linda Profaizer at the National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds at (303) 681-0401.

Listings of private campgrounds, online reservation requests and other camping-related information is also available at www.GoCampingAmerica.com and www.campmaine.com. Contact information for the parks referenced in this release is as follows:

- Balsam Cove Campground, Michelle Letts, (800) 469-7771
- Bayley's Camping Resort, Tom Bayley, (207) 883-6043
- Narrows Too Resort, Ellen Kelleher, (312) 279-1656
- Paradise Park Campground, Jim Halle, (207) 934-4633
- Pinederosa Campground, Greg and Dawn Baston, (207) 646-2492
- Sand Pond Campground, Donna Redding, (978) 562-3352, Ext. 14.