

THE LAKE REGION GREENPRINT: A COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

A Project of the Maine Community Scape Initiative



THE TRUST *for* PUBLIC LAND
CONSERVING LAND FOR PEOPLE

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For more information about the Lake Region Greenprint, please visit tpl.org/maine.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Executive Summary	1
I	Introduction	4
II	Current Conditions	5
III	The Greenprinting Process	12
	Greenprint Constituency	12
	Establishing Conservation Goals and Criteria to Express Community Values	12
	Data Gathering and Analysis	12
	Goal Refinement and Mapping	14
IV	The Lake Region Greenprint	16
	Regional and State Alignment	16
	Map 1. Regional Conservation Priorities	17
	Map 2. Protect Water Resources	19
	Map 3. Preserve Plant and Animal Habitat	21
	Map 4. Preserve Working Farms and Forests	23
	Map 5. Protect Scenic Views	25
	Map 6. Maintain Small-Town Character of Village Centers	27
	Map 7. Protect and Enhance Existing Trails	29
	Map 8. Provide Recreation	31
V	Implementation Strategies	33
	Land Conservation's Role in the Region	33
	Action Plan for the Lake Region Greenprint	34
	Applying the Greenprint to Promote and Guide Economic Development in the Lake Region	36
VI	Conservation Funding Options	38
	Local Funding	38
	Private Funding	39
	State and Federal Funding	40
	Corporate Funding	40
	Private Foundations	41
	Conservation Funding Recommendations	41
VII	Conclusion	42
	Appendices	
A	Key Planning Documents and Committees Across the Lake Region	43
B	List of Lake Region Greenprint Interviewees	45
C	Greenprint Model Criteria	46
D	Lake Region Land Conservation Finance Research	49

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The residents of the Lake Region enjoy a cherished sense of place, residing in historic Maine communities surrounded by stunning vistas, abundant outdoor space, and miles of lakes, rivers, and ponds. These natural assets have spurred a 10 percent population increase in the region since 2000—more than twice the growth rate of the state of Maine over the same time period. In the summer, the Lake Region towns swell with thousands of visitors and tourists. Residents have noticed changes, such as increasing traffic associated with tourism and services built outside traditional downtowns. Some talk of the need to connect trails and protect special places in the face of growth. Still others believe that Lake Region communities need time to fully consider and evaluate the effect of development on the regional character.

In an effort to preserve and enhance the sense of place in the region, as well as to maximize the economic potential of these natural and built assets, seven towns of the Lake Region—Bridgton, Casco, Denmark, Harrison, Naples, Sebago, and Raymond—have partnered together in a regional collaboration to assess priorities, opportunities, and strategies for open space use and natural resource conservation. Joined by Loon Echo Land Trust (LELT) and The Trust for Public Land (TPL), these towns together created a vision for the Lake Region's future that is true to their shared values of community, economic viability, and natural resource sustainability.

The vehicle for assessing regional conservation opportunities is the Lake Region Greenprint. The Greenprint is a community-driven planning process designed to articulate land use and open space goals across municipal and geographical borders. Through interviews, public meetings, and surveys, Lake Region residents expressed their conservation preferences and priorities, arriving at seven goals:

- Protecting water resources,
- Preserving plant and animal habitat,
- Preserving working forests and farms,
- Protecting scenic views,
- Maintaining the small-town character of village centers,
- Protecting and enhancing existing trails, and
- Providing recreation.

Using computer modeling and geographic information system (GIS) mapping technology, a Technical Advisory Team applied a criteria analysis approach to those goals to produce both a series of full-color maps and a web-based mapping tool that pinpoint those community priorities. Individual maps represent conservation opportunity areas for each goal, and one map depicts combined conservation goal opportunity areas. The Greenprint's data maps and layers are accessible and transparent, so users can identify opportunity areas for conservation based on single or multiple conservation goals.

The Greenprint tells an important story about conservation in the Lake Region. Over 80 percent of existing protected Lake Region lands were identified as high priority opportunities for conservation (without regard to whether or not they had already been conserved), indicating that most currently protected lands meet Greenprint community goals. On the other hand, **less than 15 percent of lands identified as high priority opportunities through the Greenprint process are currently protected.** Other findings include the following:

- Twenty percent of the entire Lake Region is designated high priority for water resource protection. The areas adjacent to the rivers, ponds, and lakes that traverse the Lake Region make up most of the high priority conservation areas for protecting water resources.
- Over half of the entire Lake Region is designated high priority for preserving plant and animal habitat. Large swaths of moderate to high priority conservation areas dominate the western quarter of the Lake Region—areas in and around Pleasant Mountain, the Boston Hills, and Allen Mountain. Lands east of Casco and Raymond, around Pine Hill and the Morgan Meadow Wildlife Management Area (WMA), were also identified as priority habitat conservation areas.
- Over half of the entire Lake Region is designated high priority for preserving working forests and farms. Outside lakeshore and developed areas, these conservation priority areas extend across much of the region.
- Thirty-one percent of the Lake Region is designated high priority for protecting scenic views. Critical scenic view areas include prominent mountains and hills, such as Pleasant Mountain, Douglas Mountain, Pikes Mountain, Hacker's Hill, Pine Hill, and Rattlesnake Mountain.
- Seventy-seven percent of the entire Lake Region is designated high priority for providing recreation. Lakeshores and areas around rivers dominate the high and moderate to high priority areas for recreation. There are also high priority areas in the Boston Hills, on Rattlesnake Mountain, and along the Northwest River.

It would be impossible to conserve all of these areas identified as high priority, but the Greenprint maps offer some guidance on where to focus conservation efforts.

The Greenprint will be valuable to the extent that it is actively used in local conservation planning processes. Stakeholders created a focused action plan to implement the Greenprint. The plan asks landowners, leaders, and organizations to take concrete steps toward conserving the key water sources, recreational opportunities, plant and animal habitats, character of village centers, scenic vistas, and farms and forests that make up the Lake Region's quality of place.

The Lake Region Community Greenprint action plan conveys the framework to facilitate an acceleration of both the pace and the quality of land conservation in the Lake Region with these steps: (1) Strengthen roles and partnerships to implement the Greenprint; (2) Use the Greenprint goals/maps to further land conservation; (3) Promote conservation of natural resources and recreation to support the economy/tourism; (4) Provide resources to assist municipalities and inform land use decisions to protect small town character; and (5) Discuss and determine appropriate methods for financing open space protection projects in mapped priority areas.

Lake Region leaders and community members now possess a tool and a plan to help them make informed decisions about addressing issues of both development and conservation. They can identify the most important areas for resource protection as well as those most amenable, from a natural assets perspective, to development. In light of the Lake Region's growth in population and desire for sustained economic vitality, now is the time to take the steps necessary to provide recreational, educational, and economic development opportunities, while helping to conserve the region's natural assets.

WHAT IS A GREENPRINT?

Greenprinting is The Trust for Public Land's (TPL) unique application of GIS modeling technology. Local priorities are translated into a set of maps. These maps identify the best places for new parks, greenways, natural resource areas, and other protected lands. TPL puts the maps online so they can be dynamic and interactive. This helps local governments and communities make informed decisions for growth, while promoting and protecting their cherished natural resources.

TPL's Greenprint process fosters collaboration within the community by bringing together diverse stakeholders who determine priorities for land conservation. The process considers these community priorities in combination with broader environmental, social, economic, educational, cultural, and recreational interests and uses them as input to produce graphic results that illustrate the best opportunities for conservation.



I. INTRODUCTION

From historic town centers to an abundance of water bodies to dense tracts of seemingly endless forest, the Lake Region possesses unique natural and built attributes that serve as social and economic assets and define the region's unique "quality of place." The vast majority of Lake Region residents take pleasure in small-town life and living in a place that people want to come to because of its beauty.¹ Residents, however, have also described recent changes to their communities, such as increasing traffic associated with tourism and services built outside traditional downtowns. Others talk of the need to more quickly connect trails and protect special places in the face of growth. Some believe development has occurred before communities have had time to fully consider and evaluate its effects.

Against this backdrop, The Trust for Public Land (TPL) and Loon Echo Land Trust (LELT) collaborated with local municipalities to collectively assess priorities, opportunities, and strategies for open space use and natural resource protection. This project encompasses the 316-square-mile area of seven towns in the Lake Region of Maine: Bridgton, Casco, Denmark, Harrison, Naples, Sebago, and Raymond. The project goal is to develop a "Greenprint," which is a plan based on local and regional priorities designed to meet community open space goals. This Greenprint strives to establish a consensus about goals that these towns can pursue. During the Greenprinting process, the community identified the lands within the Lake Region that reflect the region's quality of place, and completed a related implementation-focused plan. The action plan is the focal point of this Greenprinting effort—it reflects the desire of the Lake Region community to take concrete steps toward maximizing the region's natural and social capital.

¹ Project staff conducted general listening sessions with community members and one-on-one interviews with 29 local residents to gather background information and general perceptions of the area. See the list of interviewees in Appendix B.

II. CURRENT CONDITIONS

The towns of the Lake Region—Bridgton, Casco, Denmark, Harrison, Naples, Raymond, and Sebago—share a rich history shaped by one of the region's most bountiful resources: water. The area was originally home to the Pequawket people, a tribe of the Abenaki confederacy that fished the waters of the Lake Region.² European settlers harnessed the streams and brooks that feed the region's lakes for the milling of timber and grain. Most of the towns were incorporated in the early 19th century. The region also benefited from the use of waterways for transport and trade. Completed in 1830, the Cumberland and Oxford Canal System stretched 50 miles from Harrison to Portland Harbor.³ The Songo Lock, linking Brandy Pond and Sebago Lake, is a working remnant of that extensive system of natural waterways, hand-dug canals, and locks.

One primary driver behind this water-transit system was the management and harvesting of the seemingly boundless forests of the Lake Region. Maine has always been prized for its forests, and the Lake Region saw some of the earliest heavy harvesting in the New World. This legacy continues with the family-owned Hancock Lumber Company, which dates back to the late 1800s. To this day there remain large, unbroken tracts of forest in the region.

In the late 1800s, a tourist industry began to evolve. Visitors, attracted by the region's natural beauty, came by railroad to take steamboat tours of the lakes and spend time at newly opened inns and resorts. Tourism continues to play an integral role in the region's economy and character. For example, Sebago Lake State Park, which opened in 1938, draws visitors to Maine's second largest and deepest lake.⁴ Beyond the area's scenery and recreational opportunities, the Lake Region has wider claims to fame—particularly in the literary world. Nathaniel Hawthorne's boyhood home is located in what is now Raymond, where he lived on and off with his mother and two sisters for a span of 12 years in the early 19th century.⁵ More recently, Stephen King set the events of his novella *The Mist* in Bridgton.

The Lake Region is linked together by more than its bodies of water. U.S. Route 302 is the main economic and transportation thoroughfare that runs through this region. The road originates in Portland and runs east, crossing the Pleasant River in Windham, the Crooked River in Casco, Long Lake in Naples, Moose Pond in Bridgton, and the Saco River in Fryeburg. Perhaps the most salient link among these partner towns is a shared sense of place. After identifying first and foremost with their individual communities, area residents are more likely to associate themselves with the Lake Region than greater Portland, Fryeburg/Conway, Lewiston/Auburn, or anywhere else. This is a community of communities.

2 Access Genealogy. "Pequawket Indian History." Retrieved June 2010 from <http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/tribes/abenaki/pequawkethist.htm>. The site references Frederick Webb Hodge's *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, 1906. The Pequawket moved north to Canada in the early 19th century after a series of battles (in alliance with the French) against the British in the early eighteenth century.

3 Maine Section, American Society of Civil Engineers. "Maine Historic Civil Engineering Landmarks." Retrieved June 2010 from http://www.maineasce.org/downloads/History_Heritage/MeHistCivLandmarks6-05.pdf.

4 Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands. "Sebago Lake State Park." Retrieved June 2010 from <http://www.maine.gov/cgi-bin/online/doc/parksearch/index.pl>.

5 Hawthorne Community Association. "Narrative History: Nathaniel Hawthorne's Boyhood Home 1812–1825." Retrieved June 2010 from http://www.hawthorneassoc.com/html/narrative_history.html. The site notes those as the years of Hawthorne's association with that particular house in Raymond.

Landscape, Water Resources, and Other Significant Natural Features

The region is blessed with a number of significant landscape, water, and other natural features. A short list of these features includes Douglas Mountain in Sebago, Hacker's Hill on Quaker Ridge, Sebago Lake (which is the third largest lake in New England), Long Lake, the Boston Hills in Denmark, Pleasant Mountain in Denmark and Bridgton, Rattlesnake Mountain in Casco and Raymond, and the Crooked River that runs through Naples, Casco, and Harrison. Sebago Lake supplies drinking water to most greater Portland area communities. In interviews conducted by The Trust for Public Land and the Loon Echo Land Trust, many Lake Region residents remarked on the connection between quality of life and natural beauty, and expressed the need to maintain access to these significant natural areas. In spite of, or perhaps because of, the abundance of undeveloped land, only 8,548 acres of the Lake Region's total area—4.2 percent—is protected.⁶

The towns of Bridgton, Casco, Harrison, Naples, Raymond, and Sebago make up about half of Cumberland County. Denmark, nestled in the southeastern corner of Oxford County, is a small fraction of that county's total area. Table 1 details the respective areas and landcover of each of the Lake Region towns.

Lake Region towns are heavily forested: Forestlands cover two-thirds of the region. Developed land is roughly 10 percent of the region's total area, ranging from 1.5 percent in Denmark to nearly 30 percent in Naples. Nearly a third of open water area is Sebago Lake.

Sebago Lake is a drinking water resource for the Portland area. Currently, one-sixth of Maine's population relies on the clean water in the lake. Tributaries in the Lake Region are critical to maintaining Sebago Lake's flow and water quality. In particular, the Crooked River supplies 40 percent of Sebago Lake's surface water, and Long Lake/Songo River is the second largest supplier of surface water to Sebago Lake. The region's aquifers—many of them consisting of sand and gravel and running along the region's rivers, but also the lower-yielding bedrock that underlies the region—are the main sources of drinking water for Lake Region residents.⁷

Table 1. Landcover (acres)

	Region	Bridgton	Casco	Denmark	Harrison	Naples	Raymond	Sebago
Total Area	204,668	41,100	24,315	31,948	23,544	23,829	28,630	31,302
Developed Land*	19,636	3,463	2,310	494	2,335	6,991	2,890	1,153
% (of total area)	9.6	8.4	9.5	1.5	9.9	29.3	10.1	3.7
Forestland	135,760	28,795	14,953	26,769	16,385	14,845	16,119	17,895
% (of total area)	66.3	70.1	61.5	83.8	69.6	62.3	56.3	57.2
Agricultural	6,920	1,743	802	879	1,669	739	708	380
% (of total area)	3.4	4.2	3.3	3.6	7.1	3.1	2.5	1.2
Open Water	33,900	4,601	4,156	2,149	2,388	3,384	7,109	10,113
% (of total area)	16.6	11.2	1.7	6.7	10.1	14.2	24.8	32.3

Primary source: Portland Water District—2001 Landuse/Landcover Dataset.

Secondary source: Maine Office of Geographic Information Systems (MEGIS)—2004 Landcover.

*Includes roads and runways.

6 The conserved land figure (8,548 acres) was determined by TPL using the Maine GIS Conservation Data Layer and supplemented by land trust and local park data.

7 Email correspondence with Lee Dassler, Western Foothills Land Trust (August 2010).

The Crooked River was identified as a significant river in the 1982 Maine Rivers Study prepared by the State of Maine Department of Conservation, in large part because it is the primary spawning and nursery area for landlocked Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar* Sebago) indigenous to Sebago Lake. It was identified as one of only seven rivers in Maine that are “the state’s most significant inland fishery rivers.”⁸ Because of its outstanding resource values, the Crooked River has been granted a high level of protection by the legislature.⁹ For example, Title 12, Section 402, calls for a management approach that recognizes that there are varying interests in rivers and that some of those interests may be in conflict with each other. The legislature specifically calls for improvement of the productivity of inland fisheries as one of the interests of importance.



Historic and Archaeological Resources

The towns of the Lake Region all have noteworthy historic structures, archaeological resources, and special places of interest. Some of these include: the Benjamin Cleaves House, Bridgton Historical Society Museum, the Rufus Porter Museum, Narramissic (the Peabody-Fitch Farm), Raymond-Casco Historical Society and Museum, the Hawthorne House, Deertrees Theater and Cultural Center, Harrison Historical Society and Museum, Scribner’s Mill, Denmark Arts Center, and the Sebago Historical Society and Museum.¹⁰ These structures help to create and preserve the small-town New England feel of the Lake Region’s communities.

8 State of Maine, Department of Conservation (1982). Maine Rivers Study. U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, Mid-Atlantic Regional Office. Retrieved June 2010 from <http://www.maine.gov/doc/mfs/windpower/pubs/pdf/Maine%20Rivers%20Study.pdf>.

9 Protection of the resource values of the Crooked River is addressed by the criteria of M.S.A.12 § 402 as incorporated into the Natural Resources Protection Act, M.S.A. 38 §§ 480 et seq.

10 For a complete list of historic places, see the National Register of Historic Places, “Cumberland County, Maine,” retrieved June 2010 from <http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/ME/Cumberland/state.html>.

Agriculture and Forestry

Part of the appeal of the private land traditional uses is that there's a real, live person connected to the community and it gives that property some life. . . . It gives it a vitality.
—Kevin Hancock, Hancock Lumber Company

Agriculture was the predominant economic engine in the region until the end of the 19th century.¹¹ Since then, agricultural activities have slowly declined, although the industry remains viable in other parts of the state.¹² Some towns have few working farms left, or none. What little farming remains may consist of raising vegetables and fruit, growing Christmas trees, and producing maple syrup.¹³ However, in recent years there has been an increase in locally grown food and small family farms in the Lake Region.

Over 66 percent of land in the Lake Region is forest. Lake Region towns have a pronounced silvicultural past—the harvesting of timber for production of lumber and various wood products has long been, and continues to be, a major component of the regional economy. Both individuals and corporations hold large tracts of forested land.

Population and Demographics

People tend to stay in the same town that they live in—they don't move between towns. The human ventilation is from people moving from other parts of the country.
—Tom Gyger, Five Fields Farm Orchard

The 2010 year-round population for the towns of the Lake Region is 22,857 people.¹⁴ Some if not most of the Lake Region towns experience a two- to fourfold increase in population during the summer months. According to 2000 statistics, the total land area is 238.2 square miles and the water area covers 77.7 square miles. Based on those numbers, the population density is 72 people per square mile. For the sake of comparison, Maine's overall population density is 43 people per square mile.

Growth in the Lake Region has far outpaced Maine's growth rate over the past 20 years—by three to four times. The rate of growth for the towns of the Lake Region between 2000 and 2010 was 10.5 percent. The region is expected to continue experiencing significant population growth.

11 Town of Casco (2003). Comprehensive Plan. Retrieved June 2010 from http://cascomaine.org/planning_enforcement/2009/Complete%20Casco%20Comp%20Plan%20amended%20thru%2006-13-07.pdf.

12 Maine farmers steward 1.25 million acres across the state. Maine is the world's largest producer of brown eggs and wild blueberries; in the United States, it is the eighth largest producer of potatoes and second largest producer of maple syrup. The agricultural industry is diverse and successful, contributing \$1.2 billion to the Maine economy.

13 Maine Department of Agriculture, "Food and Rural Resources," retrieved June 2010 from <http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/index.shtml>, is the source of the statewide agricultural information for this section. For more statistics on Cumberland and Oxford counties, see National Agricultural Statistics Service, "State and County Profiles: Maine," United States Department of Agriculture, retrieved June 2010 from http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Online_Highlights/County_Profiles/Maine/index.asp.

14 U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File, Table P1.

Table 2. Historic and Future Population

	1990	2000	2010	2025 Forecast	Growth Rate 1990–2000	Growth Rate 2000–2010
Maine	1,227,928	1,274,923	1,328,361	----	3.8%	4.2%
Region	17,561	20,677	22,857	----	18%	10.5%
Bridgton	4,307	4,883	5,210	6,818	13%	6.7%
Casco	3,018	3,469	3,742	4,684	15%	7.9%
Denmark	855	1,004	1,148	----	17%	14.3%
Harrison	1,951	2,315	2,730	2,960	19%	17.9%
Naples	2,860	3,274	3,872	4,882	15%	18.3%
Raymond	3,311	4,299	4,436	6,049	30%	3.2%
Sebago	1,259	1,433	1,719	2,056	14%	20.0%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000; Greater Portland Council of Governments, Municipal Profiles; 2010 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File, Table P1.

The Local and Regional Economy

We do a really good job attracting people from away [from the Lake Region], but we need to focus on providing opportunities for those who live here every day.

—Rosie Schacht, Lake Region Vocational Center

Like the Lake Region, greater Cumberland County's economy was originally dominated by rural farming, timber harvests, and marine-related trades. Those sectors have given way to service-oriented work. The county's labor force works primarily in four areas: (1) finance, insurance, and real estate; (2) professional, scientific, and administrative services; (3) educational, health, and social services; and (4) retail trade. For example, the key sectors that support and are supported by Naples's workers are education (18 percent), retail trade (17 percent), and manufacturing (15 percent).¹⁵ Oxford County's labor force (and Denmark's) is distributed similarly, with management, service, sales, and office occupations making up the majority of jobs.¹⁶

Most businesses in the Lake Region are small, seasonal, family-run operations.¹⁷ Typical commercial establishments include summer camps, inns, restaurants, and small construction companies—there is little industry. For the last 100 years, the local economy has been mostly based on services to seasonal residents and tourists. There is interdependence among the towns, Cumberland County, Oxford County, and the Northeast as a whole. Many residents work in other towns in the Lake Region or in the Portland area. Trends in tourism and strength of the national economy have an effect on the demand for services provided in the region.

As shown in Table 3, the growing population of the Lake Region has become more affluent relative to the state since 2000.

¹⁵ Town of Naples (2005). Comprehensive Plan.

¹⁶ Maine State Data Center. Retrieved June 2010 from <http://econ.maine.gov/>.

¹⁷ Town of Seago (2006). Comprehensive Plan.

Table 3. Median Household Income (\$): A Comparison of Lake Region Towns to Maine

	Maine	Bridgton	Casco	Denmark	Harrison	Naples	Raymond	Sebago
2000	45,179	36,722	41,629	40,000	35,478	38,141	52,224	40,391
2009	47,445	48,861	54,712	49,000	45,174	48,822	64,443	48,750
% change	5.0	33.1	31.4	22.5	27.3	28.0	23.4	20.7

Source: Maine State Data Center, 2009.

The towns of the Lake Region have seen exceptional gains in median household income over the past nine years, far outpacing statewide growth. The median incomes of the towns fall within a \$10,000 range with Raymond (closest to Portland) as the outlier. For 2009, the Lake Region median household income is more than 8 percent greater than the state of Maine on the whole; if Raymond is not included, it falls to less than 4 percent. However, one explanation for this phenomenon may be the presence of second-home owners on the tax rolls— those who live most of the year in other areas and can afford a second home.

Planning

There have been significant changes to the use and ownership of Maine’s land.¹⁸ Over the past five years alone, more than a quarter of all land in Maine has changed ownership. Much of that land has been broken into smaller pieces and sold to multiple owners. Currently, the development in this area is very scattered with mostly large-lot residential development. As Kevin Hancock noted, “When land is owned in smaller and smaller parcels, it adds to the complexity of the resource— controlling or directing a sensible or coherent vision becomes much harder.” In southern and coastal Maine, including the Lake Region, land values have experienced annual increases.

According to some of the Lake Region town plans, residents are deeply concerned with preserving the rural character of the area amid the continuous population growth in the region. These concerns resonated with some of our interviewees. Allan Denison expressed his concern that the area is “losing its small-town feel” and “becoming more of a suburb of Portland all the time.”¹⁹ Many also seek more stable and lower property taxes, as well as a respect for privacy and property rights. Linking taxation to suburbanization, Tony Hazelton asked, “Have you seen my tax bill?” In light of these changes, many of Maine’s residents and planners are reassessing expectations for access, ownership, and development of the state’s land resources.

Each town has a comprehensive plan and takes its own approach to implementation. It appears that when these plans are developed, there is little coordination among the towns to create a broader, regional plan. Appendix A highlights key local planning documents and committees.

There are a number of regional and state entities doing related planning work. The Greater Portland Council of Governments recently began promoting a pilot project to develop a regional comprehensive plan that includes six of the seven Lake Region towns represented in this Greenprint project, plus an additional two Cumberland County towns.

¹⁸ Land for Maine’s Future Program. “Increasing the Return on Sound Public Investment.”

¹⁹ From the interview with Allan Denison and Tony Hazelton, Harrison firefighters.

Housing

The rural towns of the Lake Region share similar housing statistics, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Lake Region Housing Statistics

	Median Household Income (\$)		Median Home Sale Price (\$)		Affordability Index	
	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009
Maine	46,321	47,445	178,000	158,000	.79	.90
Region	49,932	51,395	185,821	165,293	.86	.96
Bridgton	45,748	48,861	151,500	129,900	.95	1.09
Casco	52,450	54,712	165,000	169,000	.93	.98
Denmark	50,104	49,000	270,000	184,250	.60	.82
Harrison	43,458	45,174	148,750	172,000	.87	.81
Naples	47,083	48,822	179,000	139,900	.79	1.08
Raymond	63,559	64,443	199,000	229,500	1.02	.84
Sebago	47,120	48,750	187,500	132,500	.85	1.09

Source: Maine State Housing Authority, Housing Facts, 2008 & 2009.

The state and the region have seen a rise in median home sale prices over the past 10 years. For example, the median home sale price for the state of Maine in 2000 was \$98,700. However, the collapse of the housing market has brought on significant changes in the Lake Region's housing landscape. While the 2009 median home sale prices in Bridgton, Denmark, Naples, and Sebago fell precipitously from the previous year, sale prices actually increased in Casco, Raymond, and Harrison. Overall, for the residents of the Lake Region, homes are more affordable relative to the state and to 2008. Again, context is important—the region has seen exceptional increases of population growth and median household income, including the influx of second-home owners.

III. THE GREENPRINTING PROCESS

Through interviews, public meetings, and surveys, residents articulated their priorities for conservation and use of open space. Then, hard data about the land base were married to these priorities. Using geographic information system (GIS) mapping technology that incorporates multiple factors (e.g., topography, trail networks, and location of key waterways), TPL developed colorful maps to identify community priorities.

GREENPRINT CONSTITUENCY

The Lake Region Greenprint Steering Committee—composed of one or two representatives from each of the seven-member communities (appointed by town select boards) and the two convening organizations (TPL and LEIT)—guided the Greenprinting process. In February 2010, the committee met to approve the overall project budget, timeline, and goals. Members of the Steering Committee identified residents who should be invited to serve on the larger Lake Region Greenprint Stakeholder Group (see Acknowledgments for a list of members).

The Stakeholder Group included members of the Steering Committee and representatives from municipal, economic, environmental, recreational, historical, and other community interests. This group refined goals identified through the data-gathering phase, ranked goals in relationship to one another, and recommended strategic implementation action steps.

ESTABLISHING CONSERVATION GOALS AND CRITERIA TO EXPRESS COMMUNITY VALUES

The community goal setting began with TPL and LEIT project staff interviewing about 30 individuals (identified by the Steering Committee) who offered a range of perspectives on history, politics, the economy, and other aspects of living and working in this region. (See Appendix B for a list of interviewees.) These findings provided context for this report and were used to structure and prepare the Greenprint process.

The involvement of the general public was essential to establish goals and identify shared values. In two public listening sessions,²⁰ held in June 2010 at the Crooked River Adult Community Education Center in Casco and Stevens Brook Elementary School in Bridgton, about 55 people gathered to share ideas about the region's future. Participants discussed what they value about local landscapes and generated a list of land conservation goals.

DATA GATHERING AND ANALYSIS

TPL then conducted an in-depth analysis of the region's demographics, economics, transportation, historic, and natural resource features, focusing also on the distinct characteristics of each member community.

20 To publicize the listening sessions, TPL and LEIT, with help from the Steering Committee and Stakeholders, compiled a contact list of 150 residents, organizations, and businesses potentially interested in these topics. Each contact received a flyer and encouragement to forward the flyer to others. A press release was also issued in advance of the meeting, an op-ed was prepared, and a three-quarter-page ad was placed in full color in the *Bridgton News* and *Lake Region Weekly*. Representatives from LEIT attended town meetings the month prior to the listening sessions and distributed copies of flyers to residents.

In June 2010, Pan Atlantic SMS Group, a market research and consulting firm based in Portland, Maine, conducted a random telephone survey of approximately 400 Lake Region's permanent and seasonal residents to gauge their current satisfaction level with living in their town; to identify the popular recreational activities and rates of activity; to identify which park and open space activities should be a top priority; and to identify the factors residents consider when deciding to support an open space and conservation program.²¹



Survey findings were as follows:

- Satisfaction levels are high. Residents of the seven towns making up the Lake Region study area reflect a high degree of satisfaction with their experience of living in their respective towns. Approximately 87.1 percent of the residents surveyed indicated that they are somewhat/completely satisfied with their residential experience, and of these, fully 51.3 percent are “completely satisfied.”
- Residents of the Lake Region are pretty active. More than four out of five respondents reported they participate in outdoor recreational activities within 20 miles of their home. Hiking (33.5 percent), walking (32.4 percent), and swimming (31.8 percent) topped the list as the most participated in outdoor activities.
- More than 75 percent of residents said there are no inaccessible activities within 20 miles of home.
- Water quality and protection are important to the Lake Region. Nine in 10 respondents rated water quality and protection issues as “somewhat important” or “very important.”
- In addition to water quality protection, wildlife habitat topped the list of purposes that would generate strong support for an open space and conservation program (89.2 percent).

²¹ A total of 380 telephone surveys were conducted with permanent and seasonal residents. The margin of error for this study is ± 5.0 percent at the 95 percent confidence interval. This means that if the study were to be repeated, 95 times out of 100 the results would reflect the results of this survey.

GOAL REFINEMENT AND MAPPING

TPL staff worked with the Lake Region Greenprint Stakeholders to group the goals identified in the public listening sessions into categories, cross-referencing participant priorities with findings from the randomly administered telephone survey. These goals and the subgoals were then refined based on technical constraints and other considerations such as what data were available.²²

TPL then developed individual maps for each goal the Stakeholders drew from the community response. With assistance from the Steering Committee and the Stakeholder Group, as well as a Technical Advisory Team (TAT), TPL reviewed the list of community-generated goals, conducted a data inventory, and compiled GIS layers to construct a GIS database model and land conservation opportunity maps.

Stakeholders then participated in an interactive weighting exercise to combine Greenprint goal maps into an overall regional priorities map. Several weighting iterations, accompanied by map review and in-depth discussion, resulted in the prioritization of Greenprint goals. Table 5 lists the final conservation goals and the relative value of each as they factor into the Lake Region's overall conservation priorities.

Table 5. Lake Region Conservation Goals

Protect Water Resources	20%
Preserve Plant and Animal Habitat	18%
Preserve Working Farms and Forests	15%
Protect Scenic Views	14%
Maintain Small-Town Character of Village Centers	12%
Protect and Enhance Existing Trails	11%
Provide Recreation	10%

²² Through local, state, and federal sources, as well as educational and private entities, there is a tremendous amount of available data. Owing to the high cost of creating original research, the scope of this work was held to available sources.

THE LAKE REGION GREENPRINT TIMELINE

February 2010–April 2011

Research and Data Collection

April 2010	Current Conditions Research and Analysis – conducted stakeholder interviews and planning document review
June 2010	Public Opinion Telephone Surveys Public Listening Sessions

Conservation Goal Mapping

February 2010	Steering Committee Established – ensured municipal funding and concert of purpose
April 2010	Stakeholder Meeting 1 – articulated desired project outcomes
July 2010	Stakeholder Meeting 2 – reviewed public survey results and drafted conservation goals
August 2010	Technical Advisory Team Meetings (4) – kickoff meeting (project overview, roles and expectations, schedule, and next steps); habitat protection modeling; water resources protection modeling; working farms and forests modeling
September 2010	Technical Advisory Team Meetings (4) – working farms and forests modeling; small-town character analysis; recreation access analysis; nature education priorities
October 2010	Technical Advisory Team Meetings (4) – small-town character analysis; working farms and forests modeling; water resources protection modeling; habitat protection modeling Stakeholder Meeting 3 – reviewed interim report and developed Greenprint urgency layer
November 2010	Technical Advisory Team Meetings (5) – working farms and forests modeling; recreation access, scenic views, and trails analysis; habitat protection modeling; nature education priorities Stakeholder Meeting 4 – reviewed priority maps and weighted regional priorities

Implementation Strategies

January 2011	Stakeholder Meeting 5 – drafted action plan
March 2011	Stakeholder Meeting 6 – demonstrated mapping, discussed funding options, and finalized action plan

IV. THE LAKE REGION GREENPRINT

The final products of the Greenprint process include a series of maps and an online mapping tool that graphically express Lake Region community conservation values and goals. The maps represent conservation priorities for each goal, in addition to a map that represents overall conservation priorities. Each goal was weighted differently by the Stakeholders to determine overall conservation priorities. The Greenprint's data maps and layers are accessible and transparent, so users can easily identify high-priority conservation areas based on single or multiple conservation goals. The maps are color-coded based on the criteria weightings, with the most intense colors indicating the best opportunities for conservation.

Although the primary resource-based goals are long term in scope, Stakeholders also identified short-term conservation considerations—those lands that should be protected soon in order to achieve long-term goals. Stakeholders recommended seven land attributes to help identify land in urgent need of conservation: forest cover, highest elevation point, underlying aquifers, lakefront properties, lands adjacent to protected lands, and lands adjacent to a road. The online mapping tool can be used to produce individual parcel reports that indicate the presence or absence of the urgency factors.

REGIONAL AND STATE ALIGNMENT

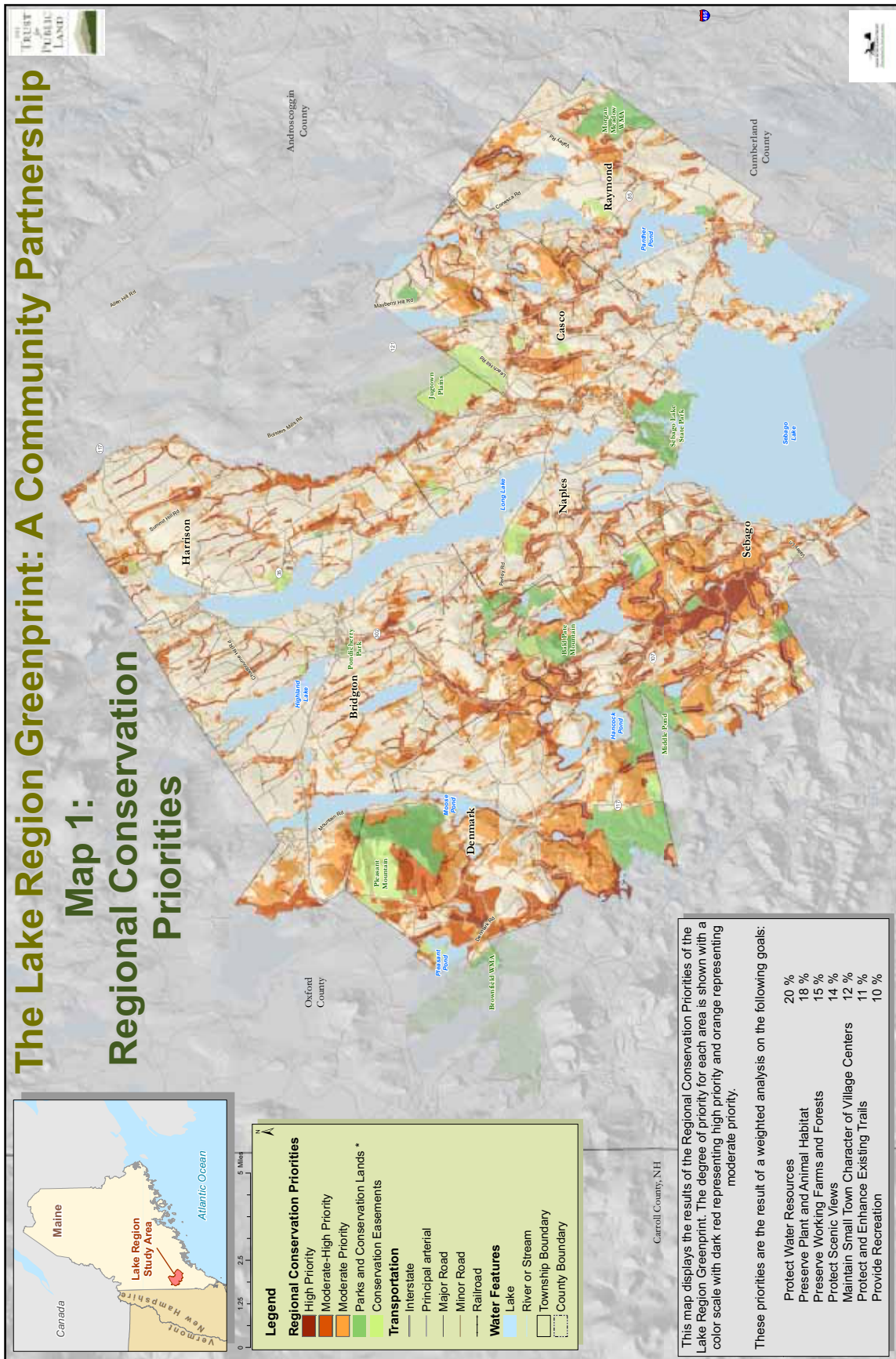
The Maine Legislature created the Maine Council on Quality of Place to promote economic activity through quality of place. Many of the Lake Region Greenprint conservation goals closely align with Quality of Place Assets—local resources that sustain a local and regional economy.

Table 6: Comparison of Greenprint Goals and Quality of Place Assets

Lake Region Greenprint Goals	Maine Office of State Planning Quality of Place Assets ²³
Preserve working forests and farms; preserve plant and animal habitat	Sustainable economic activities based on natural resources, including farming, fishing, forestry, nature based and heritage based tourism, and outdoor recreation and leisure
Maintain town character of village centers	Downtowns and community centers Historic buildings, structures, and related facilities
Protect scenic views	Landscapes, including the working landscapes of farms, forests, and waterfronts
Protect and enhance existing trails; provide recreation	Access to outdoor recreational activities and leisure over public and private lands, including motorized and nonmotorized activities

The Greenprint embraces the spirit of the Quality of Place legislation, the Greenprint itself functioning as an asset inventory and the action plan as a quality-of-place investment strategy. Protecting some of the Greenprint's "high priority" conservation lands and carrying out the action plan steps will help achieve economic growth through quality of place and promote other assets associated with quality of place: natural resources, skill transfer, enhanced arts and culture, and a loyal tourism base.

²³ M.S.A 5 § 7019.



REGIONAL CONSERVATION PRIORITIES

Stakeholders weighted the seven conservation goals to create the overall map. (See Appendix C for the Greenprint model criteria.) Map 1 indicates the overall conservation priorities for the Lake Region. Many priority conservation lands surround the rivers and streams that feed the region's larger water bodies. This was not surprising since protecting the Lake Region's lakes, rivers, ponds, and brooks was given the greatest weight in the determination of overall conservation priorities. It also indicates the values ascribed to other goals, such as healthy terrestrial and aquatic habitat, and the provision of recreational opportunities, where they coincide with the presence of water bodies.

Over 80 percent of existing protected Lake Region lands²⁴ were identified as high priority for conservation (without regard to whether or not they had already been conserved), indicating that most currently protected lands meet Greenprint community goals. On the other hand, only 13 percent of high priority lands identified through the Greenprint process are currently protected. Also, there is a higher percentage of high-priority acres in the west of the Lake Region as compared to the east— 51 percent of acres within the Denmark region and 38 of those in Sebago are designated high priority as compared to less than 20 percent in Raymond and 22 percent in Harrison. It would be impossible to conserve all of the areas identified as high priority, but the Greenprint maps offer some guidance on where to focus conservation efforts.



²⁴ "Parks and conservation lands" include publicly and privately owned lands that have long-term protection. Publicly owned lands include municipal and government-owned land designated as parks, beaches, etc. Privately owned lands include properties owned by conservation organizations and privately owned properties protected by conservation easement. Properties owned in use tax programs, such as tree growth, agricultural lands, and/or open space programs, are not included.

A map of the state of Maine, showing its location relative to Canada to the west, New Hampshire to the south, and the Atlantic Ocean to the east. A red star is placed in the southern part of Maine, indicating the 'Lake Region Study Area'. The text 'Maine' is written in the center of the state, 'Canada' is written to the west, 'New Hampshire' is written to the south, and 'Atlantic Ocean' is written to the east. A red arrow points from the text 'Lake Region Study Area' to the red star.

Legend

Protected Water Resources

- High Priority
- Moderate-High Priority
- Moderate Priority

Parks and Conservation Lands *

- Parks and Conservation Lands
- Conservation Easements

Transportation

- Interstate
- Principal arterial
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Railroad

Water Features

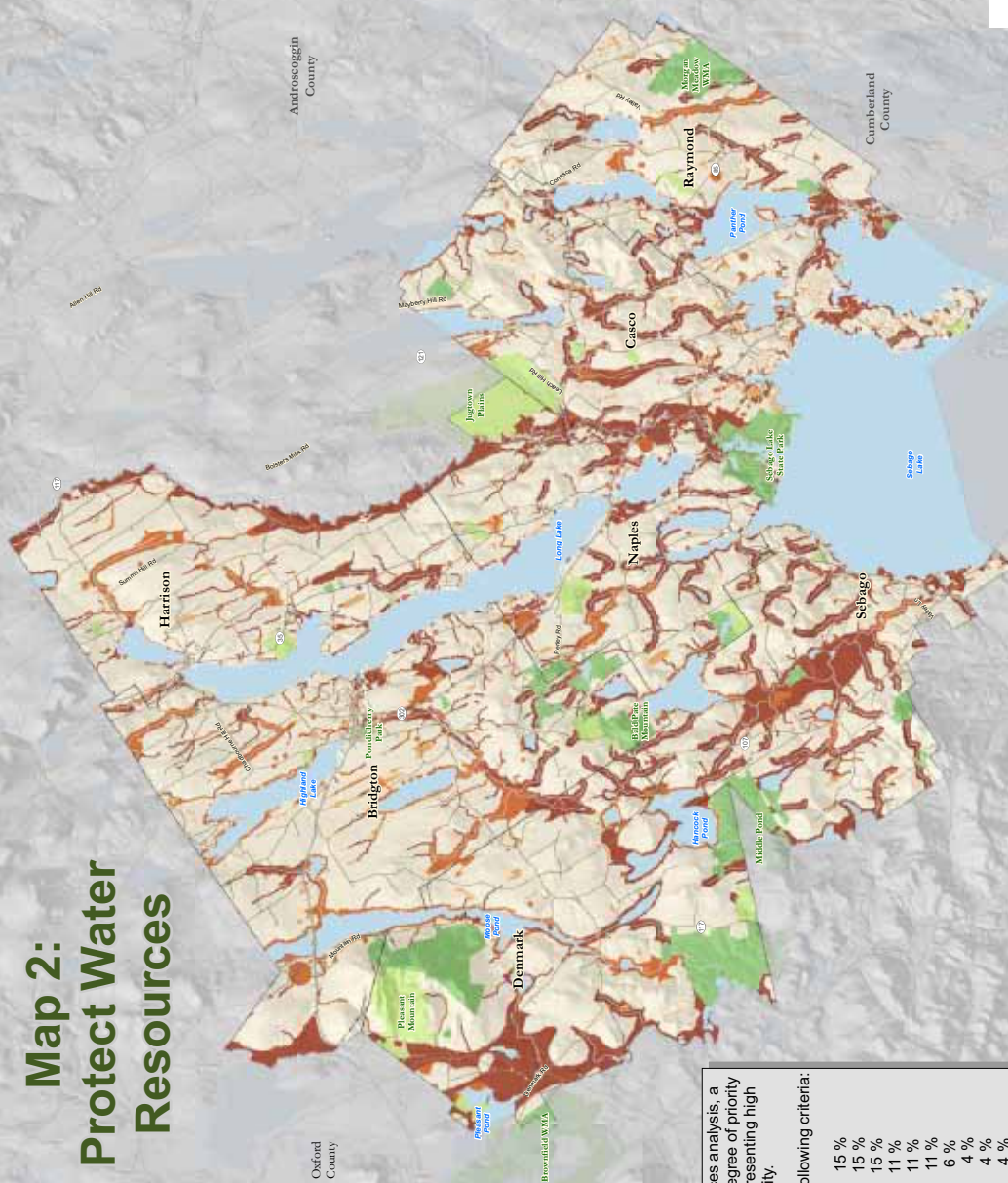
- Lake
- River or Stream

Township Boundary

County Boundary

0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles

N



This map displays the results of the Protect Water Resources analysis, a conservation goal within the Lake Region Greenprint. The degree of priority for each area is shown with a color scale with dark red representing high priority and orange representing moderate priority.

These priorities are the result of a weighted analysis on the following criteria:

Aquifers for drinking water	15 %
Public surface water supplies	15 %
Headwaters	15 %
Wellhead Protection Areas	11 %
Wetlands that function for ground water recharge	11 %
Lakes, Ponds, Rivers, and streams buffers	11 %
Wetland buffers	6 %
DEP AA Water Quality Classification	4 %
Sleep slopes	4 %
Areas Subject To Flooding	4 %
Poorly Drained Soils	4 %

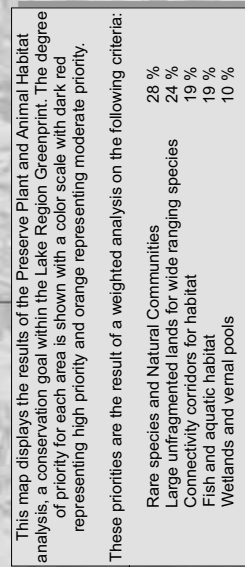
GOAL: PROTECT WATER RESOURCES

Map 2 displays the results for the Protect Water Resources goal. A variety of criteria were considered: drinking water aquifers, public surface water supplies (Sebago Lake and major contributing water bodies to the water supply, such as Crooked River), headwater areas, wellhead protection areas, wetlands that coincide with aquifer recharge areas, water body buffers, steep slopes, areas subject to flooding, and poorly drained soils. The greatest weight was applied to criteria that provide for long-term drinking water protection in areas with limited regulatory protection, such as areas lacking wellhead protection ordinances. Low weights were given to criteria that had inconclusive data such as the existing dataset for poorly drained soils.

Twenty percent of the entire Lake Region is designated high priority for water resource protection. The areas adjacent to the rivers, ponds, and lakes that traverse the Lake Region make up most of the high priority conservation areas for protecting water resources. More specifically, many of the brooks and streams that feed the Saco, Northwest, and Crooked Rivers range from moderate to high priority for conservation. Lakeshores, on the other hand, are generally moderate or moderate to high priority, indicating a preference for river conservation (which has ancillary benefits for lakes and ponds).



Map 3: Preserve Plant and Animal Habitat

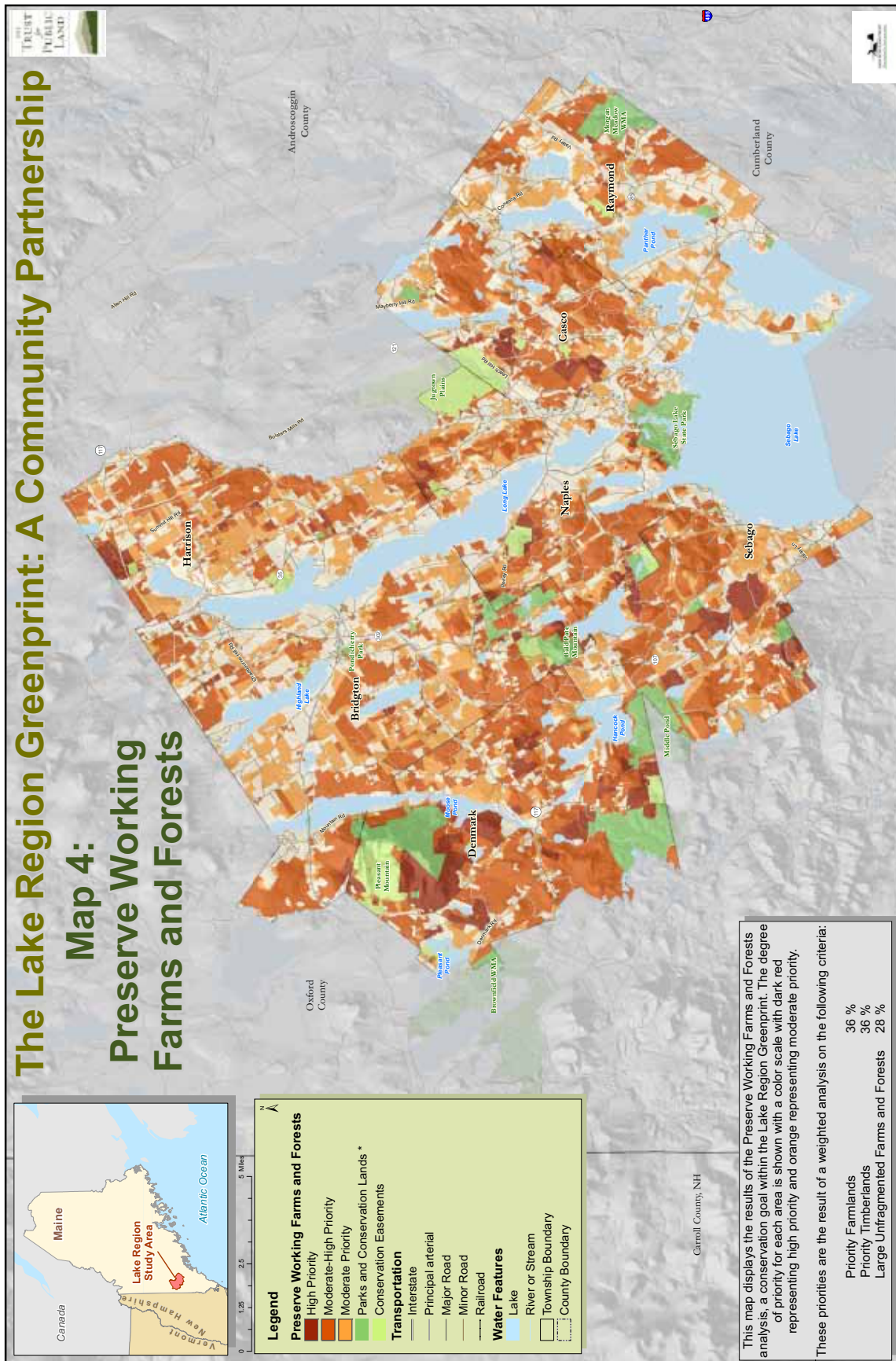


GOAL: PRESERVE PLANT AND ANIMAL HABITAT

Map 3 displays the results for the Preserve Plant and Animal Habitat goal. The map identifies known locations for rare and endangered species; high-value habitat corridors between undeveloped blocks larger than 100 acres; contiguous forested areas that are at least 500 feet away from development and roads; wetland and vernal pool areas; and aquatic habitat including areas important to Atlantic salmon, brook trout, and inland waterfowl. Rare and endangered species were considered the most important, as were large non-fragmented lands.

Over half of the entire Lake Region is designated high priority for the preservation of plant and animal habitat. Large swaths of moderate to high priority conservation areas dominate the western quarter of the Lake Region—areas in and around Pleasant Mountain, the Boston Hills, and Allen Mountain. Lands east of Casco and Raymond, around Pine Hill and the Morgan Meadow WMA, were also identified as priority habitat conservation areas. Many small tributaries throughout the Lake Region were identified as high priority areas.

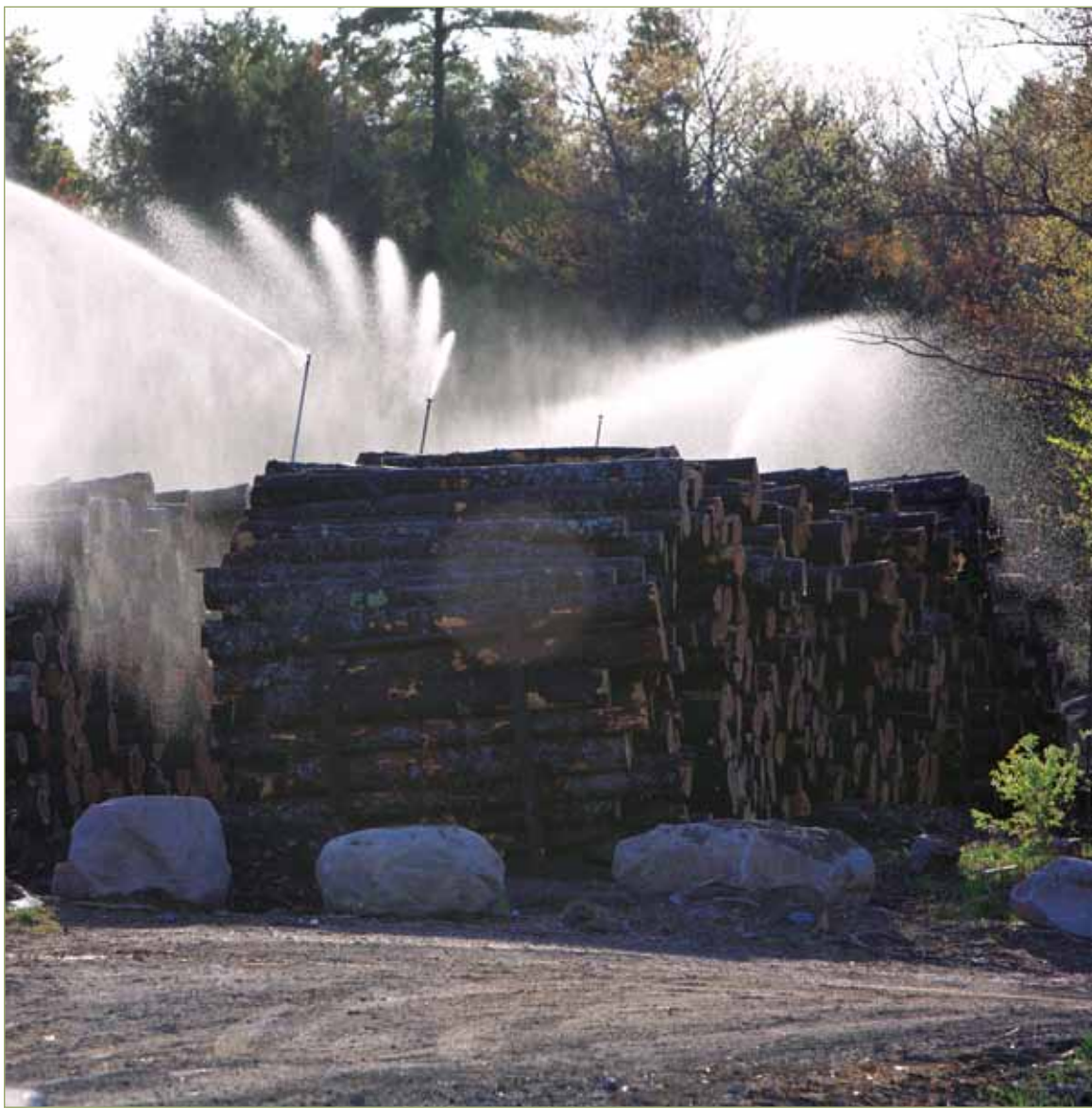




GOAL: PRESERVE WORKING FARMS AND FORESTS

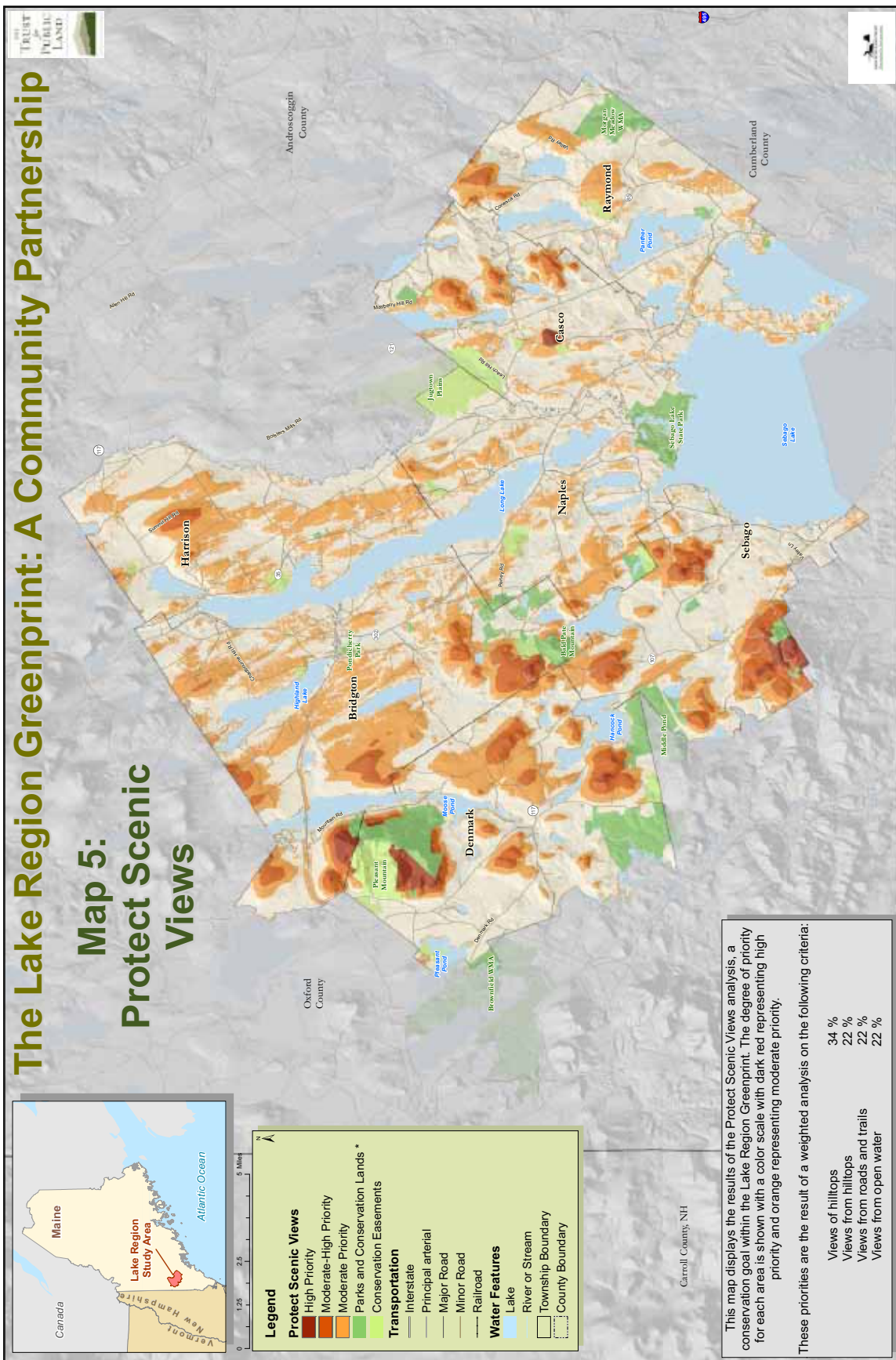
Map 4 displays the results for the Preserve Working Farms and Forests goal. Farmland was prioritized based on factors such as existing nearby protected lands and designation by the Natural Resource Conservation Service as “prime” farmland; priority timberlands that consist of at least 50 percent forest cover; and large unfragmented farms and forests based on size of contiguous blocks for each type.

Over half of the entire Lake Region is designated high priority for the preservation of working forests and farms. Outside of lakeshore and developed areas, these conservation priority areas extend across much of the region.



The Lake Region Greenprint: A Community Partnership

Map 5: Protect Scenic Views



This map displays the results of the Protect Scenic Views analysis, a conservation goal within the Lake Region Greenprint. The degree of priority for each area is shown with a color scale with dark red representing high priority and orange representing moderate priority.

These priorities are the result of a weighted analysis on the following criteria:

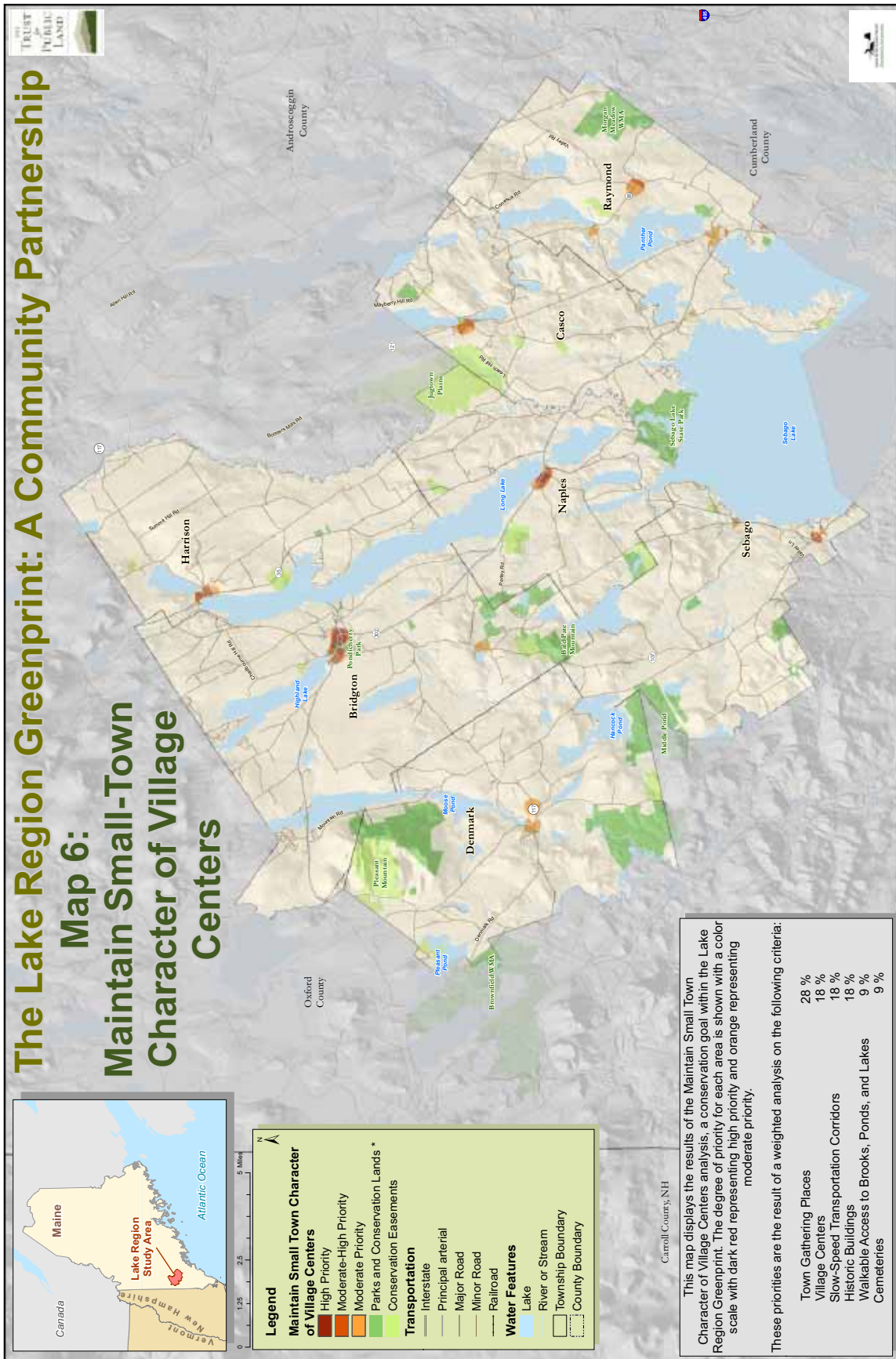
Views of hilltops	34 %
Views from hilltops	22 %
Views from roads and trails	22 %
Views from open water	22 %

GOAL: PROTECT SCENIC VIEWS

Map 5 displays the results for the Protect Scenic Views goal. The models for this goal identify views of and from hilltops; views from roads and trails at least one acre in size and composed of landcover types allowing for unobstructed viewing of distant landscapes; and views from open water. Hilltops and mountains were weighted highest, because they represent a specific feature visible from almost anywhere across the study area. Other criteria representing more general views from locations associated with a particular activity (hiking, boating, driving, etc.) were weighted moderately high.

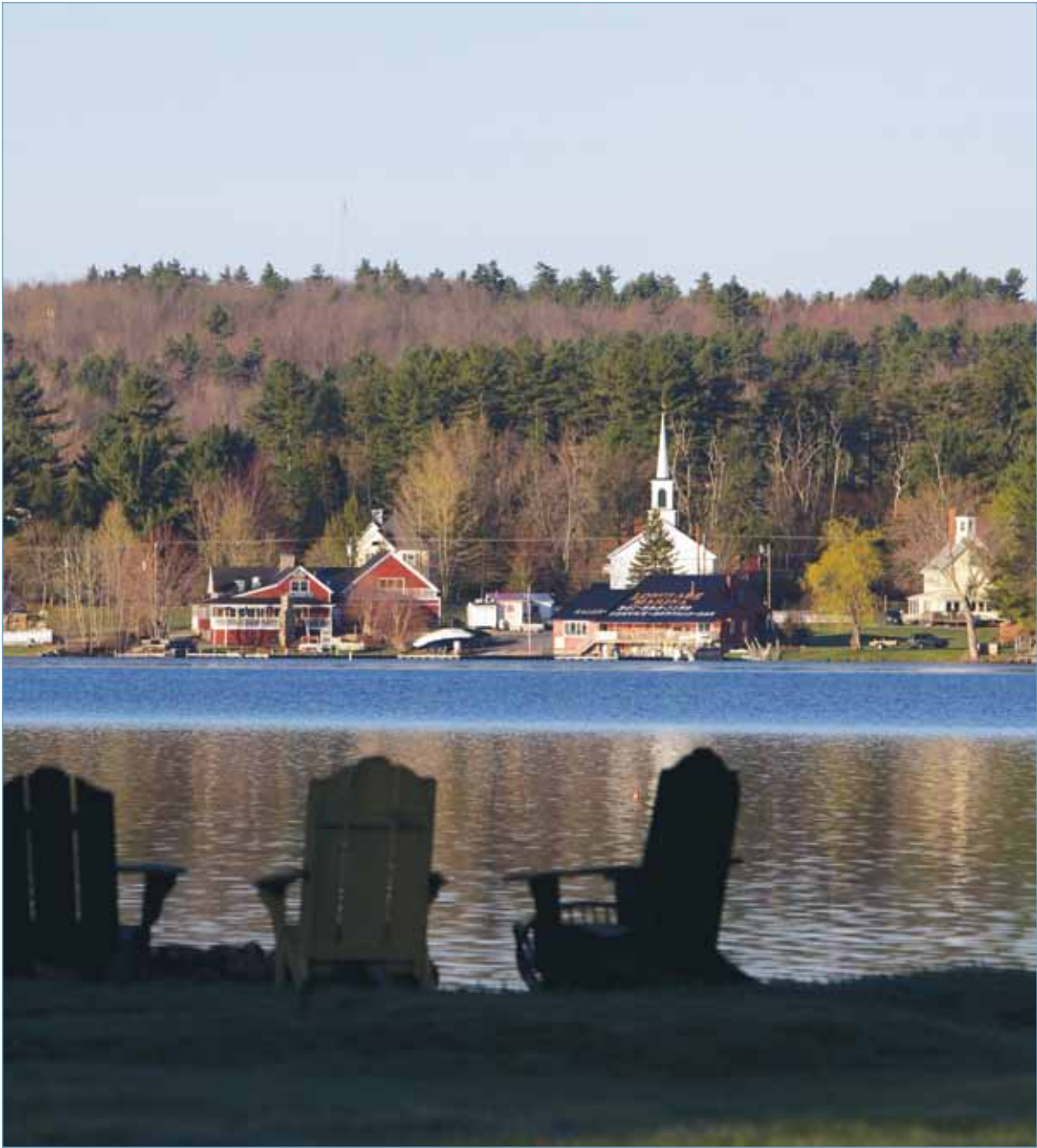
About 30 percent of the Lake Region is designated high priority for protecting scenic views. Critical scenic view areas include prominent mountains and hills, such as Pleasant Mountain, Douglas Mountain, Pikes Mountain, Hacker's Hill, Pine Hill, and Rattlesnake Mountain. The ridges that traverse the region between its lakes and ponds are also of moderate priority.



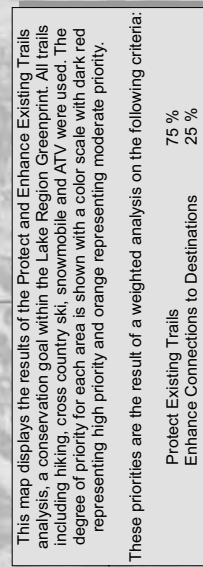


GOAL: MAINTAIN SMALL-TOWN CHARACTER OF VILLAGE CENTERS

Map 6 displays the results for the Maintain Small-Town Character of Village Centers goal. Small-town character is defined aesthetically, embodying the feeling that “wherever you go, you recognize people and greet them,” a slower pace of life, and a “quaint village” atmosphere. Based on this definition, clusters of gathering places were considered the primary characteristic of small-town character. Compact village centers, slow-speed corridors, and historic buildings also play a significant role in creating the character of a small town. Village centers are a small percentage of high priority conservation lands in the region.



Map 7: Protect and Enhance Existing Trails



GOAL: PROTECT AND ENHANCE EXISTING TRAILS

Map 7 displays the results for the Protect and Enhance Existing Trails goal. Criteria for this model included results from a least-cost-path analysis for motorized and nonmotorized modes of travel, and putting buffers around existing trails. The protection of existing trails (both pedestrian and motorized) was assigned highest importance. Many existing trails utilize private property corridors and have no long-term guarantees for access—enhancing those trails with connections to town gathering places was considered secondary, partly because trail connection layout and access considerations are site specific. As would be expected due to the physically narrow width of trails, only about 4 percent of the Lake Region is designated high priority for the protection and enhancement of existing trails.



A map of the Lake Region Study Area in Maine. The map shows the state of Maine in yellow, with the Atlantic Ocean to the east and Canada to the west. A red shaded area on the southern coast of Maine is labeled 'Lake Region Study Area' with a red arrow pointing to it. The area includes Lake Umbagog and the towns of Bethel, Fryeburg, and Bangor. The map also shows the borders with New Hampshire and Vermont.

Legend

Provide Recreation

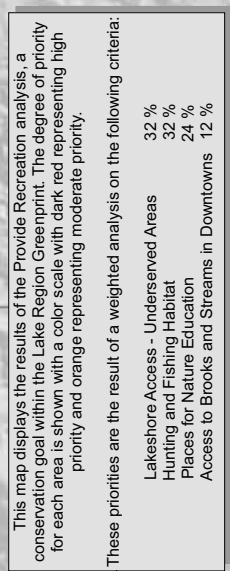
- High Priority
- Moderate-High Priority
- Moderate Priority

Transportation

- Interstate
- Principal arterial
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Railroad

Water Features

- Lake
- River or Stream
- Township Boundary
- County Boundary



GOAL: PROVIDE RECREATION

Map 8 displays the results for the Provide Recreation goal. The model for this goal identifies underserved areas of lakeshore access that reveal gaps near residential areas; streams and brooks that run through town center areas; habitats that support hunting and fishing; and potential wildlife areas that can serve as places for nature education. Lakeshore access and hunting and fishing were weighted highest because they represent the most popular forms of outdoor recreation in the area. Nature education was also weighted moderately high due to its regional popularity.

More than three-quarters the entire Lake Region is identified as high priority for providing recreation. Lakeshores and areas around rivers dominate the high and moderate to high priority areas for recreation. There are also high priority areas in the Boston Hills, on Rattlesnake Mountain, and along the Northwest River.



V. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Stakeholders crafted a concise and focused action plan for the Greenprint. Individual, organizational, municipal, and regional action will be needed for implementation. The plan is inclusive and community oriented; it asks us to take concrete steps toward conserving key water sources, recreational opportunities, habitats, towns, vistas, and farms and forests that create the Lake Region's unique sense of place.

LAND CONSERVATION'S ROLE IN THE REGION

Regulations, incentive policies, and land conservation are each important and often complementary. However, land conservation differs from regulations or incentives, which are subject to frequent change based on politics, policy, and the science of the day. Land conservation can have broader support because it is achieved through the mutual agreement of willing landowners and willing buyers of land or conservation easements and has perpetual benefits to the public.²⁵ Often, a fair price for value foregone is a critical element to successful land conservation, and sources of funding to provide such compensation are a necessary condition for success.

Loon Echo Land Trust (LELT) serves the seven Lake Region towns and protects 3,750 acres of land, most of which are owned by the organization and open to the public. Since its formation in 1987, LELT has grown to take on challenges, such as raising more than \$2.7 million for the protection of over 2,000 acres on Pleasant Mountain, but such projects take a massive amount of time, effort, and a diversity of funding sources. The pace of conservation has not kept up with the demand—only 4.2 percent of the Lake Region is permanently conserved. LELT initiated the Lake Region Greenprint and invited The Trust for Public Land to bring the Greenprint planning model to the region. LELT determined that the community needed a strategic land conservation plan in order to appropriate scarce resources to the most meaningful conservation projects. LELT intends to adopt the land conservation goals developed in the Lake Region Greenprint, and use the Greenprint as a guiding plan for future landowner outreach and land protection projects.

There are other organizations that also protect land in the region, such as The Nature Conservancy, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the Maine Bureau of Parks and Land, the Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine, and more. The Trust for Public Land also assists regional organizations and municipalities by facilitating land conservation transactions, financing, and community planning. Each organization has its own mission and role for contributing to land conservation in the region.

Land conservation provides many opportunities for considering community needs and desires because it can be applied to natural resources, parks, habitat, forests, farmland, and more. It can be said of the Lake Region that there is so much important land that one would have difficulty finding an undeveloped parcel that is not worthy of conservation. Indeed, this assertion is very

²⁵ Some authors have written about the value of land conservation compared to regulations. See, for example, Morrisette, Peter M. (2001), "Conservation Easements and the Public Good: Preserving the Environment on Private Lands," *Natural Resource Journal*, 41: 373, 420–422. See also Hollingshead, John L. (1996), "Conservation Easements, a Flexible Tool for Land Conservation," *The Environmental Law Journal*, 3:319. The author writes, "Federal, state and local governments may regulate the use of privately owned land by enacting legislation.... Legislation that protects open space and land, however, is subject to the ever-changing political climate. A legislature may amend or repeal laws to fit its political agenda. Moreover, laws that protect specific parcels of land may be subject to challenge as compensable takings. Alternatively, a government may preserve valuable property by purchasing fee title to it." (pp. 321–322). John B. Wright also refers to this topic in (1993) "Conservation Easements: An Analysis of Donated development Rights," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 59: 487–493. He writes: "Unlike regulations, conservation easements are a permanent mechanism of land use control [negotiated with willing landowners], which eliminates the need to address repeatedly development issues on the same parcel."

nearly borne out because of the rich resources found here, but neither the money nor the will exists to protect every parcel. The organizations active in this region will not be able to conserve all of the areas identified as high priority, but the maps will offer guidance on where to focus effort. A primary goal of the Greenprinting is to help increase the pace and the quality of land conservation in the Lake Region by bringing many voices to conservation, employing the best technology available, and taking steps to assure that implementation is both efficient and effective. The following action plan provides the blueprint to do just that.

ACTION PLAN FOR THE LAKE REGION GREENPRINT

1. Strengthen Roles and Partnerships to Implement the Greenprint

- a. Train all interested stakeholders, municipal staff, municipal committee members, and Loon Echo Land Trust representatives in the Greenprint web-based mapping system.
- b. Present the Greenprint results to select boards, planning boards, planning staff, comprehensive plan committees, large private landowners, foresters/timber managers, developers, and any others who have influence over land uses in the region. Develop a common terminology. Consider using a shared PowerPoint and repeating the presentation and/or having one meeting for all the towns.
- c. Help institutionalize the Greenprint by forming a well-rounded group that will oversee implementation. Loon Echo Land Trust will convene the group with representatives from the seven municipalities, including conservation commissions and other interested groups.
- d. Establish conservation/open space commissions in towns that are currently lacking such bodies.
- e. Where applicable, strengthen the roles of the conservation/open space commissions to be more effective and integral to the work of the planning boards. Consult with Maine Association of Conservation Commissions to understand the enabling legislation and the variety of authorities granted to conservation commissions by towns in Maine.
- f. Hold joint meetings of the region's conservation/open space commissions and Loon Echo Land Trust to further partnership opportunities.
- g. Communicate with land trusts whose service areas abut this region, and share Greenprint results with them.

2. Use the Greenprint Goals/Maps to Further Land Conservation

- a. Evaluate town-owned properties to determine which properties are identified as priorities in the Greenprint goals and help determine best uses of these properties.
- b. Establish one to three priority "focus areas" within each town to focus the municipalities' land conservation interests.
- c. Review the regional mapped priority areas (encompassing multiple town boundaries) and collaborate on one or more projects with regional significance.
- d. Develop an outreach plan for consistently communicating land conservation goals, available tools, and tax incentives with private landowners in the region.
- e. Produce accurate tax parcel data for all towns in GIS format annually.
- f. Explore how the advancement of the Greenprint goals can help alleviate climate change impacts.

3. Promote Conservation of Natural Resources and Recreation to Support the Economy/Tourism

- a. Present the Greenprint results to the chambers of commerce, economic development departments/councils, and councils of government and determine how the goals can be incorporated into the work of these entities.
- b. Determine whether there are adequate parkland, interconnected trails (motorized and nonmotorized), boat landings, and recreational areas for the region and individual towns.
- c. Support stewardship of multiuse trails and determine appropriate settings for motorized and nonmotorized trails, including “adequacy” criteria.
- d. Develop a regional guide featuring all publicly available open spaces, parks, trail (motorized and nonmotorized) networks, and boat landings. Market and sell such a guide to support the annual data updates to the Greenprint maps.
- e. Provide information about incentive programs to landowners to keep land in productive timber or agricultural use. If landowners are not familiar with the current use property tax programs to make working lands affordable or desirable (tree growth, open space, farmland), they should be provided with the information as part of an educational outreach effort.

4. Provide Resources to Assist Municipalities and Inform Land Use Decisions to Protect Small-Town Character

- a. Understand how the goals of the Greenprint relate to towns’ land use ordinances.
- b. Incorporate Greenprint findings as part of individual towns’ comprehensive plan updates.
- c. Encourage Councils of Government to incorporate Greenprint findings into their regional comprehensive planning efforts.
- d. Consider land use around Route 302 to preserve small-town character.

5. Discuss and Determine Appropriate Methods for Financing Open Space Protection Projects in Mapped Priority Areas

- a. Stakeholders determined that the following funding and financing options are of interest and should be further explored (funding options are described below in Chapter 5 and Appendix D of this report):
 - Grants
 - Local family and community foundations
 - Impact fees
 - Town-owned working forests
 - Sale of town-owned properties that are not in priority areas or meet other town needs
 - Annual town appropriations (e.g., \$1 per resident)
 - Fundraising from year-round and seasonal residents and businesses
 - Tree growth tax penalties
 - Bond revenues

Applying the Greenprint to Promote and Guide Economic Development in the Lake Region

The economic challenge facing the Lake Region is to retain the essential character of the region while providing better employment opportunities for the people who live here year-round. These towns find themselves in a dilemma: draw people and businesses, but don't spoil the landscape that draws them here; increase the quality of the economy, but don't lose the small-town feeling. In light of this situation, the towns of the Lake Region came together to establish a unified vision of what attributes make the region so valuable and unique. As a portrait of these attributes, the Lake Region Community Greenprint can help address the economic development challenge facing the Lake Region.

In order to attract investment, the Lake Region must offer something other places do not or cannot. An asset-based approach to economic development asks, "What do we have, and how can we build on it?" For the Lake Region, the first answer to that question is "superior quality of life." The key to regional economic development, then, is to ensure that its unique character endures, to seek out those businesses and industries, such as recreation, that rely on that character, and to pitch to those businesses that actively seek a comparatively high quality of life for their employees in a place that is reasonably close to transportation (like Portland International Airport). The Greenprint can be put to work on two levels in order to build on the quality-of-life asset.

First, the Greenprint can help identify spaces that are assets to the region's superior quality of life and economic health. The Greenprint can help community members identify the Lake Region's landscapes—ridgelines, undeveloped lands, and lakeshores—that create the natural environment for which people choose to live in the Lake Region rather than in a city, suburb, or highly developed exurb. The Greenprint is also a tool that helps identify areas providing high-value recreational opportunities, forest industry resources, or agricultural use.

Recreational locations are key assets for the region because recreation and tourism help to drive the local economy. From a regional standpoint, there is an existing network of trails that serve both motorized and nonmotorized recreation. These trails may be expanded and connected to form a comprehensive Lake Region Loop. With larger efforts underway locally (the Mountain Division Trail and the Sebago to the Sea Trail), and many dispersed snowmobiling and hiking clubs operating in the region, there is an opportunity to spur recreational "spenders" to use the Lake Region as a hub for their activities year-round.

On a town-by-town basis, forestlands and agricultural lands form critical economic assets that have great potential as private and municipal revenue streams. Forestlands and agricultural lands retain critical attributes of community character that define the Lake Region. The Greenprint can pinpoint and identify these lands and their specific attributes, and provide the objective justification for taking steps to ensure their future. Privately held arable lands in the Lake Region, if maintained, can become the cornerstone of a rejuvenated agricultural sector in these communities. Moreover, using the Greenprint as a guide, municipalities could identify lands suitable for establishing town-owned community forests to meet multiple community development needs. For example, sustainably managed community forests can be harvested in perpetuity, providing a revenue stream for the town that will pay for the initial investment and provide an ongoing and predictable source of funds.

Second, the Greenprint can be a tool to guide infrastructure and housing development decisions. The Greenprint is an expression of community priorities. It says in vivid color, “These are the places that are important to us in themselves.” Those lands are the embodiment of regional quality of place. In contrast, lands that are not high priority in themselves may be good targets for built development. Regional coordination is key and can be helped by the Greenprint as it provides an objective resource for landscape information. Regional coordination on economic development—and subsequent cost and revenue sharing—will do more to ensure a high quality of life for future generations than if towns proceed independently of one another.

If employed by town planning offices and marketed to developers and potential investors and businesses, the Greenprint can help to encourage development in a way that not only preserves (and therefore enhances) local character and town-center density, but also is “prescreened” by the public. By avoiding priority lands, economic development patterns embrace the region’s quality of place and essential character, rather than obscuring and supplanting it.

Regionally coherent economic development will be a difficult task. It asks communities to collaborate deeply in ways that may seem inimical to long-established habits of sovereignty. Towns need not take this plunge all at once, however. Because all towns share in the Greenprint, they can all apply its tools independently of one another. By sharing the same road map, they can enjoy many of the synergistic effects of collective action without having to give up independence.



VI. CONSERVATION FUNDING OPTIONS

This chapter presents a number of potential public funding options that can be knit together into a “funding quilt” for open space and conservation opportunities in the Lake Region. A funding quilt is the combination of funding sources—state, local, federal, and private—to help achieve open space and conservation objectives. Private funding is also spotlighted in this chapter.

LOCAL FUNDING

The most reliable form of funding to achieve open space and conservation objectives over the long term is local funding. Owing to competition for state, federal, and private funding, local funding must be viewed as a supplement or incentive but not as the central funding source for a program.

Local governments may fund open space acquisition directly in a few key ways, namely, budget appropriations, general obligation bonds (which are typically repaid through property taxes), development impact fees, tree growth tax penalties, development transfer fees, in lieu fee mitigation funds, and tax increment financing (TIF). Local governments are precluded by the state from levying a real estate transfer tax, a sales tax, or an income tax for any purpose, including open space acquisition.

1. **Budget appropriations.** Lake Region towns fund most of their expenditures by placing articles on the annual town meeting warrant. These articles typically result in an immediate and one-time increase in the property tax rate of the town to pay for the expenditure, rather than borrowing money, spreading the payment out over multiple years, and incurring interest. The Towns of Casco, Raymond, and Sebago have appropriated funds for open space and conservation in the past.
2. **Issuance of general obligation bonds.** At a cost to the typical homeowner of an average of \$30 per year over the 20-year life of the bond, the Lake Region municipalities could issue \$11.3 million in general obligation bonds.²⁶ Using these same assumptions, the amounts municipalities could issue range from \$0.61 million (Denmark) to \$3.05 million (Bridgton). Purchasing easements and leveraging bonded monies with state, federal, and private dollars could stretch this money much further.

Bond issues are a familiar form of public financing for land conservation in Maine. Falmouth, Freeport, Saco, and Scarborough have passed bond measures for land conservation.²⁷ The most recent bond measure approved by a Maine municipality was at the November 3, 2009, election, where voters in Scarborough approved a \$1 million general obligation bond to provide recreation opportunities and preserve habitat and open space.

3. **Creation of impact fees.** At a cost of \$150 per new resident, the Lake Region municipalities could collectively raise approximately \$40,000 each year in impact fees for open space.²⁸ This assumes that all new housing in the region results in population growth, which may not be the case given the large number of seasonal residences in the area; therefore, this report may overestimate the total potential regional revenues generated by impact fees.

²⁶ All numbers are rounded to three significant digits unless otherwise specified.

²⁷ The Trust for Public Land. LandVote Data. www.landvote.org.

²⁸ See Appendix D, Table A4, for calculations.

4. **Using tree growth tax penalties.** Lake Region municipalities could use tree growth tax penalties collected for open space and conservation. An average of \$150,000 in annual tree growth tax penalties has been assessed in the Lake Region over the past five years. The Town of Raymond has used tree growth tax penalties for land conservation.
5. **Creation of development transfer fees.** Lake Region municipalities could create a program that allows developers to pay a fee to the town enabling the developer to build an additional number of units in a designated growth area than would be allowed under current density limits. The towns of Gorham and Scarborough have utilized development transfer fees for land conservation. Because of the number of unique variables necessary to create a development transfer fee program, this report does not evaluate the revenue-raising capacity of potential programs in the Lake Region.
6. **Creation of in lieu fee mitigation funds.** Lake Region municipalities could create a program that allows developers to pay a wetland compensation fee that the town would use for mitigation projects that restore, enhance, or preserve other wetlands and bordering uplands. As no mitigation projects have been identified, this report does not evaluate the revenue-raising capacity of potential in lieu mitigation funds in the Lake Region.
7. **Creation of tax increment financing (TIF) districts.** Bangor is the only known municipality in Maine to have created a TIF with land conservation purposes. The Bangor commercial development TIF is expected to generate revenues in the range of \$1.0 million over the next 15 to 20 years. These funds will be used to purchase property or conservation easements, finance public access projects, and fund water quality improvement efforts.

Maine communities wishing to utilize TIF financing for open space or resource protection purposes must be careful to ensure that funded projects are directly related to allowing current or future development in the area and are cautioned to work closely with legal advisors or the State Department of Economic and Community Development to ensure that a TIF proposal meets state requirements. Because there are many unique variables, this report does not evaluate the revenue-raising capacity of potential TIF districts in the Lake Region.

PRIVATE FUNDING

As mentioned earlier, land acquisition often results through a partnership of multiple public and private entities, with funding from a variety of sources. Private funds from foundations, corporations, and individuals and public funds from state and federal agencies are often used to complement local public funding for open space and conservation opportunities. As such, the next sections discuss working with private, nonprofit partners and securing grants from state and federal agencies, businesses, and private foundations.

Land Trusts

In the Lake Region communities there are lands that are protected by conservation easements or owned outright by land trusts, government, and other conservation organizations. These holders include Loon Echo Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, Presumpscot Regional Land Trust, Lakes Environmental Association, and more.

Loon Echo Land Trust (LELT) serves the seven towns in the Lake Region Community Greenprint project. LELT was founded in 1987. Its mission is to protect land in the northern Sebago Lake region of Maine to conserve its natural resources and character for future generations. Today LELT protects 3,750 acres of land in Bridgton, Casco, Denmark, Naples, Harrison, Sebago, and Raymond. LELT maintains six preserves and 22 miles of trails that are open to the public and monitors 15 privately owned conservation easements.

As a private nonprofit land trust, LELT has access to private grant sources that public agencies do not and often works in collaboration with other partners, including towns, other conservation organizations, and state agencies to carry out its mission. A recent example of this type of collaboration is Pondicherry Park in Bridgton. Here LELT and the Lakes Environmental Association partnered to raise nearly \$700,000 to create a 66-acre nature park in the center of Bridgton. It took over four years to raise the funds from a variety of sources, including the Town of Bridgton's Moose Pond Land Fund and Community Development Block Grant, state grants, private foundation grants, public donations, corporate donations, and a gift of land. In 2011 the two nonprofit organizations will offer the citizens of Bridgton the parkland and its bridges, with conservation and trail easements held by LELT.

STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING

A number of grant programs provide funding to municipalities for open space opportunities in Maine. The majority of the grant programs require matching contributions from the applicant. Grant programs in general do not serve as stable sources of funding as they tend to fluctuate year to year. Therefore, they should be considered as an additional source of revenue for specific open space projects.

State funding for conservation largely comes from Land for Maine's Future (LMF), which uses money through voter-approved bond authorizations to acquire land. LMF has received a total of \$127 million in voter-approved funds over 20 years, most recently \$9.75 million approved in the November 2010 general election. Loon Echo Land Trust has received over \$1.3 million in LMF funds for Lake Region land projects. An LMF proposal is expected to have a match greater than or equal to 50 percent of total eligible project costs. For every \$1 of LMF funds expended, there must be at least \$1 of match funds.²⁹ The November 2010 bond, however, requires a two-thirds match.³⁰ The program focuses on acquiring land for open space, parks, natural areas, working waterfronts, and working forests and farms.

Additional sources of state and federal funding programs are listed in Appendix D.

CORPORATE FUNDING

Corporations and businesses in the Lake Region often make generous gifts to open space projects. Tourists heavily frequent this region, and the rate of second-home ownership is moderately high. The success of the corporations and businesses that rely on the natural resources or the influx of tourists and second-home owners directly relate to the unspoiled natural resources and appealing character of the Lake Region.

²⁹ Maine State Planning Office, *Land for Maine's Future Program Proposal Workbook: Board Adopted Policy & Guidelines* (January 2011).

³⁰ While the 2011 proposal workbook expects a 50 percent match, the bond language does not. "The bond funds expended for conservation, recreation, farmland and water access must be matched with at least \$6,500,000 in public and private contributions." P.L. 2009, ch. 414, Pt. E, §1, amended by P.L. 2009, ch. 645, Pt. J, § E-5). The \$6.5 million is a two-thirds match of the \$9.75 million bond.

A successful example of bringing together businesses and private nonprofit interests is the Contribute to Place™ program, a statewide program of the Maine Land Trust Network. Businesses collect funds through a voluntary charge on the customer's bill or by asking their customers for voluntary contributions at the time of checkout to go toward supporting a regional open space protection fund, typically administered by an area land trust. The businesses are in turn offered a marketing tool to inform their customers of their conscious choice to support open space and natural resource protection. These small contributions can collectively provide significant resources to advance and achieve this mission.

PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS

Private foundations range from those that may cover just one or more towns in the Lake Region to those that fund projects anywhere in New England. There is also a wide range in the amounts that are awarded, from \$500 to \$100,000. Some examples of foundations that may fund municipalities are the Open Space Institute's Community Forest Fund; the Community Building Program of the Maine Community Foundation, Inc.; the Casco Bay Estuary Project Habitat Protection Fund; the Fields Pond Foundation; and the New England Grassroots Environment Fund. These last two funds provide modest grants. Eligibility and application requirements may change over time, so always check with the funding source before applying (many have websites that list their requirements).

CONSERVATION FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

While private nonprofit efforts have achieved significant results in Lake Region open space protection, in order to meet the growing need for this work, it will be essential to identify other local funding sources. A range of funding options must be utilized to create a "funding quilt" that will sustain land acquisition both in the near term and over the long run. Specific recommendations include:

- Issuing general obligation bonds provides up-front funds that will allow for the immediate purchase of land and distributes the cost of acquisition over time so that future beneficiaries also share in the cost to acquire land. In addition, bond issues are a familiar form of public financing for land conservation in Maine.
- Continuing to seek grant funding and donations from state, federal, and private partners. A collaborative partnership of local (towns), regional (land trusts), and other agencies should be considered when attempting to accomplish open space goals, especially for large, regional projects. Land trusts have access to private foundation funding that a municipality does not, or vice versa. Often, being able to show monetary support from a variety of sources for a project will showcase the public benefit of such a project.

Appendix D contains the information and analyses used to develop the findings in this chapter. Please see Appendix D for the following: a description of the Lake Region's fiscal background—its budget; existing local open space and conservation funding mechanisms; a detailed analysis of the possible alternatives for funding an open space land acquisition and management program, including legal authority and revenue raising capacity; and a summary of relevant federal and state funding programs that may be leveraged by the Lake Region municipalities. Finally, since most local revenue options require approval by voters, Appendix D provides pertinent election information, such as voter registration and voter support for LMF measures.

VII. CONCLUSION

The rushing rivers, pristine lakes, dense forests, rolling hills and mountains, and historic town centers of the Lake Region define its special sense of place. Natural resource and open space conservation helps to identify and ensure this quality of place and can serve as a foundation for sustained economic growth. Through the Greenprinting process, community members of the Lake Region towns have come together to articulate their shared values and to work toward ensuring the region's social and economic well-being. As Lake Region residents protect water resources, preserve plant and animal habitat, protect working forests and farms, protect scenic views, maintain the small-town character of village centers, protect and enhance existing trails, and provide recreation, they will enhance the region's unique assets and pass on a natural legacy for generations to come.



APPENDIX A

KEY PLANNING DOCUMENTS AND COMMITTEES ACROSS THE LAKE REGION

Town	Plan / Committee	Highlights
Bridgton	Comprehensive Plan	Identifies challenges facing the town, particularly the town's high rate of growth; sets goals, policies, and strategies to address them.
	Economic Development and Downtown Revitalization Plan 2004	Intended to bring economic development, community development, land use planning, and design together in an overall vision and strategy for economic revitalization of Bridgton's town center.
Casco	Open Space Plan 2006	Created framework to undertake voluntary measures for protecting undeveloped land, from defining and identifying large areas to creating a Conservation Commission to implement the plan.
	Comprehensive Plan 2003	Amended 2007; addresses town growth and the natural environment. Highlights include major changes to residential development zoning ordinance such as new residential districts; more emphasis on preserving open space and protecting natural resources via Open Space Plan; and recognition of the major role that educational costs have on fiscal capacity and financial planning.
	Conservation Committee	The Casco Conservation Committee was formed by the select board in 2005 and has focused its efforts on lake-associated activities.
	Open Space Commission	Created to carry out the proposals in the Open Space Plan.
Denmark	Comprehensive Plan 1999	Amended 1999; oriented toward orderly growth and development while protecting the town's rural character and preventing sprawl. Respondents to a 1991 survey most appreciated Denmark's "rural character" among nine items.
	Conservation Commission	Works toward protecting and preserving the natural resources of Denmark.
Harrison	Comprehensive Plan 2009	Developed inventory of current conditions, suggested policies and goals, and recommended action plans for implementation; awaiting ratification by the state.
Naples	Comprehensive Plan 2005	Amended 2006. Addresses multiple issues: yearly tax fluctuations, loss of rural character, open space, loss of agricultural and forest lands to subdivisions, and commercial strip development.
	Naples Recreation Facility Committee	According to Derek Goodine, Naples Town Manager, the committee has been involved with the two major parks in town: recreation facilities that were owned by the American Legion off Route 11 and a 3.5-acre town beach off Route 302.
	Conservation Commission	An aquifer protection ordinance has been prepared and will go to the town for consideration in late 2010 or early 2011.

Raymond	Comprehensive Plan 2004	Created broad vision for town future; similar to Bridgton's plan.
	Open Space Plan 2009	Key recommendations include engaging in discussions with landowners about land protection and exploring protection measures; determining requirements for securing funds for land conservation; identifying opportunities and processes to apply for state and federal grants; and building partnerships.
	Conservation Commission	Currently working on land conservation planning, invasive insects education (emerald ash borer and Asian long-horned beetle), and participating in Planning Board reviews.
	Central Corridors Coalition – Member	Guides development along transportation corridors in central Cumberland County.
Sebago	Comprehensive Plan 2006	The result of two independent committees' studies and public participation; intended to be a 10-year action guide, highlights public policies and strategies

APPENDIX B

LIST OF LAKE REGION GREENPRINT INTERVIEWEES (APRIL 2010)

1. Larry Anton, Naples Planning Board*
2. Roger Bucknell, Retired Denmark Conservation Commissioner
3. Mike Corrigan, Bridgton News reporter
4. Allen Crabtree, Sebago Selectmen Chairperson*
5. Connie Cross, Loon Echo Land Trust Former President*
6. Allan Denison, Harrison firefighter
7. Greg Foster, Forester; Raymond Planning Board Member
8. Charlie Frechette, Sebago Lake Marina Owner
9. Derek Goodine, Naples Town Manager
10. Tom Gyger, Five Fields Farm Orchard
11. Holly Hancock, Bridgton Librarian; Casco Finance Committee, Fire & Rescue*
12. Kevin Hancock, Hancock Lumber*
13. Tony Hazelton, Former Harrison Fire Chief
14. Frank Howell, Owner of Downeast Inc.
15. Henry Hudson, Contractor; former Harrison Selectman
16. Peter Lowell, Lakes Environmental Association Executive Director
17. Jim Mains, Greater Bridgton Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce
18. Linda Manchester, Good Life Market
19. Rich Merk, Southern Maine Forestry Services; SWOAM
20. Dee Miller, Bridgton Planning Board; Economic Development Committee
21. Dave Morton, Casco Town Manager*
22. Rene Noel, Southern Maine Forestry Services*
23. Alan Ordway, Owner of Camp Winona
24. Ken Richardson, Denmark Public Works Director
25. Rosie Schacht, Lake Region Vocational Center
26. Jim Smith, Sebago Town Manager
27. Trevor Tidd, Pleasant Lake Milfoil Group; Advisory Committee*
28. Pat Troy, landowner in Casco
29. Bill Winslow, Chairman of the Harrison Board of Selectmen

*Telephone interviews

APPENDIX C

GREENPRINT MODEL CRITERIA

GOAL 1. Protect Water Resources		20%
Weighting Rationale: Greatest weight was applied to criteria that provide for long-term drinking water protection in areas with limited regulatory protection. Low weights were given to criteria that had inconclusive data, such as poorly drained soils. Slopes were captured in Active River Area data used in hydrological buffers for several criteria.		
CRITERIA	WEIGHT	DATA SOURCES
Aquifers for drinking water	15%	Beginning with Habitat, Portland Water District, and Maine Office of GIS (MEGIS)
Public surface water supplies	15%	ESRI, Beginning with Habitat, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Portland Water District, and MEGIS
Headwaters	15%	U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), TNC, Portland Water District, and MEGIS
Wellhead protection areas	11%	Beginning with Habitat
Wetlands that function for groundwater recharge	11%	MEGIS, TNC, Portland Water District, and MEGIS
Lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams buffers	11%	Beginning with Habitat, TNC, Portland Water District, and MEGIS
Wetland buffers	6%	TNC, USGS, Portland Water District, and MEGIS
Steep slopes	4%	TNC, Beginning with Habitat, Portland Water District, and MEGIS
DEP AA water quality classification	4%	USGS, MEGIS, and National Hydrography Dataset
Areas subject to flooding	4%	TNC
Poorly drained soils	4%	Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
GOAL 2. Preserve Plant and Animal Habitat		18%
Weighting Rationale: Rare and endangered species were seen as the most important. Large unfragmented lands are important for functional habitat and a unique feature of this study area. Wetlands and vernal pools were considered covered by rare and endangered species and fish and aquatic habitat. Remaining wetlands already have some protection.		
Rare species and natural communities	28%	Beginning with Habitat, TNC, and MEGIS
Large unfragmented lands for wide-ranging species	24%	Beginning with Habitat
Connectivity corridors for habitat	19%	Beginning with Habitat
Fish and aquatic habitat	19%	USGS, Beginning with Habitat, TNC, Portland Water District, and MEGIS
Wetlands and vernal pools	10%	Beginning with Habitat, TNC, Portland Water District, and MEGIS

GOAL 3. Preserve Working Farms and Forests		15%
Weighting Rationale: The primary elements of this goal are farms and forest. Therefore, the criteria specific to these two elements were assigned equally high weighting. Unfragmented blocks were used as a secondary emphasis in overall weighting to help assign extra importance to those farms and forests that are part of a large unfragmented block.		
CRITERIA	WEIGHT	DATA SOURCES
Priority farmlands	36%	MEGIS, NRCS, Loon Echo Land Trust (LELT), Lakes Environmental Association (LEA), Naples, Raymond, Bridgton, Denmark, Sebago, O'Donnell and Associates (Casco, Sebago), Land Environmental Associations (Harrison), ME Department of Agriculture, and Portland Water District
Priority timberlands	36%	MEGIS, NRCS, LELT, LEA, Naples, Raymond, Bridgton, Denmark, Sebago, O'Donnell and Associates (Casco, Sebago), Land Environmental Associations (Harrison), Maine Department of Agriculture, and Portland Water District
Large unfragmented farms and forests	28%	TPL, Maine Department of Transportation, Portland Water District, and MEGIS
GOAL 4. Protect Scenic Views		14%
Weighting Rationale: Hilltops and mountains were weighted highest, because they represent a specific feature, visible from anywhere across the study area. All other criteria were weighted moderately high. Each represents more general views from locations associated with a particular activity (hiking, boating, driving, etc.).		
Views of hilltops	34%	USGS
Views from hilltops	22%	USGS, Portland Water District, and MEGIS
Views from roads and trails	22%	Maine Department of Transportation and Beginning with Habitat
Views from open water	22%	USGS, TPL (TAT advised), Portland Water District, and MEGIS
GOAL 5. Maintain Small-Town Character of Village Centers		12%
Weighting Rationale: Clusters of gathering places were considered the primary characteristic of small-town character. Compact village centers, slow-speed corridors, and historic buildings also play a significant role in creating the character of a small town. Water features and cemeteries are broadly distributed across the study area. Although they help provide unique character to town centers, they do not stand alone as defining features and, therefore, were given a lower relative weight.		
Town gathering places	28%	Portland Water District and MEGIS
Village centers	18%	Multiple sources including Naples, Raymond, Casco, Bridgton, Denmark, Harrison, and Sebago, LEA, LELT, and Google Map search locations
Slow-speed transportation corridors	18%	Maine Department of Transportation
Historic buildings	18%	Maine Historic Preservation Commission
Walkable access to brooks, ponds, and lakes	9%	National Hydrology Dataset
Cemeteries	9%	ESRI, StreetMap, Google Maps, Town of Raymond, Town of Naples, Town of Bridgton, and Town of Harrison

GOAL 6. Protect and Enhance Existing Trails		11%
Weighting Rationale: Protection of existing trails (both pedestrian and motorized) was assigned highest importance. Many existing trails utilize private property corridors and have no long-term guarantees for access. Enhancing those trails with connections to town gathering places was considered secondary to maintaining existing corridors, partly because trail connection layout and access considerations are site specific.		
CRITERIA	WEIGHT	DATA SOURCES
Protect existing trails	75%	LEA, LEIT, Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, Raymond, Lake Region HS, Larry Garland, Lake Region Snowmobile Clubs, Denmark Draggers, and Crooked River Snowmobile Club
Enhance connections to destinations	25%	
GOAL 7. Provide Recreation		10%
Weighting Rationale: Lakeshore access and hunting and fishing were weighted highest because they represent most popular forms of outdoor recreation in the area. Nature education was also weighted moderately high due to its regional popularity. Stream access for downtown areas was weighted lower, because it is limited to specific areas.		
Lakeshore access: Underserved areas	32%	Greater Bridgton Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce, Town of Raymond, Town of Casco, Esri StreetMap, MEGIS, Portland Water District, LEIT, LEA
Hunting and fishing habitat	32%	Beginning with Habitat, MEGIS, ESRI StreetMap, LEA, LEIT, Maine Department of Transportation, TPL-GIS Assembled, Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, Town of Raymond, Lake Region HS, and Larry Garland
Places for nature education	24%	Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Beginning with Habitat, MEGIS, Conserved Lands, Scott Lindsey and Brautigam, and Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife – Gray Office
Access to brooks and streams in downtowns	12%	Greenprint Village Centers Analysis and National Hydrology Dataset

APPENDIX D

LAKE REGION LAND CONSERVATION FINANCE RESEARCH

This appendix considers how to create local funding to support the goals and priorities identified by the Lake Region towns for the Greenprint. To begin, this report delves briefly into the Lake Region communities' fiscal background. Then the report provides a brief overview of existing local open space and conservation funding mechanisms. Next, the report analyzes possible alternatives for funding an open space land acquisition and management program, including individual communities' legal authority and revenue raising capacity. This information is followed by a summary of relevant state and federal funding programs that may be leveraged by the Lake Region municipalities. Finally, since most revenue options require approval by voters, this report provides pertinent election information on voter registration and support for Land for Maine's Future measures.

FISCAL BACKGROUND

Budget

The budgets of the Lake Region municipalities vary in proportion to their respective populations (see Table A1). Bridgton and Raymond have the largest budgets, and Sebago and Denmark have the smallest.

Table A1: Summary of Lake Region Local Governments Budget

Municipality	FY09 Municipal Revenues	FY09 Municipal Expenditures	FY10 Municipal Revenues	FY10 Municipal Expenditures
Bridgton ³¹	\$13,400,000	\$13,400,000	\$13,800,000	\$13,360,000
Casco ³²	\$7,860,000	\$7,280,000	\$7,710,000	\$8,040,000
Denmark	\$3,340,000	\$3,380,000	\$3,480,000	\$3,050,000
Harrison	--	--	--	--
Naples	\$9,410,000	\$10,000,000	\$9,930,000	\$9,930,000
Raymond ³³	\$14,000,000	\$13,700,000	\$12,600,000	\$12,600,000
Sebago ³⁴	\$4,960,000	\$5,070,000	--	--

Those sources not footnoted can be attributed to respective town officials.

Debt

This section discusses each municipality's current bonded indebtedness, debt limits, remaining debt capacity, and expected near-term future bond issuance plans. Table A2 shows each municipality's remaining debt capacity.

31 Town of Bridgton, Maine, *Annual Report: July 2009 – June 2010*.

32 Town of Casco, Maine, *Financial Statements* (June 20, 2010). Prepared by Purdy Powers & Company.

33 Town of Raymond, Maine, *2010 Annual Report; 2009 Annual Report*.

34 Town of Sebago, Maine, *Annual Report 2008-2009*.

Table A2: Summary of Lake Region Local Governments Remaining Debt Capacity

Municipality	Municipal Debt	Debt Limit*	Remaining Capacity
Bridgton	\$500,000	\$79,500,000	\$79,000,000
Casco	\$597,000	\$48,400,000	\$47,800,000
Denmark	\$0	\$22,700,000	\$22,700,000
Harrison	\$0	\$40,600,000	\$40,600,000
Naples	\$916,000	\$59,300,000	\$58,400,000
Raymond	\$6,950,000	\$77,000,000	\$70,000,000
Sebago	\$2,370	\$31,900,000	\$31,900,000

Sources: Respective town and city officials.

*No municipality may incur debt for purposes other than schools, storm or sanitary sewers, energy facilities, or municipal airports greater than 7.5 percent of its last full state valuation. In addition, no municipality may incur debt that would cause its total debt outstanding at any time to exceed 15 percent of its last full state valuation. M.S.A. 30-A § 5702.

- **Bridgton.** The Town of Bridgton's current bonded indebtedness is \$500,000 below its debt limit of \$79.5 million.³⁵ The Town of Bridgton will issue bonds as part of Regional School Unit (RSU) 61 (which includes students from Bridgton, Casco, Naples, and Sebago). Otherwise, the Select Board is extremely hesitant to taking on any kind of debt.
- **Casco.** The Town of Casco's current bonded indebtedness is \$597,000, below its debt limit of \$48.4 million.³⁶ The Town of Casco anticipates issuing debt in the next two to five years for a town office project in the range of \$500,000 to \$1,000,000.
- **Denmark.** The Town of Denmark has no outstanding bonded indebtedness. Denmark's debt limit is \$22.7 million. Bonding has been a controversial issue in the last few years in the Town of Denmark. An attempt in 2006 to bond roadwork failed at Town Meeting. No bonding is being proposed in the next fiscal year.³⁷
- **Harrison.** The Town of Harrison, with the exception of any liability for school, county, and Ecomaine (a non-profit waste management company owned and operated by 21 municipalities in Southern Maine), has neither debt liability nor any intention of creating debt liability, at least at this time.³⁸ Therefore, Harrison's remaining debt capacity is \$40.6 million.
- **Naples.** The Town of Naples' bonded indebtedness is \$916,000.³⁹ Some future bonded indebtedness is anticipated in the range of \$2 million, not including any bonding undertaken by RSU 61. Naples' debt limit is \$59.3 million.
- **Raymond.** The Town of Raymond's current bonded indebtedness is \$6.95 million, below its limit of \$77.0 million.⁴⁰
- **Sebago.** The Town of Sebago's outstanding long-term debt is \$2,370, below its limit of \$31.9 million.⁴¹

35 Written communication from Mitchell A. Berkowitz, Bridgton Town Manager, December 8, 2010.

36 Written communication from David Morton, Casco Town Manager, December 17, 2010.

37 Written communication from Ephrem Paraschak, Denmark Town Manager, December 7, 2010.

38 Written communication from George "Bud" Finch, Harrison Town Manager, February 18, 2011.

39 Written communication from Derek Goodine, Naples Town Manager, December 29, 2010.

40 Written communication from Don Willard, Raymond Town Manager, December 8, 2010.

41 Annual Report Town of Sebago 2008–2009.

Existing Local Funding Mechanisms

This information is summarized to demonstrate how the Lake Region communities have invested in open space protection in recent years using a variety of funding mechanisms. The information is general in nature and should be viewed as such.

- **Bridgton.** The Moose Pond Trust Fund supports recreation and open space purchases and maintenance through the revenue and investment income from the sale of a town- owned property. The fund provided \$75,000 to the Pondicherry Park Project.
- **Casco.** The town has appropriated funds for land conservation at mixed funding levels since 2003. The fund's balance is currently approximately \$100,000.
- **Denmark.** Recent open space projects have been achieved through private contributions and grants. The Bicentennial Park project is an example: The Denmark Lion's Club and Arts Center joined forces to raise \$170,000 for the purchase and construction of the waterfront park.
- **Harrison.** There are no funds currently dedicated for open space protection. The annual town budget includes funds for the Parks and Recreation Department and facility maintenance; it is unknown if this fund was used for acquisition of the town park, beach, and sports complex properties.
- **Naples.** When the town purchased Kents Landing, a special town meeting was held to borrow \$750,000. There was an unfunded appropriation request for open space through the Capital Reserve Fund. An impact fee was attempted but was discontinued because the town does not have an impact ordinance.
- **Raymond.** The town has appropriated funds for land conservation at mixed funding levels annually since 2002. More recently, the fund has included use tax tree growth penalties. Funds for conservation are spent only when recommended by the Conservation Commission and approved by the selectmen. In 2009, \$10,000 was contributed to the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's purchase of Morgan Meadow property.
- **Sebago.** The town has a capital improvement fund of which \$25,000 is reserved for land conservation purchases, and the funds were dedicated through an appropriation.

Local Finance Resource Options

This section of the report provides an overview of the finance resource options available to municipalities in Maine. In Maine, state law limits dedicated funding options for land conservation available to local government to a few key sources, primarily appropriations, bonds, development impact fees, tree growth tax penalties, development transfer fees, in lieu mitigation funds, and tax increment financing (TIF), where the use of the proceeds is directly related to ensuring that development can continue to take place. Local governments are precluded by the state from levying a real estate transfer tax, sales tax, or income tax for open space land acquisition. Other revenue sources exist, such as donations, bequests, and user fees, but are not examined here in detail.

Budget Appropriations

Lake Region towns fund most of their expenditures by placing articles on the annual town meeting warrant. These articles typically result in an immediate and one-time increase in the property tax rate of the town to pay for the expenditure.

Each Lake Region municipality has a town meeting form of government, where the legislative body of the community is the town meeting. A majority vote at the annual town meeting would authorize appropriating funds for open space and conservation.

The Towns of Casco, Raymond, and Sebago have appropriated funds for open space and conservation in the past. Budget appropriation levels have been highly variable across towns and throughout time; in fact some appropriation requests have been repeatedly defeated.

Bonds

To raise funds for capital improvements, such as land acquisition or building construction, Maine towns and cities may issue bonds. There are two types of bonds: general obligation bonds and revenue bonds. General obligation bonds are essentially loans taken out by a government secured by the jurisdiction's full faith, credit, and taxing power. A revenue bond is a municipal bond whose debt service is payable solely from the revenues derived from operating the facilities acquired or constructed with the proceeds of the bonds. Municipalities can issue revenue bonds not exceeding the total tax levy of the preceding two years.⁴²

Borrowing by issuing bonds presents a number of advantages. Borrowing can provide the community with the revenue and flexibility it needs up front to fund large-scale open space and conservation projects when land is available and less expensive than it will be in the future. Bonds ensure a steady stream of funding that is not dependent on the fluctuations of the operating budget. Costs are typically spread out over a long time horizon and, therefore, are borne by both current and future beneficiaries. General obligation bonds are a popular open space financing tool at local levels across the country. As mentioned above, Falmouth, Freeport, Saco, and Scarborough have passed bond measures for land conservation.⁴³ The most recent bond measure approved by a Maine municipality was at the November 3, 2009, election, where voters in Scarborough approved a \$1 million general obligation bond to provide recreation opportunities and preserve habitat and open space.

On the other hand, financing charges accrue, debt ceilings limit the amount of bonds a community can issue, and convincing voters of the merits of incurring debt can be challenging. Finally, municipalities must be mindful of how continued increases in debt will affect its bond ratings, as ratings can influence the interest rate charged on the loans.

As discussed above, each Lake Region municipality has a town meeting form of government. A majority vote at the annual town meeting would authorize issuing a bond. Table A3 illustrates the estimated bond amount each community could issue at an annual cost of \$30 to the average homeowner.

⁴² M.S.A. 30-A § 5771.

⁴³ The Trust for Public Land. LandVote Data, http://www.tpl.org/tier3_cd.cfm?content_item_id=12010&folder_id=2386.

Table A3: Lake Region Bond Financing Costs (assuming 20-year bond at 5.0% interest rate)

Municipality	Taxable Valuation (2010)	Median Home Value	Cost/ Year/ Avg Home	Annual Debt Service	Bond Issue
Bridgton	\$1,060,000,000	\$130,000	\$30	\$245,000	\$3,050,000
Casco	\$645,000,000	\$169,000	\$30	\$114,000	\$1,430,000
Denmark	\$302,000,000	\$184,000	\$30	\$49,200	\$613,000
Harrison	\$542,000,000	\$172,000	\$30	\$94,400	\$1,180,000
Naples	\$790,000,000	\$140,000	\$30	\$170,000	\$2,110,000
Raymond	\$1,030,000,000	\$230,000	\$30	\$134,000	\$1,670,000
Sebago	\$425,000,000	\$133,000	\$30	\$96,200	\$1,200,000

Sources: Maine Revenue Service. *State Valuation History 1999–2010*, http://www.maine.gov/revenue/propertytax/sidebar/state_valuation_history.htm; Maine State Housing Authority. *Cumberland County and Oxford County Homeownership Facts 2009*, <http://www.mainehousing.org/DATAHousingFacts.aspx>.

Impact Fees

In 1987, the Maine Legislature authorized local governments to impose impact fees on new development for the purpose of financing facility improvements, including parks and open space, owing to demand caused by new growth.

The first step for a community considering implementing an impact fee is to assess its rate of growth and determine whether it would generate enough revenue to make the effort of developing an ordinance and its administration worthwhile.⁴⁴ The Lake Region communities are projected to increase in population between 2010 and 2025.⁴⁵ The next step is to identify the current level of service (e.g., 25 acres of open space for every 1,000 residents) provided in order to determine the need for future open space and the extent to which new development contributes to that need. It is important to remember that impact fees cannot be used to finance existing deficiencies; therefore, an impact fee can only be used in a community with increasing population and for providing open space to those new residents.

To give a sense of the magnitude of revenues that could be generated by impact fees, multiply the average rate of annual housing starts by the average number of persons per household in each municipality. For purposes of illustration, the impact fee per person is assumed to be \$150 based on the Town of Brunswick and the City of Saco's open space impact fees of \$127 and \$156, respectively.⁴⁶ Table A4 provides the estimated annual open space impact fee revenues.⁴⁷

44 Maine State Planning Office, *Financing Infrastructure Improvements Through Impact Fees: A Manual for Maine Municipalities on the Design and Calculation of Development Impact Fees*, January 2003.

45 While impact fees are tied to new development, as opposed to population growth, for purposes of anticipating possible revenue, in the absence of good projections for new development across the study area, anticipated population growth is used as a rough indicator for projected new development.

46 Town of Brunswick Open Space Impact Fee Methodology. The Town of Brunswick and the City of Saco are the only known towns in Maine that have implemented an impact fee specifically for open space at the time of this publication. The impact fee of \$150 was chosen because it is a round number that falls between these two existing fees.

47 For municipalities wishing to explore impact fees in more depth, the Maine State Planning Office has an open space impact fee calculator for municipalities. The worksheet can be accessed at <http://maine.gov/spo/landuse/docs/complanning/openspace.xls>.

Table A4: Lake Region Open Space Impact Fee Revenues

Municipality	Impact Fee For New Development	Impact Fee For Open Space	Persons Per Household	Annual Housing Starts	Approx. Impact Fee w/ Revenue @ \$150
Bridgton	No	No	2.45	24	\$8,820
Casco	No	No	2.42	15	\$5,450
Denmark	No	No	2.28	14	\$4,790
Harrison	No	No	2.44	10	\$3,660
Naples	No	No	2.35	32	\$11,300
Raymond	No	No	2.63	10	\$3,950
Sebago	No	No	2.37	7	\$2,490

Sources: Respective town and city officials; U.S. Census Bureau, 2005–2009 American Community Survey.

Tree Growth Tax Penalties

The Maine tree growth tax law helps landowners maintain their property as productive woodlands and broadly supports Maine’s wood products industry. Forestland enrolled in the program is valued on the basis of its ability to grow trees rather than its “highest and best use.”⁴⁸ If a landowner withdraws a property from the tree growth program, a penalty is levied on the acres removed. The penalty is based on the greater of (1) the fair market value tax for the five years preceding withdrawal less all taxes paid over the preceding five years, plus interest; or (2) a percentage of the difference between the fair market value of the property and the tree growth valuation. The longer property has been enrolled, the lower the percentage. Table A5 shows Lake Region landowner participation in the tree growth program in 2009. In the Lake Region 56,000 acres are enrolled in the tree growth program, with a total value of \$15.4 million.

Table A5: Lake Region Tree Growth Program Participation

Municipality	Parcels	Acres	Value
Bridgton	131	9,530	\$2,920,000
Casco	57	6,350	\$2,080,000
Denmark	166	17,100	\$3,270,000
Harrison	115	6,130	\$2,000,000
Naples	80	6,030	\$1,920,000
Raymond	52	2,780	\$810,000
Sebago	110	8,190	\$2,400,000

Sources: Respective town and city officials; U.S. Census Bureau, 2005–2009 American Community Survey.

48 M.S.A. 36 §§ 571 - 584-A.

Lake Region municipalities could use tree growth tax penalties collected for open space and conservation. Table A6 shows the tree growth tax penalties assessed from 2005 to 2009. An average of \$105,000 in annual tree growth tax penalties has been assessed in the Lake Region over the past five years, ranging from a low of \$25,800 in 2009 to a high of \$200,000 in 2007. The Town of Raymond has used tree growth tax penalties for land conservation.

Table A6: Tree Growth Tax Penalties Assessed in the Lake Region

Municipality	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Bridgton	\$53,400	\$31,000	\$171,000	\$0	\$15,200
Casco	\$0	\$44,500	\$1,330	\$0	\$0
Denmark	\$0	\$1,030	\$0	\$6,850	\$0
Harrison	\$4,550	\$5,360	\$14,300	\$21,300	\$4,950
Naples	\$29,800	\$0	\$1,880	\$0	\$0
Raymond	\$15,700	\$31,000	\$0	\$1,030	\$5,730
Sebago	\$40,000	\$12,100	\$11,100	\$1,360	\$0

Source: Maine Revenue Services. 2009 Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary.

Development Transfer Fees

In a development transfer fee program, development rights are transferred from designated rural (sending) areas, identified based on an open space plan or similar objectives, to designated growth (receiving) areas, designated by local land use plans.⁴⁹ Developers pay a transfer fee to the town. This payment enables them to buy and build more units in the designated growth area than would be allowed under current density limits. In turn, the payment is deposited into a town fund for land acquisition. Accumulated funds are then used to conserve lands in the designated rural sending areas once an opportunity becomes available. Through this process developers can build at greater density where it is most appropriate and willing landowners are compensated for voluntarily giving up their rights to develop. The overall goal of directing growth to designated areas while conserving important parcels of open space can still be achieved. The Towns of Gorham and Scarborough have utilized development transfer fees for land conservation.

Because of the number of unique variables necessary to create a development transfer fee program, this report does not evaluate the revenue-raising capacity of potential programs in the Lake Region.

⁴⁹ Beginning with Habitat. 2003. Land Use Ordinance Tools: Transfer of Development Rights and Development Transfer Fee. http://www.beginningwithhabitat.org/toolbox/land_tdr.html.

In Lieu Mitigation Funds

Mitigating adverse environmental impacts to wetlands and significant wildlife habitat is part of Maine's Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA), a regulatory program administered by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).⁵⁰ In general, resource mitigation is a sequential process of avoiding adverse impacts whenever possible, minimizing those impacts that cannot be practicably avoided, and compensating for those that cannot be further minimized.⁵¹

In lieu fee programs allow developers and others to pay a fee, rather than have a mitigation project selected when they impact wetlands in their development projects. The accumulated fees are then used toward the restoration, enhancement, protection, or preservation of nearby mitigation projects that are prequalified based on their ability to provide similar functions and values. The goal of the in lieu fee mitigation program is to ensure that there is no "net loss" of wetlands by identifying projects with the greatest chance for success and having a third party use in lieu fee funds to implement the projects.

In those cases where wetland impacts are unavoidable, under the NRPA, permit applicants can pay a fee in-lieu to compensate for the impacts they propose in their development plans. The fee amount is based on the compensation costs that would be otherwise necessary to restore, enhance, create, or preserve wetlands with similar functions or values to the one affected. The fee is banked in an account to be managed by a municipality;⁵² and the accumulated funds can then be spent on projects that restore, enhance, or preserve other wetlands and bordering uplands with similar functions and values that are located within the same biophysical region as the permitted disturbance.

Aside from managing in lieu fee funds, the municipality is responsible for identifying eligible projects through an application/proposal process and by a review of key areas such as the Beginning with Habitat Focus Areas of Statewide Ecological Significance in each biophysical region. When projects are identified for in lieu fee funds, the DEP may enter into an enforceable, written agreement with a municipality for the restoration or protection of these areas. The municipality must demonstrate the ability to receive compensation fees and ensure that compensation projects are implemented and the lands protected in perpetuity.

Towns conducting open space plans or similar systematic inventory and prioritization efforts can also identify potential projects and submit them as candidates to other organizations administering in lieu fees. As no mitigation projects have been identified, yet this report does not evaluate the revenue-raising capacity of potential in lieu mitigation funds in the Lake Region.

50 M.S.A. 38 § 480 A-BB.

51 Beginning with Habitat. 2003. Wetland and Shoreland Zoning Tools: In Lieu Fee Mitigation Funds. http://www.beginningwith-habitat.org/toolbox/wetlands_ilf.html.

52 Other organizations are eligible to manage the account. M.S.A. 38 § 480 Z(B) ("Any compensation fee may be paid into a compensation fund established by the department as provided in subparagraph (1) or to an organization authorized by the department as provided in subparagraph (2)."); M.S.A. 38 § 480 Z(B)(2) ("The department may enter into an enforceable, written agreement with a public, quasi-public or municipal organization or a private, nonprofit organization for the protection of natural areas").

Tax Increment Financing

In Maine, a municipality may participate in local project financing by using some or all of the new property revenues from a capital investment within a designated geographic district.⁵³ The municipality has the option of using the “incremental” taxes to retire bonds it has issued for the project, compensate a developer or business for development project costs, or fund eligible municipal economic development activities. TIF districts may be designated for up to 30 years, and bonds may be issued for up to 20 years. The designation of a TIF district requires proper notice, a local public hearing, the majority vote of the municipal legislative body, and state approval.

In Bangor, a TIF has been created for new commercial development in the area designated for commercial development near the Penjajawoc Marsh and Stream and located to the north and west of Stillwater Avenue and to the west of Kittredge Road.⁵⁴ The City will set aside 25 percent of the new taxes from commercial development within the district for open space that protects or enhances water quality starting at the end of 2008, and will continue to do so for 10 years.⁵⁵ The TIF is expected to generate revenues in the range of \$1.0 million, plus or minus 20 percent, over the next 15 to 20 years.⁵⁶ These funds will be used to purchase property or conservation easements, public access projects, and water quality improvement efforts.⁵⁷ Property and easements will only be acquired from willing sellers.

Maine communities wishing to utilize TIF financing for open space or resource protection purposes must be careful to ensure that funded projects are directly related to allowing current or future development in the area. Communities are cautioned to work closely with legal advisors or the State Department of Economic and Community Development to ensure that a TIF proposal meets state requirements.

STATE FUNDING PROGRAMS

Endangered and Nongame Wildlife Fund

Maine’s Endangered and Nongame Wildlife Fund was created by the legislature in 1983. Contributions are made through a “chickadee check-off” on the state income tax form and through the sale of a “loon license plate.” All donations are deposited into a special interest-bearing account. Money from this fund can be spent only on the conservation of Maine’s endangered and nongame species.

Drinking Water Land Acquisition Loan Program

Land acquisition loans will be used to give community water systems loans for the purchase of land or conservation easements needed for source water protection.⁵⁸ The Drinking Water Program (DWP) believes that a water system’s ownership or legal control of the land around its source(s) is the most effective means of protecting its source(s). Water systems may apply at any time; however, it is strongly recommended that requests be submitted so that the DWP can determine the amount of funds to this set-aside.

53 Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, *Municipal Tax Increment Financing*, May 1, 2005.

54 City of Bangor Code of Ordinances, Article IV Section 23-34.

55 Penjajawoc Marsh Bangor Mall Management Commission, *Marsh/Mall Overlay Zone Management Plan*, November 2007.

56 Written communication from Ed Barrett, Bangor City Manager, May 8, 2008.

57 Penjajawoc Marsh Bangor Mall Management Commission, *Marsh/Mall Overlay Zone Management Plan*, November 2007.

58 Maine Drinking Water Program.

Land for Maine's Future

<http://maine.gov/spo/lmf/>

The LMF program began in 1987 and uses money through voter-approved bond authorizations to acquire land, a total of \$127 million over 20 years. The program focuses on acquiring land for open space, wildlife, parks, natural areas, endangered species habitat, and natural communities. The LMF program has successfully leveraged funds from other sources, including private and federal dollars. Key funding partners are often nonprofit organizations, foundations, cooperating land-owners, and federal agencies.

LMF requires a minimum one-to-one match⁵⁹ of private funds for the public funds expended and has successfully leveraged more than \$126 million from other sources. Since its creation, LMF has assisted in the acquisition of more than 510,000 acres, including 247,000 acres protected through conservation easements. LMF enabled protection of more than 1,000 miles of shoreline and 158 miles of rail-trails as well as valuable wildlife habitat, entire islands, and working forests and farms.

Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund

Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

<http://www.state.me.us/ifw/grants/outdoorheritagefund/index.htm>

The Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund is supported by 26 percent of the total proceeds from “scratch-off” lottery tickets. Funds are allocated to habitat conservation, land acquisition, and endangered species projects. Grants are awarded twice each year by a seven-member board that is appointed by the governor. Grants are awarded based on a point system. Local governments or municipalities receive a higher score if there is a one-third or higher cash or in-kind match from nongovernmental sources.

The proceeds from ticket sales total approximately \$700,000 annually. The Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund Board awards grants to projects that promote recreation as well as land conservation. A monetary match is required and must consist of funds raised specifically for the project proposed; the match does not include salary costs of natural resource agency staff. A cash or in-kind match of one-third or more of the total project cost is required from nongovernmental sources.

FEDERAL FUNDING PROGRAMS

All the programs discussed under this section are administered by federal agencies but vary in how funds are delivered for on-the-ground projects. For example, some of these program funds are directed to the states, which in turn decide which projects to fund, while other program funds are granted by a federal agency through a competitive process. In still other cases, Congress may “earmark” funds for individual projects. The descriptions below are meant to provide a broad overview of funding sources. TPL can provide additional information on program rules and accessibility.

⁵⁹ See, *infra*, note 30, for the matching requirements of the latest bond.

Brownfields Program

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/applicat.htm>

If a property identified for acquisition or redevelopment is or might be a “brownfield” site, many programs and other benefits at the local, state, and federal levels may be of assistance. The EPA’s Brownfields Program provides direct funding for brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loans, and environmental job training. In addition, legislation signed into law in 2001 limits the liability of certain contiguous property owners and prospective purchasers of brownfields properties, and innocent landowners are also afforded liability benefits to encourage revitalization and reuse of brownfield sites. EPA’s brownfields program provides several types of grants:

Assessment grants provide funding for a grant recipient to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct cleanup and redevelopment planning and community involvement related to brownfield sites. Grants can be up to \$200,000, or up to \$350,000 with a waiver.

Remediation grants are available for remediation of brownfield sites. These grants are limited to \$200,000 per site, with no more than three applications per entity. There is a 20 percent cost-share. Nongovernmental organizations are eligible to apply, but they must have site control of the property. One site may qualify for two grants if pollutants include petroleum and nonpetroleum contaminants.

Revolving Loan Fund grants provide funding for a grant recipient to capitalize a revolving loan fund to provide subgrants to carry out cleanup activities at brownfields sites of up to \$1 million per eligible entity, with a 20 percent cost share. Annual grants are announced in approximately October of each calendar year.

Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs)

The EPA is charged with implementing both the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act, two landmark pieces of legislation to clean up America’s waterways and to ensure that we have safe water to drink. Conservation is an eligible activity under both laws. Both programs utilize SRFs to fund projects that better water quality and enhance our drinking water supplies. Every year, Congress appropriates funds that are portioned to the states on a formula basis to fund the SRFs.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)

<http://www.epa.gov/OWM/cwfinance/cwsrf/index.htm>

Through the CWSRF program, each state maintains a revolving loan fund to provide a source of low-cost financing for a wide range of water quality infrastructure projects. In FY07, Congress appropriated \$1.08 billion for the CWSRF, distributed among the states. Federal funds must be matched by 20 percent nonfederal funds.

The CWSRF program is available to fund a wide variety of water quality projects, including nonpoint source, watershed protection, or restoration, and estuary management projects, as well as more traditional municipal wastewater treatment projects. Nationwide, 95 percent of these funds go toward infrastructure projects, but watershed protection projects are increasing.

CWSRF programs operate much like environmental infrastructure banks that are capitalized with federal and state contributions. CWSRF monies are loaned to communities, and loan repayments are recycled back into the program to fund additional water quality protection projects. The revolving nature of these programs provides for an ongoing funding source that should last far into the future.

States may target resources to their particular environmental needs, including contaminated runoff from urban and agricultural areas, wetlands restoration, groundwater protection, brown-fields remediation, estuary management, and wastewater treatment.

Land or easement acquisition is permitted with CWSRF funds as a method to reduce nonpoint source pollution. For example, California has already used \$112 million of its CWSRF funds to acquire over 29,000 acres of land for water quality benefits. Maine's FY 2009 allotment was \$29.1 million.

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)

<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/dwsrf/index.html>

The DWSRF program was established by the 1996 Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments, under which EPA provides grants to states to establish revolving loan funds. They provide loans and other types of financial assistance to public water systems for eligible infrastructure improvements. Since its inception, Congress has directed \$4.2 billion for the DWSRFs. In FY07, states were awarded \$823 million toward their DWSRFs. Conservation easements and fee simple acquisitions are permitted with these funds.

Since its inception, only \$2.7 million has been for acquisition to protect less than 2,000 acres of land under the DWSRF. However, EPA has begun a concerted effort to focus more attention on protecting "source water," which they roughly define as "untreated water from streams, rivers, lakes, or underground aquifers which is used to supply private wells and public drinking water." There is growing recognition that protecting the source from contaminants is often more efficient and cost effective than treating drinking water later.

Loans under the DWSRF are typically low interest and can be repaid over 20 years. There is some flexibility given to the states to allow them to waive the principal repayment, offer negative interest rates, or extend the loans to 30 years in specific hardship cases.

Up to 31 percent of these capitalization grants can be set aside to administer the SRF and state source protection programs and to fund source water protection activities, including land acquisition. Up to 15 percent of the set-aside can be used for land conservation and voluntary, incentive-based protection measures, with no more than 10 percent used for a single type of activity, such as land protection.

Maine's FY 2010 DWSRF allotment was \$13.6 million.

Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration

US Fish and Wildlife Service

<http://federalasst.fws.gov/sfr/fasfr.html>

The Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, commonly referred to as the Dingell-Johnson Act, was passed in 1950 to create a program for the management, conservation, and restoration of fishery resources. The program is funded by revenues collected from an excise tax paid by the manufacturers of fishing equipment. Appropriate state agencies are the only entities eligible to receive these grants, and funds are apportioned to each state on a formula based on the percentage of licensed anglers in the state and the percentage of states' land and water area.

The program is a cost-reimbursement program, where the state covers the full amount of an approved project, then applies for reimbursement through federal aid for up to 75 percent of the project expenses. The state must provide at least 25 percent of the project costs from a nonfederal source.

In the FY 2011 apportionment, Maine is expected to receive \$2.48 million in funding through this program.

Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (Pittman-Robertson Act)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

<http://federalasst.fws.gov/wr/fawr.html>

Implemented in 1938, the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, or more commonly known as the Pittman-Robertson Act, provides funding from the Department of the Interior for the selection, restoration, rehabilitation, and improvement of wildlife habitat, wildlife management research, and the distribution of information produced by the projects. Funds are derived from an 11 percent excise tax on sporting arms, ammunition, and archery equipment and a 10 percent tax on handguns. Funds are apportioned to appropriate state agencies on a formula based on the total area of the state and the number of licensed hunters in the state.

The program is a cost-reimbursement program in which the state applies for repayment of up to 75 percent of approved project expenses. The state must provide at least 25 percent of the project costs from nonfederal sources.

In the FY 2011 apportionment, Maine is expected to receive \$3.31 million in funding through this program.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP)

U.S. Forest Service

www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/aboutflp.shtml

<http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/forestlegacy.shtml>

The FLP was established in 1990 to provide federal funding to states to assist in securing conservation easements on forestlands threatened with conversion to nonforest uses. Fee transactions are also used under the program, either for the whole transaction or combined with easements to achieve a state's highest conservation goals. A state voluntarily enters the program by submitting an assessment of need (AON) to the secretary of agriculture for approval. These plans establish the lead state agency, the state's criteria for Forest Legacy projects, and Forest Legacy areas within which proposed Legacy projects must be located. Once the AON is approved, the state lead agency can submit up to three grants each year for projects within the Forest Legacy Areas. The federal government may fund up to 75 percent of project costs, with at least 25 percent coming from private, state, or local sources.

In FY 2009, the Forest Legacy Program was funded at \$57.5 million, providing grants to states for 24 forest conservation projects and providing start-up funds for three new states.

In 2009, three projects were funded in Maine at \$4.70 million, Lower Penobscot River, Grafton Notch, and Machias River.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

Department of the Interior (varies by agency)

<http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/>

Created in 1965, the LWCF is the largest source of federal money for park, wildlife, and open space land acquisition. Specifically, the LWCF provides funding to assist in acquiring, preserving, developing, and assuring accessibility to outdoor recreation resources, including but not limited to open space, parks, trails, wildlife lands and other lands and facilities desirable for individual active participation. The program's funding comes primarily from offshore oil and gas drilling receipts, with an authorized expenditure of \$900 million each year, while federal recreation fees, sales of federal surplus real property, and federal motorboat fuel tax fund also contribute to the LWCF.

Under this program, a portion of the money is intended to go to federal land purchases and a portion to the states as matching grants for land protection projects.

LWCF — Stateside

National Park Service

http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/fed_state.html

<http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/programs/community/lwgrants.html>

The stateside LWCF program provides a 50 percent match to states for planning, developing, and acquiring land and water areas for natural resource protection and recreation enhancement.

Funds are distributed to states based on population and need. Once the funds are distributed to the states, it is up to each state to choose the projects, though the National Park Service has final approval. Eligible grant recipients include municipal subdivisions, state agencies, and tribal governments, each of which must provide at least 50 percent matching funds in either cash or in-kind contributions and a detailed plan for the proposed project. Grant applications are evaluated based on the technical merits of the project, the public/private partnerships, and how the project addresses the identified needs and priorities of a statewide comprehensive plan.

Annual appropriations to the fund have ranged from a high of \$369 million in 1979 to four years of zero funding between 1996 and 1999. In FY 2007 and FY 2008, \$27.9 million and \$25 million were provided for stateside grants in each year, respectively. In FY 2009 the appropriated amount was \$19 million and increased to \$37.2 million in FY 2010.

In FY 2010, Maine received \$375,000 from the state grant portion of the LWCF. The Department of Conservation's Bureau of Parks and Lands administers the program in the state.

Migratory Bird Conservation Fund

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

<http://www.fws.gov/realty/mbcc.html>

Each year, duck stamp (migratory bird and conservation stamps) revenues are deposited into the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund along with appropriations from the Wetlands Loan Act of 1961, import duties from arms and ammunitions, receipts from refuge admission fees, receipts from the sale of refuge-land crops and refuge rights-of-way, and Federal Aid funds. Administered by the USFWS, the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund is used to acquire waterfowl breeding, wintering, and migration habitat needed for maintaining optimum migratory bird population levels and to achieve desirable migration and distribution patterns. The habitat areas, acquired in fee, easement, or other interests such as leases or cooperative agreements, become units of the National Wildlife Refuge System or Waterfowl Production Areas. The USFWS focuses its acquisition efforts to benefit waterfowl species most in need of habitat protection. Over 4 million acres have been protected with funds from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund.

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

<http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/index.shtm>

The NAWCA was passed in 1989 to provide matching grants for the acquisition, restoration, and enhancement of wetland ecosystems for the benefit of waterfowl and other wetland dependent migratory species. Administered by the USFWS, grants are available to nonprofit organizations, state and local agencies, tribes, and private individuals in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Two types of grants are awarded: small grants for up to \$75,000 and standard grants for up to \$1 million. There is a 1:1 nonfederal match requirement for each grant, although the average match of successful proposals is over 2:1.

In December 2002, Congress reauthorized the act and expanded its scope to include the conservation of all habitats and birds associated with wetlands ecosystems. Congress also increased the appropriation authorization of the grant program to \$75 million. The congressional appropriation to fund the act's grants program in FY 2010 is \$47.6 million. Additional program funding is expected to bring the total funding available to approximately \$89 million in FY 2010.

Since 1990, over 4,000 partners have been involved in over 1,940 NAWCA standard and small grant projects, affecting 25.5 million acres of wetlands and associated uplands across the continent. Twenty approved projects in Maine have received \$6.2 million in act grants to date. Partners have added some \$39.2 million in matching funds and \$56 million in non-matching funds to affect 967,000 acres of wetlands and associated upland habitat.

Recreational Trails Grants Program

U.S. Department of Transportation

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/index.htm>

<http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/programs/community/trailsfund.html>

The Recreation Trails Program is a federal transportation program that provides monies for the maintenance, development, acquisition, and construction of new and existing trail facilities for both motorized and nonmotorized recreational trail uses. Funds are distributed to the states according to a formula. Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations, municipal agencies, state agencies, federal government agencies, and other government entities (regional governments, port districts, etc.). Eligible projects include:

- (1) Maintenance and restoration of existing trails,
- (2) Development and rehabilitation of existing trails,
- (3) Construction of new recreation trails, and
- (4) Acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property.

Grants are distributed annually and require a 20 percent match.

In FY 2010, Maine is receiving \$1.17 million for this program, which is administered by Maine's Department of Conservation Bureau of Parks and Lands.

State Wildlife Grants

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

<http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/SWG/SWG.htm>

Created by Congress in 2001, the State Wildlife Grants Program is a matching grant program available to every state in support of cost-effective, on-the-ground conservation efforts aimed at restoring or maintaining populations of native species before listing under the Endangered Species Act is required. In order to maximize the effectiveness of this program, Congress required each state to develop a comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy for the conservation of the state's full array of wildlife and the habitats they depend on. These plans identify species and habitats of greatest conservation need and outline the steps necessary to keep them from becoming endangered. The State Wildlife Grants Program provides matching funds that are to be used to implement the conservation recommendations outlined in these state wildlife action plans.

Funds appropriated under the State Wildlife Grants Program are allocated to every state according to a formula based on a state size and population. In FY 2010, Maine received \$765,000 in matching funds from this program.

Transportation Enhancements

U.S. Department of Transportation

www.enhancements.org

<http://www.maine.gov/mdot/community-programs/enhancement-program.php>

The federal Surface Transportation Program provides states with funding for highway projects. States are allocated funds based on a combination of population, transportation systems, miles of roads, and other factors. Each state must reserve at least 10 percent of its Surface Transportation Program dollars for transportation enhancement activities. These enhancement projects include historic preservation, rails-to-trails programs, easement and land acquisition, transportation museums, water pollution mitigation, wildlife connectivity, and scenic beautification. All projects must be related, in some way, to transportation.

In each state, transportation enhancement projects are selected through a competitive process. Applications are submitted by local government entities, often in partnership with nonprofit organizations. The federal government provides 80 percent of the funds and the municipalities need to contribute a 20 percent match.

In Maine, applications are reviewed, ranked, and prioritized within three broad categories: bicycle/pedestrian, scenic/landscape/historic, and environmental. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) provide input but are not directly involved in the selection process. The Maine Department of Transportation makes awards every two years. There are no maximum or minimum awards. The federal government gives final approval to the projects and distributes the funds directly to the municipalities or nonprofits on a reimbursement basis. In 2009, Maine's apportionment for Transportation Enhancements was \$3.43 million. The program emphasizes enhancements in connection with Maine DOT's Explore Maine, pedestrian and bicycle, environmental mitigation, and downtown revitalization initiatives.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works Programs

Department of Defense

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has both military and civilian responsibilities. Under its civil works program, the Corps plans, constructs, operates, and maintains a wide range of water projects, headed by a civilian Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. A military Chief of Engineers oversees the Corps' civil and military operations and reports on civil works matters to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Works. Projects generally originate with a request for assistance from a community or local government entity. A study of the project is often in order, allowing the Corps to investigate a problem and determine whether there is a federal interest in proceeding further. The study must be authorized by Congress, usually in the biennial Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), and must be funded through the annual Energy and Water Appropriations bill. Congress also provides authorizations and appropriations to the Corps for the Continuing Authorities Programs. Two programs, Section 1135 and Section 206, are of special interest. Section 1135 provides authority for the Corps to investigate, study, modify, and construct projects for the restoration of fish and wildlife habitats where degradation is attributable to water resource projects previously constructed by the Corps. Project modifications are limited to a federal cost of \$5 million per project. The program limit for Section 1135 is \$25 million.

Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration (WRDA Section 206) provides authority for the Corps to carry out aquatic ecosystem restoration and protection projects if the project will improve the quality of the environment, is in the public interest, and is cost effective. Each project is limited to a federal cost of \$5,000,000. The total program limit is \$25 million.

ELECTION OVERVIEW

Many of the financing options covered in this report ultimately require voter approval. As of October 2010, there were 17,900 registered voters in the Lake Region. As such, an examination of recent election history can be instructive. Lake Region voters have shown consistent support for Land for Maine's Future bond measures. Note: Past election results are not necessarily indicative of current voter sentiment on public financing nor on a particular proposal; therefore, public opinion polling is recommended once open space and conservation proponents have narrowed the field of potential financing options to two likely options.

Voters in the Lake Region have consistently supported bonds to fund LMF by greater than 54 percent. In fact, LMF was passed by a majority of voters in each municipality in every referendum. This indicates broad public support in the Lake Region for public land conservation funding measures. Table A7 provides a voter history for referendums for LMF between 1999 and 2010.

Table A7: Lake Region Voter Support for Land for Maine's Future (including % of all voters)

Town	November 2, 1999		November 8, 2005		November 6, 2007		November 6, 2010	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Bridgton	1,150	433	978	504	616	402	1,359	881
	(73%)	(27%)	(66%)	(34%)	(61%)	(39%)	(61%)	(39%)
Casco	702	253	685	296	411	276	938	664
	(74%)	(26%)	(70%)	(30%)	(60%)	(40%)	(59%)	(41%)
Denmark	255	109	255	130	226	192	319	219
	(70%)	(30%)	(66%)	(34%)	(54%)	(46%)	(59%)	(41%)
Harrison	500	202	495	290	341	228	754	496
	(71%)	(29%)	(63%)	(37%)	(60%)	(40%)	(60%)	(40%)
Naples	772	323	681	389	416	316	1,021	668
	(71%)	(29%)	(64%)	(36%)	(57%)	(43%)	(60%)	(40%)
Raymond	1,137	384	933	502	550	332	1,347	839
	(75%)	(25%)	(65%)	(35%)	(62%)	(38%)	(62%)	(38%)
Sebago	427	148	332	237	327	176	474	322
	(74%)	(26%)	(58%)	(42%)	(65%)	(35%)	(60%)	(40%)
Total	4,943	1,852	4,359	2,348	2,887	1,922	6,212	4,089
	(73%)	(27%)	(65%)	(35%)	(60%)	(40%)	(60%)	(40%)

Source: Maine Bureau of Corporations, Elections & Commissions. Election Results.



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