

# Community Forests: A path to prosperity and connection

## HIDDEN VALLEY NATURE CENTER

### NOTABLE BENEFITS



RECREATION



EDUCATION



FOREST-BASED PRODUCTS

ACRES: 943

YEAR ESTABLISHED: 2017

OWNERSHIP: Midcoast Conservancy

MANAGEMENT: Midcoast Conservancy

COMMUNITY SERVED: Lincoln County, Maine

POPULATION: 34,634

TOTAL ACQUISITION COST: \$1,257,000

FUNDING BREAKDOWN:



Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program

Cost Share

For a comprehensive review of the community and economic benefits provided by this forest and others, go to the full report at [www.tpl.org/economic-benefits-community-forests](http://www.tpl.org/economic-benefits-community-forests)

PHOTO PROVIDED BY MIDCOAST CONSERVANCY



Located in Jefferson, Maine, the **Hidden Valley Nature Center** (HVNC) is a sustainably-managed working forest and community hub that provides public access for recreation and educational programming. The property spans 1,000 acres including a large timber frame building with a work area and a wood-heated solar-powered indoor classroom. Visitors can explore 25 miles of trails for hiking, snow-shoeing, cross country skiing, trail-running, mountain biking, canoeing and fishing. The property also offers year-round overnight accommodation at two small tent sites, four huts, and a yurt. HVNC employs seven part-time employees that support the center's forest- and education-related activities.

The U.S. Forest Service Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program (CFP) investment in the forest is strengthening the region's local economy by providing high-quality recreation, education, and sustainable forest management. CFP has enabled the community to ensure essential recreational and educational opportunities while bolstering the forest products industry.





**Enhancing education:** HVNC provides over 40 nature-based programs annually focused on timber frame construction, chainsaw safety, forest ecology, and trail building. The center also hosts “Women and Our Woods” workshops and science programming for the area’s fourth-grade students. Each year, these programs

reach over 300 adults and 300 children in the 10-county region. HVNC also hosts a biathlon with 200 participants, the Live Edge Music Festival with

500 attendees, a half-marathon trail race that draws 150 people and a mountain bike series that attracts 50 participants each year.

**Enabling recreation:** The Trust for Public Land estimated that the use of HVNC is **\$72,000** per year for residents of Lincoln County, including \$10,000 for Jefferson residents. In addition to providing this value to residents, HVNC works with local businesses, including the general store and local breweries, to supply provisions for events.

**Bolstering tourism:** The center draws approximately 2,590 non-local visitors. The Trust for Public Land estimates that those visitors spend approximately **\$270,000** locally each year.

**Supporting the forest products industry:** HVNC contracts with five forest professionals, including a forester, a logger, a sawyer, and a firewood processor as well as a local timber framer who teaches three timber frame courses each year. On an annual basis, approximately **\$25,000** in forest products are sold to support HVNC.



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U.S. FOREST SERVICE



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The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come.

[www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org)

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