

ME State
Comprehensive
Outdoor
Recreation Plan
2014-2019

Maine
SCORP
2014-2019



ME Bureau of
Parks & Lands

Dept. of
Agriculture,
Conservation,
and Forestry



Maine State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2014-2019

July, 2015

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry

Bureau of Parks and Lands (BPL)

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The preparation of this report was financed in part through a planning grant from the US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, under the provisions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965.

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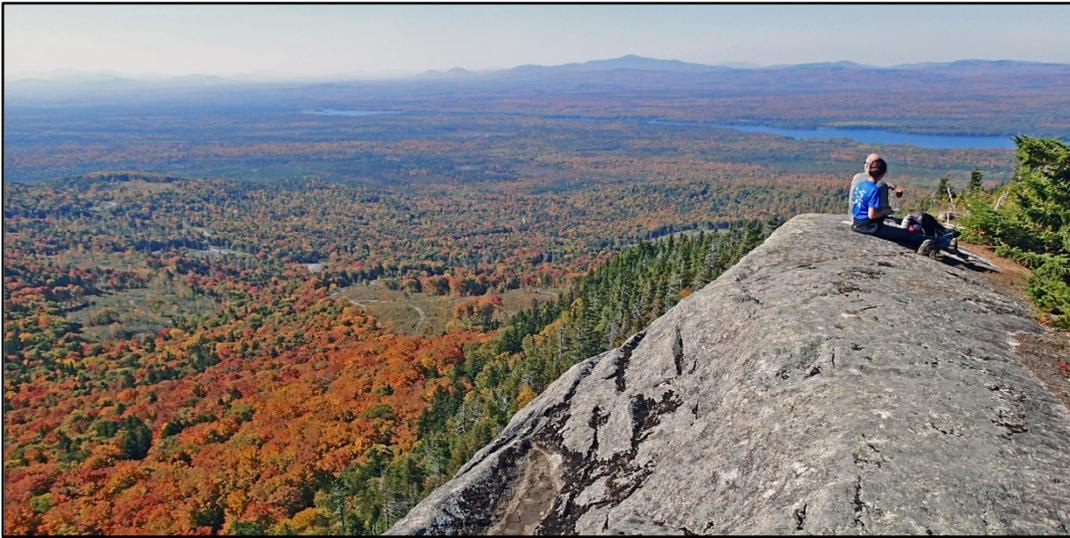
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Forward



Eagle Rock Trail, Big Moose TWP.

Maine is many things; the state encompasses bald, windswept peaks, almost endless stretches of sprawling forest lands, bucolic small towns, rolling fields, spruce-clad ocean shores, island-studded harbors, mill towns, working ports, and a whole host of other environments.

This physical beauty, rooted in the allure of deep woods, clean rivers, clear lakes, and crashing surf is intertwined with a sense of place - a tempo, a way of life. Outdoor recreation is central to this way of life. Outdoor recreation's contribution to Maine is more than a collection of swimming pools or soccer fields, though they too have their role. Outdoor recreation is a broad umbrella under which Saturday morning baseball games behind the local middle school and ten day canoe expeditions both belong - along with countless other activities. Maine life is richly imbued with opportunities to get outside and experience the benefits of nature, movement, and traditions.

There is a strong link between the special character of Maine's places and its economic, environmental, and community values. This report recognizes that "quality of place" is a driver for our recreation economy and a source of health and well-being. It therefore recognizes the fundamental need for stewardship of our natural resources and outdoor recreation infrastructure such as trails and parks. It is intended and hoped that this plan helps identify the areas in which outdoor recreation efforts can be undertaken to best serve the people of Maine and the visitors who come here to experience the outdoors. It is also hoped that the information on trends, demand, supply, and issues will be of interest to and support the work of the many diverse people and organizations that play a role in providing outdoor recreation experiences in Maine.

-Maine SCORP Planning Team.

Introduction

Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (LWCF) & Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

The federal Land and Water Conservation Fund program (LWCF) provides matching funds to states for statewide outdoor recreation planning and for acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. From 1966 through 2013, just under \$40 million of LWCF money has been used for non-federal projects in Maine. Administered at the federal level by the National Park Service and at the state level by the Bureau of Parks and Lands (BPL) in the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry, LWCF grants can provide up to 50% of the allowable costs for approved acquisition or development projects. Municipalities, schools, the State of Maine, and tribal governments are eligible to apply for local LWCF grants through BPL.

- “Established by Congress in 1965, the LWCF comprises revenue generated from offshore oil and gas leasing, not taxpayer dollars. The federal portion of the LWCF is used to acquire lands, waters, and interests therein necessary to achieve the natural, cultural, wildlife, and recreation management objectives of the NPS and other federal land management agencies.”¹
- “Over 40,000 grants to states and localities have been approved under the LWCF grants program for acquisition, development and planning of outdoor recreation opportunities in the United States.”²

State participation in LWCF requires preparation of a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), and approval of the plan by the National Park Service (NPS). The LWCF Act requires an approved SCORP to include the following requirements of Chapter 630.1 of the National Park Service LWCF guidelines.

- *evaluation of the demand for and supply of outdoor recreation resources and facilities in the state;*
- *a program for implementation of the plan;*
- *certification by the Governor that ample opportunity for public participation has taken place in plan development; and*

The minimum requirements of the plan are:

1. *inclusion of a description of the process and methodology chosen by the state;*
2. *inclusion of ample opportunity for public participation in the planning process, involving all segments of the state’s population;*
3. *comprehensive coverage - it will be considered comprehensive if it:*
 - A. *identifies outdoor recreation issues of statewide importance based upon, but not limited to, input from the public participation program. The plan must also identify those issues that the state will address through the LWCF, and those issues which may be addressed by other means;*

¹ Retrieved from: - <http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/fed/index.html>

² Ibid

B. evaluates demand or public outdoor recreation preferences, but not necessarily through quantitative statewide surveys or analyses; and

C. evaluates the supply of outdoor recreation resources and facilities, but not necessarily through quantitative statewide inventories.

4. inclusion of an implementation program that identifies the state's strategies, priorities and actions for the obligation of its LWCF apportionment. The implementation program must be of sufficient detail to demonstrate that projects submitted to the NPS for LWCF funding implement the plan; and

5. inclusion of a wetlands priority component consistent with Section 303 of the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986. At a minimum the wetlands priority component must:

A. be consistent with the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan, prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;

B. provide evidence of consultation with the state agency responsible for fish and wildlife resources; and

C. contain a listing of those wetland types which should receive priority for acquisition.

SCORP may consist of a single document or be comprised of multiple documents, as long as the LWCF planning guidelines in chapter 630.1 are met.

State Requirements

Prior to 2001, Maine state law required BP&L to periodically report to the governor on the supply of and demand for outdoor recreation facilities and how these might be met (12 MRSA 1817). Submittal of the SCORP to the Governor accomplished this reporting requirement. In 2001, the Maine Legislature amended this law to require the BP&L director to submit a state comprehensive outdoor recreation plan to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over state parks and public lands matters every 5 years. The amendment specifies that a plan meeting the federal SCORP requirements will also satisfy legislative requirements, further formalizing the role of SCORP in state government.

Planning Process

The planning process for the 2014-2019 Maine SCORP included robust public input helping to shape a vision for outdoor recreation needs and opportunities in Maine for the next five years. A major thrust of the public process involved a significant survey effort performed by the University of Maine resulting in detailed survey responses from over 16,000 Maine residents and visitors. Details on the planning process can be found in **Appendix A** and details for the survey methodology and findings can be found in **Appendix B**.

SCORP's Relationship with Other Recreation and Conservation Funds

The intended purpose of the SCORP goes beyond the LWCF program in that it serves as an assessment of outdoor recreation issues and recommends priorities for a broad range of programs and actions related to outdoor recreation opportunities in Maine. The following describes other programs that fund outdoor recreation projects, many of which assess potential projects in light of the SCORP. **Table 1** (at the end of this section) includes additional details associated with these programs.

Other Federal Grants and/or Programs of Note

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) transfers a percentage of gasoline taxes paid on non-highway recreational use in off-highway vehicles from the Highway Trust Fund into the Recreational Trails Program for trail development, improvement and maintenance.

The Bureau of Parks and Lands has been designated as the state agency to administer the program in Maine. Within the Bureau, the Division of Grants and Community Recreation provides day-to-day supervision of RTP matters. The state uses these funds directly on trail projects on state lands and also provides funds received under this program as grants-in-aid to municipalities, other qualified sub-divisions of state government and to qualified non-profit organizations under guidelines established by the Bureau of Parks and Lands in conjunction with the Maine Trails Advisory Committee.

Forest Legacy Program

The USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy program protects “working forests” that protect water quality, provide habitat, forest products, opportunities for recreation and other public benefits. The Maine Forest Legacy Program focuses on acquiring conservation easements or fee interest in lands in order to protect the traditional uses and public values of Maine’s forests, and requires that projects funded with Forest Legacy funds allow public access to the lands. The Maine Forest Legacy Committee advises the Department of Conservation, Agriculture, and Forestry- Bureau of Parks and Lands on program policy and recommends projects to the State to be submitted for consideration in a competitive process for funding through the national Forest Legacy program.

State Grants and/or Programs of Note

Land for Maine’s Future Program (LMF)

In 1987, the Maine Legislature created the LMF Program to secure “the traditional Maine heritage of public access to Maine's land and water resources or continued quality and availability of natural resources important to the interests and continued heritage of Maine people.” Since then, multiple bonds supporting the LMF Program have passed by large margins.

LMF assistance has helped conserve over 560,000 acres of conservation and recreation lands through easement and fee acquisitions. Projects have conserved:

- 52 water access sites
- 37 farms totaling more than 8,900 acres
- 20 commercial working waterfront properties
- more than 1,200 miles of shore lands, and 158 miles of former railroad corridors for recreational trails.
- 315,000 acres of working lands reflecting LMF's efforts to conserve the working landscape and keep lands in private ownership with permanent land conservation agreements.

Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund

The Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund conserves wildlife and open spaces through the sale of instant Lottery tickets. With proceeds from ticket sales, grants are awarded twice a year. The seven-member Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund Board chooses projects in four categories that promote recreation as well as conservation of Maine's special places, endangered species and important fish and wildlife habitat.

Snowmobile Grants

The Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands provides *Municipal Grants* to municipalities or counties for sharing the cost of the construction and maintenance of snowmobile trails. *Snowmobile Club Grants* are made available to all snowmobile clubs who are on file with the Snowmobile Program (BPL) and wish to participate. It is intended to help defray some of the expenses incurred in snowmobile trail preparation, including pre-season work and winter grooming. This differs from the municipal grant in that it is made directly to a club and does not require municipal involvement. *Capital Grants* (for grooming equipment) are available to clubs or municipalities.

ATV Grants

The Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands provides Municipal Grants to municipalities or counties to help defer the cost of the construction or maintenance of ATV trails. ATV club grants are also available to ATV clubs who are on file with the ATV Program and are to help cover the costs of trail construction and maintenance and also include a special landowner appreciation bonus. There has been a 600% increase in grant funding since 2000. Additionally, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife manages the ATV Enforcement Grant and Aid Program. Grants from this program are intended to maintain, improve, and expand ATV enforcement and training for state, county, and municipal enforcement officers. Grants are available for three different project types: General ATV Enforcement, Multi- Jurisdictional Enforcement, and Training & Equipment.

Boating Facilities Fund

The Boating Facilities Fund funds development and acquisition projects providing access to the waters of Maine for public recreational boating. The Boating Facilities Fund Grant Program, administered by the Bureau of Parks and Lands, assists towns, cities, districts and other public and private agencies in the acquisition, development, enhancement, or rehabilitation of boat launching facilities available to the general public. Sites

on both tidal and non-tidal waters are eligible. Funding is available to assist in the development of hand-carry as well as trailered boat launching facilities.

SCORP’s Relation to Recreation and Conservation Efforts involving Private Philanthropy

It is hoped that the SCORP plan may help inform the outdoor recreation planning efforts undertaken by a broad spectrum of planners, advocates, and fundraisers. One way in which a SCORP document can expand its value and impact is by serving as support for organizations seeking private funds for recreation and conservation projects. Therefore, fundraisers and grant writers are strongly encouraged to use the 2014-2019 Maine SCORP as they seek support for outdoor recreation projects.

SCORP & the Federal Energy Regulation Commission’s (FERC)

FERC licensing procedures require that recreation facilities and needs are evaluated as part of licensing process for hydroelectric facilities. Furthermore, 6 year recreation updates (Form 80) are also required. An approved SCORP is given consideration in the FERC licensing process, along with other State plans related to conservation and recreation.



Hiking at Donnell Pond Public Lands

Table 1: Select Programs/Funds Associated with Outdoor Recreation in Maine			
Program/Fund	Administered By	Types of Projects	Web URL(s)
<i>Land and Water Conservation Fund</i>	Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands	Statewide recreation planning, acquisitions with recreation values, outdoor recreation facilities	http://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/grants/land_water_conservation_fund.html
<i>Recreational Trails Program</i>	Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands	Restoration, construction, acquisition, and education associated with recreational trails	http://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/grants/recreational_trails_program.shtml
<i>Snowmobile/ATV Club and Municipal Grants</i>	Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands	Construction, maintenance, and capital expenses associated with snowmobile and ATV trails	http://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/grants/snowmobile_grants/index.html http://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/grants/atv_grants/index.html
<i>Boating Facilities Fund</i>	Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands	acquisition, development, enhancement, or rehabilitation of boat launching facilities	http://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/grants/boating_facilities_fund.html
<i>ATV Enforcement Grant and Aid Program</i>	Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife	maintain, improve, and expand ATV enforcement and training for state, county, and municipal enforcement officers	www.maine.gov/ifw/grants/atv.htm
<i>Forest Legacy Program</i>	Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands	working forests conservation for public benefits	http://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/get_involved/advisory_councils/forest_legacy_committee.shtml
<i>Land for Maine's Future Program</i>	Maine Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning	Protection (fee & easement purchase) of conservation, recreation, and farm land.	http://www.maine.gov/dacf/lmf/index.shtml
<i>Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund</i>	seven-member board	projects that promote recreation, conservation of Maine's special places, endangered species and important fish and wildlife habitat.	http://www.maine.gov/ifw/MOHF.html

Chapter 1: Overview of Major Issues and Outdoor Recreation Trends

The 2009-2014 Maine State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan emphasized and recommended strategies for connecting people to the outdoors in hopes of maintaining and enhancing health, wellness, conservation, local economies, and valuable heritage. This current Maine SCORP plan, updating and revising the prior Maine SCORP, still reflects this focus on connections – of outdoor recreation to health; and of outdoor recreation to Maine’s local, regional and statewide economy.

Though many of the issues and trends documented five years ago remain today, there are also new issues and new points of emphasis driving the direction of this 2014-2019 Maine SCORP. This chapter highlights issues of particular significance to the Implementation Strategies of this plan. Additional details on the issues described in this chapter can be found interspersed in other plan chapters and appendices.

The Nexus between Outdoor Recreation and the Larger Issues of Health and Economic Development

During the Plan development, input received from the plan steering committee, and new information received through the 2014-2015 public survey, led to an emphasis in this Plan that, simply stated, responds to the question ***“How can Maine maximize the use of outdoor recreation resources to positively affect Maine communities’ most pressing problems?”*** This question reflects insight from John L. Crompton of the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences at Texas A&M University, who suggests that public funds be repositioned: “The ‘big idea’ associated with repositioning is that funds are invested in solutions to a community’s most pressing problems.”³ The message is to identify how outdoor recreation resources can be targeted at benefiting communities, including those individuals in the community who do not directly participate in outdoor recreation.

Economic Prosperity

- **Overall economic activity:** Economic activity associated with outdoor recreation in Maine is striking. The Outdoor Industry reports that outdoor recreation in Maine generates \$5.3 billion in consumer spending, 65,000 jobs, \$1.5 billion in wages and salaries, and \$382 million in state and local tax revenue.⁴ A study commissioned by the Maine Departments of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and Office of Tourism documents that *“hunters spend \$231 million on hunting related activities. Collectively, recreational hunting supports more than 3,400 full- and part-time jobs providing more than \$115 million in income. The direct spending by sportsmen who hunt and the multiplier effects of that spending in Maine contribute \$191 million to the state’s gross state product and a total economic output of \$338.7 million.”*⁵ Economic impact studies for Maine State

³ Crompton, John L. (2008). Evolution and implications of a paradigm shift in the marketing of leisure services in the USA. *Leisure Studies Vol. 27 (No. 2)*, 181–206

⁴ Outdoor Industry Foundation, <http://outdoorindustry.org/advocacy/recreation/economy.html>, 2014.

⁵ Southwick Associates (2014). *Hunting in Maine in 2013: a Statewide and Regional Analysis of Participation and Economic Contributions*. Produced for the Maine Office of Tourism & Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Parks⁶, ATV related activities in Maine⁷, and snowmobiling⁸ in Maine demonstrate (cumulatively) over \$440 million in economic activity – and that is from studies between ten and twenty years old.

Select Examples of Maine Communities as Retirement Destinations

–“A lot of Victorian architecture and is also on the river that has fishing and boating. There’s just a lot to do.”

–“A lot of state and national parks too.”

–“Acadia National Park is about 30 miles away. So that has a lot of hiking and biking opportunities.”

Excerpted from a transcript of a Today Show interview in which AARP Magazine’s Gabrielle Redford lists Bangor, Maine as one the nation’s top five destinations for retirees.⁹

“She and her husband like that they can walk to the downtown, that performance centers and museums are nearby, and that people are active around the area — be it walking, biking, kayaking, boating, hiking, or volunteering their time for community groups.”

Reference from Associated Press article on why Camden, Maine has become a retirement destination.¹⁰

- Enhancing tourism: in 2013, tourism in Maine contributed over \$5.2 billion in direct expenditures and supported 88,585 jobs¹¹. One of the core strengths supporting Maine tourism is the state’s iconic natural attractions, parks, conservation areas, and outdoor recreation activities. The Maine Office of Tourism’s Strategic Plan lists “Continue to keep natural/outdoor assets at the core of MOT’s promotional messaging”.¹²Sustaining and enhancing outdoor recreation to serve the tourism industry is a strategy towards achieving economic prosperity.

- Attracting businesses: Leisure and recreation are key components of quality of life, which is a factor in attracting/retaining workers and therefore is a factor in where many businesses choose to locate. Outdoor recreation can influence business attraction.

- Attracting retirees: Evolving notions of where to retire make Maine’s pristine environment

and small-town character appealing to a growing number of Baby Boomer generation retirees. Outdoor recreation plays a role in making our communities attractive places to retire.

⁶ Morris, Charles E., Robert Roper, and Thomas Allen. 2006. *The Economic Contributions of Maine State Parks: A Survey of Visitor Characteristics, Perceptions and Spending*. University of Maine, Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center.

⁷ Morris, Charles E. et al. 2005. *Economic Contributions of ATV-Related Activity in Maine*. University of Maine, Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center

⁸ Reiling, Stephen, Matthew Kotchen, and Alan Kezis. 1997. *An Economic Evaluation of Snowmobiling in Maine*. University of Maine Department of Resource Economics and Policy for the Maine Snowmobile Association.

⁹ Today Show (Producer). (2013, October 8). *AARP’s 5 Best Places to Retire*. [Video Transcript]. Retrieved from: <http://www.today.com/video/today/53216904#53216904>

¹⁰ Canfield, Clarke. (2012, September 18). Some boomers looking north for retirement destination. Boston Globe. Retrieved from: <http://www.bostonglobe.com/business/markets/2012/09/17/retirees-head-unconventional-destinations/9FD51nuaviAxBsn7sDEQ5H/story.html>

¹¹ Maine Office of Tourism, *Five Year-Strategic Plan*, 2013.

¹² Ibid

Health and Wellness

- Community health and wellness is a paramount concern with significant implications for individual quality of life, public health expenditures, and a multitude of other aspects of life in Maine. Outdoor recreation plays a significant, positive role in addressing health and wellness and can do even more with focused efforts. Physical and mental health benefits found to be associated with parks and green spaces are listed in **Table 2**.

Ensuring availability of and access to outdoor recreation spaces is a health issue. As stated in the 2009 Resources for the Future discussion paper, “creating and improving recreational spaces can spark a 25 percent increase in those who exercise at least three times per week “. ¹³ Given that Maine has the highest obesity rates in New England, ensuring access to outdoor recreation is an essential public health tool. Outdoor spaces for recreation are a key social infrastructure with real community value. This concept is reinforced by research findings reported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation which state that proximity to parks is linked to increased participation and physical activity. Trails, playgrounds, and sports facilities along with supervised programs and renovations are shown to increase vigorous physical activity in youth. ¹⁴

Table 2: Physical and Mental Health Benefits Associated with Parks and Green Space (Source: <i>Park Science</i>¹⁵)	
Physical	Mental
Reductions in cardiovascular disease and diabetes	Improvements in cognitive functioning
Reduced obesity	Improved mood and self-esteem
Reduced heart rate, muscle tension, blood pressure	Reduced depression, anxiety, and stress
Positive influences on immunity and cardiovascular function	Increased attention levels

- Community pride and civic engagement are core elements of thriving communities. Outdoor recreation, conservation, and historic preservation are not only foundational aspects of parks, they are also sources of local pride and both a means and reason around which to engage in volunteerism. Parks, conserved landscapes, outdoor sporting facilities, greenways and water access, and historic sites are major threads woven into the fabric of vibrant Maine communities. These very elements are most typically at the core of community revitalization.
- Youth engagement and development is positively influenced by outdoor recreation programs, and any positive influence on youth bears beneficial fruits for communities. The National Recreation and Parks

¹³ Godfrey, Geoffrey. (2009). Outdoor Recreation, Health, and Wellness Understanding and Enhancing the Relationship. Prepared for the Outdoor Resources Review Group Resources for the Future Background Study. Washington, DC.

¹⁴ Active Living Research (2010). *Parks, Playgrounds and Active Living. Research Synthesis*. Retrieved from activelivingresearch.org.

¹⁵ Thomsen Jennifer M., Robert B. Powell, and Diana Allen (2003). Designing Parks for Human Health and Development. Park Health Resources: Benefits, Values, and Implications. *Park Science*. Volume 30 (2).

Association reports evidence for nine outcomes that are particularly important results of participation in out-of-school time (OST) programs. These outcomes occur for participants, families, and the wider community.

Out of School Time Recreation Programs are shown to

1. contribute to reducing juvenile delinquency
2. contribute to increasing positive and reducing negative behaviors
3. expose youth to less violence
4. improve children's educational performance and thus impact the quality of the future work force and the national economy
5. help decrease health care costs related to childhood obesity
6. increase the economic contributions of young people to society when they become adults
7. help youth develop self-confidence, optimism, and initiative"¹⁶

Outdoor Recreation Issues of Statewide Importance

Plan research and discussions have identified a number of **key issues** relating to outdoor recreation in Maine and its capacity to benefit communities across the state. These include:

- Maine continues have **health and wellness needs** that outdoor recreation can help address. **Obesity** and the related issue of inactivity are major, costly issues in Maine communities and the availability of diverse, available recreation opportunities directly combats these intertwined issues.
- As evidenced by robust survey work in this SCORP planning process, **"close to home" outdoor recreation** opportunities are highly sought and valued. Proximity to outdoor recreation is a huge factor in the level of activity of our residents as well as health and community desirability measures.
- Maine's has the **oldest population in the nation**, based on median age. This characteristic needs to be considered as specific types of recreation projects are planned and developed.
- Maine is also the state with the **highest percentage of people living in rural areas**. On the one hand this small-town characteristic is to be celebrated, while on the other, it brings with it challenges in resource maintenance and efficient recreation program delivery. Furthermore, Maine's rural communities are losing population, while relatively more urban southern Maine communities are seeing at least modest growth. Small, rural Maine communities are looking to outdoor recreation as one tool to stem population loss and lure in-migration of business and residential interests.
- There is continued to concern over **declining participation of youth** in outdoor recreation. Being active outdoors has traditionally been part of life in Maine. Efforts to engage youth and families in the outdoors are seen as having numerous health, social, and conservation benefits.
- **Maintenance, sustainability, and adaptability to change** over time are all recognized as issues for current as well as potential outdoor recreation facilities.
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¹⁶ Witt, Peter A. and Linda L. Caldwell. (2010). The Rationale for Recreation Services for Youth: An Evidenced Based Approach. Prepared for the National Recreation and Parks Association. Retrieved from <http://www.nrpa.org/Publications-and-Research/Research/Industry-Monographs/>

- **Effective public communication** continues to be a major issue for outdoor recreation. This includes the need to provide better information about available recreation opportunities, better marketing and messaging to assuage anxiety and inspire activity, and the need to adapt to modern communication technology and trends.
- **Private lands being open to public** recreational use also continues to be a vital issue. Mainers and tourists alike still rely heavily on private lands for recreation. Posting of land and its associated loss of recreation opportunity is a continued threat. Landowner relations and improved user behaviors on private lands are integral components of this issue.
- **Collaboration and coordination** between various interests are seen as essential to successful projects and resource management. Interestingly, this view is reflected in the SCORP plans of other rural states; analysis of other rural states' SCORP priorities and issues shows collaboration as a leading strategy.

Major outdoor recreation trends guiding the Implementation Strategies of this Plan:

- There is evidence of a growing trend in which people are seeking out more **events** at public recreation areas. Examples of growing demand include adventure races, 5k & 10k trail races, mountain biking events, birding festivals and other thematic special events, etc.
- **Trails** continue to be very popular recreation amenities, both motorized and non-motorized. In particular, non-motorized trails are used very frequently by Maine residents.
- **ATV** trail development has seen notable expansion within the last 5-10 years and the number of non-resident ATV registrations has climbed significantly.
- **Mountain biking** in particular has seen an increase in demand, as evidenced by the strong growth in Maine chapters of the New England Mountain Bike Association and the associated trail development these groups have spearheaded.
- Survey work shows highest interest in **motorized trail projects linking/serving communities** as well as **easy non-motorized trails in natural settings**.
- **Viewing and learning opportunities** including but not limited to self-guided interpretive trails, hands-on programs, visiting nature and historic centers, and other such informal learning opportunities are growing in demand nationally and are in demand here in Maine.
- **Time** and to a somewhat lesser degree **cost** are shown as the most significant barriers to outdoor recreation in Maine. It is fair to postulate that the time crunch of modern life, including the reduction in the traditional vacation, is one of the factors making close to home outdoor recreation in high demand.
- **Water-based recreation** continues to be a strong growth area of outdoor recreation demand. This is particularly true of kayaking and stand up paddle board use.
- **Amenities** such as showers, flush toilets, RV sites with water and electric, and an expanded range of camping opportunities (e.g., yurts and cabins) were identified as desirable Maine State Park features and/or additions and are presumably similarly appreciated/ desired at other non-state facilities.
- **Attendance** figures across various Maine outdoor recreation destinations shows that attendance is not in lock-step across the state. Most generally, more distant "north woods" destinations that tend to be more remote and primitive have not seen as solid attendance figures as other sites such as Maine

State Parks and Acadia National Park. Baxter State Park is a primitive outdoor recreation destination in the northern forest that has held its own much better, however.

- Maine residents and visitors alike use a variety of **public and private lands** to meet their recreation needs. Land trusts, state parks and public reserved lands, municipal lands, federal lands, and private lands with public recreational access all serve substantial percentages of the public based on reported visitation. Outdoor recreation in Maine continues to rely on a mosaic of landowner types.



Camden Hills State Park

Chapter 2. Demand for Outdoor Recreation Activities in Maine

The public's demand for specific outdoor recreation activities evolves over time. Primary finding #1 of the US Forest Service's 2010 Resource Planning Act Outdoor Recreation Demand Assessment¹⁷ states, "Outdoor recreation choices by people today are noticeably different from those made by and available to previous generations of Americans." This broad statement holds true in Maine and is valuable to keep in mind when considering the demand for outdoor recreation facilities and experiences in the Pine Tree State.

This section of the 2014-2019 Maine State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan strives to not only discuss static demand but to also consider trends in the demand for specific types of outdoor recreation in Maine.

Tools used to evaluate outdoor recreation demand include:

- Demographic data and insights primarily obtained through the US Census
- Trends in the purchase of various outdoor activity related licenses and registrations over time
- National visitor-use data trends (National Park Service, America's State Parks)
- Visitor-use data from Maine recreation providers such as Maine State Parks, North Maine Woods, Acadia National Park, and the Maine Island Trail
- Quantitative and qualitative data obtained through an outdoor recreation survey conducted specifically for the 2014-2019 ME SCORP
- National reports on outdoor recreation participation
- National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE) data

In addition to serving the recreation needs of its residents, Maine is an outdoor recreation destination for the greater New England/Northeast region. Therefore, understanding recreation trends across the northeast informs our understanding of outdoor recreation demand in Maine. Given that campground reservations in Maine State Parks average nearly 40% non-resident campers and that other entities such as Baxter State Park (46% non-resident visitation in 2013) experience high levels of nonresident visitation, it is important that recreation planning reflect the full range of visitors, both resident and non-resident.



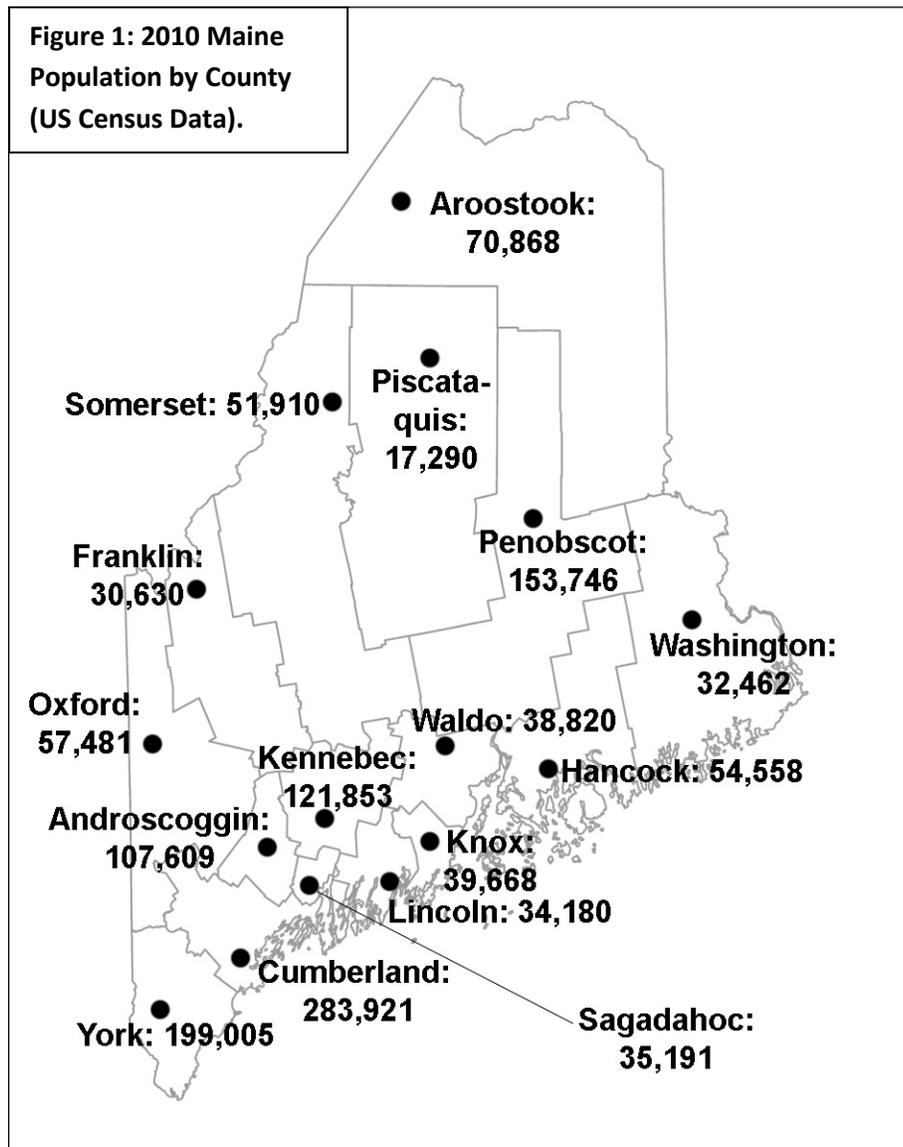
Moose River

¹⁷ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2012. Future of America's Forest and Rangelands: Forest Service 2010 Resources Planning Act Assessment. Gen. Tech. Rep. WO-87. Washington, DC. 198 p.

Maine: Its People and Visitors

Just as the character of Maine’s landscapes varies from region to region, measures such as population and other demographics vary greatly between regions. Maine’s population can be parsed many ways, but most simply it can be said that Maine’s population patterns place the majority of residents in the southern/coastal portion of the state. While Maine does have several population centers defined as “urban areas”, it is distinctively a state of small, rural towns. This and other aspects of demographics are shared here ahead of discussions on outdoor recreation supply to acknowledge that the distribution of people and recreation

resources have important bearings on one another.



In regard to total **population**, southern Maine holds the majority of Maine’s estimated 2010 population of 1,328,361. The two southernmost counties, York and Cumberland, cumulatively comprise only 7% of Maine’s geographic area but retain roughly 36% of the population. In contrast, the state’s northernmost county, Aroostook County, is approximately 1,000 square miles larger in size than the state of Connecticut and has a population of just over 70,000. As such, it has roughly 19% of Maine’s land area and only 5.3% of the population.

While the majority of Maine residents live in the southern portion of the state, that does not equate to the majority of Maine residents living in urban areas. In fact, **Maine has the nation’s highest percentage of residents living in rural areas.**

The 2010 US census data lists 61.3% of Maine residents living in rural areas. Maine’s communities are predominantly small towns with only 11 municipalities in excess of 10,000 residents and only one, Portland, in excess of 50,000.

Population trends for Maine point to a decline in the majority of counties. Only Androscoggin, Cumberland, Knox, and York are expected to show immediate growth (with Penobscot expected to show eventual growth).¹⁸ Overall, Maine’s population is expected to decline beginning in 2020. **Table 3** shows past population change by county.

2010 Decennial Census	Count 2010	Δ from 2000	% Δ 2000	% Δ 1990
Cumberland	281,674	16,062	6.0%	15.9%
York	197,131	10,389	5.6%	19.8%
Penobscot	153,923	9,004	6.2%	5.0%
Kennebec	122,151	5,037	4.3%	5.4%
Androscoggin	107,702	3,909	3.8%	2.3%
Aroostook	71,870	-2,068	-2.8%	-17.3%
Oxford	57,833	3,078	5.6%	9.9%
Hancock	54,418	2,627	5.1%	15.9%
Somerset	52,228	1,340	2.6%	4.9%
Knox	39,736	118	0.3%	9.4%
Waldo	38,786	2,506	6.9%	17.5%
Sagadahoc	35,293	79	0.2%	5.2%
Lincoln	34,457	841	2.5%	13.5%
Washington	32,856	-1,085	-3.2%	-6.9%
Franklin	30,768	1,301	4.4%	6.1%
Piscataquis	17,535	300	1.7%	-6.0%

Demographic Characteristics: Maine’s current and projected population trends are only one part of the story of those who call Maine home. The *population composition and characteristics, or demographics*, provide important details relevant to outdoor recreation planning (**Table 4**). The table reveals some important population characteristics that have a direct bearing on recreation issues:

- *Maine’s population is the **oldest in the nation** measured in terms of median age (42.7).* The state’s population of young people is at or near the bottom of the country, depending on the specific age bracket. Maine is tied with Vermont for smallest percentage of its population coming from those aged 0-18. As mentioned above, it is a very rural place, with overall low population density.
- Proportionally, Maine has a high rate of **veterans**.
- Maine is slightly below average regarding the percentage of people living below the **poverty level**.
- Maine is also a state with **limited diversity**, having the nation’s highest rate of “white alone” ethnicity (94.4%).

¹⁸ Governor’s Office of Policy and Management. (2013). *Maine Population Outlook to 2030*. Augusta, ME. Retrieved from: <http://www.maine.gov/economist/projections/pub/Population%20Outlook%20to%202030.pdf>

- In **education** attainment, the State is among the national leaders in high school diploma attainment but slightly below average in percentage of people attaining a bachelor’s degree or higher.
- Maine’s percentage of residents with a **disability** is higher than the national average. According to US Census figures (American Community Survey), 7.8% of Maine’s 2013 population over the age of 5 has an ambulatory disability. The proportion of people 65 and older with disabilities is significantly higher than other age groups. Approximately 20% of Maine residents 65 years and over have an ambulatory disability. This higher proportion of people with disabilities among the older population will become increasingly important as the number and relative proportion of older people in Maine continues to increase.

Table 4: Maine – Its People Compared to National Figures		
	Maine	United States
Population, 2013 estimate	1,328,302	316,128,839
Persons under 18 years, percent, 2010	20.7%*	24%
Persons 18-44 years, percent, 2010	32.5%**	36.5%
Persons 65 years and over, percent, 2010	17.3%†	13%
Median age	42.7††	37.2
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent, 2010	94.3%††	62.6%
Foreign born persons, percent, 2008-2012	3.3%	12.9%
Language other than English spoken at home, percentage age 5+, 2008-2012	7.0%	20.5%
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25+, 2008-2012	90.6%	85.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25+, 2008-2012	27.3%	28.5%
Veterans as a percentage of the population, 2008-2012	9.84%	6.91%
Persons below poverty level, percent, 2008-2012	13.3%	14.9%
Percent of population with a disability, 2008-2012 American Community Survey	15.6%	12
Persons per square mile, 2010	43.1	87.4
Percent of population living in rural areas	61.3%††	19.7%
*Only the District of Columbia had a lower percentage.		
**Lowest or tied for lowest percentage or number in the nation		
† Only Florida had a higher percentage.		
†† Highest in the nation		

Why Do Demographics Matter?

More and more, people are looking for close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities. Therefore, where people live and what population trends are occurring in specific places has direct bearing on the demand for outdoor recreation infrastructure and support. However, there is more to the story. As shown by the 2014-2019 ME SCORP survey, characteristics such as age, education, and income are correlated with relative likelihood to participate in specific types outdoor recreation activities. Examples from the survey (**Appendix B**) are excerpted below:

- “**Age** was found to have a significant influence on participants’ responses in a number of significant ways. Younger respondents (18-34 years old) were more likely to favor and visit a wider variety of settings and recreation sites, prefer more primitive settings, participate in a wider array of outdoor activities, and participate more frequently than older participants (69-102).”
- “Lower **income** respondents were more likely to report that they were constrained from participating in activities due to financial cost and were most likely to believe that the entrance fees to Maine State Parks were too expensive. The low income group expressed higher levels of interest in instructional programs and night sky events being offered or potentially offered at Maine State Parks.”
- “Participants with relatively low levels of **education** (less than high school or high school diploma/GED) were more likely to participate in driving for pleasure, fishing, hunting, motor boating, riding an ATV and snowmobiling. The low education group was overall highly interested in trail activities but were least interested in non-motorized trails.”
- “Highly educated respondents (master’s degree, doctoral degree, or professional degree) were . . . more likely to find a wider variety of outdoor settings very desirable than the other groups including backcountry trails, beaches, coastal trails, and community trails. The highly educated group was also most likely to participate in a wider variety of outdoor activities than other groups. They also were the most likely group to use the widest assortment of travel resources including the internet, magazine articles, the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands website, Maine guidebooks, newspaper articles, and talking with staff who work at public recreation areas.”

As organizations and communities think about the characteristics of their communities and visitors (including marketing and communication with target visitors), they can take advantage of easily obtained demographic data available through outlets such as the US Census to better tailor projects to the audience. Demographics can help planners better understand the culture and characteristics of various regions and better tailor projects that will meet the needs and desires of Maine residents and guests. Data should not take the place of communication and listening during planning, but there are readily accessible tools to incorporate more data and research into recreation planning.

Demand for Outdoor Recreation Activities – National Overview

Before focusing on Maine, let’s look at the *national* picture. Between 2000 and 2009, the number of people who participated in nature-based outdoor recreation grew by 7.1 percent and the number of activity days grew about 40 percent.¹⁹ The Outdoor Foundation reported that “in 2013, a record number of Americans — 142.6 million — participated in at least one outdoor activity” and collectively, went on 12.1 billion outdoor outings²⁰. While there are specific activities in which participation is losing ground, overall outdoor recreation demand as measured by participation is growing. In large part, this is due to population growth.

The most popular and most frequent activities (national) from the Outdoor Foundation are listed in **Table 5**. The Outdoor Foundation also reports on specific activities with the notable growth or decline. **Table 6** displays activities exhibiting the most growth in the past 3 years.

Table 5: Most Popular and Most Frequent Outdoor Recreation Activities in the US (2013) as Reported by the Outdoor Foundation.			
Top 5 Most Popular Activities	US Participants	Top 5 Most Frequently Participated in Activities	Total Outings
Running/Jogging	33.8 Million	Running/Jogging	2.8 Billion
Fishing	31.0 Million	Bicycling	1.4 Billion
Bicycling	27.4 Million	Birdwatching	422.3 Million
Hiking	23.8 Million	Wildlife Viewing	413.4 Million
Camping	22.1 Million	Hunting	230.3 Million
Note: Most popular activities as reported by the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment ²¹ using data from 1999-2008 list the top 5 activities in order as: 1) walking for pleasure, 2) family gatherings, 3) gardening or landscaping for pleasure, 4) viewing or photographing natural scenery, 5) visiting nature centers. It should be noted that NSRE and Outdoor Foundation surveys track similar but not identical activities. The Outdoor Foundation has a more pronounced focus on human powered activities.			

America’s state parks saw a total of 727 million in attendance in 2013 – down 1.89% from 2012 but up nearly 10% from 1984. Attendance is forecast to rise to 759 million in 2016.²² **National Park** recreation visits in 2014 totaled 292.8 million. This represents a 4.4% increase from the 2009-2013 five-year average.

¹⁹ Cordell, H. Ken. (2012)USDA Forest Service: Southern Research Station. *Outdoor Recreation Trends and Futures: A Technical Document Supporting the Forest Service 2010 RPA Assessment*. Asheville, NC.

²⁰ Outdoor Foundation (2014). *Outdoor Recreation Topline Report 2014*. Retrieved from: <http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/research.participation.html>

²¹ Maine and the Maine Market Region Report. (2009). Produced by the US Forest Service for the 2009-2014 Maine State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. Maine Department of Conservation. Augusta, ME.

²² Smith, Jordan W. and Yu-Fai Leung (2014). 2014 Outlook and Analysis Letter: a Report Prepared for the National Association of State Park Directors. NC State University.

The 2011 National Survey of **Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation** reports the following regarding wildlife-related recreational activity:

“The 2011 Survey revealed that over 90 million U.S. residents 16 years old and older participated in wildlife related recreation. During that year, 33.1 million people fished, 13.7 million hunted, and 71.8 million participated in at least one type of wildlife-watching activity including observing, feeding, or photographing fish and other wildlife in the United States.”²³

The survey also reports that from 2006 to 2011, wildlife recreation activities in the United States rose 3 percent. The increase was attributed primarily to those who fished and hunted²⁴.

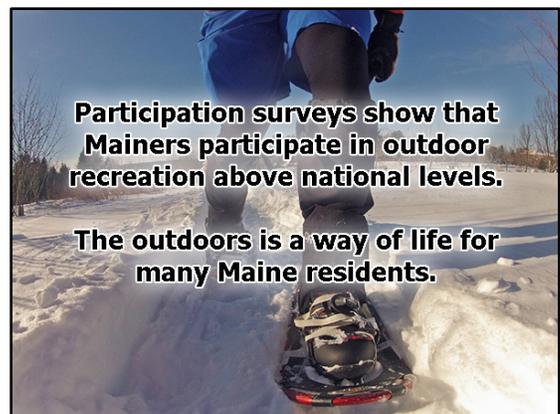
Table 6: Fastest Growing Outdoor Recreation Activities in the US (2013) – as Reported by the Outdoor Foundation.*

Top 5 Fastest Growing Activities	Percent Change (Participation)
Adventure Racing	+28%
Off-Road Triathlon	+25%
Stand Up Paddling	+24%
Kayak Fishing	+20
Kayaking	+11

*The Outdoor Foundation has a more pronounced focus on human powered activities.

Outdoor recreation participation in Maine may follow some of the general trends and patterns seen in the wider United States, but it is unique in many ways. In addition to showing that Maine residents participated in outdoor recreation activities at higher rates than both national and regional averages, the 2009-2014 Maine SCORP report listed a number of National Survey on Recreation and the Environment activities in which Maine residents participated a minimum of 10 percentage points higher than both regional and national levels. These included:

- Primitive camping
- Big-game hunting
- Snow/ice activities (any type)
- Snowmobiling
- Boating and canoeing
- Coldwater fishing
- Viewing/photographing other wildlife besides birds
- Gathering mushrooms, berries, etc.



²³ U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau. 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.

²⁴ Ibid

Maine Resident Outdoor Recreation Patterns: License Sales, Registrations, and Attendance Figures

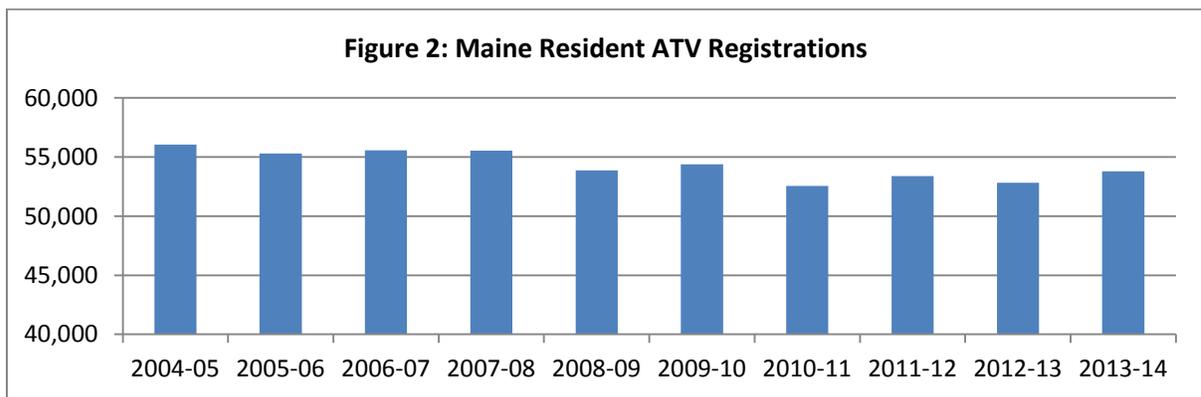
Data provided by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shows 178,735 **resident fishing** licenses sold and another 145,562 **resident hunting** licenses sold in 2013. When the 2009-2013 period is compared to the 2004-2008 period, annual fishing licenses sold decreased 1.1% and annual hunting licenses decreased 7.9%.



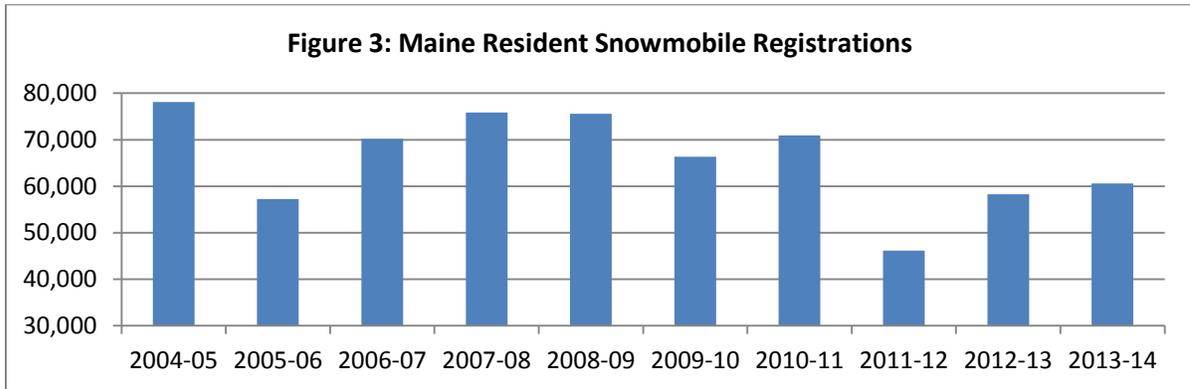
It is noteworthy that license sales growth for lifetime licenses first instituted in 2000 has steadily grown. Lifetime hunting, fishing, or combination lifetime licenses are available for purchase for citizens under 16 and over 64.

It bears mentioning that in the survey work conducted by the University of Maine for this SCORP report, 40.7% of the general population sample reported fishing within the last two years (n=204) and 25.4% reported hunting activity (N=204). A larger sample group of recreationists (made up of combined ME IFW and Bureau of Parks and Lands email addresses) showed limited county variation for reported fishing participation but notable regional variation for hunting activity. Residents of the southern coastal counties were less likely to have hunted within the last two years than residents of the other counties. Additionally, there was evidence of higher levels of hunting participation among the 69 years old and above age class. More information on the survey can be found in **Appendix B**.

As shown in **Figure 2, All-Terrain-Vehicle (ATV)** resident registrations over the past ten years have hovered between 52,000 and 56,000. However, it should be noted that there has been strong and steady growth in the number of non-resident seasonal ATV registrations, which totaled nearly 9,000 in 2013-14. It is also worth noting that ATV riders shifting from smaller one up machines to larger side by sides machines may be cutting the number of ATVs being registered in that couples, families, etc. are more likely to now be sharing an ATV that seats multiple riders.

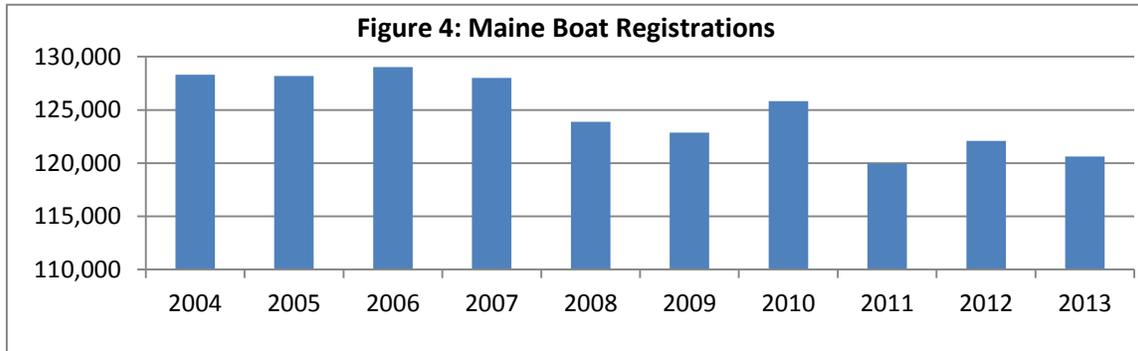


Snowmobile registrations during the past ten years have shown notable fluctuation, with dramatic reductions in registrations during low snow years and challenging economy of 2011/2012. The 2014-2019 ME SCORP survey data shows that snowmobile use is greater by residents in the typically high snow areas of the mountain/northern/eastern counties as compared with residents in the typically low snow areas of the southern coastal and mid-coast regions.



Snowmobiling on the Downeast Sunrise Trail

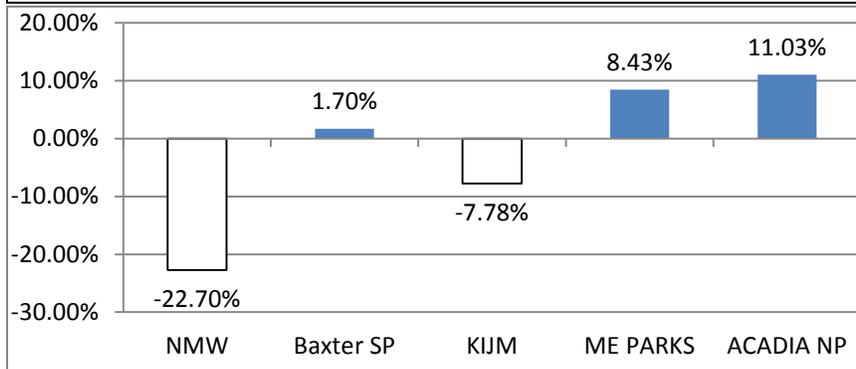
Maine **boat registrations**, reported in **Figure 4** do not have a non-resident component and are not required unless a motor is attached (e.g., motor-less canoes, kayaks). As with ATVs and (not as dramatic as) snowmobile registrations, there is a modest dip in registrations within the last several years



Park and conservation areas attendance data in Maine is available from a variety of sources (**Figure 5**). While these figures are useful in generally showing trends in overall recreational use of outdoor resources, it is noted that they do not reflect use of state Public Reserved Lands, municipal parks and conserved lands, land trust properties, and the majority of private landowners who allow public recreation.

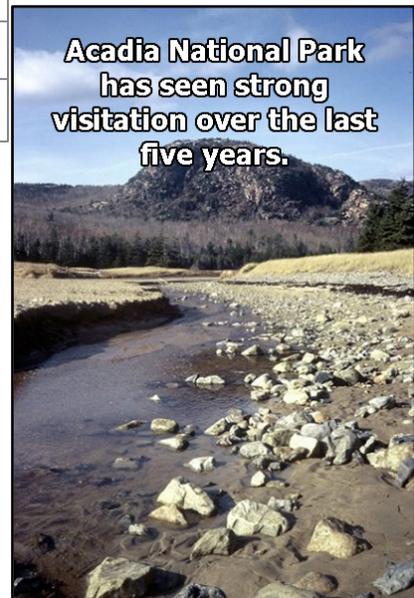
Maine State Parks also show total attendance growth over the last five years. State Parks have increased

Figure 5: Percent Change in Visitation between the 2004-2008 Average and 2009-2013 Average. NMW = North Maine Woods, KIJM = KI Jo Mary Forest, ME Parks = Maine State Parks.



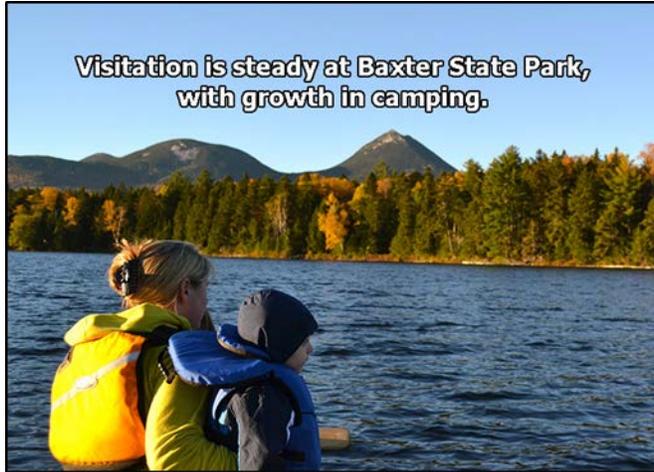
average attendance 8.4% when 2009-2013 is compared to 2004-2008. While the five-year camping average fell 8.3%, day use has been strong in recent years.

Acadia National Park, located in



eastern coastal Maine, shows growth in its visitation and in camping. Its average number of visitors for the period of 2009- 2013 (2,358,505) is up 11% from the previous five-year period. Camping comparisons for the same periods show a 21% increase in camping visits at Acadia.

Baxter State Park, an independently (from Maine State Parks) operated wilderness park of over 200,000 acres maintains detailed public use figures. Using the same five-year analysis mentioned above, Baxter State Park shows an increase of 1.7% for total visitor days with 117,481 visits in 2013. Camping activity at Baxter SP is up 10.2%.



Not all outdoor recreation destinations in Maine have seen increases in visitation. **North Maine Woods** (3.5 million acres) and the **KI-Jo Mary Multiple Use Forest** (175,000 acres) display the most dramatic losses in visitation. These gated areas of (predominantly) private timberland are open to many types of public, forest-based recreation (fees apply). Using the aforementioned five-year analysis, North Maine Woods has seen a 22.7% drop in visitation. The KI-Jo Mary property has seen a 7.7% drop. In 2013, the North Maine Woods saw 176,867 visitor days while the KI-Jo Mary Forest saw 19,423

visitor days.

Camping data for the **Allagash Wilderness Waterway**, a state-administered scenic river in the Federal Wild & Scenic River System, shows a five-year average drop of 10.5% from the 2004-2008 average.

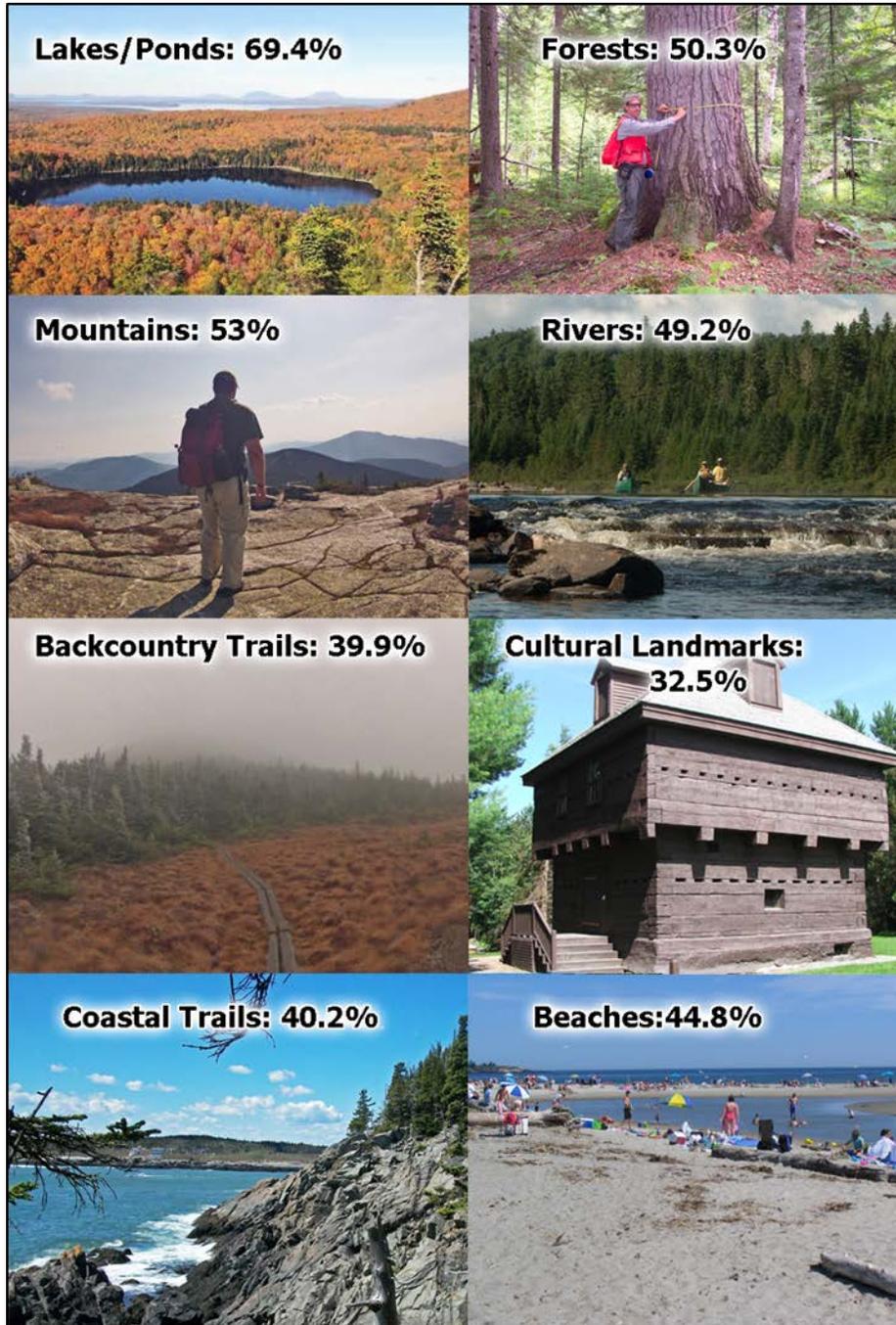
Location, Location, Location: Indications of where people recreate in Maine are not limited to attendance figures. The survey effort undertaken for this report produced data related to where respondents reported having visited for recreation within the last two years. The data for Maine residents are presented below (**Table 7**). While public outdoor recreation destinations such as Acadia National Park and Maine State Parks are notable in this reporting, both **land trust properties** and access to **private land** were important destinations. Additionally, non-resident recreationists present some interesting data in that over half of them report having visited a Maine State Park and over half report having used private land for recreation (see **Figure 7**, pg. 26).

LOCATION	Maine General Pop. (%)	Maine Resident/ Recreationists
Local Municipal Parks	78.9	75.0
Acadia National Park	61.7	58.8
Baxter State Park	29.9	38.9
Farms/Agricultural Sites	48.5	49.6
Maine Public Res. Lands	29.4	46.5
Maine State Parks	77.0	78.8
Priv. Land with Rec. Access	53.4	69.8
Land Trust Properties	52.0	50.7
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Ref.	33.8	42.1
White Mt. National Forest	41.7	39.5

In addition to providing insight into the “designated” types of outdoor recreation destinations chosen by the resident and visiting public, the 2014 ME SCORP survey gives a glimpse into the settings preferred by respondents. **Figure 6** on page 25 shows eight of the top scored settings, with percentages listed reflecting the averaged percentage of respondents across the three samples who rated the given setting as “very desirable” on a five-part scale ranging downward to “very undesirable”. One take-away from

responses is that not only are Maine’s storied coastal settings very desirable to the public, so too are more inland resources. In fact, “rivers”, “lakes/ponds”, “mountains”, and “forests” all were rated higher than “coastal trails” and “beaches”.

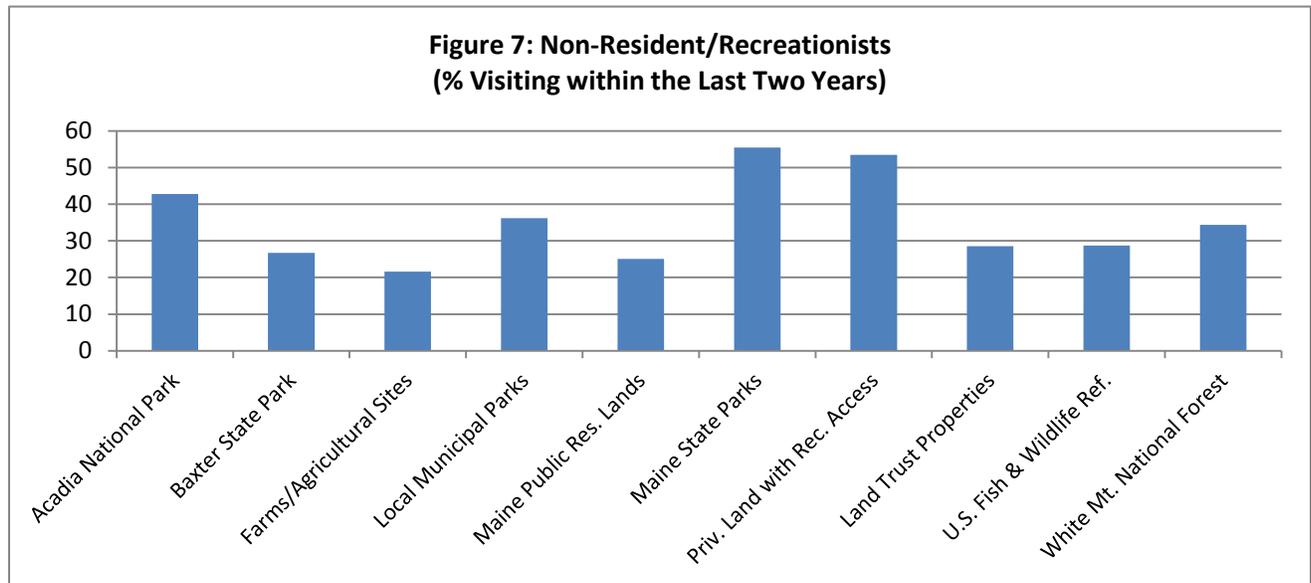
Figure 6: Percentage of 2014 ME SCORP Survey Respondents Who Rated the Given Setting as “Very Desirable” on a Five-Part Scale Ranging from “Very Desirable” to “Very Undesirable.” Top Eight Settings:



Maine’s Non-Resident Recreating Public

In 2013, tourism in Maine contributed over \$5.2 billion in direct **expenditures**. This activity supported 88,585 **jobs**²⁵. Maine’s natural resources and recreation opportunities are central to Maine’s tourism industry.

When asked in the 2014 ME SCORP survey **where in Maine they recreated** in the past two years, non-residents indicated that they visited a diversity of site types. **Figure 7** shows the results. Of particular note is that over 50% visited a Maine State Park, over 50% reported having visited private land for recreation purposes, and even municipal parks were visited by over 30% of respondents. So, while there is a popular image of tourists following US Rt. 1 along the coast to Acadia National Park, the more truthful picture is that tourists are coming to enjoy Maine’s outdoor recreation opportunities alongside Mainers in all corners of the state. Everything from town square pocket parks to vast backcountry areas serve as a foundation for the tourism industry. That being said, it is important to note that the 2014 ME SCORP survey non-resident data is from a pool that obtained a hunting or fishing license, reserved a Maine State Park campsite, registered a snowmobile or ATV, or registered a boat in Maine.



Tourism/Recreation Findings: The Maine Office of Tourism contracts for **visitor research**. In addition to supporting the tourism industry, aspects of this information is useful for understanding tourist-related demand for outdoor recreation in Maine. This research, conducted by Digital Research Inc., reinforces that outdoor recreation is a key tourism driver in Maine. When asked why they chose to visit Maine, tourists rated “beautiful scenery” as the top reason. Other outdoor recreation related responses in the top ten responses include “enjoy the coastline” (2nd) and “outdoor recreation options” (8th)²⁶. The same report identifies “to

²⁵ Maine Office of Tourism (2014). *Five-Year Strategic Plan*. Augusta, ME.

²⁶ Maine Office of Tourism (2014). *Maine Office of Tourism Visitor Tracking Research 2013 Calendar Year Annual Report*. Prepared by Digital Research Inc. Retrieved from: <http://www.visitmaine.com/research>

enjoy nature” (36%) and “outdoor recreation/adventure” (33%) as *the primary purpose* for overnight leisure trips²⁷. Water related activities such as kayaking and outdoor swimming were rated very highly by visitors. Data sources for the Maine Office of Tourism –commissioned research were not limited to non-residents who obtained a fishing license etc.

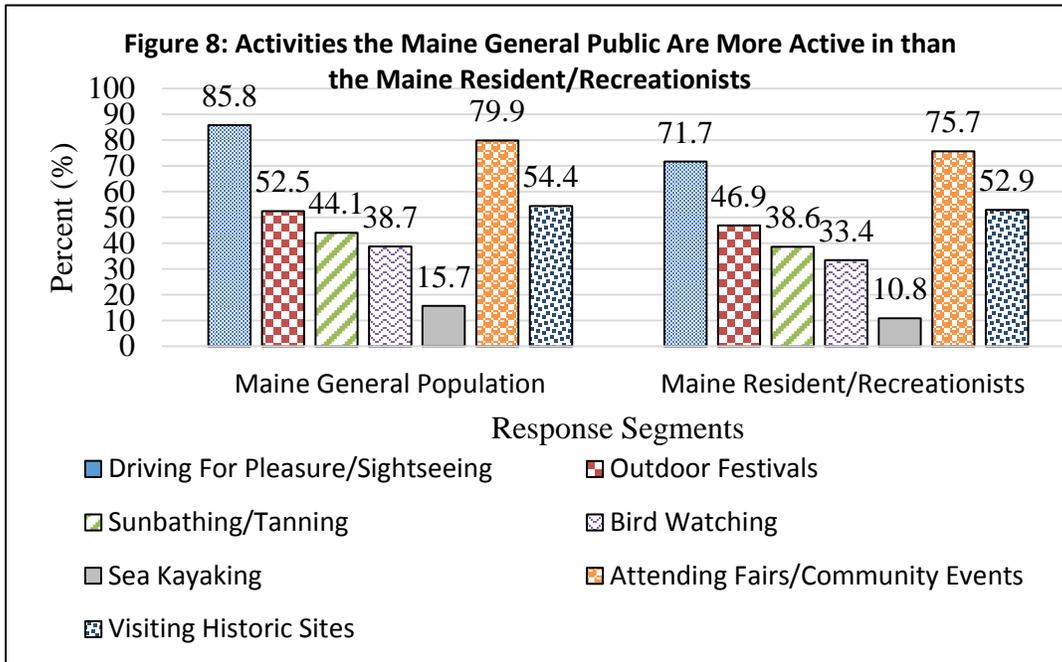
Hunting and fishing continue to be a draw for non-residents visiting Maine, though overall licenses sold to non-resident hunters indicate a roughly 30% drop in licenses sold to non-residents. This reduction is particularly acute for big game licenses, which have dropped roughly 50% from 2004-2013 (28,861 in 2004 to 16,434 in 2013). The number of fishing licenses sold to non-residents have remained fairly steady, hovering in the mid to high 70,000s range of individual licenses sold.

ATV use in Maine by non-residents has been an area of strong recreational growth. The 2004/2005 season saw 5,942 non-resident ATV seasonal registrations. The 2013/2014 figure of 8,997 registrations represents a 50% increase. Approximately 25% (20,902 registrations) of the **snowmobile** registrations in Maine, in 2013/2014, belonged to non-residents.

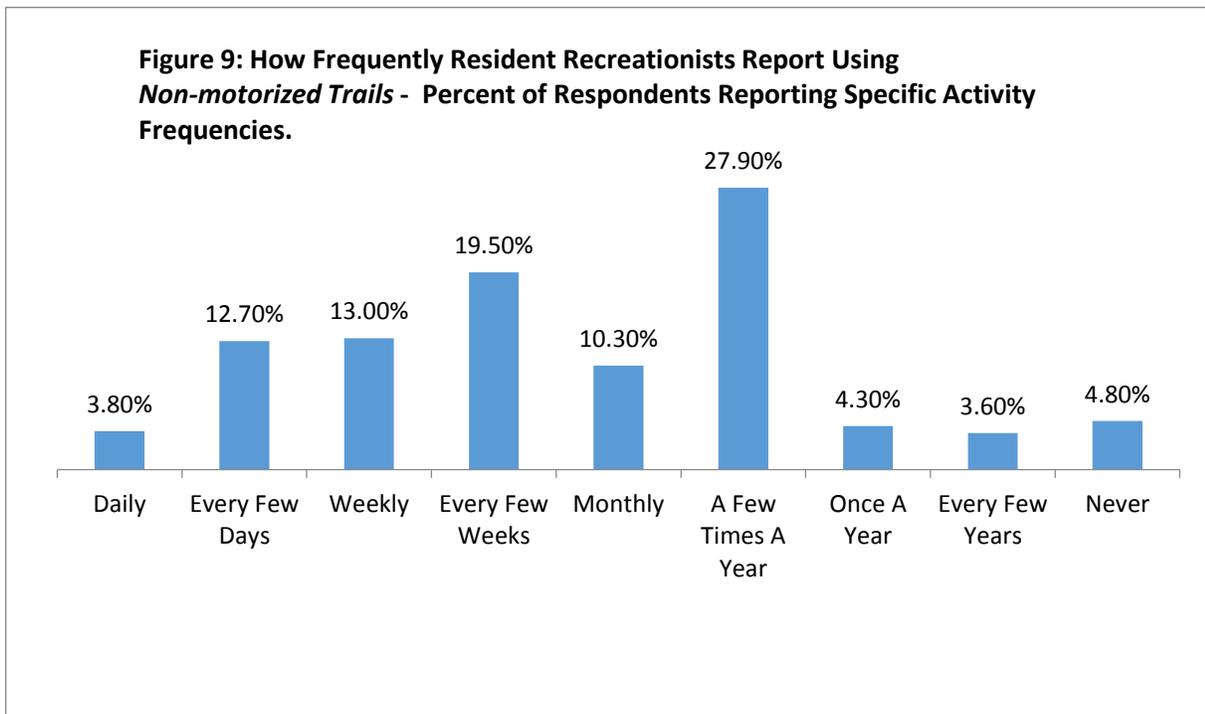
What Outdoor Recreation Activities Engage the Public and How Frequently?

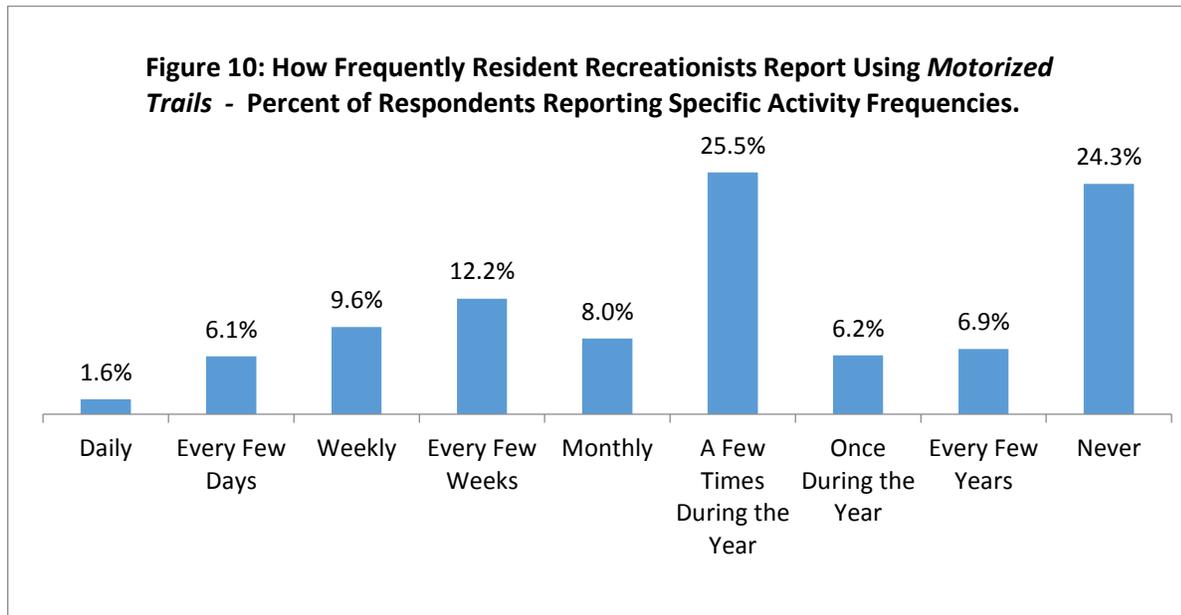
Appendix D lists participation rates for outdoor recreation activities as documented by the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment. This data is a carryover from the previous SCORP, but still serves well as a baseline for outdoor recreation participation. The more recent 2014-2019 ME SCORP Survey (**Appendix B**) also provides insight into activities Maine residents and visitors engage in. The survey structure in which individuals were in one of three groups (purchased email list representing the general population and resident and non-resident “recreationists” groups compiled from ME BPL and ME IFW emails) provides the ability to tease out interesting observations about noteworthy patterns. For example, **Figure 8** shows seven activities where the Maine resident general public is more active than the resident recreationists sample group. The value here is to recognize that while those residents who register ATVs, make an online campsite reservation, buy a fishing license, etc. are on average participating in more outdoor activities than the general Maine population sample, there are activities that are important to the general population and that could get ignored if not properly considered during planning. These activities may also serve well as gateways into other activities. Furthermore, the fact that consumptive and motorized activities have disproportional participation rates in the ME IFW/ME BPL sample indicates that perhaps those agencies should strive to capture more contacts within those segments of the population who do not hunt, fish, register recreational vehicles or register to camp.

²⁷ Ibid.



Though numbers fluctuate with the seasons, the 2014 SCORP survey reports that **almost 50% of residents participate in outdoor recreation at a weekly rate or more**— and that is in the winter. Over 20% of residents participate in outdoor recreation on a daily basis in the summer. More specifically, a look at the frequencies of non-motorized and motorized **trail activity** is provided in the following two figures.





Constraints/Barriers to Outdoor Recreation

The 2014-2019 ME SCORP survey work specifically inquired about barriers to outdoor recreation. While barriers such as lack of skills, lack of knowledge, lack of interest, and physical difficulty all scored low, over 25% of respondents stated that “**too busy**” or “**not time off from work/school**” were, to a large or very large extent, constraints to their recreating outdoors. **Financial costs** are another significant constraint, particularly with the Maine General Population sample. **Table 8** lists reported levels of constraints.

Table 8: Reported Levels for Factors Limiting Participants' Pursuit of Outdoor Recreation Activities over the past Two Years to a 'Large' or 'Very Large' Extent

RECREATIONAL BARRIERS	Maine General Population (%)	Maine Resident/ Recreationists (%)	Non-Resident/ Recreationists (%)
Difficulty of Access	7.7	7.0	8.0
Family Status	12.4	13.3	13.2
Financial Cost	27	17.4	14.4
Lack of Interest	4.1	2.0	1.9
Lack of Knowledge	4.7	2.7	2.1
Lack of Skills	4.7	2.1	1.2
Lack of Transportation	1.5	1.3	1.5
Not Having Companions	10.3	6.2	4.5
Perceived Danger/Risk	4.7	1.8	1.1
Physical Difficulty	11.7	4.7	3.1
Too Busy	30.8	28	32.6
No Time Off From Work/School	24.1	25	32.9
The Weather	12.3	11.8	5.5

As is shown in the table, there is a lot of commonality between the degree of constraints reported by the three groups. However, it is noteworthy that the Maine General Population sample – a sample shown to be active outdoors but not quite as active as the recreationist resident group - shows higher constraints on several barriers. **“Financial cost”, “not having companions”, and “physical difficulty”** all were **larger barriers to the general population** sample versus the recreationists sample. This suggests that it may be wise to consider programs and projects that address these barriers in order to increase outdoor recreation participation.

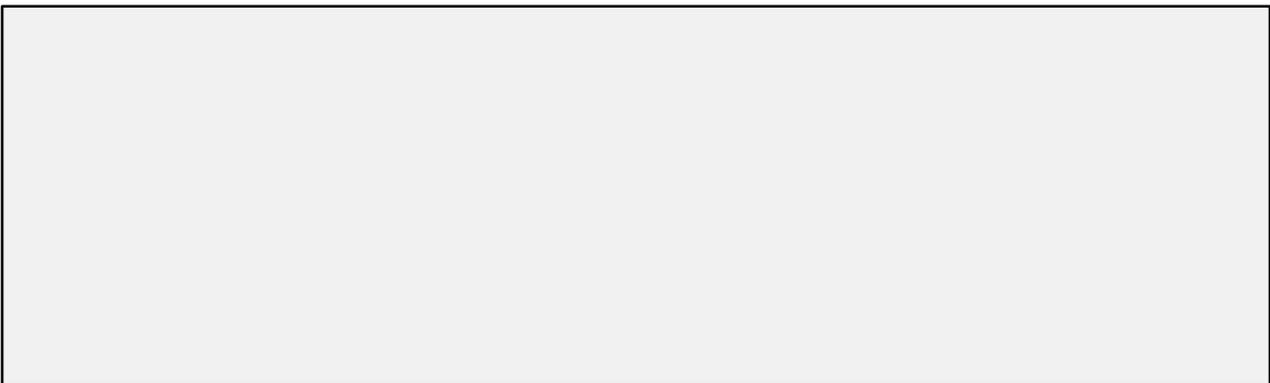
Survey respondents aged 69 and older showed modestly higher rates of reporting “physical difficulty/strain” as a barrier to outdoor recreation. However, they exhibited modestly lower rates of reporting family status or financial constraints. Thus, given Maine’s very relatively aged population dynamics, it may be wise to ensure that there are appropriate resources for older recreationists who may have physical limitations but who have interest in and relatively limited other constraints relative to outdoor recreation.

Though not asked about specifically, **ticks**, notable the Lyme Disease -carrying deer tick (*Ixodes scapularis*), was mentioned by a number of survey respondents as a worrisome and growing barrier to outdoor recreation. This concern was also expressed early in the planning process by members of the SCORP steering committee.



Engorged Deer Tick- Photo by Griffin Dill (ME Cooperative Extension image)

Part of the 2014-2019 ME SCORP survey inquired about visits to and impressions of Maine State Parks. While very valuable to park management, the data also provides intriguing clues of interest to other land managers and providers of outdoor recreation. For instance, while “lack of knowledge” was only cited by 4.7% of the Maine resident recreationist sample, “lack of knowledge about ME State Parks” was cited by 20.5% of those who had reported not visiting a state park. This discrepancy may indicate that while people often think they are not limited by not knowing where to go, they may well not be aware of specific types of opportunities. In other words, there is a **need to promote awareness** for specific facilities and destinations so they don’t remain hidden to potential users.



Chapter 2A. Outdoor Recreation Activity Profiles

The following profiles of major outdoor recreation activities in Maine provide further information about the demand for outdoor recreation in Maine. They cover the range of traditional activities, including hunting and fishing, paddling/canoeing (non-motorized boating), trails of all sorts, and viewing and learning activities.





ACTIVITY PROFILE: **CAMPING IN MAINE**

The Outdoor Industry Association's 2012 *Special Report on Camping*²⁸ provides valuable insight into the status of camping in the US. First, the report states that fully 47% of all those making a camping reservation during their last camping trip made that reservation at one of the nation's 7,000 state parks. State park campers numbered 55.3 million in 2009, 52.7 million in 2010, and 54 million in 2011. Sixty six percent (66%) of camping involved tent camping with other significant types included RV camping (12%), backcountry/backpacking (10%), and staying in a cabin (6%).

This same report indicates that 50% of campers had taken a camping trip by age 7. A vast majority (87%) of campers surveyed reported having been camping before the age 16. Fathers were the overwhelming choice (44%) for who/which group took respondents camping for the first time. Mothers (13%) were reported as being chosen more by younger generations versus older generations. Organized groups such as scouts, churches, YMCA/YWCA etc. did not represent double-digit figures with the exception of Boy Scouts – though only 7% of respondents aged 18-34 reported the Scouts as the group that first took them camping. Friends made up 70% of reported camping groups, with spouse/significant other (59%) and immediate family (47%) making up other significant answers to the question of who respondents camped with.



**Primitive Campsite on the Maine Coast –
Courtesy Maine Island Trail Association**

A majority (60%) of trips were in the 1-2 nights range with only 15% reporting taking trips lasting more than 5 nights. The mean distance traveled for camping trips was 190.6 miles, with 86% of camping trips occurring within 300 miles of home. Predominant motivations for camping included the activity itself (33%) as well as “to escape the grind” (23%). Saving money versus other lodging options was listed by very few respondents. Time-related constraints made up the top three reasons chosen for people taking fewer camping trips.

Survey information collected from 779 Maine respondents between 2002-2009 as part of the *National Survey on Recreation and the Environment* (NSRE) included inquiry into camping activity and indicates that 34.5% of Maine residents participated in developed camping annually. When looking at the entire New England Region, the percentage of the population participating drops to 26.6%. The backpacking participation rate for Maine is 18.3% while New England's rate is 14.5%.

²⁸Outdoor Foundation.(2012). *Special Report on Camping*. Retrieved from <http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/research.participation.html>

Several questions about camping were included in the 2014 email-based survey initiated for this SCORP report. Over 9,000 Maine residents contacted as part of an email-based sample obtained from a combined emailing list from the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands (BPL) and the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IFW) responded to questions about camping activity. Forty-seven percent (47%) indicated they had tent camped at a car-accessible campground within the last two years. Another sample group made up of a commercially purchased, random Maine email list reported participating at a level of 28.4% for the same question. Non-residents reached via the same BPL/IFW mailing list reported tent camping at a 27.8% rate.

This same SCORP survey also showed 34% of the resident BPL/IFW sample tent camping in a remote, backcountry setting. Numbers for the general (random, purchased) resident sample were 16.2% for remote tent camping while the non-resident BPL/IFW sample participated at 18.4%. RV camping without electricity received respective participation rates of 14.8% (BPL/IFW resident sample), 7.4% (general resident sample), and 8.4%. An inquiry into RV camping with water and electric produced responses indicating 16.7%, 14.2%, and 10.5% participation rates. Over a quarter of all respondents, in all of the sample groups, reported having stayed in a yurt or rustic cabin. Younger survey respondents were more likely to report tent camping in remote, backcountry settings.

Survey respondents who reported having visited a Maine State Park were asked a series of questions, including certain amenity questions related specifically to camping. When asked to check amenities they appreciate and/or would like to see offered at Maine State Parks, 27.9%, 29.2%, and 25% of respondents in the three respective samples (BPL/IFW resident sample, general Maine sample, BPL/IFW non-resident sample) checked that they appreciate or would like to see water and electric hook-ups for RV camping. Currently, approximately 14% of Maine State Park campground campsites provide water and electric hookups. Respondents also indicated interest in cabins or yurts at Maine State Parks; between 25% and 30% of respondents in the three samples reported they would like to see rustic cabins or yurts available at Maine State Parks. Currently, essentially none are provided. It is worth noting that numerous private campgrounds in Maine provide water & electric RV hookups and campgrounds and other private entities also provide cabin rentals.

Maine Camping Data - Attendance

Public camping data for Maine paints a mixed picture of the last decade. In a comparison of the averaged camping figures between 2004-2008 with similar figures covering 2009-2013, both Acadia National Park and Baxter State Park showed growth in camping visits (21.1% and 10.21 respectively). However, camping activity diminished in the Allagash Wilderness Waterway (-10.54%) and the non-profit managed North Maine Woods sites on predominantly private forestland in northwestern Maine (-25.62%). Camping at Maine State Parks dropped slightly in the comparison, down 6.2%.



ACTIVITY PROFILE: **Hunting and Fishing in Maine**

Hunting and Fishing Activity in Maine

Based on data from the 2011 *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*, 233,000 Maine residents participated in hunting and/or fishing. This equates to approximately 22% of the population. Maine saw 341,000 anglers with 197,000 of those anglers being residents. There were 181,000 hunters with 141,000 of those being residents. In 2011, Maine waters supported over 3.8 million days of fishing and the state was home to over 2.5 million days of hunting.

Economic Impact of Hunting in Maine

Research commissioned by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Maine Office of Tourism shows that hunters spend \$231 million on hunting related activities in Maine. Recreational hunting supports more than 3,400 full- and part-time jobs providing more than \$115 million in income. The direct spending by sportsmen who hunt and the multiplier effects of that spending in Maine contribute \$191 million to the state's gross state product and a total economic output of \$338.7 million.²⁹ This same study indicates that resident and nonresident hunters in Maine are predominantly male and that resident hunters are slightly younger, have lower incomes and more years of experience hunting in Maine than nonresidents. The greatest percentage of non-resident hunters have started hunting in Maine within the last five years.



According to the aforementioned hunting study, *“Resident hunters are more likely than nonresident hunters to take just a day trip to go hunting, whereas, nonresidents are more likely to take an overnight trip to go hunting. For residents and most nonresident hunters who do take an overnight trip, the most commonly utilized accommodation is a relative’s or associate’s lodging. Nonresidents in Aroostook County most often stay overnight in a sporting lodge or wilderness camp.”*³⁰

²⁹Southwick Associates. 2014. *Hunting in Maine in 2013: A statewide and regional analysis of participation and economic contributions*

Produced for the Maine Office of Tourism & Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

³⁰ Ibid.

Trends

Trends in hunting and fishing participation are mixed in Maine. While fishing remains quite steady with relatively little change in licenses sold, hunting can be seen as declining. However, this is not as simple as counting annual licenses sold. Since 2000, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife has made available for purchase lifetime licenses for citizens under 16 and over 64. Therefore, as of 2013, there were, for example, 45,378 active Maine resident lifetime hunting licenses. Thus, it is dangerous to infer that the 21,815 drop in resident hunting licenses between 2000 and 2013 is perfectly analogous to a roughly 13% drop in participation over that period. Data does show a notable drop over time in the number of non-resident big game hunting licenses sold. Adding to the precaution to not overestimate hunting license sales decreases in specific categories is data from the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation showing an increase in both hunters in Maine and hunting days (2001-2011). Interestingly, the *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation* shows single digit decreases in anglers and angler days from 2001-2011.³¹

While license and survey data point in slightly different and nuanced directions, it is nonetheless safe to say that hunting and fishing remain important to the economics, character, and traditions of Maine. Though changes have been experienced, there is still strong demand for hunting and fishing opportunities. On the other side of the equation, posting of private land -often in response to misuse and negative impacts coming from irresponsible public use - continues to threaten hunting and fishing opportunities along with other recreational pursuits.



³¹ US Fish & Wildlife Service. 2013. *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation: Maine*. Retrieved from: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/fhw11-me.pdf>



ACTIVITY PROFILE: **NON-MOTORIZED BOATING IN MAINE**

Maine Participation & Trends

The most recent data on non-motorized boating participation in Maine comes from the 2014-2019 ME SCORP survey. That work indicates that half of Maine residents report having canoed at least once within the last two years. Freshwater kayaking was reported at a 41% participation rate with 13% 13.2% reporting having gone sea kayaking. Rafting and sailing showed more limited participation, with 10.9% and 10.6% rates respectively.

Survey data from 1995-2009, obtained from the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, indicated that **kayaking** was the fastest growing activity in New England over that time period. Canoeing was seventh fastest growing. The recent development of stand-up paddling (paddleboards) has shown modest growth over the past three years. It is an activity that tends to attract a younger demographic.³²

Motivations and Perspectives

The Outdoor Foundation states that exercise/fitness, adventure/excitement, being with family/friends, and being close to nature are-in descending order- the top reported motivations for paddlers. When asked to rate the need for additional non-motorized trail resources, respondents to the 2015-202 ME SCORP survey ranked water trails somewhere in the mid to lower levels of need (overall, 39.1% rated additional “paddle trails without motorboats” as either very needed or needed).

The general Maine resident sample ranked this type of trail 8th most needed out of 10 types listed. Resident recreationists (see Appendix B for group details) ranked paddle trails 7th and, interestingly, non-resident recreationists ranked paddle trails 4th most needed. It is uncertain if the language citing “paddling trails *without motorboats*” (emphasis added) influenced responses of respondents who may value water trails that include both motorboats and paddle craft.



Resting on a Gravel Bar - Moose River

³² Outdoor Foundation (2013). *2013 Special Report on Paddlesports*. Retrieved from: <http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/research.paddlesports.2013.html>

It is also noteworthy that the ME SCORP survey indicates that lakes/ ponds are the highest rated outdoor setting reported in the survey, surpassing both beaches and coastal trails. 69.4% of respondents ranked lakes/ponds as “very desirable” on a 5-point scale running down to “very undesirable”. In fact, “rivers” scored slightly higher than coastal trails and beaches. While coastal resources were rated as overwhelmingly desirable, freshwater settings were rated even higher.

Economic Impact

The Maine Island Trail and the Northern Forest Canoe Trails are water trails of at least national significance. Whereas the Maine Island Trail is a coastal water trail along the coast of Maine, the Northern Forest Canoe Trail is a multi-state freshwater route from Old Forge, New York to Fort Kent, Maine. Both of these trails have had economic impact studies within the last decade.

Reports indicate that the Maine Island Trail directly generates “at least \$674,000 annually in visitor spending impact in the State of Maine, up to potentially **\$2.1 million in impact and 27 jobs**”³³ and that the Northern Forest Canoe Trail created **\$12 million in total economic impact while supporting 280 jobs**³⁴ (across the 740-mile length of the multi-state/province trail).

**The Moose River Bow Trip:
Insight on Public Information Limitations?**

A 2012 BPL visitor research effort on the Moose River Bow Trip in Northern Somerset County provides intriguing insight into a remote, classic paddling route that while renowned amongst canoe enthusiasts, has not been actively marketed as a “water trail”. The Northern Forest Canoe Trail now includes a portion of the circular “Bow Trip”, though the full route has not been heavily promoted to date. An excerpted section of that report’s discussion is below, along with an excerpted table. The study may hint at paddling opportunities, whether regionally or locally significant, being yet another recreation resource in Maine where knowledge and awareness are limiting factors and information is not readily available to those not “in-the-know”.

“The Moose River Bow Trip ... is a destination attracting paddlers who travel significant distances specifically to paddle and camp Many of these paddlers have never been on the river before, though they are largely not new to paddling backcountry rivers. These visitors first learned of the Moose River Bow Trip through friends and family and/or guidebooks and the internet.”

How did you first learn about the Moose River?	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Family/friends	67.3%
Asked local people	2.0%
Exploration	10.2%
Newspaper	0.0%
Campground info/staff	6.1%
Internet	14.3%
Guide book	24.5%
Road signs	4.1%
Local retailers/ B&Bs	0.0%
Magazine	0.0%
Atlas	10.2%

³³ Glassman, Jonathan and Vilas Rao (2011). *Evaluating the Economic Benefits and Future Opportunities of the Maine Island Trail Association. Discussion Paper 2011-28, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Environmental Economics Program, May, 2011.*

³⁴ Pollock, Noah (2007). *The Northern Forest Canoe Trail: Economic Impacts and Implications for Sustainable Community Development. Vermont Tourism Data Center, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT*



ACTIVITY PROFILE: TRAIL ACTIVITIES IN MAINE

Maine Participation in Trail-Related Activities

2002-2009 NSRE Participation Data for Maine	
Activity	% Participating (Residents)
Day Hiking	41.3%
Backpacking	18.3%
Walk for Pleasure	87.6%
Running/Jogging	27.7%
Bicycling	38.2%
Mountain Biking	27.7%
Snowshoeing	16.7%
Cross-Country Skiing	14.4%
Horseback Riding on Trails	5.2%
Snowmobiling	28.7%
Drive Off Road (Any Type)	26.7%

The 2009-2014 Maine State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan provides a fairly recent picture of trail-related activity participation. The data, based on the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, is shown in the table to the left.

More recent survey work associated with this 2014-2019 ME SCORP provides more detail on trail activity as well insight into both frequency of activity and preferences for trail expansion. Maine residents use non-motorized trails frequently, with over 25% of residents using non-motorized trails at least weekly (motorized trails are reportedly used by 16.9% of residents at a weekly frequency or greater).

2014-2019 ME SCORP Survey		
Activity	% Participating (Maine Resident Recreationists)	% Participating (Maine Residents General)
Hiking	69.3%	66.2%
Mountain Climbing	32.5%	29.9%
Bicycling (Includes Mountain Biking)	38.9%	34.3%
Snowshoeing	46.7%	40.7%
Cross-Country Skiing	25.3%	23.0%
Snowmobiling	31.8%	19.1%
Riding an ATV	34.4%	20.6%

The ME SCORP survey data does not align completely with previous NSRE activity labels, and where it does, there is not always consensus with the data. That being said, the more recent

SCORP data represents greater sample size and is more recent. The 2015 data includes both a general resident sample and a recreationists sample obtained via license and registration data. More methodological detail is available in Appendix B, but a key point is that the recreationist sample reports significantly higher levels of motorized trail activity participation.

In addition to asking recent survey respondents about trail activity participation, the 2014-2019 ME SCORP survey asked respondents to rate to what degree they thought specific types of trails needed to be expanded in Maine (five point scale from “very needed” to “definitely not needed”). Results, for both non-motorized trails and motorized trails, are shared on the following page.



Newly Constructed Footpath in Maine’s Moosehead Lake Region

Maine State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2014-2019

MOST NEEDED NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL RESOURCES	Maine General Population (%)	Maine Resident/ Recreationists (%)	Non-Resident/ Recreationists (%)
#1 Most Needed	Easy trails in natural settings (71.1)	Easy trails in natural settings (59)	Easy trails in natural settings (43.8)
#2 Most Needed	Educational/nat. history trails (60)	Educational/nat. history trails (54.2)	Moderate day hikes in nature (43.7)
#3 Most Needed	Moderate day hikes in nature (56.2)	Moderate day hikes in nature (53.1)	Educational/nat. history trails (41)
#4 Most Needed	Easy/moderate off road biking (52.2)	Handicapped accessible trails (46.9)	Paddle trails without motorboats (36.9)
#5 Most Needed	Handicapped accessible trails (52.1)	Easy/moderate off road biking (46.3)	Long/remote day hikes (36.6)
#6 Most Needed	Snowshoeing trails (48.1)	Snowshoeing trails (44.6)	Easy/moderate off road biking (31)
#7 Most Needed	Long/remote day hikes (38.2)	Paddle trails without motorboats (42.8)	Handicapped accessible trails (28.4)
#8 Most Needed	Paddle trails without motorboats (37.6)	Long/remote day hikes (42.8)	Remote/multi-day backpacking (28.3)
#9 Most Needed	Groomed X-Country ski trails (37.5)	Groomed X-Country ski trails (38.8)	Snowshoeing trails (23.8)
# 10 Most Needed	Remote/multi-day backpacking (26.5)	Remote/multi-day backpacking (32.6)	Groomed X-Country ski trails (21.1)
MOST NEEDED MOTORIZED TRAIL RESOURCES	Maine General Population (%)	Maine Resident/Recreationists (%)	Non-Resident/Recreationists (%)
#1 Most Needed	Community linking ATV trails (36.8)	Community linking ATV trails (42.3)	Community linking ATV trails (25.7)
#2 Most Needed	Community linking snowmobile trails (30.3)	Community linking snowmobile trails (40.2)	Remote/vista ATV trails (23.9)
#3 Most Needed	Close-to-home snowmobiling (28.4)	Off trail snowmobiling (38.1)	Community linking snowmobile trails (23.2)
#4 Most Needed	Close-to-home ATV (27.1)	Close-to-home ATV (37.5)	Off trail snowmobiling (22.8)
#5 Most Needed	Off trail snowmobiling (25.7)	Remote/vista ATV trails (37.3)	Remote/vista snowmobile trails (20.9)
#6 Most Needed	Remote/vista ATV trails (24.3)	Close-to-home snowmobiling (36)	Close-to-home ATV (19.4)
#7 Most Needed	Shared/groomed snowmobile trails (24.3)	Remote/vista snowmobile trails (33.5)	Close-to-home snowmobiling (19)
#8 Most Needed	Remote/vista snowmobile trails (23.7)	Shared/groomed snowmobile trails (30.8)	ATV/rail trail/shared use trails (17.7)
#9 Most Needed	ATV/rail trail/shared use trails (22.7)	ATV/rail trail/shared use trails (29.9)	Shared/groomed snowmobile trails (16.8)
# 10 Most Needed	ATV trails with challenging terrain (14.7)	ATV trails with challenging terrain (18.7)	ATV trails with challenging terrain (13.9)



ACTIVITY PROFILE: **VIEWING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN MAINE**

National Trends

In the 2010 Renewable Resources Planning Act (RPA) Assessment developed by the US Forest Service, Cordell (2011) discusses seven clustered groups of outdoor recreation activities including: 1) *Visiting recreation and historic sites*, 2) *Viewing/photographing nature*, 3) *Backcountry activities*, 4) *Motorized activities*, 5) *Hunting and fishing*, 6) *Non-motor boating*, 7) *Snow skiing and snowboarding*. Of these seven clusters, Cordell states that:

*The clear leader in growth of total annual days was the overall group of activities named “viewing and photographing nature.” The emergence of viewing and learning activities as a leading form of outdoor recreation was a key finding of the RPA recreation demand assessment.*³⁵

New England and Maine

This national finding is consistent with Maine/New England recreation data obtained from both the 2009 Maine SCORP as well as survey efforts associated with the 2015 Maine SCORP. 2009 data in the Maine SCORP gathered as part of the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment shows that between 1995 and 2009 the New England region has added 2.1 million participants in the activity of “viewing wildlife (besides birds)”. This was the largest number of participants added in any category. “Viewing/photographing fish” and “viewing/photographing birds” were also in the top activities for participants added.



Bird-watching at Wolf’s Neck Woods State Park

When the current SCORP survey respondents were asked about their recreational activity, “enjoying nature” and “viewing wildlife” were in the top 5 activities for all three sample groups (see Appendix B for more detail on samples). “Enjoying nature” was the most popular activity for two of the three groups. Furthermore, the survey results report that educational and instructional programs were by far the most popular types of programs and events people would like to see offered in Maine State Parks (self-guided educational hikes being the most popular choice for all three groups). When asked about types of non-motorized trails

³⁵ Cordell, H. Ken (2011). Outdoor Recreation in the First Decade: A Research Brief in the IRIS Series. Retrieved from <http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/trends/pdf-iris/IRISRec20rptfs.pdf>.

respondents feel are most needed in the state, both Maine resident sample groups ranked educational trails (natural or historical) as the second most needed trail type -behind only “easy trails in natural settings”.

The 2014 SCORP survey data suggests that while older age groups participate at higher levels in birdwatching, kids and school programs are rated higher by younger respondents (often presumably having children in the home). **It is apparent that there is strong and trending demand for outdoor experiences that interpret elements of Maine’s outdoor heritage and that provide the opportunity to participate in that heritage first hand.**



Historical Reenactors Rowing a Bateau on the Kennebec River

Chapter 3: Supply of Outdoor Recreation Opportunities in Maine

Maine: It's Places and Character

Maine's 20.4 million acres offer a diverse natural environment that supports a wide variety of outdoor recreation activities for

residents and visitors. The state's 5,000-mile coast includes miles of sandy beach and rocky headlands, as well as over 3,000 islands. In northern and western Maine, the Longfellow Range of the Appalachian Mountains contains more than 100 mountains over 3,000 feet, and all of the state's "4,000 footers." Maine's inland waters total nearly 1,450 square miles in area and include about 5,800 lakes and ponds and almost 32,000 miles of rivers and streams. Maine also has about 5 million acres of wetlands ranging from small vernal pools to extensive coastal salt marshes. About 90% of the state's land area is forested.

The forests of Maine are predominantly privately owned, with private ownership hovering around 95%.³⁶ Maine has the largest contiguous block of undeveloped forestland east of the Mississippi comprised of approximately 10.5 million acres of "unorganized territory" (no city or town government entities). This region's forests are primarily managed for timber production and are typically available for various forms of public recreation. Private forests in more developed portions of the state are also significant in terms of public recreation and other multiple values associated with forests.



Jewell Island, Casco Bay



Winter View from Mount Blue, Mount Blue State Park

Maine's climate is marked by distinct seasons. Winters are generally cold, with average annual snowfall from 50 to 70 inches along the coast and 60-110 inches inland. Spring comes later than the majority of the Continental United States. Summer temperatures range as high as the 80s along the coast and 90s inland. Fall weather is typically pleasant and cool with dramatic fall foliage occurring in the middle of the season. Maine's pronounced and distinctive seasons greatly shape the character and traditions associated with outdoor recreation.

³⁶ Maine Forest Service (2010). *Maine State Forest Assessment and Strategies*. Forest Policy & Management Division. Retrieved from: <http://www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs/publications/reports>.

Outdoor Recreation Resources Open to the Public in Maine

Maine residents and visitors alike rely on a mix of public and private lands for outdoor recreation. As just one example, roughly 95% of snowmobile trails in Maine are located on private lands. Hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, birding, snowmobiling, paddling, camping, and a host of other activities routinely occur on private lands open to public recreation not typically through legal agreements but rather via a tradition of public access. At the same time, a mosaic of ownership and private conservation has been growing to create increased conservation and recreation assurances across the state. One major area of conservation growth is in public easements on private lands. Many, though not all, conservation easements have at least some degree of public recreational access guaranteed.

Public Conservation Lands

Federal Lands: Most federal recreation lands in Maine are administered by three agencies: the US Department of the Interior's **National Park Service (NPS)** and **US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)**; and the US Department of Agriculture's **National Forest Service (NFS)**. Federal military and veterans' agencies also administer some lands available for public recreation. The principal federal recreation lands in Maine are **Acadia National Park** (35,332 acres owned by the National Park Service and 12,416 acres of privately owned lands under conservation easement); the Maine portion of the White Mountain National Forest (49,980 acres); and the National Wildlife Refuges (64,660 total acres).

State Lands: The **Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands (BPL)** owns and manages 616,952 acres of Public Reserved and Non-Reserved lands (tracts managed for multiple use including forestry, wildlife and recreation; with no user fees) and 86,233 acres in Parks, Historic Sites, and Boat Access sites, including 968 acres leased from USFWS, which are managed primarily for recreation, subject to user fees. BPL also owns approximately 1,095 acres in coastal islands, some of which are managed under contract as part of the Maine Island Trail. Finally, BPL holds public access easements allowing pedestrian use and vehicular use on designated roads, donated by three large landowners whose combined acreage is 602,423 acres. **Table 9** examines Bureau properties in relation to Maine's most populated cities.

The **Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife** is responsible for management on all State owned Wildlife Management Areas. The WMAs comprise approximately 100,000 acres and contain a diverse array of habitats. These properties are available for a multitude of recreational opportunities, with a focus on hunting, fishing and trapping.

Baxter State Park includes 209,644 acres managed as a wilderness park. It is overseen by an authority comprised of the Maine Attorney General, Director of the Maine Forest Service, and the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Management is based on park founder Governor Percival Baxter's deeds of trust. About 75% of the Park (156,874 acres) is managed as a wildlife sanctuary while 25% of the Park (52,628 acres) is open to hunting and trapping with the exception that Moose hunting is prohibited in the Park. 29,537 acres was designated by Governor Baxter to be managed as the Scientific Forest Management Area and is currently a Forest Stewardship Certified showplace for sound forestry.

Table 9: Maine State Parks, Public Lands, and State Historic Sites within 25 and 50 miles of Maine’s 10 most populated cities (some adjacent/nearby cities clustered).

Municipality or Cluster of Municipalities	2010 Population (US Census)	BPL Sites w/in 25 miles of one or more listed communities	Additional BPL sites within 25-50 miles of community or cluster
Portland South Portland Westbrook	66,194 25,002 17,494	Bradbury Mt. SP Crescent Beach SP Ferry Beach SP Mackworth Island Pinelands Land Unit Two Lights SP Wolfe’s Neck Woods SP Crescent Beach SP Scarborough Beach SP	Range Ponds SP, Eagle Island SHS, Reid SP, Fort Baldwin SHS Sebago Lake SP, Fort Edgecomb SHS, Vaughan Woods SP, Fort Popham SHS, Fort McClary SHS, Popham Beach SP, John Paul Jones SHS, Androscoggin Riverlands SP
Lewiston Auburn	36,592 23,052	Bradbury Mt. SP Pinelands Land Unit Range Ponds SP Androscoggin Riverlands	Popham Beach SP, Reid SP, Colburn House SHS, Scarborough Beach SP, Dodge Point Public Lands, Sebago Lake SP, Two Lights SP, Whaleback Shell Midden SHS, Wolfe’s Neck Woods SP, Mackworth Island, Whistle Stop Trail, Fort Popham SHS, Eagle Island SHS, Fort Edgecomb SHS, Fort Baldwin SHS, Kennebec Highlands Public Lands
Bangor	33,037	Bradley Land Unit** ** The Bradley Land Unit does not serve a substantial recreational role, though a snowmobile route does pass over it.	Peaks-Kenny SP, Donnell Pond Lands, Lagrange - Medford Trail, Four Season Adventure Trail, Fort Knox SHS, Fort Point SHS, Lamoine SP, Moose Point SP, Swan Lake SP, Downeast Sunrise Trail
Biddeford Saco Sanford	21,277 18,482 20,798	Crescent Beach SP Ferry Beach SP Mackworth Island Two Lights SP Scarborough Beach SP Vaughan Woods SP	Pineland Public Lands, Wolfe’s Neck Woods SP, Fort McClary SHS, John Paul Jones SHS, Range Ponds SP Sebago Lake SP, Vaughan Woods SP, Bradbury Mountain SP
Augusta	19,132	Fort Halifax SHS Damariscotta Lake SP Colburn House SHS Lake St. George SP	Colonial Pemaquid SHS, Birch Point SP, Fort Edgecomb SHS, Camden Hills SP, Range Ponds SP, Moose Point SP, Bradbury Mt. SP, Reid SP, Dodge Point Public Lands, Whistle Stop Trail, Whaleback Shell Midden SHS, Androscoggin Riverlands SP, Kennebec Highlands Public Lands

SP = State Park, SHS = State Historic Site.

SOURCE: www.maine.gov/doc/parks “Find Parks & Lands”

Not-for-Profit Land Conservation: Land trusts and private conservation organizations have had a major role in both conserving Maine’s unique natural areas as well as providing outdoor recreation opportunities. Over 1.5 million acres of land across Maine have been conserved by private conservation organizations and land trusts. Conserved properties range from small easements and holdings held by local land trusts up to landscape scale conservation projects in Maine’s North Woods region. It is notable that the 2014-2019 Maine SCORP survey



Not-for-profit conservation organizations such as the Appalachian Mountain Club and the Nature Conservancy (to name just two) are playing a larger and larger role in conserving Maine land and providing recreational opportunities. Pictured above: skiing groomed trails at the Appalachian Mountain Club’s Katahdin Iron Works property.

indicates that just over 50% of residents and over 28% of non-residents report having visited a land trust property within the last two years.

Municipal Lands: The Maine Conservation Lands Layer, a geographic information systems data set maintained by the Maine Office of GIS, attributes just over 26,000 acres of lands to municipalities or water districts. It is important to recognize that many municipal lands serving vital recreation needs such as sports fields and playgrounds are NOT included in this figure. Furthermore, the local significance of municipal lands is often not their overall acreage but rather their proximity to citizens.

Where Are Conservation Lands Located?

A simplistic look at where conservation lands are located indicates that conservation lands are spread across every county of the state. A more detailed analysis shows that while it is true that every county in Maine at least some conservation lands, the amounts vary greatly (**Table 10**). Piscataquis County in central Maine is a very rural county with by far the greatest amount of conservation land (by total acreage and percentage of land area conserved). Large conservation holdings including but not limited to Baxter State Park and numerous Public Lands combined with several very large working forest conservation easements make Piscataquis County the state’s most conserved county. Conversely, Androscoggin, Kennebec, and Lincoln counties, in the State’s more populated areas, all have a relatively small amount of their respective land area under some form of conservation.

One factor that accounts for the larger area in conserved lands in the predominantly rural counties such as Franklin, Somerset, Piscataquis, Aroostook, and Washington is the amount of large tracts of managed timberland with working forest conservation easements. In populated counties like Androscoggin, Cumberland, Kennebec, and York, land ownership is more highly fragmented, and conserved lands tend to be smaller.

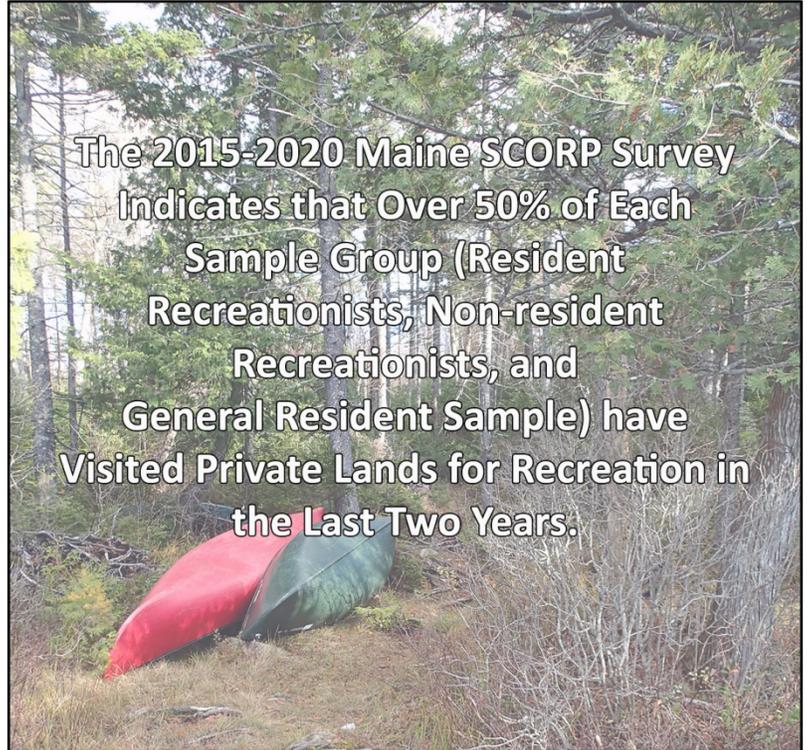
Table 10: County Analysis of Conservation Lands in Maine.			
County	Acres of Conservation Land (1)	% of County Land Conserved (1)	% of Maine's Total Population Residing within County (2)
Androscoggin	9,189	2.89%	8.10%
Aroostook	581,131	13.33%	5.30%
Cumberland	38,163	6.5%	21.36%
Franklin	142,649	12.81%	2.30%
Hancock	178,758	16.54%	4.10%
Kennebec	22,363	3.68%	9.17%
Knox	18,540	7.71%	2.98%
Lincoln	12,895	4.23%	2.57%
Oxford	263,785	18.98%	4.32%
Penobscot	154,308	6.79%	11.57%
Piscataquis	1,076,556	38.51%	1.30%
Sagadahoc	18,502	11.29%	2.65%
Somerset	818,324	31.31%	3.91%
Waldo	22,830	4.19%	2.92%
Washington	506,953	28.81%	2.44%
York	65,558	10.14%	14.97%
Total:	3,930,504 (Statewide)	18.9% (of State)	
(1) Based on Conservation Lands Layer and town and county (24k-scale) GIS Data (2015), ME Office of GIS. Includes fee and easement properties from all owner types (e.g., federal, state, private, etc.) (2) Based on US Census 2010			

Importantly, when asked as part of the 2014-2019 ME SCORP survey, respondents indicated Cumberland and York as counties identified most strongly as where they most often recreate. *This supports the logical proposition that general outdoor recreation demand is strongest where more people live and work.*



Public Use of Private Lands

Maine has long enjoyed a tradition of public access to privately owned lands. Whether provided by small woodlot owners or commercial timber companies owning hundreds of thousands of acres, there has been a tradition of the public enjoying private lands. However, there has been a recognition that negative impacts from recreation (e.g., littering and dumping, etc.) coupled with changes in land ownership, particularly intergenerational transfers on family held lands, may present risks to that tradition. It is important to recognize that private lands play a major role in meeting Maine's demand for outdoor recreation. Hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, ATV and snowmobile trail use, wildlife watching, and many more activities occur on private lands. Additionally, private forest road networks provide access to not only private lands but also public lands and publicly held easements. Ensuring good relations with landowners through shared stewardship, education and communication is essential to continuing this long Maine tradition.



Public Outdoor Recreation Sites

While acreage in conserved lands is a measure of the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities, it is not the only measure. Conserved lands figures miss a range of outdoor recreation resources in Maine. **Municipal parks, open space, playgrounds, sports fields, and courts** serve to address community recreation interests beyond the nature-based interests typically addressed via conserved lands. These are the types of projects most often supported by Land and Water Conservation funds. This report does not include an exhaustive accounting of these resources. However, previous **Land and Water Conservation Fund** project figures are shown in **Table 11** and discussed below.

Table 11: LWCF Expenditures by County (1966-2013)	
Androscoggin	\$2,499,034.82
Aroostook	\$3,416,096.93
Cumberland	\$7,913,734.51
Franklin	\$1,457,215.33
Hancock	\$836,581.99
Kennebec	\$2,956,920.49
Knox	\$1,927,153.86
Lincoln	\$1,078,465.78
Oxford	\$1,564,739.38
Penobscot	\$3,822,912.54
Piscataquis	\$3,475,106.71
Sagadahoc	\$1,070,597.06
Somerset	\$1,031,419.89
Waldo	\$1,559,173.45
Washington	\$1,988,458.39
York	\$3,265,914.39

LWCF funding has enabled projects in every county in Maine. The figures in Table 11 do not include local match funds and are not reflective of total project costs. Expenditures listed do include both Bureau of Parks and Lands projects as well as other projects awarded to municipalities. Individual project funds distributed range from just over \$1000 to two acquisition projects over \$1 million (Allagash Wilderness Waterway and West Branch). Figures were not adjusted for inflation. The average project award over the Maine’s LWCF history is just over \$50,000.

Figure 11 shows an overview of where individual LWCF project sites in Maine are located.

Trail Junction, Ferry Beach State Park



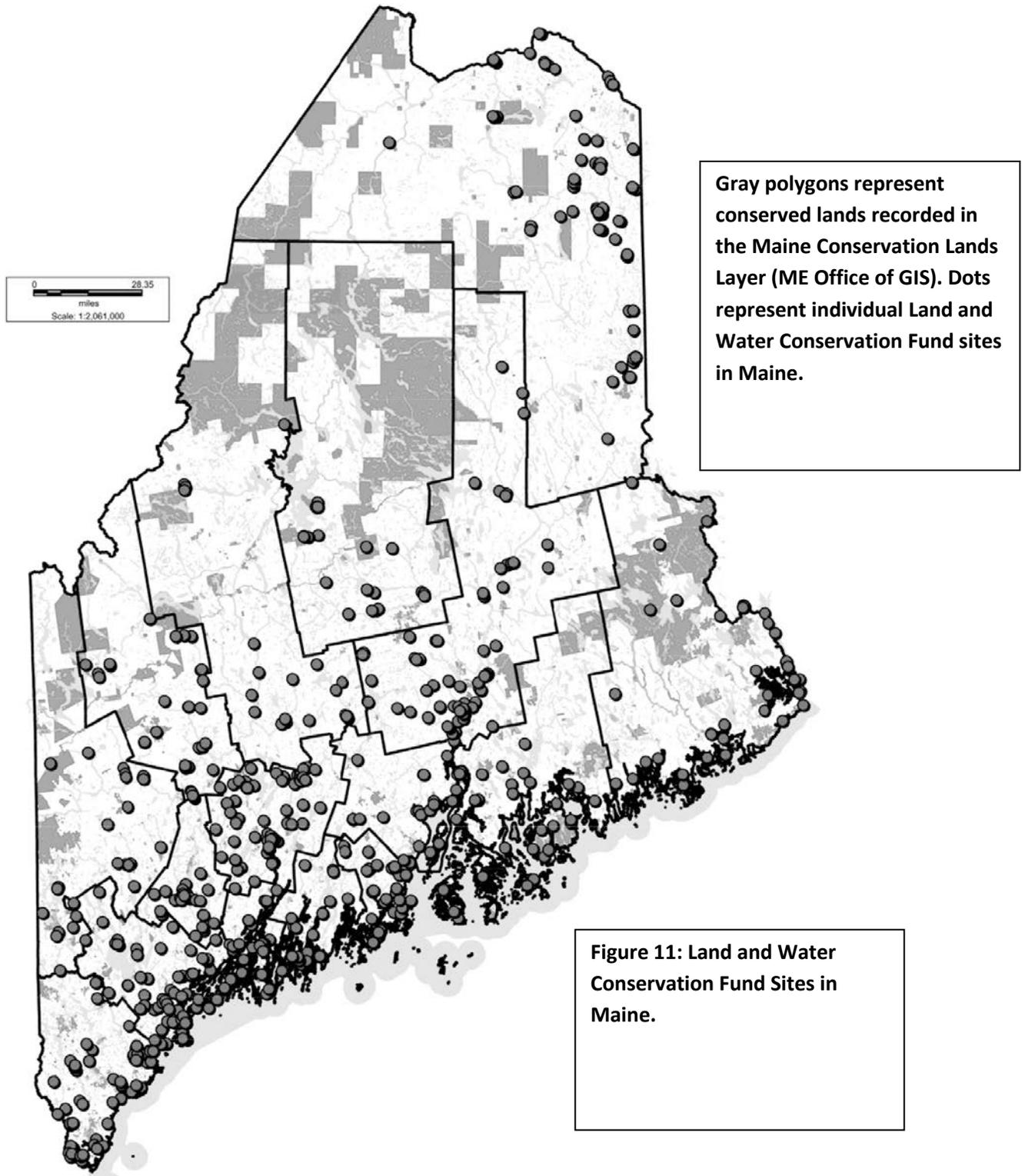


Figure 12 shows the evolving pattern of the types of LWCF projects in Maine across 5 decades. LWCF funding level changes have had a direct influence on projects but so have changes in demand/recreation interests. In keeping with evolving demand, projects such as tennis courts rose in prominence (especially in the 1970s in the case of courts). The 1980s saw growth in sports fields and playgrounds, with these project types remaining strong into the '90s and 2000s (relative to other category types). Skate parks emerged as a new use in the 2000s.

What is not reflected in Figure 12 is that trends evolve and that demands addressed at a given point in time may not reflect future demand. Aforementioned tennis courts, for example, are now quite often observed as being lightly used and poorly maintained in many settings. While some tennis court projects -as just one example facility type- are being well used and cared for, the point is to recognize that some of the current supply of permanently protected LWCF sites are not addressing current demand and trends in outdoor recreation. The re-purposing of outdated recreation infrastructure is increasingly an issue that confronts the managers of some of the State's older LWCF projects.



Aging and Derelict Tennis Court

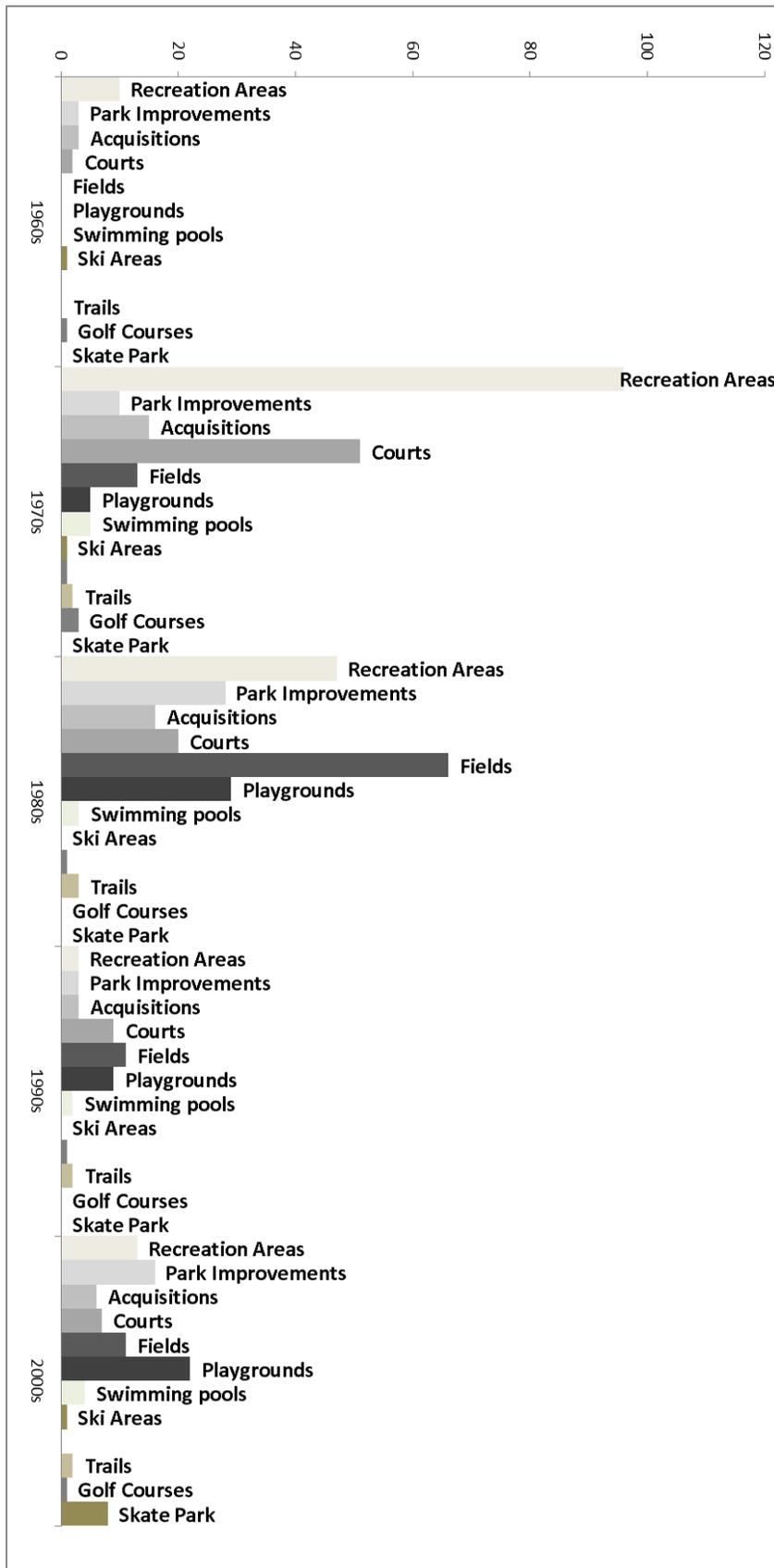


Figure 12: Number of Maine LWCF Projects by Type, by Decade.

Activity Specific Resources

Skiing: Skiing is one of Maine’s more popular “developed” outdoor recreation activities (2008 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment reported New England participation rates of 13.6%). Maine **downhill ski areas** range from a handful of surviving small community hills with rope tows or t-bars that operate occasionally to two of the region’s largest ski resorts, Sunday River and Sugarloaf USA.

Maine has 18 operating downhill ski areas open to the public that can be characterized as small, medium, and large according to the number of trails and lifts. Sunday River and Sugarloaf USA each have over 130 trails and 15 or more lifts. Medium size areas include Mt Abram, Saddleback, and Shawnee Peak, which have 30-66 trails and 4-5 lifts each. The remaining ski areas have 1-3 lifts and 20 or fewer trails³⁷. Most ski areas now have some level of snowmaking and designated snowboard areas.

Ski Maine Association lists 16 **Nordic ski centers** in Maine with a total of 665 km of groomed ski trails (**Table 12**). Facilities range from “mom and pop” operations to major facilities including the Nordic Heritage Center (NHC) in Presque Isle, a world-class venue for cross country skiing, and biathlon; and the Maine Huts and Trails system with the plan to develop a continuous groomed cross-country ski system from Bethel in western Maine to the Greenville area, presently having four huts in the Bigelow to Jackman area. In addition to those listed by Ski Maine, Maine State Parks maintains groomed ski trail systems at Mt. Blue State Park (Weld), Sebago Lake State Park (Naples), Bradbury Mountain State Park (Pownal), Lily Bay State Park (Beaver Cove), Aroostook State Park (Presque Isle), Camden Hills (Camden), Cobscook Bay (Dennysville), and Range Pond (Poland). In addition, several community trail areas/projects include groomed ski trails. Examples include Quarry Road in Waterville, Bond Brook Recreation Area and the Viles

Table 12: Nordic Ski Centers in Maine

Nordic Ski Center & Location	Trail KM	County
10th Mountain Division -Fort Kent	23	Aroostook
Bethel Nordic Ski Center- Bethel	33	Oxford
Black Mountain of Maine- Rumford	18	Oxford
Carters Cross Country Center -Bethel	55	Oxford
Carters Cross Country Center- Oxford	30	Oxford
Five Fields Farm- Bridgton	27	Cumberland
Harris Farm XC Center- Dayton	40	York
Hidden Valley Nature Center- Alna	24	Lincoln
Lost Valley Touring Center- Auburn	10	Androscoggin
Maine Huts & Trails- Carrabassett Valley	72	Franklin
Maine Wilderness Lodges (AMC)- Moosehead Lake	100	Piscataquis
New England Outdoor Center- Millinocket	10	Penobscot
Nordic Heritage Venue- Presque Isle	20	Aroostook
Pineland Farms- New Gloucester	25	Cumberland
Rangeley Lakes Trail Center- Rangeley	67	Franklin
Spruce Mountain Nordic- Jay	5	Franklin
Sugarloaf Outdoor Center- Carrabassett Valley	90	Franklin
Titcomb Mountain Nordic- West Farmington	16	Franklin
Source: Ski Maine Association		

Arboretum in Augusta, and trails in the Millinocket area maintained by Northern Timber Cruisers.

³⁷ Retrieved from: <https://skimaine.com/ski-areas/>

Golf Courses: Golf, like skiing, is also one of Maine’s more popular “developed” outdoor recreation activities (2008 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment reported New England participation rates of 17.4%). According to the Maine State Golf Association, Maine has 125 golf courses. Maine golf courses have been predominantly developed by the private sector. The Maine State Golf Association lists 6 municipal golf courses (Bangor, Dexter, Frye Island, Riverside in Portland, South Portland, and Val Halla in Cumberland). It also lists 12 private clubs, 84 public courses, 7 resort courses, and 16 semi-private courses.³⁸

Swim beaches: Swim beaches are a popular traditional destination for much of Maine’s population . There are 15 Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands properties within 50 miles of one of Maine’s ten most populated cities and provide swimming opportunities. Of those State beaches, 8 serve multiple large communities in southern Maine, and 6 have lifeguards (staffing cuts over past years have reduced lifeguard positions, notably at most freshwater swim facilities).

In addition to state parks, federal, municipal, and private landowners own swim beaches. In particular, municipalities are major providers of swimming opportunities. It is worth noting that the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) lists Maine as having more than 29 miles of public access beaches stretching along Maine’s coast³⁹. Sixty beach management areas participate in the (DEP) Maine Healthy Beaches Program. This listing refers primarily to beaches and does not account per se to the full range of swimming opportunities along the coast nor does it account for freshwater beaches and swimming holes.

Playgrounds: While this report does not tally the total number of playgrounds in Maine, these resources are nonetheless important assets to communities. The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands has playgrounds at 15 of its parks. Through 2013, the LWCF fund has supported the construction of 73 playground projects, with at least one playground project in every Maine county.

Camping Facilities: Maine is home to a variety of *commercial and public campgrounds* as well as numerous *commercial sporting camps*.

Region	# Campgrounds
Aroostook	6
Downeast/Acadia	28
Katahdin/Moosehead	24
Kennebec Valley	12
Mid-Coast	21
Portland & Freeport	8
South Coast	45
Western Lakes & Mountains	36
<i>(Source: Maine Campground Owners Association - http://www.campmaine.com)</i>	

Commercial campgrounds in Maine play an important role in meeting camping demand and supporting the tourism economy. The Maine Campground Owners Association reports 180 campgrounds in Maine, **(Table 13)** not including State Park Campgrounds or Federal sites such as Seawall and Blackwoods campgrounds in Acadia National Park. Taken as a whole, privately operated campgrounds in Maine provide more developed facilities than public campgrounds such as State Park campgrounds. Amenities such as

³⁸ Retrieved from: <http://www.mesga.org/>

³⁹ Maine Department of Environmental Protection. (2015). *Maine Healthy Beaches 2014 Report to US EPA*. Retrieved from: <http://www.mainehealthybeaches.org/resources.html#reports>

water/electric/sewer/cable tv hook-ups, pools, recreation halls, laundry, and other amenities are more likely to be found at private sector campgrounds. Cabin/cottage rentals are more prevalent as well.

Maine State Park campgrounds are found at 13 State Parks spread across 8 counties. Generally speaking, Maine State Park campgrounds provide traditional camping experiences with a focus on natural settings. Playgrounds, trails, boat launches, and hot showers (11 of the 13 campgrounds) are examples of facilities found at many but not all park campgrounds. Water hookups and electric service is available at a portion of the campsites at Sebago Lake State Park and Camden Hills State Park; other park campgrounds do not have hook-up campsites. Limited (and popular) reservable group campsites are found at 10 of the 13 campground parks. Maine State Parks offer no cabins or cottages for rent; the national average number of such rentals in other state park systems is 169.⁴⁰

Commercial sporting camps have a long tradition in Maine, most notably in the Aroostook, western mountains, Moosehead, Katahdin, and Downeast regions. These cabin/lodge based operations are typically located in remote areas renowned for hunting and fishing opportunities. They are strongly tied to the Maine Guide traditions and can include rustic yet up-scale lodging and dining. The Maine Sporting Camp Association lists 43 member camps.

Trailside Lodges: Within the last decade, two new examples of trail-focused lodging have developed. **Maine Huts and Trails** is a not-for-profit organization developing a multi-use/multi-season, non-motorized trail system of interconnected lodges in western Maine. The huts are described as eco-lodges or “boutique hostels”.⁴¹ The **Appalachian Mountain Club** (not-for-profit) has acquired thousands of acres of land in the “100-Mile Wilderness” Region between Moosehead Lake and Baxter State Park with a series of Maine Wilderness Lodges and lodge-to lodge skiing and other lodge-based activities as a preeminent recreational opportunity on their properties.

Pedestrian trails: Trails available for **walking, jogging, hiking, snowshoeing** and/or other pedestrian uses are highly valued by a broad sector of Maine recreationists and visitors recreating in Maine. At this time, there is no definitive inventory of trails in Maine. However, it is possible to share trails listed on Maine Trail Finder – a popular and growing website serving as a web-portal for finding trails across the state. Maine Trail Finder, created and managed by the Maine Center for Community GIS includes all Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands’ over 450 miles of human-powered trails as well as similar trails managed by organizations ranging from non-profits to municipalities to Acadia National Park (partial listings). It does not list a few notable destinations such as Baxter State Park’s approximately 200 miles of trails or all of the 281 miles of the Appalachian Trail in Maine.

⁴⁰ Leung, Yu-Fai, Jordan Smith, and Anna Miller. (2015). *Statistical Report of State Park Operations:2013-2014*. Prepared for the National Association of State Park Directors, Raleigh, NC.

⁴¹ Retrieved from: <http://www.mainehuts.org/about-mht/>



Singletrack Mountain Biking
(Courtesy Augusta Trails)

Mountain bike trails have seen an upsurge thanks to the growth of mountain bike clubs across the state. Currently, there are chapters of the New England Mountain Bike Association in the following Maine areas: Bethel area, Carrabassett Valley region, Central Maine (Kennebec County area), Greater Portland, Mid-Coast area, Penobscot region. Most of these clubs have formed within the last five to seven years. Notably, these clubs have worked with landowners including but not limited to municipalities, the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, and land trusts to develop purposefully built singletrack trails well suited to modern mountain biking as well as snowshoeing and trail running (in particular).

Table 14: Non-motorized Trails Listed on Maine Trail Finder (www.mainetrailfinder.com)

ME Tourism Region	Walking/ hiking Trails (Mi.)	Nordic Ski Trails (Mi.)*	Mountain Bike Trails (Mi.)**
Aroostook	98	46	49
Downeast & Acadia	480	231	193 (All wide trails, not narrow singletrack)
Greater Portland & Casco Bay	226	129	127
Kennebec & Moose River Valleys	151	56	73
Maine's Lakes and Mountains	693	308	201
Mid-coast	281	127	40
The Maine Beaches	86	62	27
The Maine Highlands	237	108	76
Total	2,252	1,067	786

Figures do, in some cases, include non-motorized opportunities shared on the same trail as motorized activity. Figures may also include "double or triple counting" (i.e., the same mile of trail may fall into more than one category above).

**Does not necessarily imply groomed trails.*

*** Does not necessarily imply all narrow, "singletrack" trails.*

Table 14 lists Maine Trail Finder trail statistics for walking, cross-country skiing and mountain biking, by region.

The 2014-2019 ME SCORP Survey, while largely focused on outdoor recreation participation and demand, also provides insight into perceived supply. Respondents were asked to evaluate the need for new trail resources by type. The relative need for specific types of new trail resources are listed in **Table 15**.

Table 15: Non-motorized Trail Resource Types Rated as Either “Needed” or “Very Needed”			
Trail Resource Type Ranking	Maine General Population Sample (% Sample Ranking “Needed” or “Very Needed”)	Maine Resident/ Recreationists Sample (% Sample Ranking “Needed” or “Very Needed”)	Non-Resident/ Recreationists Sample (% Sample Ranking “Needed” or “Very Needed”)
#1 Most Needed	Easy trails in natural settings (71.1)	Easy trails in natural settings (59)	Easy trails in natural settings (43.8)
#2 Most Needed	Educational/nat. history trails (60)	Educational/nat. history trails (54.2)	Moderate day hikes in nature (43.7)
#3 Most Needed	Moderate day hikes in nature (56.2)	Moderate day hikes in nature (53.1)	Educational/nat. history trails (41)
#4 Most Needed	Easy/moderate off road biking (52.2)	Handicapped accessible trails (46.9)	Paddle trails without motorboats (36.9)
#5 Most Needed	Handicapped accessible trails (52.1)	Easy/moderate off road biking (46.3)	Long/remote day hikes (36.6)
#6 Most Needed	Snowshoeing trails (48.1)	Snowshoeing trails (44.6)	Easy/moderate off road biking (31)
#7 Most Needed	Long/remote day hikes (38.2)	Paddle trails without motorboats (42.8)	Handicapped accessible trails (28.4)
#8 Most Needed	Paddle trails without motorboats (37.6)	Long/remote day hikes (42.8)	Remote/multi-day backpacking (28.3)
#9 Most Needed	Groomed X-Country ski trails (37.5)	Groomed X-Country ski trails (38.8)	Snowshoeing trails (23.8)
# 10 Most Needed	Remote/multi-day backpacking (26.5)	Remote/multi-day backpacking (32.6)	Groomed X-Country ski trails (21.1)
For Survey Details, See Appendix B.			

Water Trails: The State of Maine does not have an official **water trails** designation. Likewise, there are not substantial numbers of water trails in Maine registered in any official capacity with federal or other programs. Notable exceptions include the state-administered/federally designated Allagash Wilderness Waterway (designated as a wild river in the federal Wild & Scenic River System), the 740-mile Northern Forest Canoe Trail (with approximately half its length in western/northern Maine), and the 375-mile Maine Island Trail (America’s oldest water trail). There are also significant state and internationally managed resources such as the Penobscot River Corridor and St. Croix International Waterway as well as other traditional paddling routes with conserved lands and recreational access (even if not thought of formally as a water trail

Within the last several years, interest in water trails appears to be growing. Maine Trail finder now lists 10 unique paddling destinations on its site as part of a pilot expansion into water trail listings. This includes large

trails such as the Maine Island Trail and Northern Forest Canoe Trail as well as smaller trails in more developed portions of the state (such as the Royal River in Cumberland County). *It is worth emphasizing that Maine has a vast and amazing array of water recreation opportunities. These resources have traditionally been used by generations of outdoorsmen and outdoorswomen but Maine lags many other states in terms of water trails with organized management and stewardship.*

Equestrian Trails: Trails built first and foremost for Equestrian (horseback riding) use are rare in Maine. However, horseback riding is an allowed use of shared-use roads on Maine Public Lands as well as over 300 miles of multiple-use rail trails owned and managed by the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands (through its Off-Road-Vehicle program). Additionally, trails are available at Mt. Blue, Camden Hills, and Bradbury Mountain State Parks. In some cases, local equestrian interests have coordinated with ATV trails to support trail construction and maintenance that can safely accommodate horses.

Snowmobile Trails: There are nearly 14,000 miles of maintained **snowmobile trails** available throughout Maine. Many of the trails interconnect providing a statewide network linking even beyond Maine's borders into Canada and New Hampshire. This growing network of trails is the product of a cooperative program between snowmobile clubs, municipalities, private landowners and the Bureau of Parks and Lands.

ATV Trails: Maine has over 6,000 miles of maintained **ATV trails** across the state. As with snowmobile trails, ATV trails provide major recreational options for residents and visitors alike while injecting economic activity into local communities. **Table 16** lists ATV and snowmobile trail miles by county.

Table 16: Designated ATV & Snowmobile Trails by County		
County	Trail Miles (ATV)	Trail Miles (Snowmobile)
Androscoggin County	67	589
Aroostook County	1475	1904
Cumberland County	102	640
Franklin County	474	1008
Hancock County	350	343
Kennebec County	65	725
Knox County	0	230
Lincoln County	6	288
Oxford County	420	1514
Penobscot County	705	1966
Piscataquis County	550	1247
Sagadahoc County	65	160
Somerset County	635	1498
Waldo County	85	469
Washington County	910	739
York County	152	440
Total	6,061	13,760

As with non-motorized trails, the 2014-2019 ME SCORP Survey provides insights into what survey respondents view as priority needs relating to the supply of motorized trails in Maine. Table 16 shares trail needs by ranking.

Table 17: Motorized Trail Resource Types Rated as Either “Needed” or “Very Needed” (Ranked)

Trail Resource Type Ranking	Maine General Population Sample (% Sample Ranking “Needed” or “Very Needed”)	Maine Resident/ Recreationists Sample (% Sample Ranking “Needed” or “Very Needed”)	Non-Resident/ Recreationists Sample (% Sample Ranking “Needed” or “Very Needed”)
#1 Most Needed	Community linking ATV trails (36.8)	Community linking ATV trails (42.3)	Community linking ATV trails (25.7)
#2 Most Needed	Community linking snowmobile trails (30.3)	Community linking snowmobile trails (40.2)	Remote/vista ATV trails (23.9)
#3 Most Needed	Close-to-home snowmobiling (28.4)	Off trail snowmobiling (38.1)	Community linking snowmobile trails (23.2)
#4 Most Needed	Close-to-home ATV (27.1)	Close-to-home ATV (37.5)	Off trail snowmobiling (22.8)
#5 Most Needed	Off trail snowmobiling (25.7)	Remote/vista ATV trails (37.3)	Remote/vista snowmobile trails (20.9)
#6 Most Needed	Remote/vista ATV trails (24.3)	Close-to-home snowmobiling (36)	Close-to-home ATV (19.4)
#7 Most Needed	Shared/groomed snowmobile trails (24.3)	Remote/vista snowmobile trails (33.5)	Close-to-home snowmobiling (19)
#8 Most Needed	Remote/vista snowmobile trails (23.7)	Shared/groomed snowmobile trails (30.8)	ATV/rail trail/shared use trails (17.7)
#9 Most Needed	ATV/rail trail/shared use trails (22.7)	ATV/rail trail/shared use trails (29.9)	Shared/groomed snowmobile trails (16.8)
# 10 Most Needed	ATV trails with challenging terrain (14.7)	ATV trails with challenging terrain (18.7)	ATV trails with challenging terrain (13.9)
For Survey Details, See Appendix B.			

Boating Facilities: Access to an individual pond, river, stream, bay, etc. for general boating, fishing access, and other water-based recreation is an important component of Maine’s outdoor recreation mix. Maine has strong demand for recreation on the water and as a result, there has long been a major effort to provide boating access to the state’s water bodies. **Table 18** lists total boating facilities as well as hand-carry only boating sites.

Table 18: Public Boating Access Sites by County		
County	Public Boat Launch Sites (All Types- Including Trailerable Ramps)	Hand-Carry Only Sites
Androscoggin County	13	3
Aroostook County	58	13
Cumberland County	39	6
Franklin County	22	9
Hancock County	61	12
Kennebec County	51	15
Knox County	16	4
Lincoln County	15	1
Oxford County	40	12
Penobscot County	49	9
Piscataquis County	63	23
Sagadahoc County	11	3
Somerset County	46	13
Waldo County	18	3
Washington County	79	25
York County	21	2
Total	602	153

Access to remote ponds and other destinations via **aircraft** is a long-time Maine tradition tied to both recreational use and commercial operations (in association with sightseeing, transportation to sporting camps, private camps, etc.). Though data is limited in this area, it is a noteworthy resource to be documented here.



Sunset on Moosehead Lake near Lily Bay State Park

Chapter 4: Implementation Strategies

The 2009-2014 Maine SCORP, which this plan updates, used “connectivity” as a framework theme tying together priorities for outdoor recreation in Maine. Connectivity was recognized as a key element for trail-based recreation and habitat conservation (on which so much outdoor recreation activity in Maine is based). Furthermore, connectivity was identified as a way to organize thinking about how Maine citizens and visitors alike interact with and understand outdoor recreation opportunities. Finally, connectivity served as a construct encapsulating the social and community elements stemming from Maine’s strong sense of place and outdoor traditions.

This plan update re-affirms the theme of connectivity. Priorities identified five years ago largely remain priorities today. While these priorities are not all carried over completely unchanged and new points of emphasis have been defined, the overall thrust remains consistent. Maine still needs to ensure earnest efforts are made to connect outdoor recreation with Mainers lives and communities.

Additionally, outdoor recreation remains a core focus for tourism and economic development – which further enhances the capacity of communities to grow and serve not only Mainers, but visitors to our state, and in so doing, expands our local, regional, and statewide economies.

Priority Area 1: Connect More Mainers of All Ages with the Health and Wellness Benefits of Outdoor Recreation



Maine needs to address health issues and outdoor recreation can be part of the road to improvement. Outdoor recreation provides multiple benefits to individuals and society. Time spent engaged in physical outdoor activities improves health and wellness. Simply having more experiences in outdoor settings provides emotional and psychological benefits that positively impact many health issues exhibited in an increasingly sedentary population. Experiences out in nature are positively correlated by researchers with childhood stress relief⁴², coping with Attention-Deficit- Disorder⁴³, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity-Disorder, and obesity prevention.⁴⁴

Maine has realities and challenges associated with health and wellness. Maine’s population is the oldest in the nation measured in terms of median age (42.7 years). According to 2013 population estimates, 17.3 percent of Maine’s population is 65 years of age or older, compared to 13 percent nationally. “Baby boomers,” aged 46 to 64 in 2010, are the largest segment of Maine’s population, while youth, under age 18, are the smallest. A large majority of Maine’s baby boomer population was over 50 years of age in 2010⁴⁵.

⁴² Wells NM & Evans GW (2003). *Environment and Behavior*, 35(3):311-330

⁴³ Taylor AF, Kuo FE & Sullivan WC (2001). *Environment and Behavior*, 33(1):54-77.

⁴⁴ Council on Sports Medicine and Fitness and Council on School Health (2006). *Pediatrics*, 117(5):1834-1842.

⁴⁵ Retrieved from: <http://maine.gov/economist/projections/index.shtml>

An increasingly older population is predicted, with increasing health and disability issues. Approximately 20 percent of Maine residents 65 years of age and older have an ambulatory disability.

Maine's population also has the highest-in – New England adult obesity rate, at 28.9 percent -placing it at number 27 out of all states on the obesity scale.⁴⁶ Childhood obesity, among children aged 10 to 17 years old, was 12.5 percent in 2011, ranking 42nd among all states.

Given the imperative to serve an aging population and to address inactivity and obesity across generations, and given the demonstrated positive impacts of outdoor recreation, it is essential that public and private entities strive to provide outdoor recreation opportunities where youth and adults of all abilities can get out, get active, and experience the health benefits found in the outdoors. That includes reducing the need to drive to designated recreation areas. It also includes improving connectivity between outdoor recreation assets and neighborhoods within towns, as well as with other recreation, cultural and economic assets within those towns or in neighboring towns.

Strategies

A. Encourage Increased Participation in Outdoor Activities by Raising Awareness of Outdoor Recreation's Health & Wellness Benefits:

- Encourage collaborative efforts between recreation and health groups in order to increase participation by appealing to a range of motivations. Collaboration and coordination between groups such as the Maine Department of Health and Human Services; Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry; Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife; and Department of Education (and others) as well as collaborations amongst other recreation and health organizations should result in enhanced awareness of health benefits from being outside.
- Continue and enhance programs in which doctors can “prescribe” park passes as a tool for enhancing health and wellness, especially of youth patients.
- Partner with YMCAs, gyms, etc. to promote the values of indoor AND outdoor recreation for a healthy lifestyle and fitness goals.
- Better integrate with and support the capacity for schools to make outdoor recreation a meaningful part of health education. Additionally, look to integrate outdoor recreation into all academic content areas.
- Foster and support the growth of clubs and groups utilizing outdoor recreation resources (e.g., trails, water access, etc.) for healthy activities such as weekly walking/biking groups, outdoor yoga, scheduled paddling outings, etc. Promote dialog between resource managers and group organizers to facilitate healthy lifestyle oriented events. Look for opportunities to develop recreation sites well-suited to formal and informal group activity.
- Develop outreach strategies identifying audiences, messages, and delivery mechanisms that will get beyond preaching to the choir and attract more people to become more active in the outdoors.

⁴⁶ Retrieved from: <http://healthyamericans.org/reports/>

- Promote educational efforts to assuage fears and showcase benefits in order to help combat certain cultural trends that undercut outdoor recreation. Efforts to raise appreciation of outdoor recreation should recognize that there are fears and misconceptions that may keep some potential participants from enjoying outdoor recreation opportunities. Fears ranging from “stranger danger” (youth abductions) to insect bites need to be addressed via education and awareness campaigns.
- Develop professional, targeted messages at specific audiences to emphasize why getting outside is part of a healthy, fulfilling lifestyle. Coordinate and collaborate with agencies and individuals understanding the science of messaging and communication.
- Develop programming that introduces the outdoors in a FUN and unthreatening way, especially when targeted at audiences lacking outdoor recreation experience.

B. Improve Awareness of Existing Outdoor Recreation Opportunities:

- Provide readily available information on access to public lands and water. New media as well as traditional information dissemination routes are tools for getting information out to broad swaths of the public. If one goal is to reconnect more Mainers with the outdoors, it is logical to assume that some may need more of a guiding hand than existing activity enthusiasts, who largely know where to go. This is supported by research looking into rural youth in Maine, who were shown to lack awareness of where to go for outdoor recreation.⁴⁷
- Improve signage, kiosks, and other on-site public information in order to increase public awareness and enhance visitor experiences. Many Maine sites need improvement in this area, including wayfinding signage, improved maps, interpretive messages, safety information, and use guidelines.
- Recognize that outdoor recreation, even when associated with public resources such as parks, is a product that requires marketing; use best practices of communication, branding, and marketing to connect potential users with existing resources.
- Improve the quality and availability of GIS-based (Geographic Information System) data and maps. GIS systems serve as an underpinning of mapping efforts aimed at enhanced publicly available maps, brochures, websites, and global positioning systems data. Coordinating various public and private GIS-based mapping efforts, would benefit public information efforts by supporting improved management efficiency.
- Encourage municipalities to develop and maintain a data base and guide for outdoor recreation opportunities within their boundaries and to make this information available to their residents, businesses and visitors. Further, encourage data sharing between municipalities and the state for regional and statewide planning efforts.



⁴⁷ Muskie School of Public Service. 2008. *Active Living for Rural Youth* Retrieved from: <https://muskie.usm.maine.edu/Publications/rural/pb37/ActiveLiving.pdf>

C. Support Programs and Expand Opportunities that Provide Youth with Experiences that Connect Them with Nature:

- Continue youth outreach programs such as Take It Outside!, and Hooked on Fishing. These programmatic efforts build community support for outdoor recreation, celebrate life-long, healthy activities, develop skills and knowledge needed to enjoy the outdoors, and link outdoor recreation activities with environmental stewardship.
- Look for new partnerships to reach more youth, perhaps with schools, youth groups, parent networks, etc. Research by the Outdoor Industry Foundation finds that parents, friends, and relatives, are by far the strongest factors influencing youth to be active outdoors.⁴⁸
- Consider opportunities to use technology as a conduit to the outdoors. Despite the problems associated with too much time spent in front of screens, there are opportunities to use technology as a tool for getting some youth outside more. Smart phone apps, geocaching or Earthcacheing (both involving sleuthing using a GPS receiver), digital photography and video use, and social networking can have value in getting get kids outside.
- Support new recreation infrastructure aimed at activities of interest to youth, such as biking, hiking trails close to home or school, and sports oriented facilities that can be adapted over time to changing interests.
- Provide outdoor recreation opportunities of specific interest to working parents. Working parents are a key piece of the youth issue. This could include family friendly trails near home, as well as at state parks and lands within a short drive of population centers. Running trails sized to accommodate strollers are an example of how this demographic might be reached.
- Continue to support traditional sports and sports facilities such as baseball/softball, soccer, etc. but also look for opportunities to support non-traditional “sports” and extracurricular activities such as outing clubs, mountain bike teams, etc. Especially target facilities and programs that target youth not well served by traditional physical activities.
- Recognize that Maine’s rural character with dispersed residences in many communities creates scenarios where students travel long distances on buses to reach and return from school and other community resources. Explore opportunities such as “late” busses and/or other creative transportation approaches to address youth “stuck” with no means for reaching recreation resources. This is especially relevant for lower-income families struggling with transportation costs and/or work schedules.
- Work with all levels of education to support hands-on student stewardship programs engaging students directly in the care and enjoyment of natural areas.

⁴⁸ Outdoor Industry Foundation (2008) *Outdoor Recreation Participation Study*.

D. Provide a Broad Range of Outdoor Opportunities to Meet the Varied Interests and Abilities of Adults, Especially the Older and Less-Abled Public:

- Provide more opportunities suitable for Maine’s seniors. Programs, partnerships, and facilities well suited to specific senior interests should be developed and/or promoted. Recreation opportunities for Maine seniors should encompass mind and body and provide a range of settings and identified attributes. Viewing and learning activities such as guided nature walks and bird watching as well as resources such as easy walking/hiking trails are particularly attractive to older recreationists.



- Provide outdoor recreation opportunities of specific interest to working adults including young professionals and working parents. Working parents are a key piece of the youth issue. Additionally, recreation is a significant factor in quality of life, and research shows that businesses not tied to a specific resource (e.g., technology firms) value quality of life highly as they consider where to locate or relocate⁴⁹. Therefore, providing desirable recreation opportunities for this demographic has benefits not just as a health strategy but also as a business attraction strategy. Quality of life and outdoor recreation opportunities are and should remain a competitive advantage for Maine. In particular, vibrant town centers with close to town/close to home recreation amenities such as parks and trails can fit well into the time-limited lifestyles characterizing modern professional and personal life.
- Support investments in rehabilitation and construction of trails and other recreational amenities designed for the physically challenged and disabled populations. Support development of easy to moderate nature trails in a variety of close to home settings, as well as at destination sites located in more remote areas of the state.
- Support improvements to State and municipal parks to address changing interests and needs of the recreating public. Specific priorities identified in the 2014 Maine Outdoor Recreation Survey include modern bathrooms and bath houses with running water, and flush toilets; water and electric hook-ups at campgrounds; family-friendly cabins, tents, and yurts; availability of more interpretive programs and self-guided nature trails; and availability of equipment rentals.

E. Connect Mainers with Close to Home Outdoor Recreation Opportunities:

- Facilitate access to trails and open space; local access not requiring driving is especially of interest. The call from American Trails for trails within 15 minutes of every American home and workplace, and from The Trust for Public Land for access to park and open space within a 10 minute walk are both soundly based in the evidence that proximity is directly related to use. Trails at the local level that are convenient to the local

⁴⁹ Crompton, John L., Lisa L. Love, and Thomas A. More. "An Empirical Study of the Role of Recreation, Parks and Open Space in Companies' (Re) Location Decisions," *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 1997: 37-58.

population are vitally important for their recreational benefits in and of themselves, but also may serve to provide alternate transportation to other proximate outdoor recreation areas, parks, playgrounds, and similar recreational facilities.

- Recognize that Maine experiences long winters and ensure that outdoor opportunities for Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, ice-fishing access, sledding, skating, snowmobiling, and other winter pursuits are important recreational opportunities. Support efforts to develop recreation opportunities to combat inactivity during the winter months.
- Minimize barriers to connectivity and recreation arising from poor policies or design. Notable, but not exclusive, barriers include those affecting bicyclists and pedestrians. Improved bike and pedestrian access to parks and outdoor recreation areas, especially in more urban areas, benefits health and quality of place objectives while potentially opening up more areas to those without motorized transportation.
- Support efforts to prioritize local trail planning that serves the recreation needs of citizens throughout Maine, with an eye toward those initiatives that also serve to increase access to key community attributes.
- Understand that the tradition of public recreational access to private land is essential if all Mainers, especially those in many rural areas, are to have close to home recreational opportunities ranging from fishing to trail running to snowmobiling. Support landowner relations efforts at all levels from community grassroots to formal state programs.

Priority Area 2: Support Regionally Connected Trail Systems in Maine's Less Developed Regions to Increase Access to Outdoor Recreation for Maine's Rural Population and Enhance Economic Development

Maine is blessed with natural and cultural attractions around which trails of all types have been constructed, including significant regional trails networks. The Appalachian Trail traverses just over 300 miles in Maine; this trail system, along with over 40 related side trails is a segment of a nationally significant hiking system. The state ITS snowmobile trail system provides thousands of miles of well-organized riding. In the last half-decade, ATV trails have become more statewide and organized in scope. On the water, both the Maine Island Trail Association (coastal waterway) and the Northern Forest Canoe Trail (freshwater lakes and rivers) systematically address stewardship, development, information, and outreach. These established trails and other "thematic" trails including scenic byways, natural and cultural history trails, etc. provide valuable recreational opportunities for Maine residents, and also play a role in attracting visitation to Maine's most rural communities.

In Maine's more rural regions, with few exceptions, these regional trails, often linking to and through Maine's Public Reserved Lands, are the backbone of recreation opportunities (as compared to Maine's more developed regions where most state and municipal parks are located). While Maine is known for these regional trails systems, there is opportunity for improvements. These systems still have gaps, and there are opportunities to add more connectivity with local trails and to enhance trail opportunities in these rural regions to reach more

potential users. A more connected system can also help address, at a regional level, the need for support networks capable of realistically dealing with ongoing maintenance.

Coordinating existing trails and filling literal or experiential gaps could have the potential to increase the user base for these trails, enhance tourism (and related economic benefits), and engender volunteerism and trail stewardship.

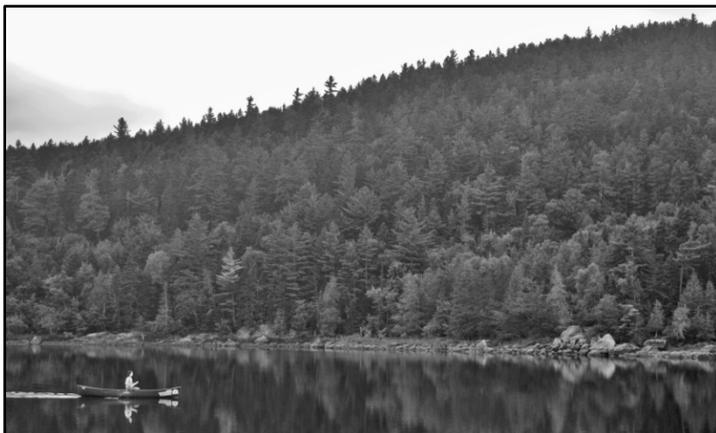
Implementation Strategies:

A. Support Regional Initiatives:

- Support initiatives and larger visions involving multiple communities as a means of addressing both regional and local recreation and tourism objectives. One example is provided by the Northern Forest Canoe Trail (NFCT), a non-profit organized to foster waterway stewardship, support rural economic development, and celebrate community recreation, arts, and heritage along traditional Native American canoe routes linking upstate New York and Maine. NFCT actively works to link paddlers with guides, outfitters, lodging, and other business interests along the trail. Opportunities to integrate trails, whether motorized, non-motorized, multi-use, birding, etc., with local communities should be pursued as they become available.
- Invest in sound planning that will enhance regional trails systems. Support trail system visioning and planning efforts that link tourism and recreation interests by region, and provide a comprehensive vision for trail systems across the state.

B. Encourage and Support Coordinated Management of Extended Trail Systems:

- Support partnerships and alliances that will facilitate coordinated or consolidated collection and management of trail information (GIS and other trail related information). Invest in developing inventories of the full suite of trails available, the condition of those trails.
- Support efforts to coordinate expertise for trail construction, management, and maintenance. As more alliances/partnerships and systems are developed, availability of technical expertise should increase for more trail groups (especially volunteer groups).
- Support coordinated efforts to develop public information on trails through well-designed web and/or print products.



- Support efforts to bring together diverse elements within a community or region to better manage recreation trails. Bringing together business interests, tourism stakeholders, land owners and managers, recreation groups, municipal officials, and other local players results in a coordinated vision for stewardship of regional trails and can also provide the resources needed to support that vision.

- Foster awareness and appreciation for the perspective of private landowners engaged in trail projects and work to ensure landowner concerns are addressed. Continually communicate and collaborate to improve the recreating public's appreciation for use of private lands.

C. Support and Encourage Landowner Collaborations:

- Create and maintain processes that facilitate trail projects across various ownerships, and that minimize conflicts among user groups. Given that trails often are located on private lands (including private conservation organizations), and given that even different public land managers have diverse goals, there is a need to develop mechanisms for better coordination and collaboration in trails planning.
- Support education and awareness efforts aimed at recreationists using private lands to help minimize negative recreation impacts on private lands. Look for opportunities to integrate and coordinate programs such as the national Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly programs as well as existing state landowner relations efforts.
- Encourage organized recreation groups and clubs to be proactive in landowner relations - these groups have an important role in educating users to help minimize and mitigate recreation impacts, and in communicating with landowners.

Priority Area 3: Connect to Future Tourism Markets through Recreation Interests

The Maine Office of Tourism notes, in its Five Year Strategic Plan (2014-2019), notes that of the 4.7 million visitors to Maine from New England, 96 percent are repeat visitors, with little expected increase in the percentage of first-time visitors. However, global demand for authentic nature- and heritage-based experiences is growing and Maine is well positioned to meet this demand. *"Maine's assets critical to attracting visitors include its natural landscape . . . , natural resources . . . and wildlife . . . and the means for enjoying these things [recreation trails, drives/byways]."*⁵⁰ The report concludes that, based on consumer trends,

"tomorrow's" visitors will want:

- *Special interest experiences – traveling with/for a purpose*
- *Interactive learning experiences*
- *Authentic, unique experiences*
- *Physical or psychological challenges*
- *Customized, individualized travel"*

⁵⁰ Retrieved from: http://visitmaine.com/assets/downloads/Maine_5yrPlan.pdf

The report further identifies the growth target for future visitors to be Millennials, and international travelers. . It is noteworthy that non-residents who did not purchase a hunting or fishing license, register a snowmobile or ATV, or camp at a Maine State Park campground were not represented in the University of Maine 2014-2019 Maine SCORP Survey. Furthermore, the survey would not have reached non-residents who have not previously visited Maine, regardless of whether they fish, hunt, camp, etc. In light of this, the Maine Office of Tourism’s profile of “tomorrow’s visitors” provides insights on how to target new visitors to increase economic activity through outdoor recreation-related tourism.

Implementation Strategies:

A. Foster and Support Mechanisms that Enhance “Base Camp” Communities as Centers of Information for Regional Recreation Opportunities:

- Support efforts to bring together diverse elements within a community or region to better promote recreation. Business interests, tourism stakeholders, land owners and managers, recreation groups, officials, and a host of other local players can produce richer projects with more potential for positive community impacts.
- Support the development and management of visitor centers and similar central facilities for orienting visitors to the story of and opportunities in a region.

B. Expand and Diversify Maine’s Outdoor Recreation Offerings to Appeal to Emerging Trends, Especially Target Visitor Profiles:

- Create a state water trail branding program or similar initiative to develop and promote water trails. Ensure proper partnerships and management capacity guidelines are woven into any initiative. Focus on “low-hanging fruit” where community/regional groups can come together to better package existing opportunities primarily requiring collaboration, public information, and planning to develop a coordinated experience that will attract expanded community enjoyment and increased economic activity.
- Use partnerships between public land managers/agencies and recreation interests to respond to the growing demand for adventure races, festivals, and other events in which event organizers ranging from birders to mountain bikers seek destinations for pre-scheduled competitions and events.
- Continue to explore and expand “trail” opportunities like the Maine Birding Trail. Consider developing and marketing itineraries pairing outdoor recreation with other aspects of Maine such as cuisine, traditional crafts, agriculture, etc.



Priorities for Use of Land Water Conservation (LWCF) Fund Monies

A. *Strategically Use LWCF Funds for Recreation Areas or Facilities that Provide New or Expanded Outdoor Recreation Opportunities, with Priority for Opportunities:*

- that serve youth, seniors, the disabled, or other demographic components that are underserved;
- that increase access to recreation and natural areas, particularly in areas close to population centers;
- that provide multiple public benefits in addition to recreation benefits – i.e., address public health issues (e.g., obesity), economic development (e.g., nature-based tourism, quality of place), and protection of ecological values; or
- that increase connectivity among trail systems or expand regional trails systems, especially in Maine’s more rural areas..

B. *Support the Rehabilitation or Replacement of the State’s Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure, Including Improvements for Accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act.*

- Rehabilitation or replacement of Maine’s aging outdoor recreation infrastructure, including the provision of ADA-accessible trails and facilities, should be a high priority in the upcoming years. The 2006 white paper, *Sustaining Maine’s Green Infrastructure*, lists \$40 million in need over 5 years for State Parks and Historic Sites⁵¹. It also lists \$6 million for MDOT related nature tourism infrastructure (over 4 years). These figures do not represent the significant needs for rehabilitation and improvements to municipal facilities. Therefore, rehabilitation and/or replacement of existing resources should continue to be a focus of LWCF funding.



⁵¹ Harris, Jody (Ed.). 2006. *Sustaining Maine’s Green Infrastructure: A white paper prepared for the Governor’s Steering Committee on Maine’s Natural Resource-based Industry*. Maine State Planning Office, Augusta, Maine.