

Appendix E

Land Assets

The major land assets are established in the Act and are listed here with additional logical sub-categories. Those specifically identified by the Act are noted with an asterisk (*). Those subcategories not listed in the companion legislation are those logical components of the major categories.

In 1996 the Land Acquisition Priorities Advisory Committee convened. The Committee's final report outlined a comprehensive set of goals and recommendations to guide future public land acquisitions and other conservation strategies.

As part of its preparation for issuing this workbook, the current LMF Board reviewed the LMF statutory requirements, LMF bond requirements and LAPAC report to develop the priorities and scoring system described herein.

Land Assets

Recreational Lands*

- Lands offering hunting and fishing opportunities *
- Lands having trail corridors or hiking trails
- Lands offering opportunities for nature study
- Lands having cross-country skiing opportunities
- Lands having snowmobile trails
- Lands offering traditional camping or picnicking areas

Water Access Lands*

- Coastal beach access for swimming or sunbathing
- Inland beach access for swimming or sunbathing
- Fishing access on streams and lakes
- Fishing access on oceanfront (including clamming and worming)
- Coastal boat launching sites
- Inland boat launching sites
- Canoe access sites (rivers, lakes, ocean)
- Recreational sites (camping or picnic sites) on streams, lakes
- Recreational sites (camping or picnic sites) on the coast

Lands Supporting Vital Ecological or Conservation Functions and Values

- Wildlife habitat *
- Wetlands *
- Lands of importance to fish and wildlife because of their limited occurrence or biological diversity/productivity (e.g., coastal islands, salt marshes, inland wetlands, riparian areas)
- Lands providing public water supply protection when that purpose is consistent and does not conflict with the natural resource conservation and recreation purposes of this chapter.*
- Lands of special importance to specific species in Maine (e.g. deer wintering areas*, blue heron rookeries, fish spawning areas)
- Lands essential to maintaining wildlife migration corridors, or shore and seabird nesting habitats
- Lands representative of ecosystem types of Maine and essential to the preservation of the range of natural biological diversity

Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Natural Communities, Plants, or Wildlife Habitat *

- Habitats which are naturally rare due to range limitations
- Habitats of special importance to the restoration of endangered and threatened species (e.g. bald eagle nesting territories, least tern nesting beaches)
- Fragile mountain areas * (e.g. alpine tundra vegetation)
- Peatlands (certain types)
- Old-Growth Forests (representatives of common & rare types)
- Rare wetland types (e.g. fens, cedar swamps, patterned bogs)

Areas of Scenic* Interest and Prime Physical Features*

- Undeveloped shorelines* (coastal, rivers, & lakes)
- Significant, undeveloped archeological sites*¹
- Mountain viewsheds
- Visual access to water (rivers, lakes, ocean)
- Areas along state highway system
- Headlands
- Waterfalls
- Gorges
- Whitewater rapids
- Mountain ridges
- Beach-dune systems
- Eskers
- Cobble beaches

¹ In 2007, the Legislature authorized the Board to consider protection of “significant, undeveloped archeological sites”. Applicants claiming value under this category must have a written endorsement from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission that describes the significance of the archeological resources on the site.

Farmland and Open Space*

- Prime farmlands
- Unique farmlands
- Multiple-use forestland
- Lands near population clusters available for passive or low-intensity active recreation
- River corridor greenways

If the primary purpose of your proposal is to protect a working farm -- and it has a secondary or minor conservation or recreation component -- then the project may fall under the Farmland & Open Space category. If the primary purpose of the proposal is conservation or recreation -- and it has a secondary or minor component that involves the protection of agricultural values -- then the project should be submitted under the Recreation Land category.

The purpose of the farmland investment is to protect Maine's most productive farmlands from conversion into non-agricultural uses and seeks to protect farmlands comprised of soils identified and classified by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service as "Prime Farmland", "Farmland of Statewide Importance", "Farmland Soils of Local Importance" and those lands classified as 'Unique Farmlands' that do not rely on prime, statewide or locally important agricultural soils, but do produce important high-value crops such as blueberries and cranberries. Additionally, LMF seeks to protect properties that sustain farming operations in areas of the State that support and anchor a viable agricultural economy.

Ecological Reserves

- Ecological Reserves are lands specifically set aside to protect and monitor the State of Maine's natural ecosystems. These lands are managed by the Bureau of Parks and Public Lands, and the Maine Natural Areas Program oversees the long-term ecological monitoring plan. Ecological reserves should serve as benchmarks which will provide important information about changes to our environment. These sites should be used for scientific research, long-term environmental monitoring, education, and in most cases may also provide important outdoor recreation opportunities.

The project must state that the applicants intend to actively seek designation as an ecological reserve or to be added to an existing ecological reserve, and to manage the project property as such in perpetuity. Ecological reserve as defined by MRS 12 Chap. 220 Subchapter 1 section 1805. Applicants must have a letter of support from the Bureau of Parks and Lands for the inclusion of this property in the state's Ecological Reserve system.

River or Trail System

- The project must provide documentation that the project lands will enhance the protection and integrity of the proposed river segment by fostering an upgrade in water quality, or preventing further degradation of water quality, increasing critical riparian habitat for fish and waterfowl, fish passage, and recreational opportunities. It's the intent of this category that the property include frontage on a water course.
- A number of trail development efforts in Maine including the State snowmobile trail network, the Appalachian Trail, and the island trail network have proven very successful. However, there are additional recreational trail needs and opportunities that require attention including the development of extended loop hiking trails (2-5 days), as well as the creation of extended interconnected multi-use trail systems for uses such as hiking, biking, skiing, and snowmobiling and ATV riding. In particular, acquisition efforts should focus on opportunities to link existing public land holdings by trail corridors and to acquire trail corridors such as abandoned railroad beds. The project must provide documentation of the trail attributes.

Islands and Undeveloped Coastline

- Islands, particularly coastal islands, have become increasingly sought after for development, threatening bird nesting habitat and other sensitive ecological values. The State, private conservation organizations, and the federal government have successfully protected many valuable islands in recent years. However, additional acquisition efforts are needed to protect those islands identified as having important resource values that remain vulnerable to development and habitat loss. To qualify for this multiplier, the project must provide documentation of the island attributes.
- Maine is famous for its coastline. However, only a small percentage of the coast is in conservation ownership. In particular, there are significant undeveloped stretches of shore, including coastal wetlands and estuaries that provide critical habitat to many species of wildlife and offer opportunities for expanded coastal recreation. The land must be on tidal water and the proposal must provide documentation that the project lands are undeveloped and will provide critical habitat to many species of wildlife and offer opportunities for expanded coastal recreation.

Significant Mountains

- While many of the state's highest peaks are currently in the public domain, there are still a number of significant mountains in private hands that are worthy of public acquisition. Acquisition efforts should focus on those mountain areas with outstanding vistas, established recreational uses, or significant ecological values, as well as those that are in close proximity to population centers. The proposal must provide documentation of the significant mountain attributes.