

Town of Isle au Haut Comprehensive Plan

2026 – 2036



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Thank you to the many community members who contributed their time and insight through public meetings, surveys, written comments, and one on one conversations.

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A Vision for Isle au Haut

Isle au Haut will remain a small, remote island community defined by its wild character, working waterfront, and strong sense of stewardship. The community supports a stable year-round population, safe and affordable housing options, and essential services that sustain daily life while respecting the island's limited infrastructure and environmental constraints. Land use and development will be carefully managed to protect natural resources, coastal and marine ecosystems, scenic landscapes, and historic settlement patterns. The island will strengthen resilience to climate change and extreme weather, support a diverse local economy rooted in fishing and small-scale enterprises, and coordinate with regional partners where shared services and infrastructure are necessary.

Executive Summary and Key Priorities

This Comprehensive Plan provides a framework to guide land use, public investment, and policy decisions in Isle au Haut over the next decade. It is based on local data and analysis, extensive community engagement, and a structured process of identifying needs, setting goals, objectives, and strategies to achieve the community's vision.

This plan also fulfills important legal and administrative functions. It meets the State of Maine's minimum requirements for comprehensive planning and is reviewed for compliance with the Growth Management Act. It serves as the policy foundation for the Town's zoning and land use regulations and supports eligibility for many state grant and funding programs. The Town's first and only officially adopted comprehensive plan was in 2011. There was an update in 2016, although it was never adopted by the town voters.

The plan addresses a broad range of topics, challenges, and strategies across all required chapters, reflecting the full set of issues important to the community. At the same time, because the Town has limited staff, funding, and volunteer capacity, a focused approach to implementation is necessary. Through community surveys, public workshops, inventory and analysis, and planning committee discussions, five priority areas were identified as the most critical near- to mid-term focus areas. These priorities do not replace the broader goals of the plan, but are intended to help direct limited resources, guide funding and fundraising efforts, and support coordinated action by the Town, community organizations, volunteers, and regional partners.

How to Navigate This Plan

This plan is organized by topic chapters, and readers are encouraged to review the sections most relevant to their interests. Each chapter can be read independently. For those seeking a quicker overview, the most useful sections are the **Key Findings and Issues**, which summarize the major conditions and challenges identified during the planning process, and the **Goals, Objectives, and Strategies**, which outline the actions the Town intends to pursue over the coming years. Reviewing these sections provides a concise understanding of the plan's main conclusions and recommended actions.

Key Priorities and Challenges

Priority	Challenges
Reducing Barriers to Year-Round Housing	Limited pathways from rental to homeownership
	Lack of affordable buildable land due to septic, road, or utility constraints
	Conversion of year-round homes to seasonal properties
	High cost of building materials and construction
Sustaining a Year-Round Population	Lack of affordable year-round housing
	Keeping the school viable with enough school age children
	Lack of stable year-round employment
Maintaining Essential Services and Infrastructure	Limited fire protection capacity
	Limited funds for capital projects
	Limited access to routine and emergency medical care
	Continued maintenance of island roads
	Cost and continuing service with waste disposal services including trash, bulky waste, and recycling
	High cost and limited frequency of barge services
	Long-term viability of essential island services (power company, boat company, store)
	Maintenance and limitations at the town dock and thorofare
Protecting the Community from Climate Risks	Inadequate wildfire prevention measures and forest management
	Warming ocean temperatures affecting fisheries
	Flooding and sea level rise threatening critical infrastructure such as roads and fuel tanks
	Navigating the impacts to local service providers with a transition to renewable energy and reduction in use of fossil fuels
Strengthening Local Leadership and Capacity	Reliance on a small group of year-round residents for civic roles
	Improved communication among community members about prioritizing island needs
	Achieving strong community communication
	Limited capacity for planning, grants, and implementation of projects
	Concerns about equitable representation in decision-making

Community Engagement

To develop a comprehensive plan that reflects the community's values, priorities, and long-term vision, the Planning Committee and the Hancock County Planning Commission (HCPC) conducted a series of public engagement activities using multiple methods. These efforts were designed to reach a broad cross-section of the community and gather input at key stages of the planning process. The information collected directly informed the plan's vision, priorities, and policy direction.

Community Visioning Session

Two community visioning sessions were held in fall 2024, one in person and one virtual. The in-person session took place at Town Hall and was attended by approximately 50 participants. The purpose of the session was to introduce the comprehensive planning process and gather input on desired community character and key challenges over the next 10 to 20 years. Activities included an overview presentation, small-group discussions facilitated by HCPC staff and planning committee members, and individual reflection through a poster and sticky-note exercise. The virtual session mirrored the in-person format and included approximately 10 participants.

Community Survey

A community survey assessed public opinion on a broad range of topics relevant to the comprehensive plan. The survey was open from February through June 2025. Outreach included 122 postcards mailed to all Isle au Haut post office boxes, distribution through the ICDC mailing list, flyers posted around town, direct emails through multiple listservs, promotion at community events, and announcements on social media and the Town website.

The survey received 111 responses. Of respondents, 25% were year-round residents (6–12 months on Isle au Haut), 68% were seasonal residents, and 7% were non-residents. Full survey results are included in the appendix.

Community Priorities Session

A community priorities workshop and exhibit was held at Town Hall in July 2025. The goal was to review and refine the top community priorities identified through the survey, visioning sessions, committee discussions, and other feedback, and to inform the development of strategies. The workshop included a brief presentation followed by an interactive poster exercise. Five stations were set up, one for each priority area, with posters listing associated challenges. Participants ranked each challenge as high, medium, or not a priority and provided written feedback on potential strategies.

ISLE AU HAUT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Future Land Use Plan Event

Comp Plan Community Event(s) & Lunch

**SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 15TH**
TIME: 12:00PM
LOCATION: TOWN HALL
BYO PLATES, CUPS, AND UTENSILS

**MONDAY NOVEMBER
17TH**
TIME: 6:00 PM
LOCATION: ZOOM

THE FUTURE LAND USE PLAN IS THE CULMINATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN. IT SHOWS HOW ISLE AU HAUT WOULD LIKE TO GROW, WHERE DEVELOPMENT SHOULD OCCUR, AND WHAT SHOULD BE PROTECTED.

Zoom Link for the November 17th Meeting:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89407060942?pwd=YtQzGoaUdYWZkeD0HAx9T4odiSRmlw.1>

Sandwiches will be provided by the Store.

For More Information email dwellstrom@gmail.com

Approximately 50 people attended the in-person event. Due to the timing, most participants were seasonal residents. To increase year-round resident participation, the activities were converted into a survey and the planning committee conducted direct door-to-door outreach. This follow-up survey received 10 responses from year-round residents.

Future Land Use Workshop

Two future land use workshops were held in fall 2025, one in person and one virtual. The in-person workshop took place at Town Hall and was attended by approximately 20 participants. The purpose of the workshops was to identify preferred locations for housing, discuss appropriate density levels, and consider how flood risk should be addressed in the Future Land Use Plan. Activities included a presentation on the role and requirements of a future land use plan and facilitated small-group discussions, with opportunities for written input. The virtual workshop replicated the in-person activities and included approximately 15 participants.

Data

The population and demographic data in this chapter come primarily from two sources in the U.S. Census — the 2020 Decennial Census and the 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates. To calculate ACS estimates, the Census Bureau selects a random sample of addresses to fill out questionnaires. The 5-Year Estimates are calculated using data that is collected over a 60-month period. It should be noted that the 5-Year Estimates often have a large margin of error due to the small size of the sample subset. For example, the 5-year estimates from the ACS count 0 people between the ages of 15-19 living on Isle au Haut, with a margin of error around ± 11 . This is a large margin of error, and it means the data presented here from the ACS 5-Year Estimates are not reliable and should be interpreted through the lens of alternative information sources. It is noted that this Plan presents Census data, however the Census data is not reflective of population trends observed since 2020, especially considering changing trends associated with the Covid-19 pandemic

Additionally, when the Census Bureau did their 2020 Decennial Census count in 2020, there was an accidental double-count of participants in the data set. This skews the 2020 Decennial Census data that is provided. In an effort to provide a more accurate representation of the Town, the Committee has decided to supplement this data with data from the Public Opinion Survey which received 111 responses, other local data sources, and data collected directly by the committee. These data sources often contradict one another and are interpreted with caution.

Chapter A: Population and Demographics

1. Purpose

Population is a foundational data set to guide all aspects of a comprehensive plan. The understanding of the town's past, current, and future population trends support many other aspects of the plan, such as housing, land use, and transportation, and will help the town of Isle au Haut prepare for future municipal expenditures and investments. This section will:

- Describe Isle au Haut's population trends;
- Discuss how these recent trends relate to and contrast with Knox County, the State; and
- Review likely future population trends.

2. Key Findings & Issues

Isle au Haut has a year-round population, a semi-year-round population, and seasonal population. Since 2000, the island population has fluctuated but is projected to steadily increase over the next decade. Average household size on the island has decreased over the past two decades. Similar to the state as a whole, the median age of island residents has trended upwards. A growing island population is dependent on a number of factors, including the ability to increase and improve housing options for year-round residents. The Town will continue to maintain the schoolhouse and provide a quality education for island students.

3. Key Findings & Issues from Previous Plan, 2016

Isle au Haut has a year-round population, semi-year-round population (defined as those spending 8-10 months of the year on Isle au Haut), and seasonal population. The year-round population of Isle au Haut can be characterized as decreasing. This population also seems to be aging. The semi-year-round population seems to be increasing. The seasonal population continues to be stable or slowly increasing, though residents have noted an increase in the conversion of year-round homes to seasonal residences. The ability to maintain a year-round population and school is a major population and demographic issue facing Isle au Haut.

4. Community Engagement Results

Community engagement identified maintaining a stable year-round population as a central concern, particularly the ability to retain and attract younger individuals and families with school-aged children. At the priorities workshop, sustaining a year-round community was repeatedly identified as a major issue, with affordable housing cited as the primary challenge, followed by keeping the school viable through sufficient enrollment. Survey responses reinforced these concerns, with declining school enrollment consistently identified as one of the community's biggest population-related challenges, closely linked to limited housing options for families and school staff. While difficulties associated with aging on the island were acknowledged across the survey, visioning sessions, and workshop discussions, they were not typically identified as a top priority; many participants noted that aging in place is an inherent aspect of island life and that the community generally

provides informal support, though decreasing access to health services on the Blue Hill Peninsula was seen as worsening these challenges. Survey results show moderate support for increased town investment in senior services, with 46.4% supporting additional investment if offset by grant funding and 28.9% supporting investment funded through property taxes. Open-ended survey responses emphasized long-term risks of population decline, loss of young families, and the potential transition toward a predominantly seasonal community, threatening the town’s civic and institutional stability.

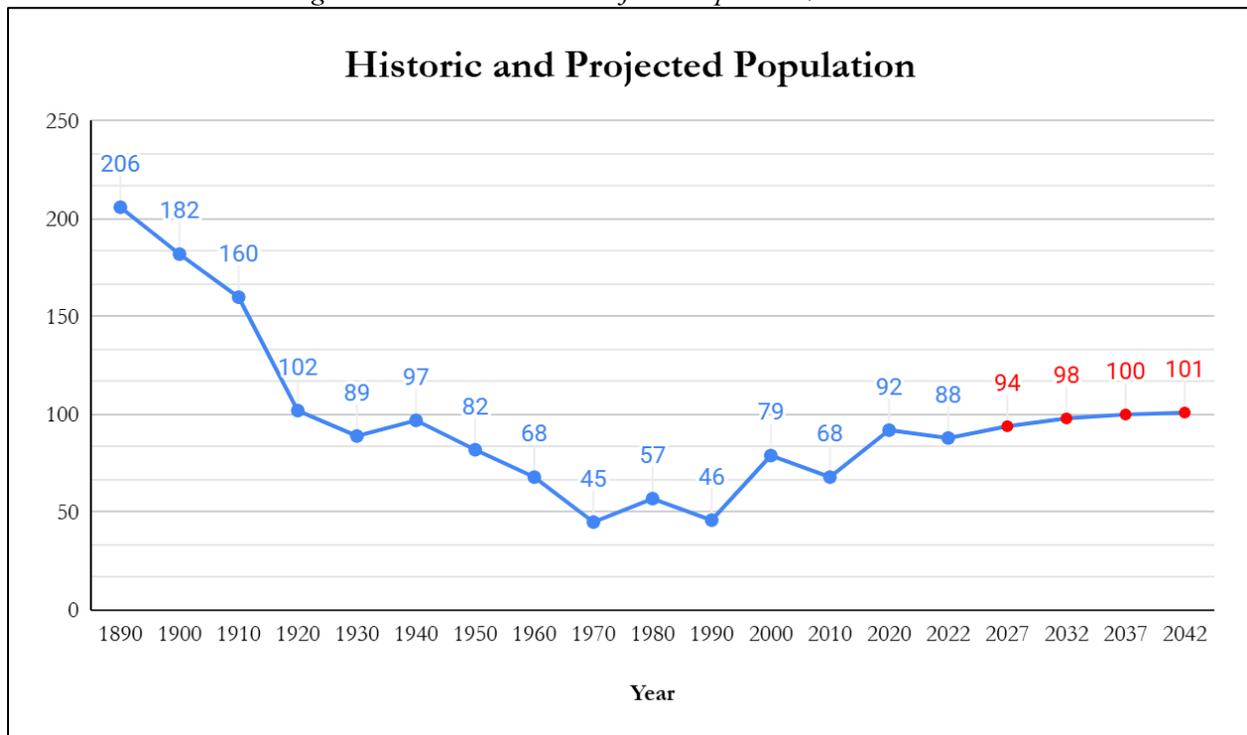
5. Conditions and Trends

A. Population Trends

Figure A-1 shows historical population changes and projections through the year 2042. Population trends in rural and island communities are shaped by factors such as proximity to urban centers, access to transportation, regional economic conditions, and availability of broadband internet.

Isle au Haut reached its highest population in 1880 and has not returned to that level. The population declined steadily into the mid-1900s and fluctuated between roughly 50 and 100 residents from 1940 to 2000. The 2000 Census recorded a large increase (71.7%). The most recent decennial Census counts appear to overstate the year-round population, estimating 92 year-round residents. During development of this plan, the Comprehensive Plan Committee conducted a local count and estimated the population to be closer to 60 residents. This count aligns more closely with the 2023 ACS 5-year, which estimates the Isle au Haut population to be 59.

Figure A-1: Historical and Projected Population, 1800 – 2042



Source: US Decennial Census, Maine State Economist

B. Population Projections

The Maine State Economist’s projections show Isle au Haut’s population increasing through 2042, while Knox County is expected to lose population, and the State overall is projected to experience modest growth followed by leveling off. When compared to locally verified population levels, this represents a substantial percentage increase. However, this significant projected growth is likely a result of the statistical effects associated with very small populations, rather than evidence of a significant expected influx of new year-round residents.

C. Age Characteristics

Isle au Haut has a relatively balanced age distribution for a community of its size. According to the 2020 Decennial Census, the two largest age groups are residents ages 20–44 and 65–84. The smallest age groups are children under age 5 and adults aged 85 and older.

Because the population of Isle au Haut is so small, the percent change from 2010 to 2020 is seemingly dramatic. Most notable, the island experienced decreases in the 5-19 and 45-64 age cohorts and increases in the 20-44 and 65-84 cohorts. The Town followed the larger population trends of both Knox County and the State, which experienced large increases in the groups above sixty-five years of age. One implication of this change could be the need for more senior housing options or senior services to accommodate an aging population.

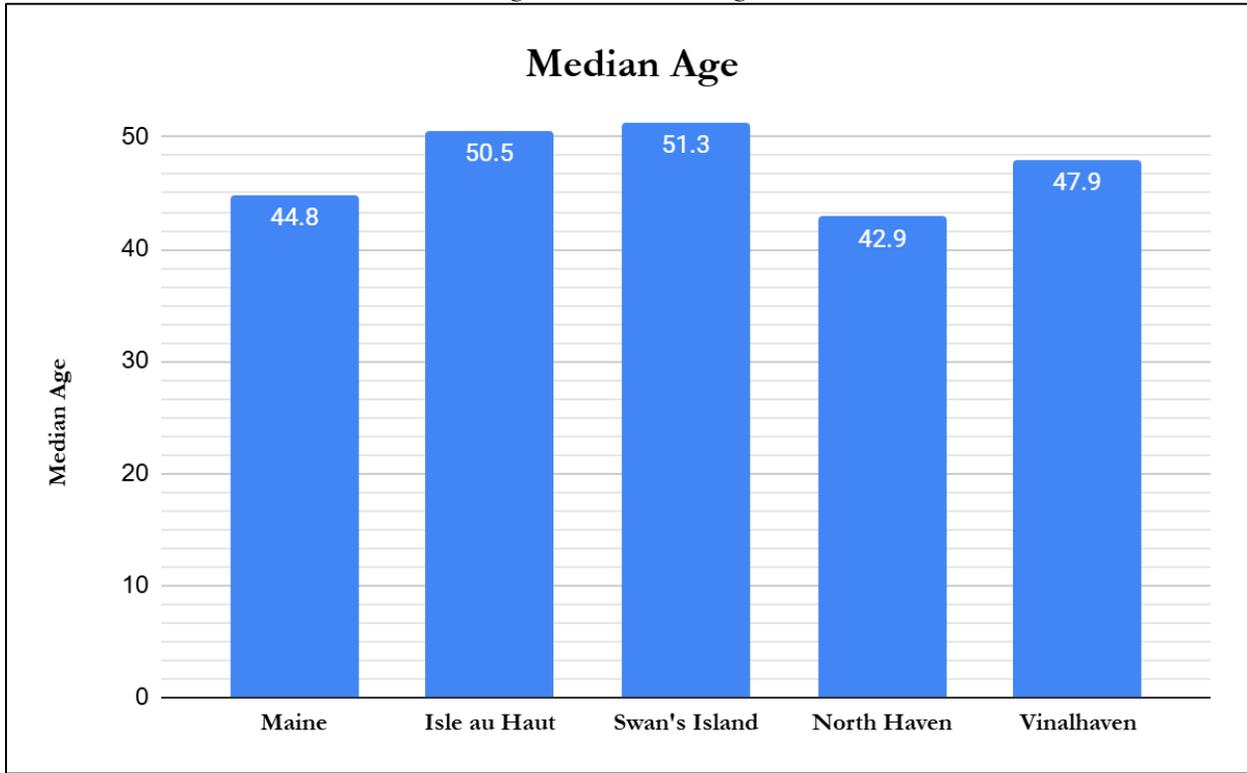
Table A-1: Age Characteristics, 2010 and 2020

Age Group	2010	% of Total	2020	% of Total	% Change 10' – 20'
0 - 4	0	0.0%	2	2.2%	200%
5 - 19	21	24.7%	13	13.0%	-38.1%
20 - 44	25	29.4%	38	30.3%	52.0%
45 - 64	23	27.1%	20	21.7%	-13.1%
65 - 84	16	18.8%	28	30.5%	75.0%
85+	0	0.0%	2	3.3%	200%
Total	85		92		8.2%
Median Age	49.5		50.5		2%

Source: 2000, 2010, and 2020 Decennial Census

In 2020, Isle au Haut had a median age of 50.5 years. This is higher than several comparable island communities, including North Haven (42.9) and Vinalhaven (47.9), and higher than the State of Maine median age of 44.8.

Figure A-2: Median Age



Source: 2020 Decennial Census

D. Education

Table A-3 below shows Isle au Haut, Knox County, and Maine’s educational attainment for those ages 25 and older. The percentage of Isle au Haut’s population 25 years of age and older with a high school diploma is higher than Knox County and the State. However, Isle au Haut has a fewer percentage of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher, but significantly more with a graduate or professional degree.

Table A-2: Educational Attainment, Population 25+

	Isle au Haut		Knox County		Maine	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Less than 9th grade	0	0.0%	346	1.1%	17,176	1.7%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	0	0.0%	1,446	4.6%	37,992	3.7%
High school graduate or equivalent	24	40.6%	9,446	30.1%	310,778	30.2%
Some college, no degree	2	3.3%	5,488	17.5%	182,869	17.8%
Associate's degree	0	0.0%	2,403	7.6%	109,768	10.7%
Bachelor's degree	11	18.6%	7,721	24.6%	229,764	22.3%
Graduate or professional degree	22	37.2%	4,562	14.5%	141,794	13.8%
Population 25 years and over	59		31,412		1,030,141	

Source: 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates

E. Household Size

Since 2000, Isle au Haut’s average household size has notably decreased from roughly 2.5 persons per household to an estimated 1.44, a 43.1% decrease. This is a significant decrease, and while similar to the trend we are seeing in the County and in Maine, may be overemphasized by a high margin of error. This decrease in household size happening in Knox County and the State may be related to the increasing median age. Households tend to get smaller as residents age and children move out.

Table A-3: Average Household Size

	2000	2010	2023
Isle au Haut	2.53	2.30	1.44
Knox County	2.31	2.32	2.17
Maine	2.39	2.37	2.29

Source: 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census

F. Race

According to the Census Bureau, over 85% of Isle au Haut’s residents identify as being white alone, while 15% of the population identify as being of a different race.

Table A-4: Race, 2020

	2020
White	86%
Black or African American	1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1%
Asian	1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0%
Some other race	1%
Population of two or more races	9.7%

Source: 2020 Decennial Census

G. Income

The most recently collected data on median income for Isle au Haut was in 2019, when it was \$32,500 according to American Community Survey 5-year estimates. This is on par with the median income in 2010.

Table A-5: Median Household Income, 2000, 2010, and 2019

	2000	2010	2019
Median Household Income	\$25,000	\$33,750	\$32,500

Source: 2019 ACS 5-year Estimates, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census

According to 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 3.4% of Isle au Haut residents are below the poverty level compared with 8.8% of the residents of Knox County as a whole.

Isle au Haut is not designated as a service center by the State. Residents commute on and off the island via mail boat and no particular services are required to support the daytime population. The National Park and other recreational opportunities located on the Island have attracted a daytime population of day-trip tourists, as well as a small workforce.

A. Seasonal Population

There are no census or other statistical measurements available directly showing the seasonal population of Isle au Haut; however, according to the 2020 Decennial Census, out of the 107 vacant housing units on the island 102 were vacant for seasonal, recreational or occasional use. The Maine Office of Tourism's DownEast & Acadia 2024 Economic Impact & Visitor Tracking Report estimates an average party size of three. Multiplying the number of units vacant for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use by average party size, the maximum seasonal population is estimated to be an additional 321 residents.

There are no hotels or B&Bs on Isle au Haut, but there is one established campground. This campground has five sites and is located in Acadia National Park. At peak season, this would not affect the overall population very much but still plays a role in the Town's small tourism industry. The Comprehensive Plan Committee also estimated that there are about 12 short-term rentals on Isle au Haut.

6. Goals & Objectives

Goal: Achieve a more demographically diverse population in terms of age, employment, and year-round residency.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Increase and improve housing options for year-round residents.	(See Housing Chapter).	ICDC, Community Hub, Selectboard, Planning Board	Ongoing
Integrate new residents into Town culture and organizations.	Work with ICDC to provide welcome packages to new residents.	ICDC, Church, Tuesday's Table, Community Members, Community Hub	2027
Maintain a population of school-aged children.	Continue to provide a quality education for Isle au Haut students.	School Board	Ongoing
	Maintain sufficient housing for teachers.	School Board, Selectboard	Ongoing
	Maintain Schoolhouse.	School Board, Selectboard	Ongoing
	Continue the Town's relationship with Deer Isle-Stonington High School.	School Board	Ongoing
	Continue to engage in inter-island school programming.	Maine Seacoast Mission, School Board	Ongoing

Goal: Support older residents to enable them to remain in their homes as they age.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Increase ADA accessibility in Town facilities.	Continue to improve ADA accessibility in town facilities.	Selectboard	2035
	Work with the IaH Boat Services to allow for wheelchair accessibility.	IaH Boat Services	2030
Seek to understand and support the needs of the aging population.	Continue to support the work of community organizations engaging with the island's elderly population.	Maine Seacoast Mission, Community Hub, Community Organizations and Businesses	Ongoing

Chapter B: Economy

1. Purpose

An understanding of past, current, and future potential economic trends in the local and regional economy is essential for assessing Isle au Haut's future needs. As employment patterns change, such as by increasing numbers of at-home workers and telecommuters, regional changes to major sources of employment, and/or changes in retail and other sectors, transportation, telecommunication, and energy infrastructure will all be impacted and will require adequate planning. This section aims to:

- Describe employment trends in Isle au Haut;
- Describe the local and regional economy; and
- Discuss likely future economic activity and market changes that may impact Isle au Haut.

2. Key Findings & Issues

Isle au Haut has a strong fishing history, and lobstering and fishing still employ the greatest number of individuals on the island. Many of the jobs on-island are part-time, seasonal or change with the seasons, with a higher-than-average rate of self-employment. It is estimated that there are around 30 full-time and over 40 part-time positions on the island.

There is concern about how temperatures and rising pH levels of the ocean will affect the lobster industry. Additionally, the population of groundfish and shellfish is limited due to green crab infestation. Skilled trades and construction workers continue to be in demand. Tourism is an important part of the export economy, along with revenue the Mail Boat draws from summer park visitors. The island has secure access to power and reliable broadband internet connection, which can increase the number of work-from-home opportunities and other home-based businesses.

3. Key Findings & Issues from Previous Plan, 2016

Perhaps Isle au Haut's greatest asset is its quality of place. Its natural resources, physical beauty and tranquility attract year-round residents, seasonal residents, and tourists. Historically, Isle au Haut was settled because of its proximity to productive fishing grounds. Isle au Haut is home to a summer colony, numerous summer cottages, and includes part of Acadia National Park.

Economically, however, Isle au Haut's location is also somewhat of a disadvantage today. Energy costs are high, and fishermen must compete for territory with neighboring communities. In addition, the heavy dependence on one marine resource has proven dangerous, leaving fishermen vulnerable to decreases in price or stock levels, increases in operating costs, or pressures from mainland fishermen, increased regulation, and potential adverse effects on fish populations from global warming effects. Though tourism is currently an important part of its economy, many residents do not want to expand the dependence on tourism. The development of small businesses within the export sector, and a population able to work from home on Isle au Haut may be

important in the island's future economy. There is a strong connection between the population of the island, year-round housing, and economic opportunities. The Island Community Development Corporation (ICDC) works to provide affordable housing and offers microloans to applicants with sufficient net assets to pledge as collateral.

4. Community Engagement Results

Community engagement showed strong consensus around the importance of maintaining essential services and supporting a small, resilient year-round economy. At the priorities workshop and in a follow-up survey of year-round residents, the long-term viability of the IaH Power Company, Island Store, and IaH Boat Services was identified as the highest economic priority. Respondents emphasized the economic role of the Island Store in employing islanders and supporting local products, while also identifying inconsistent use by both year-round and seasonal residents and potential loss of kerosene sales as threats to its viability. There was broad support for either maintaining the current town involvement in working waterfront protection (49% of all respondents) or increasing town involvement (41%). When asked to rank businesses critical to the town's future, over 87% of respondents placed a mechanic among their top three, followed by workshop space, barge service, and space for visiting medical professionals. Visioning sessions and open-ended survey responses reinforced interest in modest service-oriented businesses, reliable broadband for remote work, and economic diversification beyond fishing to support long-term community stability.

5. Conditions and Trends

A. History and Background

Isle au Haut has a strong fishing history. From prehistoric times, Isle au Haut served as summer fishing grounds for Native Americans, as shown by numerous shell middens. The location is convenient to deeper waters for cod and other ground fish as well as prime lobster grounds. The Island's advantage diminished as internal combustion engines became more common. The population of the Island began to decrease. Lobstering, however, continues to be a major part of Isle au Haut's economy.

Other past uses of Isle au Haut and its smaller neighboring islands include sheep grazing, boat building and tourism. Isle au Haut's physical beauty has attracted summer visitors for more than 130 years. A summer colony at the northern end of the Island was established in the late nineteenth century. In the 1940s, about half of the land on Isle au Haut became part of Acadia National Park, which now attracts day visitors and campers.

B. Overview of Existing Regulations Affecting the Economy

Lobster fishing is governed by state and federal regulations. Building and construction is managed through zoning and the Planning Board permitting. Recent statewide legislation relating to increasing housing production may impact patterns of residential development on the island, including the construction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Other sectors are overseen by various state and local regulations. There are no fees for fishermen to use the town dock and there are no mooring fees.

C. Isle au Haut’s Place in the Region

Isle au Haut is considered part of the Rockland-Camden Labor Market Area (LMA) and the Blue Hill Economic Summary Area (ESA). These connections are, however, weak, with a very small commuting population. Isle au Haut’s major tie to the mainland is Stonington in Hancock County, six miles away, where the mail boat is docked. Ellsworth and Blue Hill are nearby service areas. Only a few people commute to the mainland to work, as it is difficult to rely on the mail boat in the winter due to schedule changes on windy days and only 7 hours between the 2 trips in the winter.

D. Current Conditions

The civilian workforce on Isle au Haut is estimated at 41 by the Maine Department of Labor, Center for Workforce, Research, and Information. This is defined as residents over the age of 16 who are employed at least seasonally. This does not include those who work on Isle au Haut, but live elsewhere (e.g., construction workers).

The island has a tradition of residents working several different jobs in more than one industry. For example, fishing and construction complement each other well. Many of the jobs on Isle au Haut are part-time, seasonal or change with the seasons. Like other island communities, the self-employment rate is high. Isle au Haut’s isolation means that most residents have a very short commute. The average time traveled to work on Isle au Haut is four minutes, which is shorter than the average commute for residents of Knox County, 20 minutes.

Employment & Unemployment

The tables below show trends in Isle au Haut and Hancock County for labor force, employment, and unemployment. Hancock County is included as opposed to Knox County due to Isle au Haut’s naturally closer ties with the region. The labor force includes the employed and the unemployed who are actively looking for work. It does not include homemakers, retired people, those in the military, and discouraged workers, which are people without a job and available to work but are not seeking work because they believe that no suitable jobs are available.

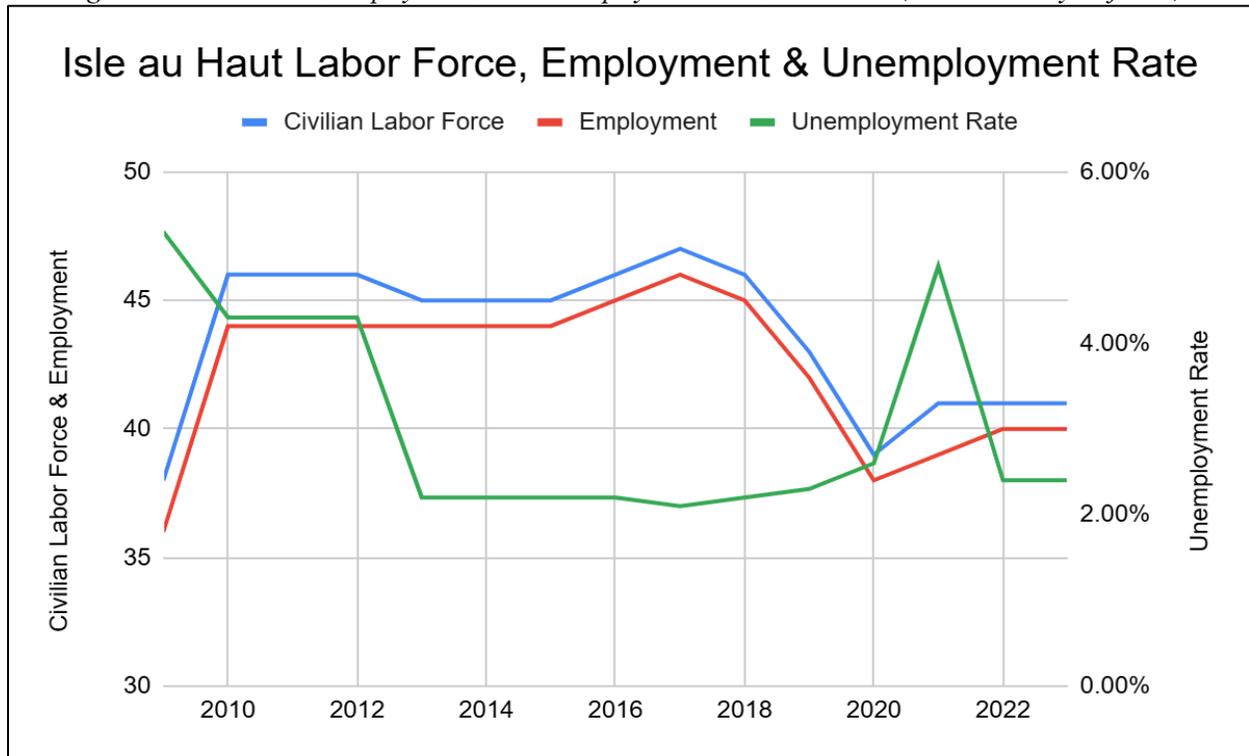
Both the civilian labor force and unemployment rate in Isle au Haut have declined since 2010. The labor force and employment were lower in 2020 than in 2010, a decline that started at the tail end of the decade. Since 2020, it is estimated that employment has increased. Figure B-1 below visualizes the Isle au Haut table of this information.

Table B-1: Isle au Haut and Hancock County Employment Trends (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

	Hancock County			Isle au Haut		
	2010	2020	2023	2010	2020	2023
Civilian Labor Force	29,994	26,888	28,262	46	39	41
Employment	27,263	25,400	27,388	44	38	40
Unemployment Rate %	9.1%	5.5%	3.1%	4.3%	2.6%	2.4%

Source: Maine Department of Labor, Center for Workforce, Research, and Information

Figure B-1: Labor Force, Employment, and Unemployment Rate, 2009-2023 (Not Seasonally Adjusted)



Source: Maine Department of Labor, Center for Workforce, Research, and Information

Employment by Industry

As seen in Table B-2 below, employment on Isle au Haut is categorized by industry sector. According to Census estimates for 2023, roughly half (51.5%) of employed civilians 16 years and over work in jobs associated with agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining. Additional sectors in which Isle au Haut residents are employed include public administration; construction; transportation and warehousing, and utilities; and educational services, and health care and social assistance.

Table B-2: Employment by Industry

	Number	Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	17	51.5%
Construction	5	15.2%
Manufacturing	0	0%
Wholesale trade	0	0%
Retail trade	0	0%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	3	9.1%
Information	0	0%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	0	0%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	0	0%

	Number	Percent
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	2	6.1%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	0	0%
Other services, except public administration	0	0%
Public administration	6	18.2%
Total civilian employed population 16 years and over	33	100%

Source: 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Employers

Year-round jobs on Isle au Haut include an estimated 34 full-time and 47 part-time positions. Lobstering and fishing employ the greatest number of individuals. Caretaking and landscaping/gardening are also common areas of work. Some of the larger employers include the Town, IAH Home Improvement, the Store and the IaH Power Company.

Table B-3: Isle au Haut Employers

	Full Time	Part Time
School	2	2
Isle au Haut Store	1	3
Town/Office	0	9
Isle au Haut Electric Power Company	0	6
ICDC	0	1
Acadia National Park	0	3
Post Office	1	0
Point Lookout Association	4	0
High Island Carpentry	4	0
Stevens Sawmill & Construction	1	2
IAH Home Improvement	4	1
Lobstering/Fishing	9	6
Animal Husbandry	2	0
Construction Other	2	0
Caretaking	1	7
Cleaning	0	4
Painting	0	2
Landscaping/Gardening	1	4
Total	34	47

Source: Isle au Haut Comprehensive Plan Committee, 2024

Future Outlook of Top Employers on the Island

There is concern of how temperatures and rising pH levels of the ocean will affect the lobster industry. Additionally, the population of groundfish and shellfish is limited due to green crab infestation. Skilled trades

and construction workers continue to be in demand. Limited lodging on the island affects the small business labor pool, and Acadia National Park is unable to afford a full-time park ranger as it has in the past.

Opportunities for saving costs at one employer tends to negatively affect another; for example, the IaH Power Company loses significant income if The Store chooses to use solar to reduce its electric bill, or if households choose to install heat pumps this helps the IaH Power Company but impacts heating fuel sales at the Island Store.

Fishing

Fishing is an important aspect of Isle au Haut's export economy. There are an estimated 15 people employed in the lobstering/fishing industry on Isle au Haut. Isle au Haut's fishing industry is challenged by a number of issues, including the dependence on one species, limited waterfront access, fishing ground competition, and high input costs. The marine resources section gives more information about this issue.

Contractors and Construction

There are several full-time and part-time jobs on the island in the construction industry. Some fishermen work in construction off-season and/or assist in seasonal caretaking work. Services provided on the island include building construction and renovation; driveway construction and other earthwork; carpentry; painting; general landscape work, among others. In addition, a number of contractors, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, and propane technicians travel to work on Isle au Haut from off island. The IaH Power Company employs one full-time and several part-time employees to maintain electrical transmission lines.

Small Business

Small businesses on Isle au Haut are part of both the export and service economies. Several businesses bring in money from outside of the Island. The Island store sells groceries, some hardware, and some tourist gifts. It employs one manager and several workers part-time. The store also delivers oil and kerosene. There is a food truck that operates from June through September, that also provides catering services for special events.

Government and Public Service

Acadia National Park hires several seasonal rangers. The town employs a number of people part time. This includes the selectboard (three), treasurer, town clerk, tax collector, road commissioner, librarian, etc. One full-time teacher works at the school with a full-time ed tech. Other part-time teachers are added as needed. The post office employs a full-time postmaster.

Local and Regional Economic Development Plans

The [Midcoast Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy](#) (CEDS) is intended as a five-year plan with annual updates and is an opportunity to set goals and objectives regionally. The last five-year plan was completed in 2021.

Stonington's [Economic Resiliency Strategy](#), completed in March 2023, was created to understand recent and emerging economic challenges and develop strategies to address these challenges and create economic opportunity. The Isle au Haut ferry service was identified as an asset to the local economy and other portions of

the document reference this service. Strategies and actions related to climate impacts and supporting the blue economy can likely be applied to Isle au Haut.

Economic Development Incentive Districts

Isle au Haut does not have any economic development incentive districts.

Issues of Public Concern

The public has recognized the role economic opportunity plays in maintaining a vibrant year-round community. This issue is closely linked with the population and demographics of the island and the availability of affordable housing, which continues to be a concern for island residents and across the state. Rising shipping costs and energy costs impact the affordability of housing, goods and services, and business operations. The degree of dependency on which the economy depends on one marine species, lobster, is another concern. Based on the correlation in southern New England between rising seawater temperatures and the decline there in the lobster fishery, and based on recent evidence the seawater temperatures in the Gulf of Maine are rising faster than anywhere else on earth, there is reason to be concerned that the local lobster industry may be in eventual jeopardy of a serious decline. Another issue of economic impact is federal budget cuts to Acadia National Park. This could be the amount of revenue the mail boat receives from summer park visitors as well as the park employees. The park service also supplies the island with at least one EMT each summer.

6. Analyses

A. Change in the Economy

Isle au Haut does not have many of the types of business that contribute to an economy, such as inns, coffee shops and other small businesses. Attracting younger families can increase the labor pool and opportunities for new businesses on the island, but the current housing affordability and construction cost issues limit this growth. Significant increases in the costs of building and living in housing makes it difficult to attract new residents and keep existing ones on the island long-term.

B. Community Priorities for Economic Development

Locally, priorities for economic development are focused on housing and opportunities for the future. Recently a subsea cable connecting Isle au Haut to Stonington and Deer Isle was installed to bring reliable broadband access to the community, opening the opportunity for more home-based and remote business operations. The Midcoast Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy establishes a number of measurable goals that are relevant to those shared on the island, such as growing the 25-44 population, increasing the number of businesses and increasing year-round affordable housing opportunities.

C. Village Center

Most commerce and social events take place in the 1.25 miles between the Ranger Station and the Town Hall. Specific areas of activity include the Town Hall, The Store, the town dock, the church, the post office, the school, the gift shop and the Ranger Station.

D. Tourism

Tourism is an important part of the export economy in that it brings outside money to Isle au Haut. It is a scenic location that attracts tourists during the summer, especially during the month of August. This includes day hikers and campers in Acadia National Park, or weekly cottage renters. Over 10,000 recreation visits were made to Isle au Haut and there were over 1,500 overnight camping stays in 2023 per National Park Service data. Visitors to the Island spend money at island businesses and IaH Boat Services offers scenic tours and puffin cruises. The Town, the park service and the post office support IaH Boat Services, which allows tourists access to the island and reduces overall boat costs. Seasonal cottages require caretaking and cleaning, which provides additional employment for Island residents. The Island does not currently impose any regulation on short-term rentals, allowing this type of use to occur and attract visitors.

E. Home Occupations

The natural beauty of the island is a great backdrop for writing and other work that is not location dependent. The availability of internet allows some residents to telecommute to an office or client in another location while living on Isle au Haut. Isle au Haut is also home to several working professionals, writers, artists, and people supplementing income by making and selling crafts made at home. The ability to work remotely and from home allows both year-round and summer residents to supplement their income, and for summer residents to extend their time on the island

F. Locations for Industrial or Commercial Development

The town pier serves as a space for commercial activity. Gravel sources on the island are used up. Any new sources need both planning board approval and state permits.

G. Public Facilities Necessary to Support Projected Economic Activity

The island has secure access to power and reliable broadband internet connection. Water derives from wells, and there is a water tower for the Point Lookout Association. Overuse of small aquifers and rising sea levels are a concern. Boat access, ramp access and parking availability on island and on the mainland are larger facility issues.

H. Performance of Economic Development Incentives

There are currently no local or regional economic development incentives in place.

I. Use of Unique Assets for Economic Growth

Isle au Haut's greatest economic asset is its quality of place. The beautiful scenery, secluded location, clean environment and quiet atmosphere attract both visitors and residents to the Island. The town continues to maintain the lighthouse, to work with Acadia National Park, to offer library hours, and hold community events such as parades and Tuesday's Table. The town beach offers recreational opportunities. The Island's location affords convenient access to marine resources. The town landing guarantees lobster fishermen access to the water in perpetuity, and the IaH Boat Services is helpful and reliable. The school offers an exceptional educational

experience, and much of the island has access to the internet. Community members often comment about how safe they feel on the Island.

7. Goals & Objectives

Goal: Support a resilient island economy by sustaining marine industries, strengthening essential local businesses and services, and collaborating with regional partners and community organizations.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Encourage and support marine-based enterprises.	Work with the U.S. Army Corps to ensure necessary dredging occurs.	Selectboard	2026-2028
	Protect public access to marine resources (See Marine Resources).	Selectboard	Ongoing
	Ensure the wharf is well maintained and suitable for ongoing demand.	Selectboard	Ongoing
Encourage and support local businesses.	Continue to promote ICDC and CEI microloan programs to both encourage growth of existing and establishment of new small businesses	ICDC, Maine Seacoast Mission, Island Institute	Ongoing
	Continue to provide financial support to essential community businesses and organizations.	Town	Ongoing
	Provide business training programs as needed.	Library, ICDC, Maine Seacoast Mission, CEI, Fishermen's Partnership, National Park Service, Island Institute, Community Hub	Ongoing
	Encourage residents and community organizations to support local businesses through the Town's website and other channels.	Community, IaH Boat Services, Web Master	Ongoing
	Ensure community needs for specific businesses are communicated with residents to encourage potential entrepreneurs.	Community	2027
	Amend local ordinances to reflect the desired scale, design, intensity, and location of desired businesses.	Selectboard, Planning Board, HCPC	2027-2028
Work collaboratively with to support sustainable economic development.	Participate in regional economic development efforts.	ICDC, Selectboard, MCOG, Island Institute	Ongoing
	Actively work to strengthen the Town's relationship with Acadia National Park.	Selectboard	2027

Chapter C: Housing

1. Purpose

A comprehensive plan needs to address several key housing issues. These include changes in conditions and needs as well as projecting future demand for housing. This section aims to:

- Describe recent trends in Isle au Haut’s housing stock in terms of types and number of units created.
- Discuss housing affordability (cost to rent or own).
- Project future housing needs.
- Describe the benefits that will accrue to Isle au Haut from a supply of available and affordable housing.
- Recommend ways to increase the supply of housing that is safe, energy-efficient and affordable for a multi-occupational and multi-generational community.

2. Key Findings and Issues

The number of occupied housing units on Isle au Haut has increased over the past two decades while the number of vacant housing units used for seasonal use have decreased according to Decennial Census data. Housing continues to be developed unit-by-unit, primarily as single-family dwellings. Fourteen new housing units and four accessory dwelling units have been built on the island since 2010. Isle au Haut Community Development Corporation (ICDC) continues to play an important role in reducing affordability challenges for island residents by providing affordable rental opportunities. The federal and state funding sources that ICDC needs to provide affordable rental options have strict low-income requirements, which has created ongoing challenges for attracting new residents and supporting middle income residents.

Housing affordability is still a primary concern on the island and countywide. A limited availability of land, and high costs associated with accessing this land and construction, contribute to the challenges of building housing. More housing will be needed to accommodate any sort of population growth. There are continued instances of year-round homes being converted into seasonal or short-term housing options.

3. Key Findings & Issues from Previous Plan, 2016

Nearly 80% of Isle au Haut’s housing units are used seasonally. Affordable housing options for new residents are very limited on Isle au Haut. High land values and low incomes coupled with the popularity of the Island as a summer and second home location has led to high housing costs and discouraged an increase in year-round residents. The Isle au Haut community has tried to address this issue through the Isle au Haut Community Development Corporation (ICDC), a local 501(c)3 and town owned rental units, but the complexity of the issue suggests that a continuing focus on creating affordable housing for new residents seeking to make a living on the island is crucial. The Community Hub of Isle au Haut, a newly established non-profit, is in the process of developing three affordable units.

Several former year-round houses have been sold and are now seasonal residences. This reduces the inventory of available year-round housing. Rental housing is especially important to Isle au Haut to allow prospective year-round residents to experience island life before committing to the purchase of property. There is also a need for workforce housing. Although there was little support from year-round residents in the 2015 survey for the Town to assist in providing workforce housing, expansion of some on-island businesses has been limited by lack of housing opportunities for the needed help. The 911 Addressing effort in 2016 identified 183 separate detached dwelling units (including 13 on the smaller islands) within the Town. In the past 10 years, the average rate of new dwellings being constructed has been about 2 per year. Most are second homes.

4. Community Engagement Results

Housing was consistently identified as a top community priority and a key factor in sustaining Isle au Haut’s year-round population. During the visioning sessions, residents emphasized the need for owned, affordable, year-round housing and raised early concerns about limited pathways from rentals to homeownership, lack of buildable land, and physical constraints such as road access, power, water, and steep slopes. These concerns were reinforced through the survey and at the priorities workshop, where limited pathways to homeownership emerged as the top housing-related challenge, followed by the high cost of materials and infrastructure. Survey results show that 64% of all respondents supported allowing affordable housing anywhere, along with majority support for single-family and workforce housing, while 74% opposed mobile home parks. When asked to prioritize housing types, respondents ranked rental housing, single-family housing, and housing for private ownership as the most important, with shared housing and senior housing ranked lower. Across engagement efforts, residents also raised concerns about the conversion of year-round homes to seasonal or short-term use and expressed support for modest, island-appropriate housing on town-owned or already disturbed land near existing roads to help maintain a stable year-round community.

5. Condition and Trends

A. Housing Stock

According to the Decennial Census, in 2020, there were 152 total housing units on Isle au Haut. This is a 20-unit decrease from the 172 units in 2010 and less than the 165 in 2000. Local records suggest this decline is inaccurate. Since 2016, the e911 addressing officer has add four newly constructed houses.

Table C-1: Total Housing Units

	2000	2010	2020
Total Housing Units	165	172	152

Source: U.S. Decennial Census

According to Decennial Census data, the number of occupied units on Isle au Haut has increased only slightly each decade since 2000. Local sources share that as of winter 2025 there are 37 year-round occupied housing units on the island. Census data shows that the total number of vacant units has decreased each decade. Countywide trends show that the number of occupied units has increased each decade since 2000 in Knox

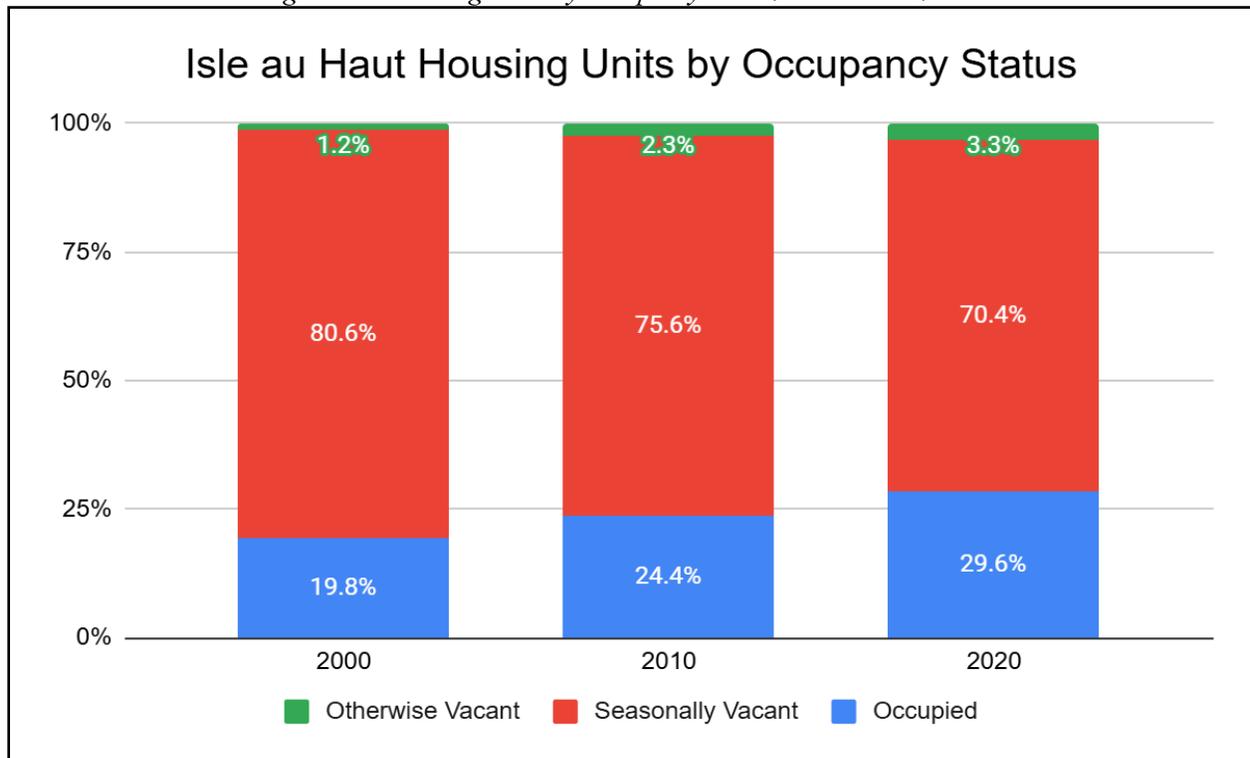
County. More information about vacant units designated for seasonal, recreational or occasional use can be found in section G. of this chapter.

Table C-2: Occupied and Vacant Dwelling Units, Isle au Haut and Knox County, 2000 – 2020

	Isle au Haut			Knox County		
	2000	2010	2020	2000	2010	2020
Occupied Units	32	42	45	16,608	17,258	17,883
% of Total	19.4%	24.4%	29.6%	76.8%	72.7%	73.7%
Vacant Units	133	130	107	5,004	6,486	6,372
% of Total	80.6%	75.6%	70.4%	23.2%	27.3%	26.3%
Total Units	165	172	152	21,612	23,744	24,255

Source: U.S. Decennial Census

Figure C-1: Housing Units by Occupancy Status, Isle au Haut, 2020



Source: U.S. Decennial Census

B. Housing Unit Type

Single-family, detached units have historically been the primary form of residential development on Isle au Haut. Currently, all units are single-family. ICDC is in the process of renovating one single-family unit to become a duplex apartment. There is also one owner-occupied yurt. Given that mainland communities do not have all of the same development challenges as Isle au Haut, multifamily housing is more common in Knox County as a whole.

Table C-3: Changes in Dwelling Unit Type, Isle au Haut and Knox County, 2000-2020

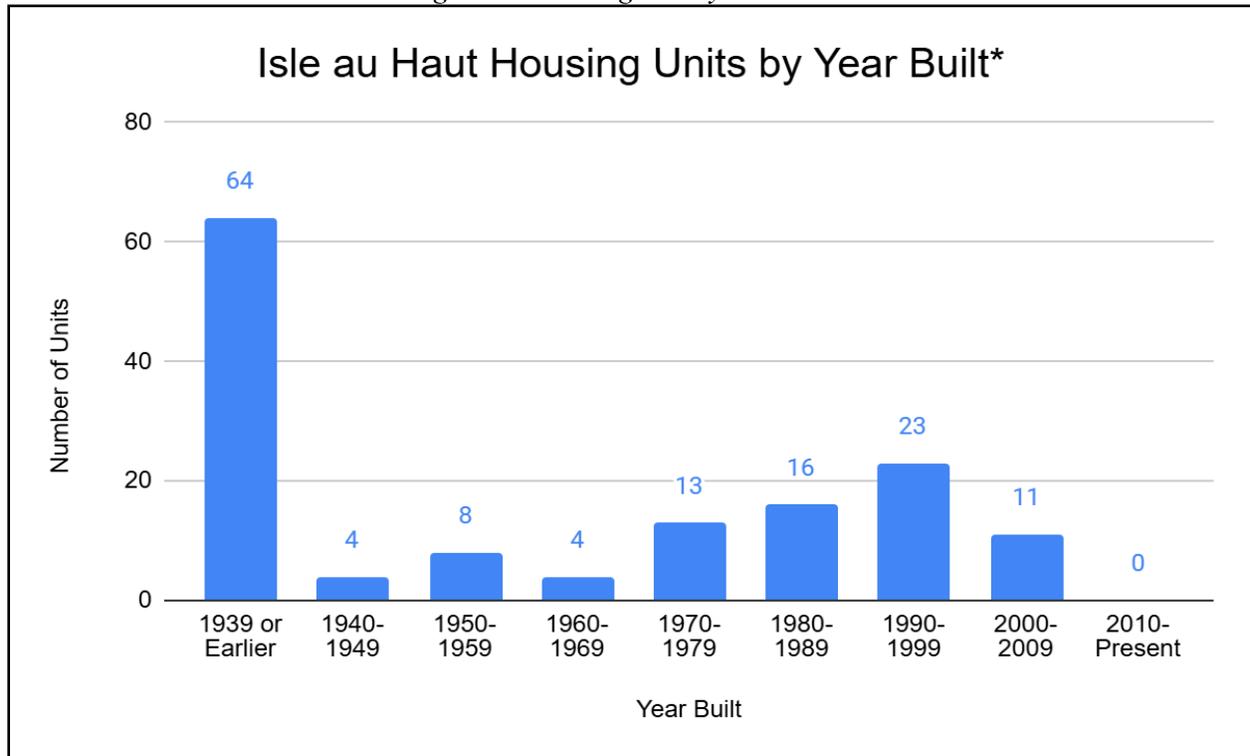
	Isle au Haut						Knox County					
	2000		2010		2023		2000		2010		2023	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Single-Family	165	100%	182	100%	143	100%	16,799	77.7%	18,804	79.7%	19,833	81.2%
Duplex/Multi-Family	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3,058	14.2%	3,128	13.3%	3,086	12.6%
Mobile Home	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1,709	7.9%	1,667	7.0%	1,495	6.1%
Boat, RV, Van, etc.	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	46	0.2%	0	0.0%	14	0.1%
Total Units	165	100%	182	100%	143	100%	21,612	100%	23,599	100%	24,428	100%

Source: 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census

C. Housing Unit Age

Close to half of Isle au Haut’s housing units were built before 1940. There was also a notable period of residential development from the 1970s through the 1990s, when an estimated 36% of total housing units were constructed. 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates indicate that there has been no housing units built since 2010; however, in reality, 14 new housing units (one yurt) as well as four accessory dwelling units (two are yurts) have been built since 2010.

Figure C-2: Housing Unit by Year Built



Source: 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

*According to local sources housing units have been built since 2010

D. Tenure

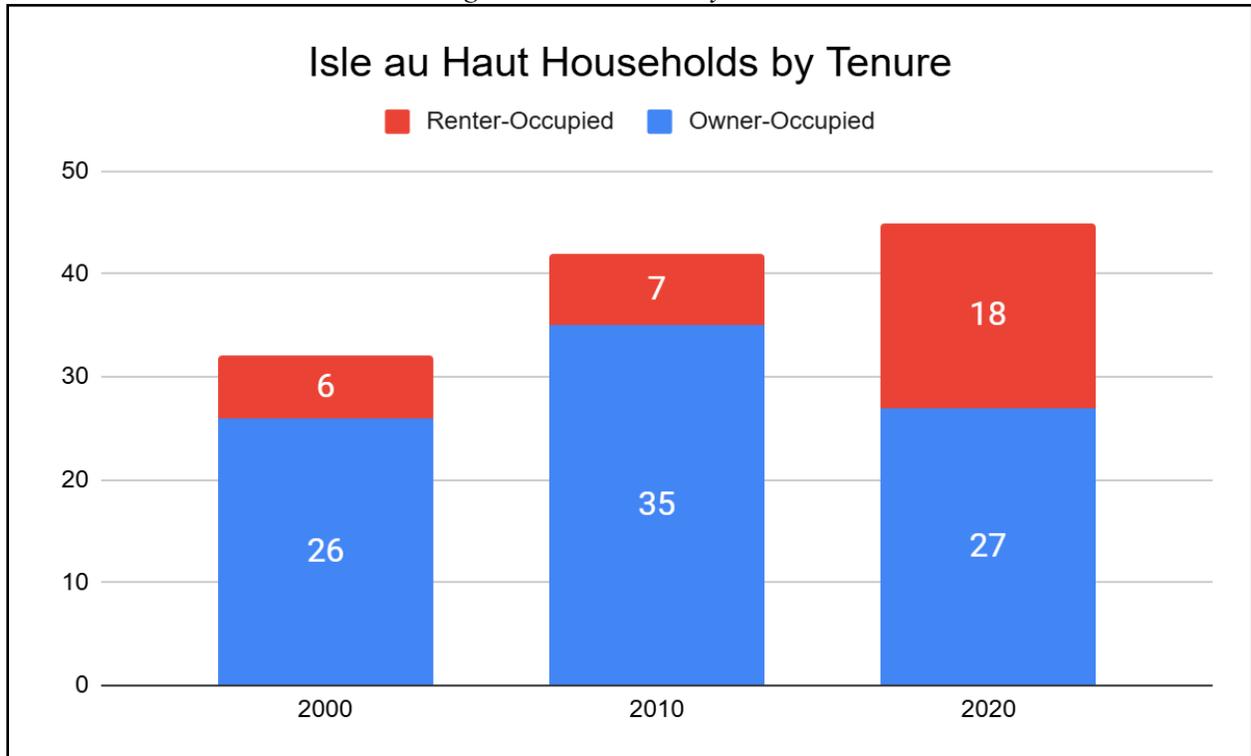
As previously mentioned, local sources share that as of winter 2025 there are 37 total year-round occupied housing units; 26 are owner-occupied and 11 are renter-occupied. There has been a notable increase in the amount of renter households on Isle au Haut since 2010, according to the Decennial Census. The ratio of owner-occupied to renter-occupied housing has remained consistent in Knox County over recent decades.

Table C-4: Changes in Dwelling Unit Type, Isle au Haut and Knox County, 2000-2020

	Isle au Haut			Knox County		
	2000	2010	2020	2000	2010	2020
Owner Occupied	26	35	27	12,291	12,789	13,318
% of Total	81.2%	83.3%	60%	74%	74.1%	74.5%
Renter Occupied	6	7	18	4,317	4,469	4,565
% of Total	18.2%	16.7%	40%	26%	25.9%	25.5%
Total	32	42	45	16,608	17,258	17,883

Source: U.S. Decennial Census

Figure C-3: Households by Tenure



Source: U.S. Decennial Census

E. Affordability

Affordability continues to be a challenge for many households throughout the county and the state. Living expenses are greater on Isle au Haut than in mainland communities. Electricity rates are close to seven times above the mainland average. Kerosene, propane and gasoline are also comparatively expensive. Energy efficiency

is especially important to help reduce living expenses. Island life requires ferry tickets, mainland parking and typically requires a second mainland car, all of which are added expenses.

Renting

According to the ACS Estimates, renters on Isle au Haut are spending less than \$1,500 per month on gross rent. ICDC owns five rental units, one of which is being converted into a duplex. Households of the four single-family units are charged \$835 per month, not including utilities, while the rent for the duplex has not yet been established.

A key issue for affordable rentals is that ICDC is limited by the requirements of federal and state funding sources, which have strict low-income requirements. Low-income requirements have hindered ICDC’s ability to attract new residents to Isle au Haut and support middle income residents. The Community Hub currently has one rental, a two-bedroom house, and is in the process of building two single-person units, that are not restricted by low-income federal and state funding requirements.

Home Ownership

The table below depicts owner-occupied housing values for Isle au Haut according to ACS Estimates. The two highest categories in which the housing values fall are between \$500,000 to \$749,999 and between \$750,000 to \$999,999. The median value of an owner-occupied housing unit in 2023 was \$662,500. This median value is significantly higher than the Knox County 2023 median value of \$290,800.

Table C-5: Isle au Haut Households by Home Value

Home Value	# of Units
\$0-\$99,999	0
\$100,000-\$199,999	3
\$200,000-\$299,999	2
\$300,000-\$399,999	0
\$400,000-\$499,999	4
\$500,000-\$749,999	10
\$750,000-\$999,999	9
\$1,000,000-\$1,999,999	0
\$2,000,000+	3
Median Value	\$662,500

Source: 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

F. Seasonal Units

Vacant units used for seasonal, recreational or occasional use comprise a significant percentage of the town’s total housing units, as is the case for other island and coastal communities. According to Decennial Census data, their percentage of the total housing stock has decreased over the last two decades on Isle au Haut. Anecdotally, the amount of seasonal housing units is still a concern as it limits opportunities for year-round residents in need of something that is available or more affordable. Figure C-1 in this chapter shows the percentage of vacant units

used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use compared to the percentage of occupied units and vacant units for other reasons.

While the number of units vacant for seasonal use has also increased countywide, the total percentage of units vacant for this purpose is less than it was in 2000 and has been consistent over the past two decades.

Table C-6: Vacant Units Used for Seasonal Use, 2000 - 2020

	Isle au Haut			Knox County		
	2000	2010	2020	2000	2010	2020
Vacant Units (seasonal use)	131	126	102	4,075	4,828	4,748
Total Housing Units	165	172	152	21,612	23,744	24,255
% of Total Housing Units Vacant for Seasonal Use	79.4%	73.3%	67.1%	18.9%	20.3%	19.6%

Source: U.S. Decennial Census

Short-Term Rentals

A short-term rental (STR) typically describes the rental of a residential unit for stays of less than 30 days. Short-term rentals, when active, do provide financial benefits for those that operate them and offer an opportunity for visitors to travel to and spend time on the island. Conversely, units that are used as STRs for most or all of the year are removed from the market of potential housing opportunities for residents or employees that need somewhere to live, limiting this supply for those in need.

. Locally, residents are aware of four seasonal homes used as short-term rentals at Point Lookout, as well as around eight others elsewhere on the island. Some of these properties are often used for weekly stays by immediate family when not in use year-round.

G. Existing Local and Regional Year-Round Affordable Efforts

The Isle au Haut Community Development Corporation (ICDC), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, was founded in 1990 to address the declining year-round population of Isle au Haut and to focus on providing affordable housing for new residents. Since then, through donated land, grants from the Maine State Housing Authority and through other means, ICDC has increased the number of affordable rental housing options on the Island. Most recently, the town gifted its Coombs Mountain rental property to ICDC; a renovation of this property is expected to be completed in 2026, bringing the total number of rental units on the Island to six. As of 2024, there are seven adult year-round residents and four children in ICDC homes. Three of these children are enrolled at the school. Three families currently renting ICDC homes have expressed interest in purchasing a home. The organization owns two buildable sites but there are no current plans to build on them.

Additionally, ICDC has established a low-interest (2%) microloan program to contribute to the economic development of Isle au Haut. Residents can apply for a loan to support their current business or start a new venture. Strategic business planning support is also provided through ICDC to ensure repayment of the loan and the success of the business. As of 2024, 42 microloans have been financed.

Undeveloped land on the hill above the Town Landing has been donated to the Community Hub to build a new community center and two rental units. An additional house half a mile from the Town Landing was donated to the Community Hub. That house was converted from a seasonal to a winterized house and is currently occupied by a town employee. The Community Hub is a recently established non-profit that is currently building a small community center and a new affordable housing option.

6. Analyses

A. Housing Units Necessary to Accommodate Projected Population

Because of Isle au Haut's small population and geographic location, predicting the future is difficult. There are several factors that can impact population change. Additionally, other factors such as available and accessible land, construction costs, and available jobs can limit housing growth. Accommodations for year-round residential needs versus those that live on the island seasonally also influences the number of units that may be necessary in the future.

Maine State Economist projects a population of 98 on Isle au Haut in the year 2032 and a population of 100 in 2037. These totals would be only a slight increase from the 2020 Decennial Census population of 92. Regardless, if the population is to grow, more housing units will be needed. Given the average occupancy of 1-2 persons per dwelling unit for year-round residents, this results in needing a high-end estimate of 4-5 additional housing units by 2037 if projected growth were to occur. Local sources have also identified four families that have expressed interest in either building or buying a home on Isle au Haut.

B. Housing Affordability at the Median Income

Housing affordability continues to be a top concern for the town. There have been occurrences of year-round residents moving off-island because of affordability challenges. According to the Decennial Census, owner-occupied households with incomes of less than \$35,000 are spending 30% or more of household income on housing costs.

MaineHousing's Affordability Index is "the ratio of price affordable to median home price at median income to median home price. An index of less than 1 means the area is generally unaffordable". This means that a household earning the median income could not afford to cover the payment of a median-priced home. To provide an estimate of affordability in the region, MaineHousing data for Knox County was used. The affordability index for all of Knox County in 2023 was 0.44; 87.6% of households in the county were unable to afford a median-priced home. The median income in 2023 was \$68,925 while the income required to afford a median-priced home in the county was \$157,358. This index is also available at the town level; however, Isle au Haut is not one of the towns with an index. The affordability index for the neighboring island of Vinalhaven was 0.89 in 2023. The median income was \$107,181 and the income required to afford a median-priced home was \$119,838. The median home price in Vinalhaven was \$346,750 in 2023.

MaineHousing income eligibility limits and maximum rents for Isle au Haut and other unbridged islands are capped at 120% of the area median income. ICDC can keep its monthly rents low due to financial assistance

from its annual fund. Census data shows that renter-occupied units are spending less than 30% of household income on housing costs.

C. Conversion of Year-Round Homes to Seasonal Use

Conversations with community members reveal that there is some concern about the number of year-round homes that have become seasonal residences. It is estimated that somewhere around 10 homes on the island, if not more, have been converted. As noted earlier, removing year-round housing from the existing housing stock further limits opportunities for residents or employees that require a place to live on the island full-time, jeopardizing the sustainability of the year-round community. A limited supply of year-round housing also leaves fewer choices when something becomes available, which can result in higher prices when something is listed for sale.

D. Projected Need for Affordable, Senior, or Assisted Living Housing

As previously discussed, affordability is a top concern. Greater affordability is needed to meet community needs and is something that will continue to be addressed. As part of the Community Hub project, two affordable single-person units are planned. ICDC also continues to create units that are more affordable than something that may be listed on the open market. There is no senior-specific or assisted living housing on the island. Creating housing for these populations would likely be done on a unit-by-unit basis as the island does not have the land or infrastructure to accommodate a larger living facility. Partnering with regional entities for construction and funding assistance can assist in the creation of more on-island housing opportunities.

E. Substandard Housing

A drive-by survey conducted as part of the previous comprehensive plan revealed that, overall, the condition of housing on Isle au Haut is fair. Homes are heated by kerosene, wood (including wood pellets), or propane gas. Heat pumps were recently being added to a few residences.

Based on the Census information below, substandard housing is more of an issue on Isle au Haut than it is within Knox County or the state as a whole. According to building sheets from the town's tax assessing records, there are 8 housing units with a plumbing grade of 1, meaning no plumbing or the use of an outhouse or other systems.

Table C-7: Substandard Housing in Isle au Haut, County, & State, Occupied Housing Units

	Isle au Haut	Knox County	Maine
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	5 (12.2%)	91 (0.5%)	5,422 (0.9%)
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	8 (19.5%)	130 (0.7%)	3,154 (0.5%)

Source: 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

F. Local Regulations & Affordable Housing Policies

Maine's mandatory Shoreland Zoning requires towns to regulate land use activities within 250 feet of Great Ponds, rivers, and freshwater and coastal wetlands, including tidal waters. As such, residential land uses in the Shoreland Zone are limited. The Town's Zoning Ordinance contains an Affordable Housing Overlay Zone,

created in 2012, that permits a reduced minimum lot size of one acre in areas where underlying zoning would otherwise require significantly larger lots.

Isle au Haut’s land use ordinances do not restrict or discourage the development of affordable housing. Challenges to the development of this housing on the island include the high costs associated with accessing areas of developable land, the pairing of limited land and septic availability with high property values, the high costs of buildings, and challenges securing a mortgage.

7. Goals & Objectives

Goal: To encourage and promote adequate and affordable housing to support the community’s viability and success.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Engage Town officials, stakeholders, and residents in addressing the Town’s housing needs.	Continue to support the work of ICDC to provide diverse affordable housing for different target groups, particularly young families.	Selectboard, Community	Ongoing
	Seek to achieve a level of at least 50% of new residential development built or placed during the next decade be affordable.	ICDC, Community, Planning Board, Private Landowners	Ongoing
	Prioritize helping current residents that desire home ownership to achieve it by connecting them with resources.	ICDC	Ongoing
	Establish a construction loan program and capital purchase program.	ICDC	2028-2029
	Investigate options for improving homeowners’ insurance availability and rates.	ICDC, Island Institute, State Legislators	2029
Identify potential sites for new housing development.	Identify buildable lots that could potentially be subdivided and consider approaching private owners for sale or tax-deductible donation of land.	ICDC, Private Landowners, Selectboard, HCPC	2028-2029
	Explore alternative septic options for difficult lots.	Local Contractors, Maine State Housing	2028-2030
Determine a balanced approach to managing seasonal and year-round housing needs.	Host community discussions around future policies or regulations to manage short-term rentals on Isle au Haut.	Planning Board	2027
	Identify options for returning seasonal homes to year-round housing stock.	ICDC, Private Landowners	2027-2028
	Provide education on estate planning that benefits the year-round community.	ICDC	2028
Recommend policies to encourage construction of workforce and affordable housing.	Amend land use ordinances to comply with recent State housing legislation such as LD 2003 and LD 1829.	Planning Board, HCPC	2026
	Encourage cluster housing to reduce overall cost of construction and to ensure the island's rural character is maintained.	Planning Board, HCPC	2028

Chapter D: Transportation

1. Purpose

A town's transportation system is critical in determining how it will grow. Development is generally located along roads. Poorly planned development in turn may create traffic problems that require road improvements. This section addresses the following:

- An overview of Isle au Haut's transportation systems;
- Present transportation needs; and
- Likely future needs.

2. Key Findings & Issues

The island's loop road remains in variable condition, and town roads are maintained throughout the winter. Most residents are satisfied with road maintenance. Funding for road paving in the future needs to be identified. Acadia National Park also maintains sections of road and miles of trail on the island; the maintenance of Park roads has not always received the same level of satisfaction. The public landing is vital year-round as the town's connection to the mainland and provides commercial fishermen access to the water. The mail boat continues to serve as an integral connection to the mainland and is in high demand during the summer months. Ensuring continued successful operation of the mail boat, as well as barging transit to and from the island, continue to be a high priority.

Roughly one-third of surveyed residents believe that parking on the island needs improvement; however, town investment in parking both on-island and in Stonington received mixed response according to public opinion survey results. Many residents support town investment in barge services, town road improvements, and the town dock and thorofare. Speeding through some areas of town has been brought up as a concern.

3. Key Findings & Issues from Previous Plan, 2016

There are about 14 miles of paved and gravel Town and ANP roads on Isle au Haut in variable condition. The majority of the community is satisfied with road maintenance, though a large percentage of year-round respondents commented that winter maintenance needs improvement. The number of vehicles seems to be increasing on Isle au Haut, which would correspond with the new construction of about 2 houses per year over the past 10 years.

The ferry service, IaH Boat Services' Mail Boat, is critical to Isle au Haut's economy, and the community is generally satisfied with the service. Public access to the water was improved in the fall of 2009 with the construction of a new dock at the Isle au Haut public landing.

4. Community Engagement Results

Community engagement emphasized maintaining safe, reliable, and island-appropriate transportation systems rather than expanding capacity. Visioning session participants raised ongoing concerns about road conditions, including washouts, erosion-prone areas, and dangerous or blind corners, with mixed views on paving versus maintaining dirt roads and a clear emphasis on addressing high-risk segments first. Continued maintenance of island roads emerged as a higher-ranked priority at the priorities workshop, while survey results showed more moderate concern about road maintenance (36%) and bike shoulders (43%), alongside higher concern for public transportation (67%). A majority of respondents supported additional investment through increased property taxes for town road improvements (51%) and the town dock and thorofare (51%), with additional support for improving barge services when costs are offset by grants or other funding sources. Public transportation was commonly identified as needing improvement and was often interpreted as a privately operated taxi service. Longer-term comments linked transportation challenges to climate change, noting increased storm impacts on roads, docks, culverts, and access to off-island services, including disruptions affecting travel to mainland schools.

5. Conditions and Trends

A. Road Network & Infrastructure

Isle au Haut has about 12.7 total miles in the loop road. 4.7 miles are within Acadia National Park. Parts of the road are paved, and parts are gravel. The town roads are maintained throughout the winter, while the park roads are not. The condition of the loop road varies from good to poor. The town employs a Road Commissioner and a Deputy Road Commissioner.

There are countless scenic locations along this road. Areas of particular note include Moore's Harbor, Duck Harbor, Shark Point Beach, Head Harbor, Annis Hill on the Main Road, Long Pond, and the Thorofare.

B. Public Landing

The Isle au Haut public landing is vital year-round as the town's connection to the mainland. This landing also provides commercial fishermen access to the water. The dock at the town landing was replaced during the fall of 2009.

Figure D-1: E911 Roads on Main Island



This project was funded by a Community Development Block Grant from Maine's Department of Economic Development, the Department of Transportation's Small Harbor Improvement Program, Maine's Working Waterfront Program, and the Island Institute. The dock is 160 feet long and 20-24 feet wide, with a 70-foot ramp. The dock is estimated to be useable for 50 years. Because this project was funded through the Working Waterfront program, the Isle au Haut Public Landing guarantees commercial fishermen access to the water in perpetuity. It is the only waterfront site on Isle au Haut accessible to all the town's fishermen.

Isle au Haut recently appointed its first harbormaster and has a Harbor and Waters Ordinance that assigns priorities and establishes standards for moorings. Moorings have been placed by individuals with the consultation of fishermen and other mooring holders. There currently is no fee paid to the town for moorings.

C. Vehicles and Parking

Because Isle au Haut has no car ferry, any vehicles must be privately barged onto the island. More vehicles are barged onto the island than are barged off. 2023 American Community Survey results estimate that all households have at least one vehicle. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the number of vehicles on the island is increasing. Disposal of derelict vehicles is difficult and costly.

On-Island Parking

There is parking for about 25 vehicles near the public landing. It is generally known that parking is restricted to one week at a time although there is no enforcement, with the result that a number of people from distant parts of the island have often left vehicles there for months on end without moving them. From July through October there is insufficient parking in the lot for the vehicles wanting access there. Overflow parking occurs in front of the residential lot on the inland side of Main Road, east of the parking lot. Although options to expand the parking have been presented to the Selectboard, there have been no recent discussions about doing so.

Off-Island Parking

Most island residents have personal vehicles parked in Stonington. Parking and storage of freight and store inventory are available at IaH Boat Services' facilities in Stonington. The wharf and building are leased. Parking at IaH Boat Services is both outdoor and indoor. Other residents have private parking arrangements in Stonington; however, in the past 5 years two different areas open to public parking within one block of IaH Boat Services wharf have been removed from public access. The Town of Stonington has also restricted parking along the road along the water east of the dock so that no overnight parking is permitted. Overall, the Stonington parking availability for Isle au Haut year-round and seasonal residents has been shrinking while the demand has been increasing.

D. On-Water Transportation

Ferry Service

Isle au Haut's main tie to the mainland is a mail boat operated by Isle au Haut Boat Services, a private non-profit organization since 2002. Seventy-five percent of the operating costs are covered by passenger, mail and freight fares, while 25 percent is subsidized by the town (since 2005), US Department of Transportation, National Park

Service and donations. Total revenue in 2024 was \$739,814, nearly the same as in 2023 while expenses were higher than in 2023 due to planned and unplanned maintenance as well as for insurance. IaH Boat Services does a good job raising money and staying ahead of maintenance and scheduling.

The mail boat stops at the Isle au Haut town landing throughout the year. In the summer and early fall, it also stops at the Point Lookout dock and Acadia National Park’s campground at Duck Harbor. The trip from Stonington to Isle au Haut’s public landing takes between 30 and 45 minutes depending on weather, route, and load. The Miss Lizzie was retired in 2015 and replaced by a new boat, the Otter, in 2016. The Mink and the Otter both provide service in the summer, but the Mink is the only boat in service in the winter and spring.

The mail boat does not carry vehicles. Any vehicles or other large items must be barged onto the island by private services. As of spring 2025, passenger fares are \$24 one-way. Passenger fares for year-round residents have been kept to \$11, as efforts have been made to keep costs low for the year-round community. The cost for operating the mail boat is the same at empty as it is at full capacity (62 people).

Table D-1: Mailboat Services Fares, 2024 vs. 2023

	2024 Fares	% Change, 23'-24'
Non-Resident Fares	17,073 fares	4.8%
Resident Fares	4,757 fares	-4.6%
Charters, tours, special trips	≈ \$115,000	-5.9%
Freight	N/A	1.0%
Parking	N/A	-1.3%

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At its summer peak, the mail boat makes six trips to the island each day Monday-Saturday and also operates on Sunday during the summer. In the winter, a morning and afternoon trip are available Monday-Saturday and there are two weekly midday trips on Wednesday and Friday. Mail boat arrival times generate significant traffic, both auto and pedestrian around the public landing, particularly during the daily freight run when large amounts of freight and lumber may need to be unloaded onto waiting trucks.

The schedule is not conducive to commuting from Isle au Haut to work on the mainland because the boat and captains are based in Stonington. Currently no one commutes to work on the mainland. Some high school students have commuted to Stonington but were unable to take part in extracurricular activities. The boat can be chartered for other special trips and is available for 24-hour emergency calls. IaH Boat Services is governed by a board of 12, each serving a three-year term.

IaH Boat Services is preparing to issue bids for the reconstruction of the mail boat wharf in Stonington, with plans to begin in mid-October 2025. The plan to improve resilience calls for concrete decking similar to that used at the Town Landing, and for the surface to be raised by two feet above its current level. A modest increase in parking capacity is also expected. The estimated project budget of just over \$5 million includes \$1.85 million in earmark funding obtained by Senator Collins, \$250,000 of funding from the MaineDOT SHIP program, and

funds received and pledged from 69 individual donors and one foundation. Repairs costing around \$80,000 were made to the wharf after the January 2024 storms.

Barging

Large items and vehicles must be barged to and from the island. The towns of Isle au Haut and Stonington together purchased the Colwell property in Stonington intended to be a staging place for barges destined to Isle au Haut in the late 1990s. Currently, a number of moorings in Stonington must be moved for the Colwell Ramp to truly serve the needs of Isle au Haut. Barges have also departed for Isle au Haut from Webb Cove. It has been suggested that the Town try to either purchase or obtain a long-term lease on the Webb Cove property. The Island Transporter, out of Rockland, is able to land on Isle au Haut at the town boat launch ramp.

E. Traffic Volume & Safety

Vehicular traffic volume is considerably low. The most recent MaineDOT AADT (Annual Average Daily Traffic) counts were done in 2010, and the highest AADT count was 400 vehicles on the portion of the road by the store, the town office and the school. Other AADT counts ranged from 10 vehicles per day on the south/southwestern portion of the island to 230 on the east side of the island. The largest safety concern is excessive speeding through town.

Crash History

Due to the low volume of vehicles there is no history of high crash locations or segments on the island. The Maine Public Crash Query Tool reports no crashes over the last 10 years. Speed limits on the island range from 15 to 25 miles per hour.

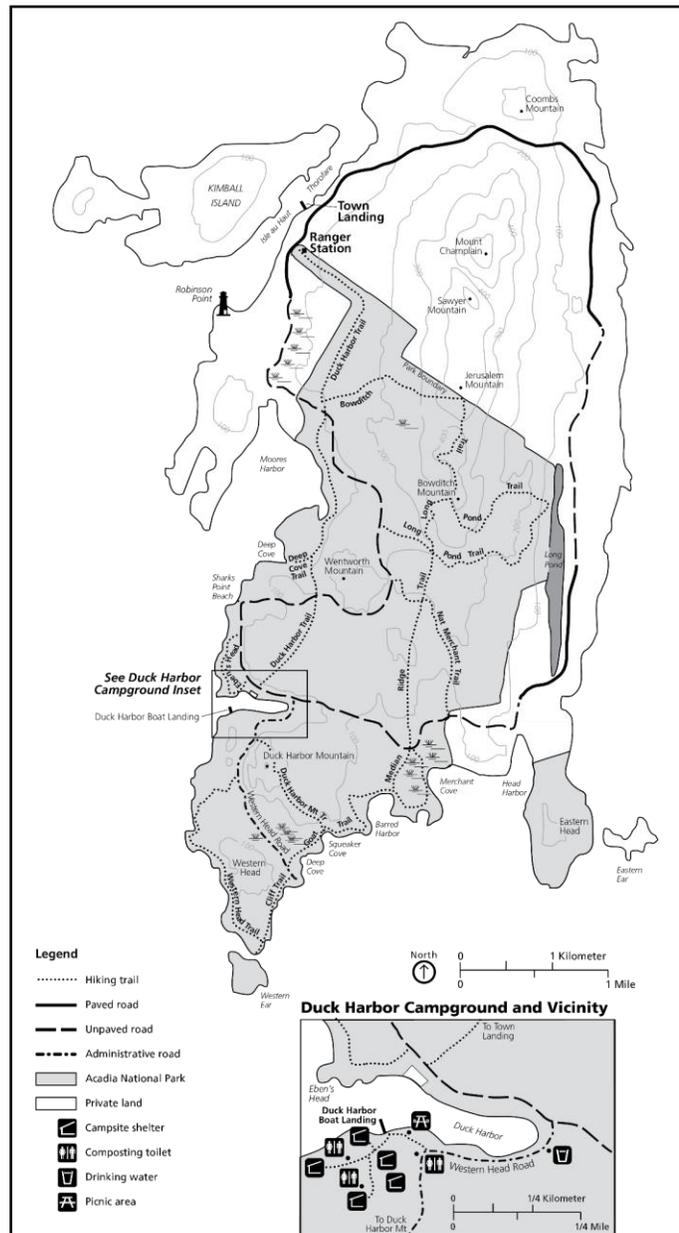
F. Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

According to Acadia National Park, there are five miles of paved roads and seven miles (11 km) of rough, unpaved roads on the island for cycling. Mountain bikes are recommended, and bicycles are prohibited on hiking trails. The ferry charges an additional fee to transport bicycles to and from the island. There are nearly 20 miles of trails for hiking. There is no immediate need for additional facilities for pedestrians.

G. Public Transportation

The mail boat is the only public transportation service accessible directly on the island. It is possible to charter a float plane from the Bangor area to Long Pond, which several visitors and property owners use annually. Some property owners along the pond have voiced concern about the disturbance of float plane landings. There are no bus or rail services, and the nearest airports are the Stonington Municipal Airport in Stonington and the Knox County Regional Airport in Owls Head.

Figure D-2: Trail Network



Source: National Park Service

H. Budget and Maintenance

In FY25 the town received \$11,496 in Local Road Assistance from MaineDOT. From 2025-2027, IaH Boat Services is also scheduled to receive, through MaineDOT, an estimated \$120,000 annually from Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5311 formula grants, which “provide capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000.”

The current annual budget for road maintenance is \$50,000, which covers adding gravel to gravel roads, grading, some ditch work, patching potholes, and mowing shoulders. Town roads are in need of paving, and a source for funding this work is still to be determined.

6. Analyses

A. Policies and Standards

Local road construction standards usually address required width of the right of way, required width of pavement, depths and types of base material, thickness of pavement, minimum and maximum grades and slide slopes. The Town’s Shoreland Zoning Ordinance defines standards for the construction of roads and driveways in shoreland areas, including various setback requirements; standards for the banks and grades of roads and driveways; standards for parking areas in the shoreland zone; and restrictions to developing these systems in a Resource Protection District.

An ordinance should be developed, or improved, to do a better job of regulating parking at the Town Landing. The objectives of this would be to limit the amount of time a vehicle may be left at the town landing; establish the center parking zone as one where keys must be left in the vehicles in case they need to be moved to allow barge traffic; and reserve certain space for utility trucks and spaces for a possible future medical center.

B. Relevance of State and Regional Transportation Plans

There are no transportation-related plans within the Town of Stonington’s 2018 comprehensive plan that impact the island. Other regional and state plans concerning highway safety, active transportation, rail service, or public transportation are not relevant to the island.

C. Adequacy of Transportation Systems

The ferry company has generally been able to accommodate the traffic and freight moving off and on the island, although the amount of freight is starting to become overwhelming. Day trippers to the island at the height of summer can exceed the boat capacity. The new public landing’s life is estimated to be 50 years. The roadways are adequate for the current amount of vehicular traffic on the island, but there are significant and costly maintenance issues that

D. Issues of Public Concern

The primary areas of focus and concern are getting people and goods to and from the island via the mail boat, barging, and personal transportation once on the island.

7. Goals & Objectives

Goal: Maintain and improve island roads and transportation infrastructure and ensure land use decisions support safe, efficient, and reliable access.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Create and maintain a capital road investment plan.	Assess current road conditions incorporating the projected impacts of flooding and sea-level rise.	Selectboard, Road Commissioner	2027-2028
	Create a 10-year road prioritization plan that incorporates flooding, ditching, and paving needs.	Selectboard, Road Commissioner	2027
	Establish a capital reserve fund for road maintenance and evaluate continue to evaluate grant opportunities.	Selectboard, Road Commissioner, HCPC	2027
	Create and maintain a succession plan for town-road maintenance.	Selectboard, Road Commissioner	2027
	Make it easier for residents to pay excise taxes.	Selectboard	2028
Maintain roadway safety.	Maintain town speed limit signs.	Selectboard, Road Commissioner	Ongoing
	Monitor and address island speed limits and speeding concerns as needed.	Community	Ongoing
	Educate residents and visitors about the importance of safe speeds and sharing the road with pedestrians and bicycles.	Community	Ongoing
Coordinate with Acadia National Park to maintain reliable park roads.	Regularly communicate with ANP to review road conditions and communicate maintenance needs.	Road Commissioner, ANP	Ongoing
Coordinate land use decisions with transportation needs.	Amend local ordinances to foster transportation-efficient growth patterns and provide future street connections.	Planning Board	2028
	Ensure local ordinances are not in conflict with the Sensible Transportation Policy Act and state access management regulations.	Planning Board	2028

Goal: Encourage responsible parking and vehicle storage on-island.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Address parking needs on-island.	Enforce parking ordinances at the Town landing parking lot.	Selectboard	Ongoing
	Add signage at the Town landing to display parking rules.	Selectboard	2026
	Require on-island vehicle owners to store vehicles on private property for longer term parking needs.	Selectboard	2026

Goal: Encourage responsible parking and vehicle storage on-island.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Consider other options for improving on-island parking as needed.	Selectboard	2027
	Identify solutions for long-term parking needs of off-island specialized contractors.	Road Commissioner	2028
Address parking issues on the mainland.	Investigate opportunities to address parking challenges on the mainland.	IaH Boat Services	2028
Assist with the proper removal of derelict vehicles.	Explore options for removing derelict vehicles.	Selectboard, Private Vehicle Owners	2028

Goal: Ensure reliable and affordable transportation options.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Ensure reliable and affordable transportation to and from the island.	Work with the IaH Boat Services to ensure that boat services and schedule continue to meet the needs of the community.	Selectboard, IaH Boat Services	Ongoing
	Investigate opportunities for to improve and reduce costs for barge service.	IaH Boat Services, Selectboard	2028
	Work with the Stonington to ensure adequate landing area for barges.	Selectboard, Colwell Ramp Committee	2028-Ongoing
	Explore options for improving large boat docking on-island and the mainland	Colwell Ramp Committee	2028
Support resident and visitor ability to maintain access to personal transportation.	Support continued access to vehicle fuel at the store.	Store	Ongoing
Support diverse on-island transportation options.	Encourage the use of bicycles, walking, and alternative transportation options were safe and practical.	Community	Ongoing
	Share safe walking and biking routes with visitors.	Community	Ongoing

Chapter E: Land Based Natural Resources

1. Purpose

This chapter provides an overview and analysis of the Town's natural resources and addresses issues related to wildlife & plant habitats and other ecological systems. Development on or near these vital resources could adversely affect quality-of-life factors including clean drinking water (see Chapter F: Water Resources) and protection from flooding. Specifically, this chapter:

- Describes Isle au Haut's critical natural and scenic resources;
- Assesses the effectiveness of existing efforts to protect and preserve these resources; and
- Predicts future impacts to these resources as a result of growth and development.

2. Key Findings & Issues

As an unbridged island community, Isle au Haut has unique opportunities to manage natural resources within the town. 52% of the town's land area is conserved, and many of the identified critical and important natural resources are located within conserved areas. There are several species ranked as rare, threatened, endangered, or species of special concern found within Isle au Haut. Further concentrating development around the Thorofare village area will reduce environmental impacts to sensitive habitats.

3. Key Findings & Issues from Previous Plan, 2016

The 2016 Plan Update noted Isle au Haut's coasts, wetlands, marshes, forests and islands are home to rare plants and animals; the surrounding islands are an important stopping point for migratory birds. The only instance of ink-berry, an endangered plant species in Maine, is found on Isle au Haut. The ocean cliffs and mountains of Isle au Haut affords many scenic views. National Park holdings and other conservation lands provide large undeveloped habitat blocks for a variety of species. Natural resource concerns include the island's deer population, the control of invasive species, and maintaining a co-existence of the island's wild character and the year-round human community.

4. Community Engagement Results

Community engagement reflected strong support for protecting Isle au Haut's land-based natural resources and scenic character. Visioning sessions emphasized the value of upland and inland areas such as Great Meadow, Coombs Mountain, Mt. Champlain, Duck Mountain, ridgelines, and interior open spaces, along with a preference for low-impact recreational use and development patterns that keep critical resources intact. Survey results indicate that respondents generally felt the Town's current level of involvement in natural resource protection is appropriate, with no more than six respondents indicating the Town should be less involved in any category and no resource area receiving majority support for increased involvement. The highest interest in additional involvement was focused on aquifers for drinking water (46%), working waterfronts (45%), coastal

land (41%), and lakes and ponds (39%). A majority of respondents (50%) support increased investment in controlling invasive plants when offset by grants and 31.6% supporting such investment through property taxes.

5. Summary of Habitats & Critical Natural Resources

Critical natural resources are those with unusual or significant geological, biological, or hydrological features. Much of the data in this section is derived from information provided by the Beginning with Habitat program.

A. Water Resources & Riparian Habitats

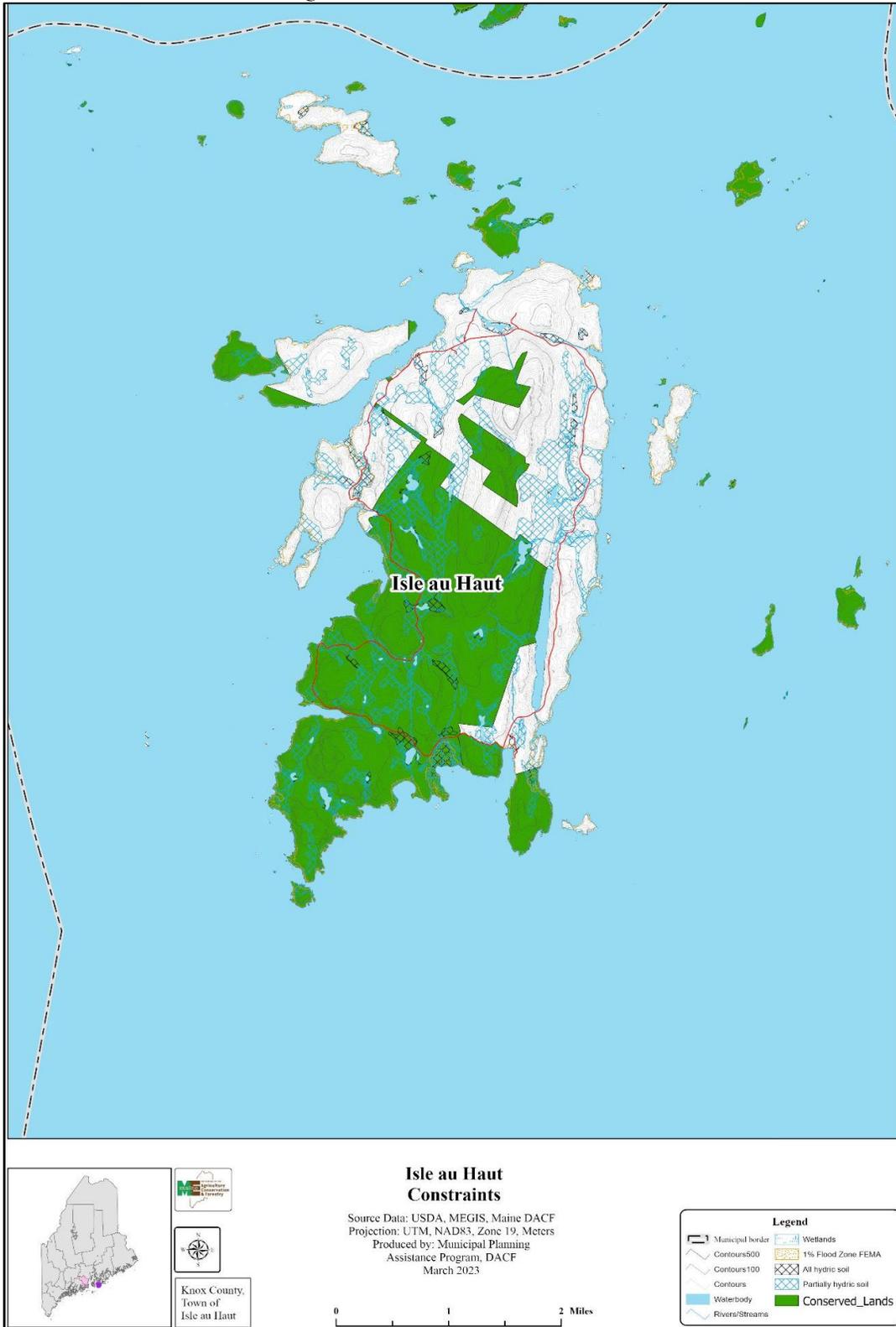
Isle au Haut has 366 acres of freshwater emergent and forested wetlands, which provide critical habitat for animals and plants, as well as water filtration and flood storage capability. Wetlands have the capacity to hold stormwater during flood events; areas that have experienced extensive filling often face increased flooding due to the reduction of wetland area. Figure E-1 shows wetlands and hydric soils on Isle au Haut. Hydric soils are formed through saturation, flooding, or ponding of soils for a period that allows the development of anaerobic (little to no available oxygen) conditions in the upper part of the soil¹. The 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update noted that the spot-winged glider (a species of dragonfly) has been found in several wetlands. Areas identified as Inland Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitats or as Tidal Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitats on the High Value Plant & Animal Habitats map (Figure E-3) tend to represent some of the highest quality wetlands in a landscape. Notable wetlands on Isle au Haut include the areas near Moore's Harbor and Merchant's Harbor.

Isle au Haut has one Great Pond, Long Pond (see Figure E-2), home to fish species including American eel, brook trout, golden shiner, ninespine stickleback, and rainbow smelt². The rainbow smelt population is self-sustaining, while brook trout are stocked by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) annually. Each fall MDIFW stocks 1,000 brook trout in Long Pond by plane.

¹ <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/natural-resource-concerns/soil/hydric-soils>

² <https://www.lakesofmaine.org/lake-fish.html?m=5562>

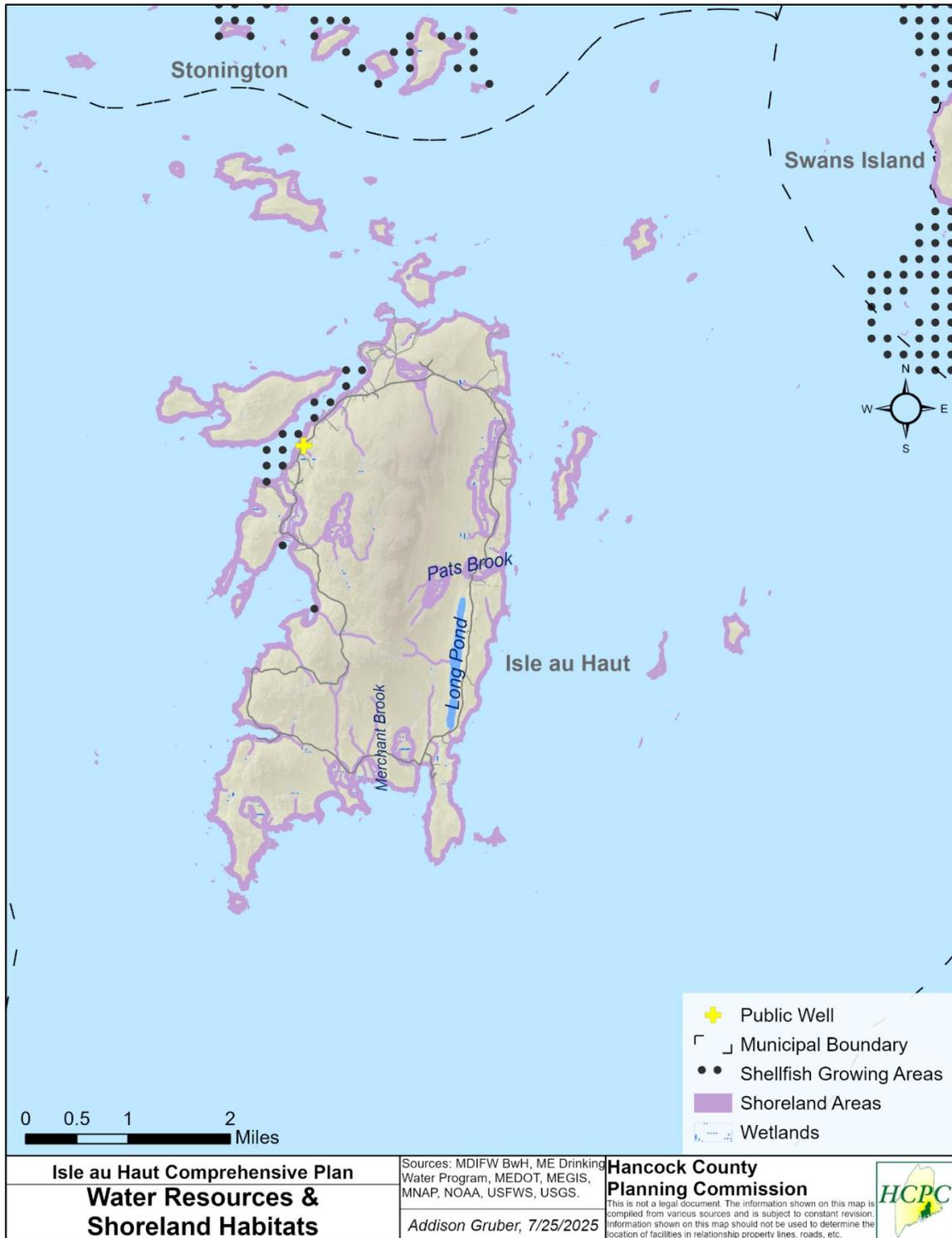
Figure E-1: Isle au Haut Constraints



Stream Barriers

The Maine Stream Habitat Viewer does not contain data on stream crossings for Isle au Haut; the current state of stream crossings on the island is unknown.

Figure E-2: Water Resources & Shoreland Habitats



B. Important Plant & Wildlife Habitat

Rare plants are found throughout Isle au Haut, including three State Special Concern species (mountain firmoss, mountain sandwort, and blinks), a State Threatened Species (screwstem), and a State Endangered Species (ink-berry). Isle au Haut is the only place in Maine where ink-berry is found, making this species of particular concern and priority for protection. This shrub is found from Florida to Louisiana, north to Massachusetts, with disjunct populations on Isle au Haut and in Nova Scotia.

Significant wildlife habitat as defined by the Natural Resources Protection Act includes high and moderate value deer

wintering areas and travel corridors; seabird nesting islands; and critical spawning and nursery areas for Atlantic salmon; and within other protected natural resources: significant vernal pool habitat; high and moderate value waterfowl and wading bird habitat, including nesting and feeding areas; shorebird nesting, feeding and staging areas; and habitat for listed state endangered and state threatened species under 38 MRS §480-B(10). Isle au

Figure E-3: High Value Plant and Animal Habitat



Haut contains both tidal waterfowl and wading bird habitat and seabird nesting islands. See Figure E-3 for the locations of high value plant and animal habitats with the Town. No critical spawning or nursery areas for Atlantic salmon have been identified in Isle au Haut's waters.

All known listed animal species in Isle au Haut are related to the marine environment, and include State Threatened species (harlequin duck, arctic tern, and great cormorant) and State Special Concern species (purple sandpiper, overwinters in the Town). The arctic tern and great cormorant breed within Isle au Haut, the harlequin duck overwinters in the Town. Purple sandpipers and harlequin ducks have recently seen large declines; undeveloped islands and shorelines are important for these species and should be prioritized for protection. No significant vernal pools have been identified by MDIFW on Isle au Haut.

The islands and ledges including and surrounding Isle au Haut are an important stopping point for migratory birds. Shorebird areas such as the one present on the West Halibut Ledges (see Figure E-3) are internationally important, serving as locations for shorebirds to feed or rest during their global migrations. Isle au Haut's coast and many of the outer surrounding islands are habitat for several species that are endangered, threatened or of special concern. These include the arctic tern, bald eagle, great cormorant, harlequin duck, and purple sandpiper.

Wild mammals found on the island include white-tailed deer, snowshoe hare, deer mouse, meadow vole, boreal red back vole, red squirrel, masked shrew, racoon, eastern coyote, mink, river otters, and bats³. MDIFW has not identified any significant deer wintering areas on Isle au Haut.

C. Natural Communities

The Maine Natural Areas Program has classified 104 natural community types across Maine. Isle au Haut is home to three exemplary communities (lower-elevation spruce-fir forest, leatherleaf bog, and sedge-heath fen) and two rare communities (pitch-pine woodland and low-elevation bald).

Notable habitats including sedge heath fens, lower elevation spruce-fir forests, leather leaf bogs, pitch pine woodlands and low elevation bald areas, are home to unusual plant assemblages.

D. Focus Areas

Focus areas are concentrations of important and critical natural resources (defined biologically rather than by political borders). The Penobscot Bay and Islands Focus Area includes Isle au Haut, Swan's Island, Stonington, and Deer Isle. This focus area is currently being re-evaluated by the Maine Natural Areas Program.

³ www.coa.edu/live/files/1252-sarah-cole-senior-project-002

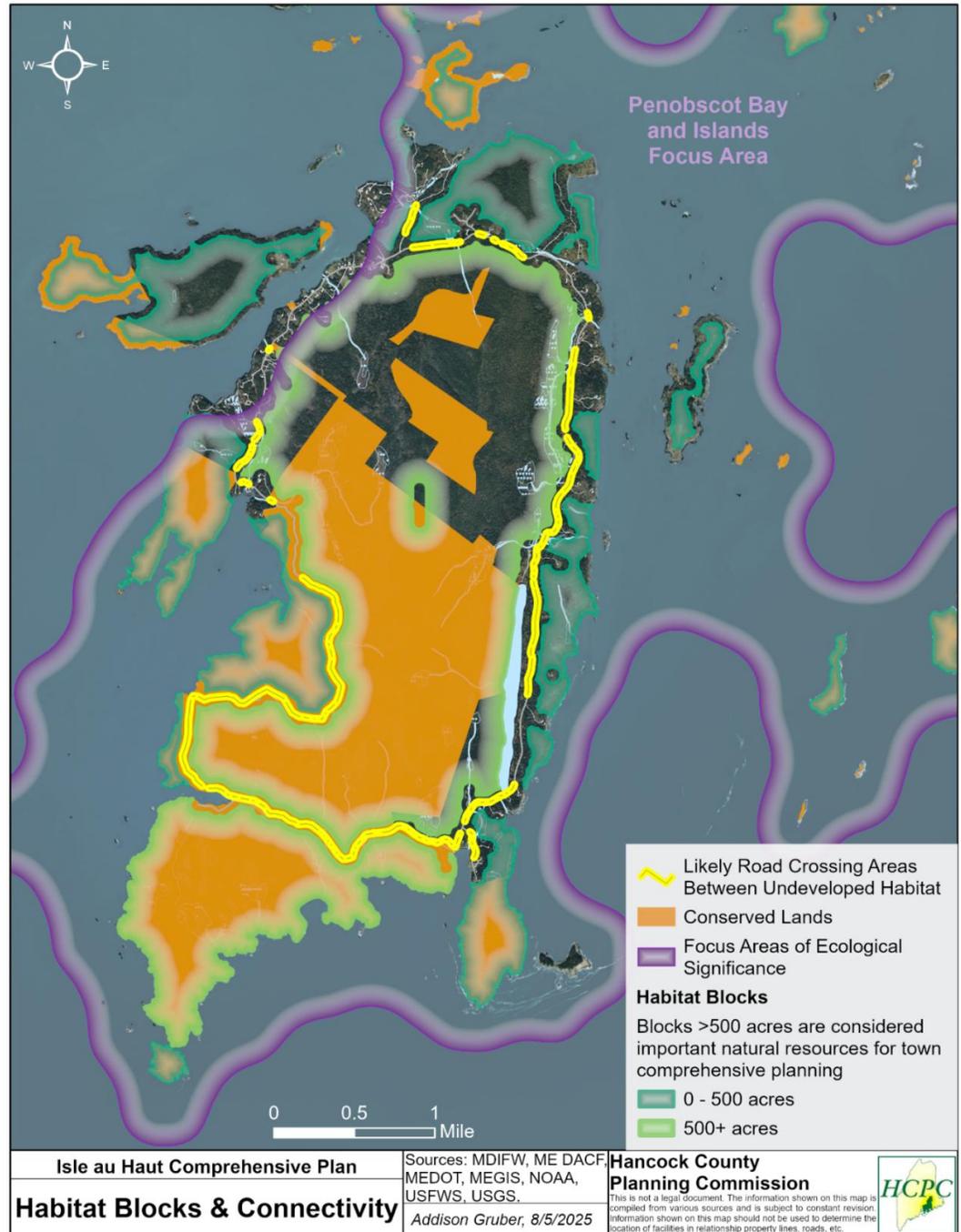
E. Undeveloped Habitat Blocks & Connectors

The national park holdings and other conservation land provide large blocks of uninterrupted habitat on Isle au Haut (Figure E-4). Such blocks are important for habitat connectivity. Working to maintain large areas of intact habitat and the connections between them may help to support a variety of wildlife on the island and reduce sprawl, increasing efficiency in town services. A subdivision ordinance could provide the Town options for encouraging density, reserving open spaces, smaller minimum lot sizes, or promoting connectivity between open spaces.

F. Scenic Resources

Isle au Haut’s natural beauty is one of its greatest assets. The coastal cliffs, rocky beaches, spruce forests, bogs, and pond contribute to Isle au Haut’s natural character. The ocean cliffs and mountains of Isle au Haut afford countless scenic views. There are innumerable scenic areas on Isle au Haut and the surrounding islands. The Camden Hills and the mountains of Acadia National Park on Mount Desert Island are significant examples of Isle au Haut’s scenic resources, visible from the mountains and coastal cliffs of the island. Other significant scenic areas include Mt. Champlain and Boom Beach.

Figure E-4: Habitat Blocks & Connectivity



6. Assessment of Threats to Isle au Haut's Critical Natural Resources

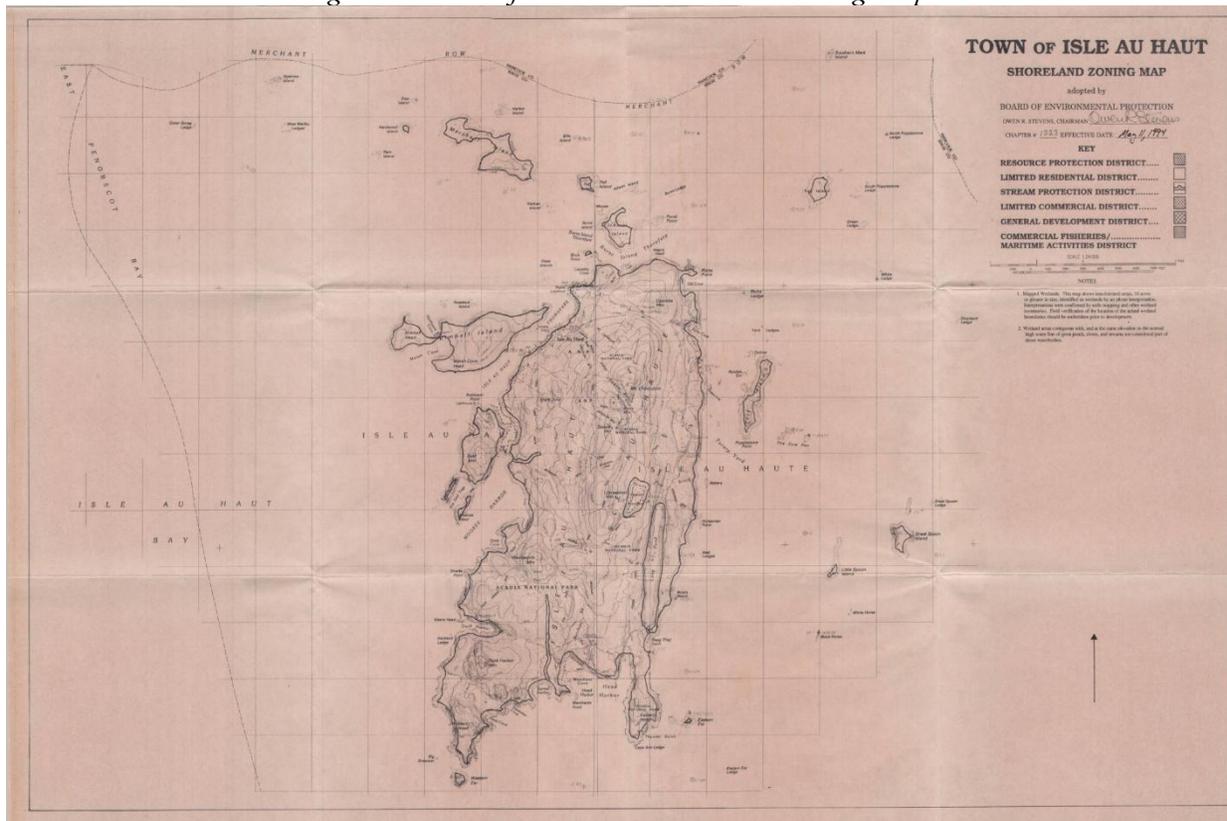
There are several nonnative invasive plant species on Isle au Haut, including Japanese barberry, Japanese knotweed, bush honeysuckle, Norway maple, and bittersweet. The Town should consider providing educational materials on common invasive species and their removal at the Town Hall.

Isle au Haut has zoning ordinances to protect valuable natural resources. Future development could pose a threat to critical habitats and natural resources; concentrating development in areas with existing development and services will reduce environmental conflicts.

7. Consistency of Isle au Haut's Shoreland Zoning Standards with State Guidelines

The Town of Isle au Haut has a state-imposed shoreland zoning ordinance. These land use restrictions apply within 250 feet of the normal high-water line of any great pond, river or saltwater body, within 250 feet of the upland edge of a coastal or state-defined freshwater wetland, or within 75 feet of the high-water line of a stream. Figure E-6 shows the official shoreland zoning map. The Town is currently working on updating the shoreland zoning ordinance.

Figure E-5: Town of Isle au Haut Shoreland Zoning Map



8. Measures to Protect Critical & Important Natural Resources

Isle au Haut's land use ordinances are designed to maintain natural beauty and environmental quality. New construction should be minimally invasive, and building practices should protect water quality. Zoning ordinances should be amended to include a height restriction. To limit the number of vehicles and traffic on the island, ferry service should continue to be restricted to passengers only and consider implementing a fee to bring vehicles onto the island to contribute toward the cost of removing abandoned vehicles. The town should encourage the proper disposal of bulky waste and consider opportunities for joint purchasing of barge removal services. Many of the natural resources identified in the analysis above are protected by their location within the boundaries of Acadia National Park.

Current zoning concentrates development in existing settlements and along existing roads. This helps to maintain contiguous habitat blocks. The Town of Isle au Haut implemented its first zoning ordinance in March 1975. The State of Maine imposed a mandatory Shoreland Zoning Ordinance on the Town in 1995. The Town zoning ordinance divides the Town into seven zones: remote shoreland, accessible interior, accessible shoreland, remote interior, resource protection, general development, and commercial fisheries/maritime activities. Resource protection zones "include areas in which development would adversely affect water quality, productive habitat, biotic systems or scenic and natural values." There are additional land use restrictions in this zone.

9. Regional Cooperation to Protect Shared Critical Natural Resources

To continue to protect shared critical natural resources on Isle au Haut, the Town should continue to work with conservation partners including Acadia National Park, Island Heritage Trust, the Nature Conservancy, and Maine Coast Heritage Trust. The Town should also take advantage of opportunities to collaborate with other towns within the Penobscot Bay and Islands Focus Area, including Swan's Island, Stonington, and Deer Isle, to protect wildlife and habitats throughout the area.

10. Goals & Objectives

Goal: Improve the quality of and protect Isle au Haut's natural resources.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Protect and conserve critical natural resources in the community.	Distribute educational materials on rare plants and animals and invasive species to community members.	ANP, Selectboard	2028
	Coordinate with regional and state resource agencies to protect shared critical natural resources.	Selectboard	Ongoing
	Designate critical natural resources as Critical Natural Resource Areas in the Future Land Use Plan.	Comprehensive Plan Committee, Planning Board	2026
	Encourage bulky waste disposal on Isle au Haut and investigate opportunities for joint or collective bulky waste removal.	Selectboard	2028-Ongoing
Ensure land use ordinances are consistent with applicable state law regarding critical natural resources.	Require subdivision or non-residential property developers to identify critical natural resources that may be on site and to take appropriate measures to protect those resources.	Planning Board	2028
	Require the planning board to include consideration of pertinent Beginning with Habitat maps and information regarding critical natural resources as a part of the review process.	Planning Board, Beginning with Habitat	2028
Participate in local and regional efforts to protect shared critical natural resources.	Pursue public/private partnerships to protect critical and important natural resources such as through land swaps or the purchase of land or easements from willing sellers.	Selectboard	Ongoing
	Distribute or make available information to those living in or near critical or important natural resources about current use tax programs and applicable local, state, or federal regulations.	Selectboard, Maine Revenue Services	2028

Chapter F: Water Resources

1. Purpose

This section presents an overview of Isle au Haut’s water resources, which are essential to protect the town’s drinking water. Specifically, this chapter:

- Describes the characteristics, uses, and quality of Isle au Haut’s significant water resources; and
- Assesses the effectiveness of existing measures to protect and preserve these resources.

2. Key Findings & Issues

Isle au Haut has one great pond (Long Pond), several streams, and over 300 acres of freshwater and forested wetlands. These areas are important to the community for their natural beauty, recreational opportunities, habitat, and flood storage capacities. Past drinking water well testing efforts have found levels of contaminants above recommended levels. The Town should publicize opportunities for well water testing for residents.

3. Key Findings & Issues from Previous Plan, 2016

Water resources are valued by the community, with wetlands providing important habitat and helping regulate groundwater levels and stream flows. Long Pond provides many important recreational opportunities in addition to wildlife habitat.

Most of Isle au Haut’s residents depend on groundwater, while a few rely on surface water for their household water supply. The quality of the pond, streams, and wetlands could be impaired by uncontrolled development. Care should be taken in new construction to reduce sedimentation and impervious surface run-off. The 2007 public opinion survey suggested concern from respondents about the water quality of the pond. A 2012 ground water survey noted that more residents should test their drinking water for arsenic, lead, fluoride and radon, in addition to the more common iron and manganese.

4. Community Engagement Results

Community engagement highlighted the importance of protecting Isle au Haut’s water resources, particularly the Pond, as a valued recreational and ecological feature. Visioning session participants expressed general concern about maintaining water quality and minimizing activities that could degrade the Pond. A few residents raised concerns about float planes on the Pond. Survey results indicate generally positive views of access to freshwater, with 68% of respondents rating public access to fresh water as good or excellent. Responses regarding town involvement suggest that residents largely feel the Town’s current role in water and resource protection is appropriate, with very few indicating the Town should be less involved and no resource area receiving majority support for increased involvement. The highest levels of interest in additional involvement were related to aquifers for drinking water (46%), coastal land (41%), and lakes and ponds (39%).

5. Surface Water Resources

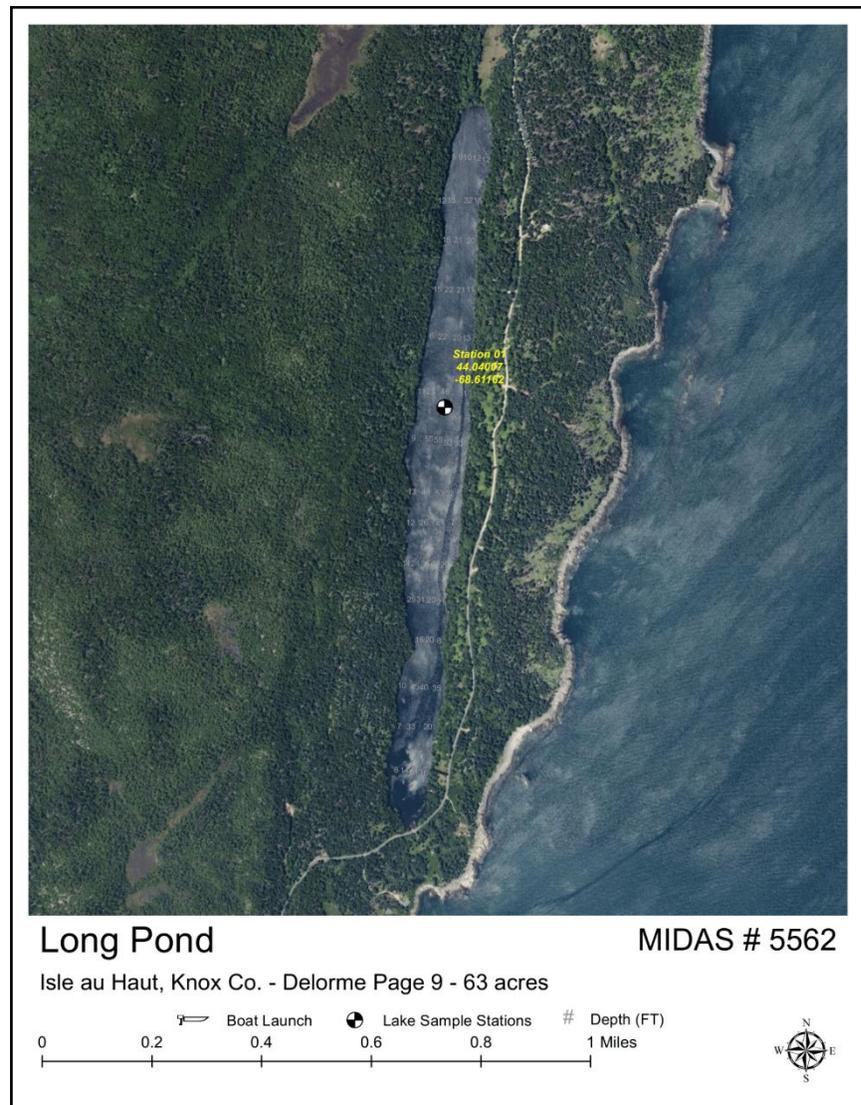
A. Long Pond

Long Pond, also known as Turners Lake, (MIDAS 5562) is Isle au Haut's only inland freshwater pond. Figure F-1 shows Long Pond and the surrounding area. Long Pond is valued by the community both for its natural beauty and recreational opportunities. It is a Great Pond (inland water bodies greater than 10 acres in size are held in trust as "Great Ponds" by the State of Maine). Physically, the lake is 1.32 miles long, about 600 feet wide at its widest point, and has a surface area of 63 acres. The greatest Pond depth is 59 feet in the center of the Pond, just north of where Bull Brook enters from the west. Tables F-2 and F-3 detail Long Pond's characteristics and water quality. Much of the western shore of the pond is undeveloped, protected from development by Acadia National Park.

Long Pond is home to American eel, brook trout, golden shiner,

ninespine stickleback and rainbow smelt. Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) stocks the pond with brook trout annually in the fall and has stocked landlocked salmon and rainbow trout in the past. The pond is classified as "GPA" in the Maine Department of Environment classifications that control direct discharges. Under this classification, no direct discharges are permitted to the pond.

Figure F-1: Long Pond



Source: Lakes of Maine

Table F-1: Characteristics of Long Pond

Area (Acres)	Perimeter (miles)	Mean Depth (ft.)	Max Depth (ft.)	Fishery Type	Invasive Aquatic Plant Infestation
63	2.7	23	59	Coldwater	None Known

Source: Lakes of Maine

Table F-2: Long Pond Water Quality

Secchi Transparency (m)	Chlorophyll -a (ppb)	Total Phosphorus (ppb)	Color (spu)	Alkalinity (mg/L)	pH	Conductivity (uS/cm)
6.8	1.8	4	7	2.6	6.27	82

Source: Lakes of Maine

B. Streams

Isle au Haut has numerous brooks and streams. Figure F-3 shows the locations of ponds and streams; named streams are Barter Creek, Duck Brook, Pats Brook, Bull Brook, and Merchant Brook. Most are small, and the flow is seasonally variable. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection has classified these streams as Class “B”. Class B waters are “of such quality that they are suitable for the designated uses of drinking water supply after treatment; fishing; agriculture; recreation in and on the water; industrial process and cooling water supply; hydroelectric power generation, except as prohibited; navigation; and as habitat for fish and other aquatic life. The habitat must be characterized as unimpaired as defined by Title 38 §465.

Figure F-2: Isle au Haut's Ponds and Streams



C. Freshwater & Coastal Wetlands

Isle au Haut has numerous inland wetlands, which provide important habitats for animals and plants, as well as water filtration and flood storage capability. Figure F-3 shows wetland types and locations in the town. In addition to these wetlands, there are many vernal pools and seasonal wetlands. Wetlands are addressed in more detail in the Natural Resources section.

The floodwater storage capacity of the island's wetlands is quite large. Stream flows are moderated due to this storage capacity. However, the storage capacity can be overwhelmed by very large rainfalls such as more than five inches in a day.

Coastal (saltwater) wetlands are generally considered to be intertidal areas between high and low

tide. Various state and federal regulatory programs have various specific definitions to describe the jurisdiction under various statutes and regulatory programs. These wetlands are important spawning grounds for marine life

Figure F-3: Isle au Haut Wetlands Map



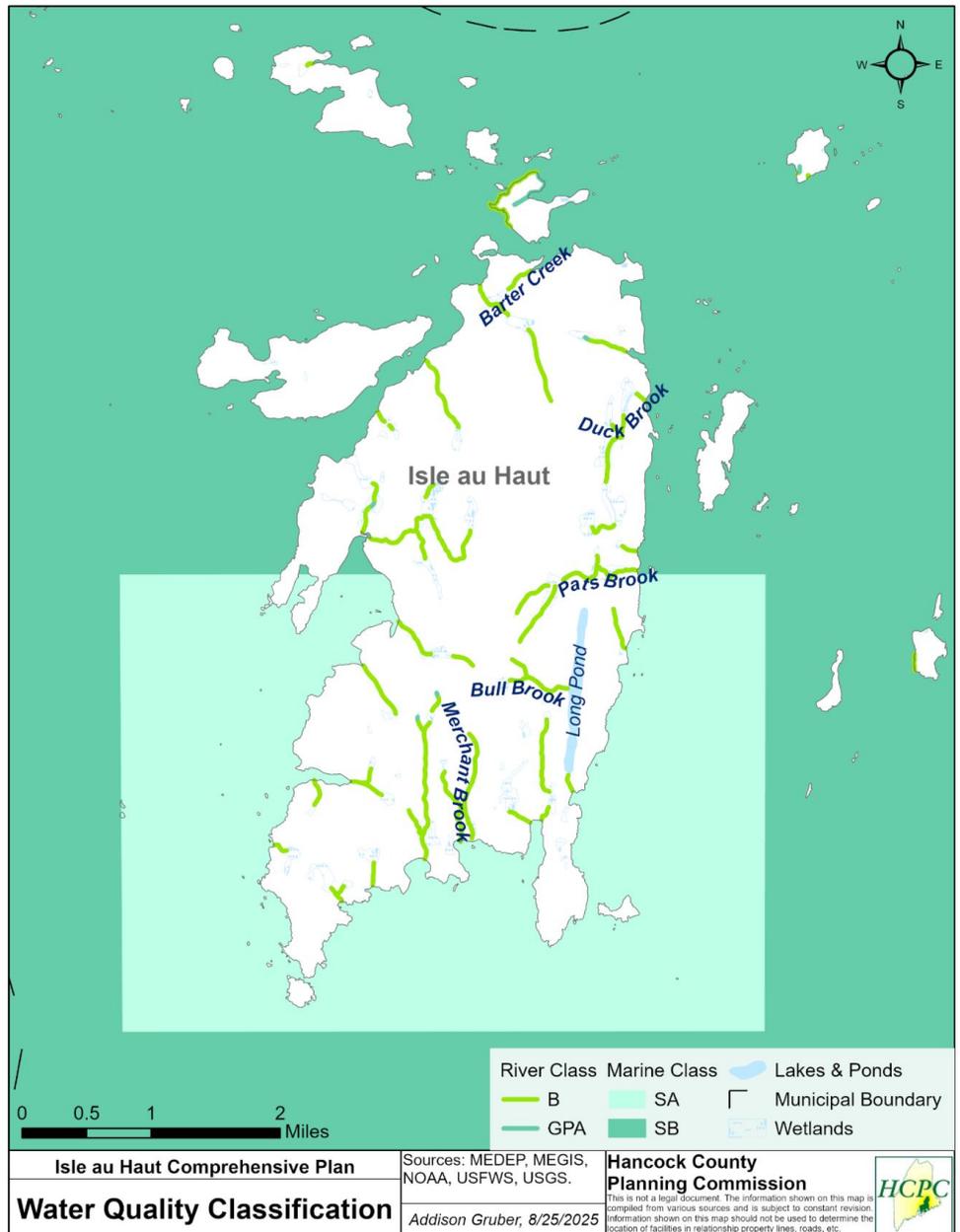
and habitat for waterfowl. Where the coastal wetlands are wide or contain saltwater marshes, these wetlands can reduce the impact and runoff of coastal storm waves.

There are two marine water quality classifications found in the coastal waters of Isle au Haut (as defined by 38 MRS §465-B): Class SA and Class SB (Figure F-4 shows the location of each water quality classification area). Class SA is the highest water quality classification and surrounds most of the ANP shoreline. The islands' natural resources are addressed at greater length in the Natural Resources section.

D. Other Water Quality Conditions

According to the most recent DEP data, there are no current wastewater outfalls or overboard discharges or significant aquifers on Isle au Haut.

Figure F-4: Isle au Haut Statutory Water Classification



Invasive aquatic species are introduced exotic flora and fauna that displace native plant and animal communities. Infestations result in habitat disruption, loss of property values, diminished water quality, reduced fishing and water recreation opportunities, and significant expense for mitigating the environmental costs. There are fifteen invasive aquatic species identified in Maine law as illegal to import, sell, and transport. According to Maine DEP's data on Invasive Aquatic Plants, no known aquatic invasive species are present on Isle au Haut at present.

DEP also maintains a Nonpoint Source Priority Watersheds List to encourage communities to take action to restore or protect waters impaired or threatened primarily by polluted runoff. The list also helps prioritize DEP nonpoint source water pollution control efforts and grant funds. Isle au Haut does not have any lakes, streams, or marine waters on the DEP lists of impaired or threatened watersheds.

6. Drinking Water

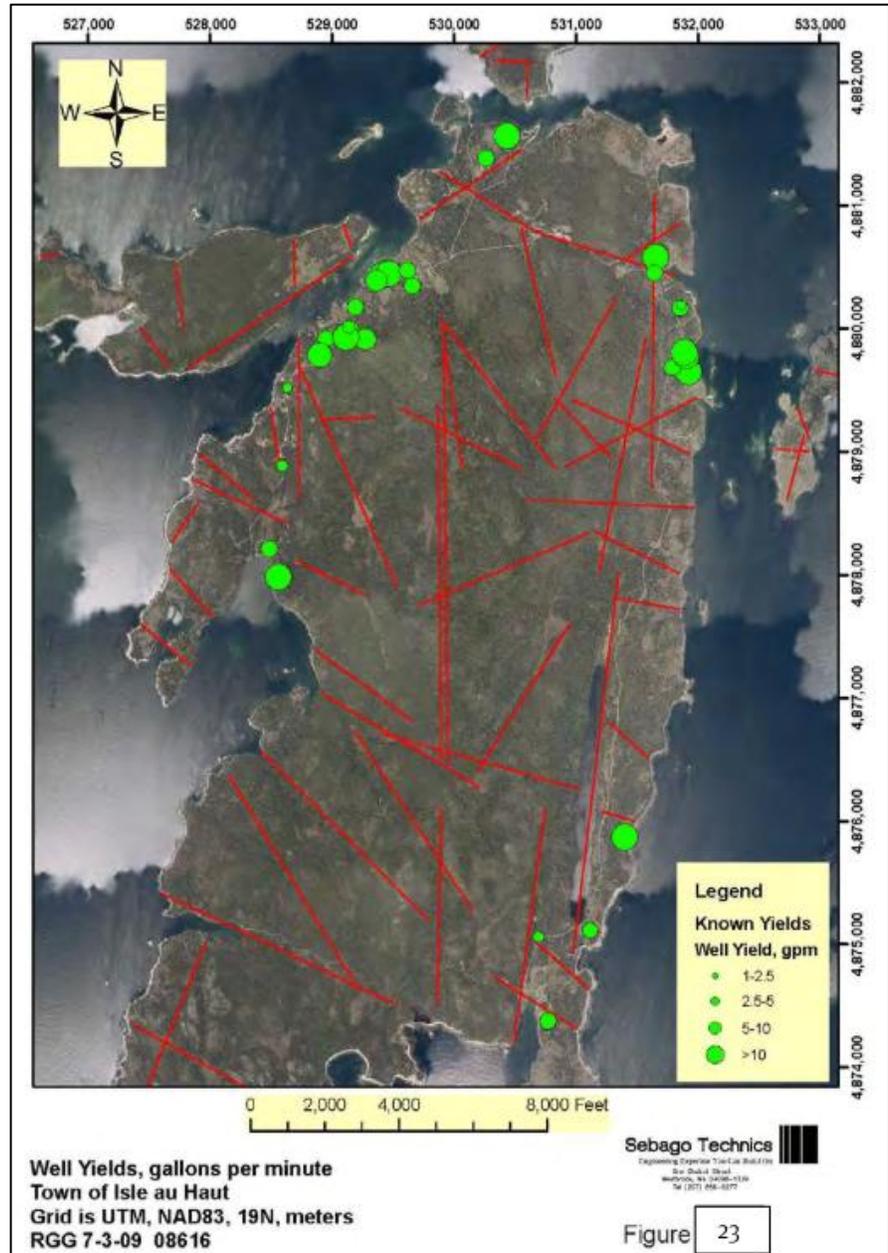
A. Groundwater

Groundwater is defined as subsurface water found in the saturated soils and water-bearing bedrock of the earth's surface. Aquifers are especially important and are especially vulnerable to pollution from surface and subsurface sites.

In 2009, Sebago Technics conducted a well water survey in which 58 Isle au Haut households responded. Based on the 2009 report, the median yield of wells near town was five gpm (gallons per minute). The median yield of wells on the east side of the island was 15 gpm. The map in Figure F-6 shows well yields in gallons per minute for many wells across the island. The report noted there is “more than ample groundwater available to serve the current and reasonably foreseeable needs of the island population.”

In addition to data gathered from the town-wide well

Figure F-5: Well Yields, gallons per minute



survey, the Maine Geological Survey has collected information on wells drilled since 1987. This data is not comprehensive or complete, as not all well drillers have reported drilled wells to the Maine Geological Survey.

Wells for which there is some data are shown in Table F-3. Most of the wells on the island are drilled and are for domestic use. The highest well yield reported is 50 gpm. Wells are considered “high yield” with a yield of 10 gpm or more.

Table F-3: Isle au Haut Well Information

Well Number	Address	Well Use	Well Type	Well Depth (ft)	Yield (gpm)
15197		Domestic	Bedrock	75	6
15198		Domestic	Bedrock	125	3
15199		Domestic	Bedrock	150	4
16261	Near Robinson Point	Domestic	Bedrock	92	4.5
16262	Isle Au Haut	Domestic	Bedrock	55	20
16263	Head Harbor, Isle Au Haut	Domestic	Bedrock	150	4.5
16264	Near Town Dock	Domestic	Bedrock	83	5
16265	Head Harbor, Isle Au Haut	Domestic	Bedrock	125	4
16266	Isle Au Haut	Domestic	Bedrock	55	25
16267		Domestic	Bedrock	83	8
16268	Near Ranger Station/Town Dock	Domestic	Bedrock	90	5
38683		Domestic	Bedrock	180	8
38684	Near Robinson Point	Domestic	Bedrock	260	3
38685		Domestic	Bedrock	300	8
38687	Near Town Hall	Domestic	Bedrock	200	12
38689	Near Town Dock	Domestic	Bedrock	240	3
38690	Near Bowditch Trail	Domestic	Bedrock	200	20
42145	Box 7A	Domestic	Bedrock	200	4
69455		Domestic	Bedrock	220	10
73746		Domestic	Bedrock	200	20
73747		Domestic	Bedrock	250	2
73748		Domestic	Bedrock	300	5
73749		Domestic	Bedrock	220	40
73750		Domestic	Bedrock	220	2
73751		Domestic	Bedrock	240	40
73752		Domestic	Bedrock	220	5
73753		Domestic	Bedrock	240	30
75816		Domestic	Bedrock	405	0.5
75817		Domestic	Bedrock	345	1
75818		Domestic	Bedrock	135	30
80457		Domestic	Bedrock	420	0.5
80458	Head Harbor	Domestic	Bedrock	200	0.75
80459	Head Harbor	Domestic	Bedrock	100	4
80460		Domestic	Bedrock	280	12
80461		Domestic	Bedrock	250	20
80463		Domestic	Bedrock	320	1.5

Well Number	Address	Well Use	Well Type	Well Depth (ft)	Yield (gpm)
105003		Domestic	Bedrock	240	3
108760		Domestic	Bedrock	420	0.5
108761	East Side Long Pond	Domestic	Bedrock	420	0.5
108762	Main Street	Domestic	Bedrock	420	0.75
108768	Main Road	Domestic	Bedrock	320	0.5
116419	Main Road	Domestic	Bedrock	300	7.5
116420		Domestic	Bedrock	380	3
116421		Domestic	Bedrock	170	80
116422		Domestic	Bedrock	140	25
116423	Town Road	Domestic	Bedrock	80	50
116424	Town Road	Domestic	Bedrock	280	1.5
116425	Off Main Road	Domestic	Bedrock	360	1
121180	Off Main Road	Domestic	Bedrock	300	12
121181	Head Harbor Road	Domestic	Bedrock	200	5
121182		Domestic	Bedrock	360	3
121183	Main Road	Domestic	Bedrock	340	2
132644	10 Main St	Domestic	Bedrock	160	7
132645	Main Loop Road	Domestic	Bedrock	300	3
132646	Island Loop Road - East Side	Domestic	Bedrock	300	3
132652	Main Road	Domestic	Bedrock	200	15
132674	2 Rich'S Cove Road	Domestic	Bedrock	300	2
134165	367 Main Rd	Domestic	Bedrock	320	2
144778	Town Dock / Hastings Property	Domestic	Bedrock	705	1
144782	IaH Community Development Center	Domestic	Bedrock	430	12
145022	10 Main Road	Domestic	Bedrock	430	15
149440	Outpost House	Domestic	Bedrock	530	2
149441	Main Rd	Domestic	Bedrock	255	7
38686		Institutional	Bedrock	200	20
38688		Municipal	Bedrock	220	30

Source: Maine Geological Survey

B. Groundwater Quality Considerations

Surveys of well water over the years have revealed various levels of naturally occurring contaminants. There have been a couple reports of saltwater intrusion in wells. In 2015 Isle au Haut Community Development Corporation tested its rental houses and found concentrations of iron, manganese, fluoride, arsenic, and radon that exceeded drinking water standards. These water quality issues have been remediated with home filter systems.

The MDI Biological Laboratory's Healthy Water, Healthy Aging project tested six private wells on Isle au Haut in partnership with Maine Seacoast Mission between 2023-2025. Two water samples collected were found to be contaminated; contaminants identified included manganese, iron, and lead.

PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) have been detected in the school’s water supply at levels above the drinking water standard. Bottled water is currently provided for drinking in the school. The PFAS filtration system was recently installed and is fully operational.

While private wells are the responsibility of the homeowner to test and maintain, the Town should consider providing educational materials to homeowners on common water quality issues, well testing, and options for remediation.

C. Public Water Systems

A public water system is defined as “any publicly or privately-owned system of pipes or other constructed conveyances, structures and facilities through which water is obtained for or sold, furnished or distributed to the public for human consumption, if such system has at least 15 service connections or serves at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year or bottles water for sale. The term “public water system” shall include any collection, treatment, storage or distribution pipes or other constructed conveyances, structures or facilities under the control of the supplier of water and used primarily in connection with such a system, and any collection or pretreatment storage facilities not under that control that are used primarily in connection with such a system.”

There are three types of public water systems, each of which is regulated differently: Community Public Water Systems; Non-Transient, Non-Community Public Water Systems; and Transient Public Water Systems, which are “non-community systems that serve at least 25 persons, but not necessarily the same persons, for at least 60 days per year. Examples include restaurants, camps and campgrounds, motels and hotels, golf courses, etc.”

Isle au Haut has one public well located at the ranger station near the town landing (information on this public water system in Table F-4). There is also a well and pump on Duck Harbor Road as you approach the Duck Harbor boat landing in Acadia National Park. Public wells do not have to be publicly owned but serve a certain number of members of the public. Owners and operators of the public water systems must be notified of land use decisions that could affect the quality of the public water. The Maine Bureau of Health’s Department of Public Services considers the Stevens storage area at the southern side of Coombs Mountain to be the only major land use risk.

Table F-4: Public Water Systems

PWSID#	Public Water System Name	PWS Type	Source Type
ME0098590	US NPS Isle au Haut Ranger Station	NC (Transient)	Well (groundwater)

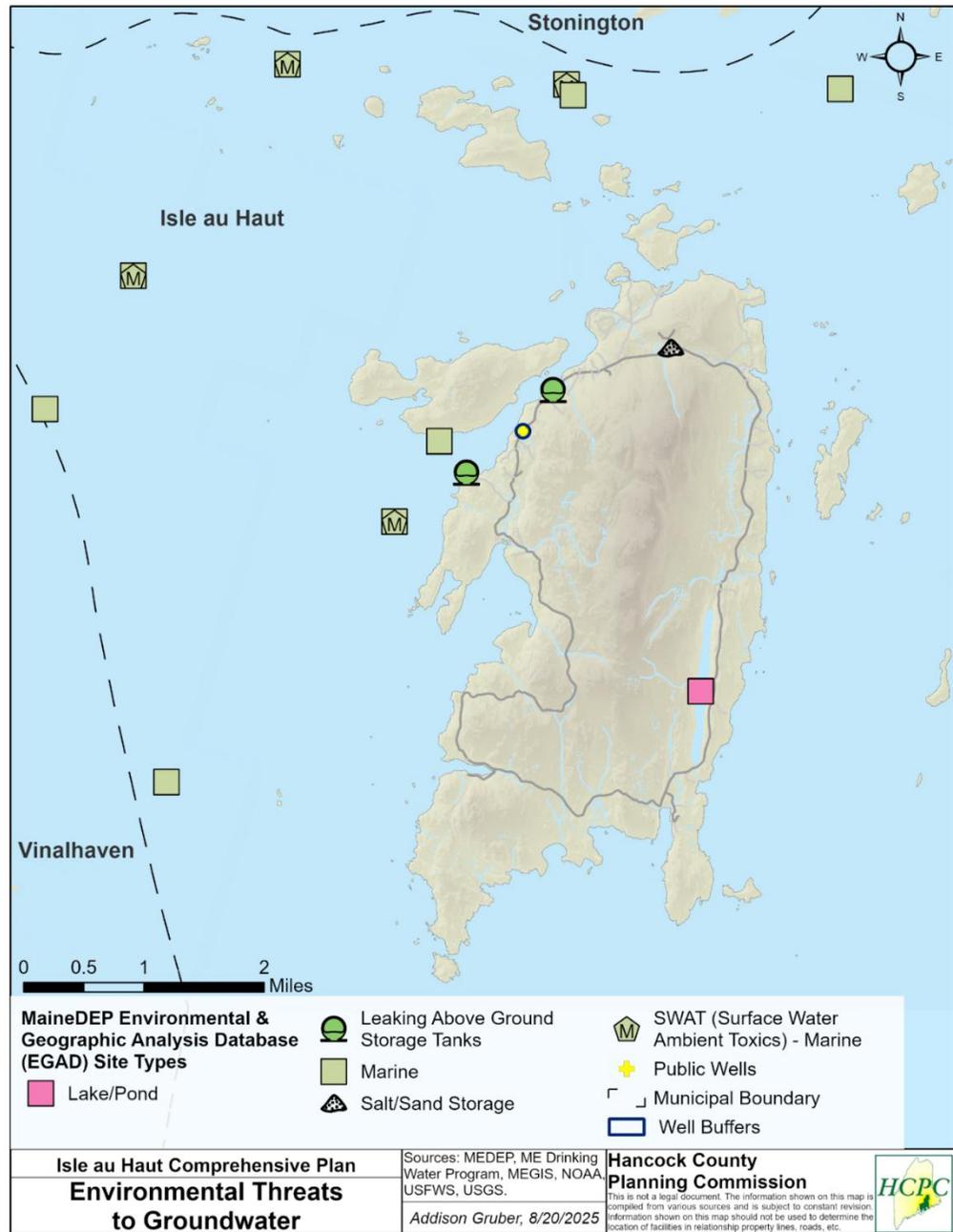
Source: Maine Drinking Water Program

7. Point Sources of Pollution and Steps to Eliminating Them

Discharge from wastewater treatment plants and other industrial facilities are examples of point sources of pollution. Other examples of point source pollution include leaking fuel storage tanks, salt/sand sheds, and transfer stations. Maine DEP’s Environmental and Geographic Analysis Database (EGAD) contains data from sites with land use activities which are potential and/or actual sources of contamination and sites where

biological and surface water sampling is conducted. Figure F-6 shows the locations and types of EGAD sites in Isle au Haut. The green squares (Marine) represent marine locations where monitoring or assessment occur, the green pentagons (SWAT (Surface Water Ambient Toxics) - Marine) depict sites where organisms (mussels, lobster, etc.) and sediments are monitored for contamination with toxic chemicals. There are two icons for leaking above ground storage tanks on the map, one at the Island Store and the other at the lightkeeper's

Figure F-6: Environmental Threats to Groundwater



house. The fuel tanks at the Island Store have never consistently leaked due to lack of structural integrity, rather occasional leaks have occurred due to user error. The Island Store has funding through the ShoreUp program to plan for protecting its fuel tanks from flooding. The leaking oil tank at the lightkeeper's house has been remediated by the owner. The Salt/Sand Storage icon on the northern part of the island depicts where the Town stores its sand and salt mixture. The Town stores about 30 cubic yards of material at a time in a dumpster, and it is unlikely to pose a major threat to groundwater.

There are concerns about pollution from float planes landing and parking on Long Pond. Informally, motorized watercraft are not allowed on Long Pond, but floatplanes do use the pond from time to time. The Town should consider options for limiting pollutants in Long Pond from motorized watercraft.

8. Nonpoint Sources of Pollution and Steps to Eliminating Them

Nonpoint source pollution may come from multiple sources within a watershed. Stormwater runoff is water that does not soak into the ground during storms and flows over the surface of the ground until it reaches a stream, lake, estuary, or the ocean. Stormwater runoff often picks up polluting hitchhikers such as soil, fertilizers, pesticides, manure, and petroleum products. Potential sources of nonpoint pollution on Isle au Haut may be old or failing septic systems, pesticide or manure runoff, or erosion at public access points. Currently no issues with nonpoint source pollutants have been identified.

9. Protection of Groundwater and Surface Water Supplies and Their Recharge Areas

State shoreland zoning regulations are designed to protect water resources; Isle au Haut has a state-imposed shoreland zoning ordinance. Land use controls are the strictest in the Resource Protection zones and the remote shoreland areas. There is a 125-foot buffer zone around Long Pond and Moore's Swale that prevent almost all new land uses within that Resource Protection zone. The Town's Floodplain Management Ordinance establishes where new and replacement sanitary sewage systems and on-site waste disposal systems can be located to avoid impairment during floods and to minimize or eliminate discharges into flood waters.

Public works crews and contractors use best management practices to protect water quality in their daily operations.

10. Opportunities to Partner to Promote Water Resource Protection

The National Park Service is the largest owner of conserved land on Isle au Haut. Acadia National Park's boundary covers about a quarter of the shoreline of Long Pond, so they will be an important partner for activities concerning Long Pond and through the wetland areas in the park.

The Knox-Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District provides land and water conservation leadership and resources in Knox and Lincoln counties. Their services include invasive plant identification and management plans, natural resource assessments and pond consultations among others. A working relationship with the District could prove to be beneficial for collaboration on future projects and initiatives regarding water quality on Isle au Haut.

Island Institute has initiatives related to marine resources and climate solutions that can affect water resources. Additionally, Maine Islands Coalition, a collaboration of island communities facilitated by Island Institute, meets to discuss the challenges and interests of islands and advocates for these topics at a higher level; water resource concerns should be raised at these meetings to learn from the experiences of other communities.

11. Goals & Objectives

Goal: Protect current and future drinking water sources.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Enact surface and groundwater protection ordinances and standards.	Amend local land use ordinances to incorporate stormwater runoff performance standards consistent with: a. Maine Stormwater Management Law and Maine Stormwater regulations b. Maine Department of Environmental Protection's allocations for allowable levels of phosphorus in pond watersheds. c. Maine Pollution Discharge Elimination System Stormwater Program.	Planning Board, HCPC, CEO	2028
	Consider amending local land use ordinances to incorporate low impact development standards.	Planning Board, HCPC	2028
Engage with regional partners in assessing and addressing pollution sources.	Promote Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory's "Healthy Water, Healthy Aging" project to encourage residents to test their water for arsenic and other toxic metals.	ICDC	Ongoing
	Collaborate with Maine Seacoast Mission to offer well testing services and a maintenance education program.	ICDC	2028
Monitor groundwater availability and dry wells.	Promote and utilize the Maine Emergency Management Agency's Dry Well Survey to track dry wells on Isle au Haut.	Planning Board, Knox County EMA	2028-Ongoing

Goal: Minimize pollution and improve water quality where needed.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Engage with regional partners in assessing and addressing pollution and water quality concerns.	Partner with Acadia National Park and Lake Stewards of Maine to monitor freshwater quality of streams and ponds.	Planning Board, CEO	2028
	Provide educational materials regarding aquatic invasive species.	Selectboard, DIF&W	2027
	Continue to work with the State to ensure float plane compliance with milfoil sticker requirements.	Community	Ongoing
Assess current and future sources of pollutants and develop plans to prevent or minimize their impact	Assess the current and future impacts to groundwater resources from the uses of adjoining properties and develop plans to address priority pollution sources.	Planning Board, CEO	2029
	Incorporate road ditching and culvert maintenance as needed into public works program to improve stormwater management.	Selectboard, Road Commissioner	2027

Chapter G: Marine Resources

1. Purpose

It is important that the Comprehensive Plan for an island community, such as Isle au Haut, addresses marine resources. Specifically, this chapter:

- Describes Isle au Haut’s coastal marine resource areas, facilities, and water-dependent uses;
- Assesses the adequacy of existing facilities and public access points to satisfy current and projected use demands; and
- Assesses the effectiveness of existing measures to protect and preserve coastal marine resource areas and water-dependent uses.

2. Key Findings and Issues

Currently, lobster fishing is the only commercial fishing activity in Isle au Haut. There is local support for aquaculture, but those who have tried have been met with many challenges. There is no commercial shellfish harvesting taking place, but residents have noticed a decrease in some shellfish species, including clams. There are challenges around managing the working waterfront and suggested strategies for helping the harbormaster. Lastly, parking at the Town Dock is a pressing issue as residents often leave their vehicles parked there for more than the 7-day limit.

3. Key Findings & Issues from Previous Plan, 2016

Marine resources are integral to Isle au Haut’s identity. The water quality surrounding the island is generally excellent, and numerous species can be found there. The waters are also paddling and sailing destinations. Public boat access to the ocean is limited to the town landing. Currently lobster is the most important commercial fish species. As a result, the health of lobster populations are important to the community. An increase in bait prices combined with relatively low lobster prices has plagued the lobster industry recently. Isle au Haut fishermen are threatened by competition from mainland fishermen.

4. Community Engagement

Community engagement underscored the central role of marine resources in Isle au Haut’s economy, identity, and long-term viability. Visioning sessions emphasized sustaining the working waterfront through continued access for fishing and marine-dependent businesses, maintaining dock and landing infrastructure, and protecting shoreline access points used for boating, hauling out, and marine recreation. Survey results reinforced these priorities, with 68% of year-round respondents rating public access to the water highly and 51% of all respondents supporting increased investment, including through property taxes, in the town dock and thorofare. Priority rankings highlighted growing concern about marine-related risks, with 64% rating warming ocean temperatures affecting fisheries as a high priority and 71% identifying flooding and sea level rise impacts on critical infrastructure as a high priority. Responses to town involvement questions suggest general satisfaction

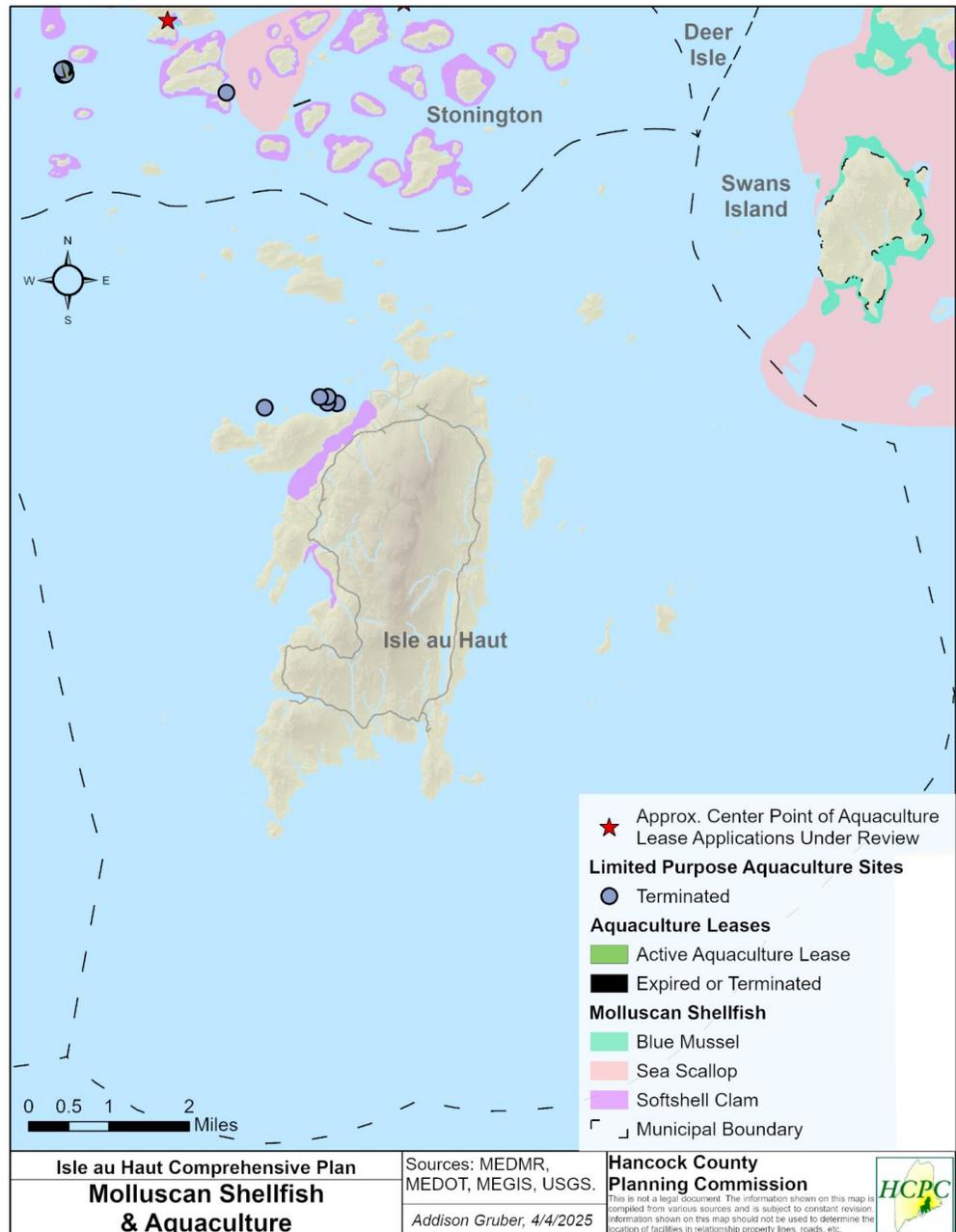
with the Town’s current role in marine resource protection, with very few respondents favoring less involvement and the highest interest in additional involvement focused on working waterfronts (45%) and coastal land (41%). Longer-term comments linked marine resources to economic resilience, noting ongoing dependence on fishing and lobstering alongside concern about industry decline and interest in diversifying marine-related and complementary economic activity.

5. Marine Resource Inventory

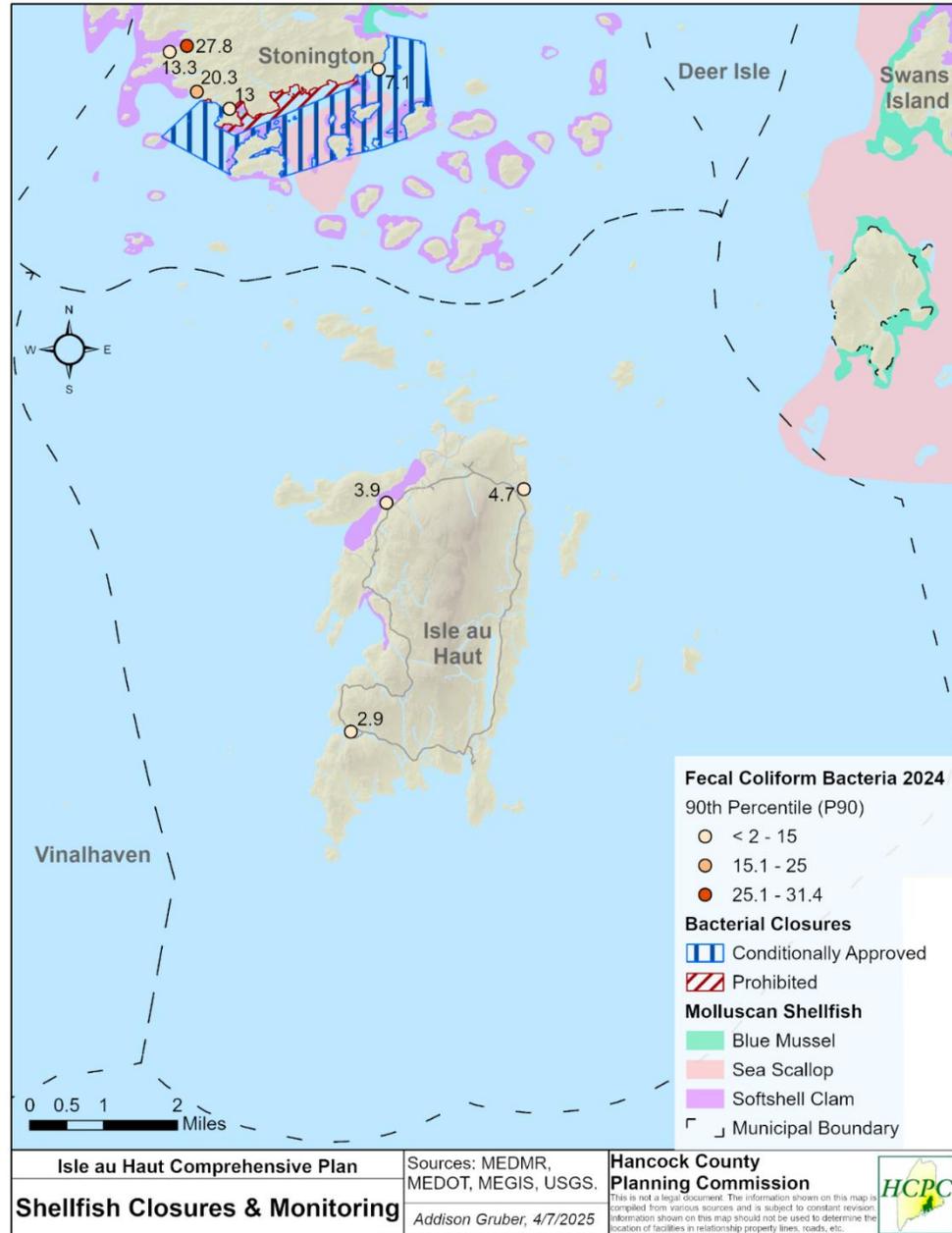
A. Shellfish

Currently, lobster fishing is the only commercial fishing activity occurring in Isle au Haut. There are no issued commercial clamming, worming, or aquaculture permits. Pogies and scallops have been harvested in the recent past but are not being harvested at present. There are marine worms and sea urchins in the area, though there is no active harvesting. Figure G-1 shows molluscan shellfish habitat and aquaculture sites in Isle au Haut and surrounding waters.

Figure G-1: Isle au Haut Marine Resources



Highlighted areas on the map of Shellfish Closures and Monitoring Data (Figure G-2) show where the harvesting of clams is “conditionally approved” or “prohibited” under DMR’s Shellfish Growing Area Classification Program, a part of the National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP). Conditional approval means the site is closed some of the time due to rainfall or seasonally poor water quality or other predictable events. When open, it is treated as an approved area. Prohibited areas are closed to the harvest of shellfish under all conditions, except the gathering of seeds for municipal propagation programs under a permit. This program is primarily concerned with two types of contamination: 1) disease-causing microorganisms, such as bacteria and viruses, associated with sewage pollution; and 2) marine biotoxins associated with harmful algal blooms, such as “red tide.” As shown in the map, there are currently no closures for shellfish harvesting on Isle au Haut.



DMR tests coastal water quality regularly at locations where freshwater drains off the land from streams. Heavy metals and overboard discharges are typically the cause of heightened bacteria levels. As seen in the Shellfish

Closures and Monitoring Data map (Figure G-2), there are no closures or areas of concern on or near Isle au Haut.

B. Aquaculture

Aquaculture is the farming of aquatic organisms, such as fish, shellfish, and plants. It can refer to both marine and freshwater species and includes both land-based and ocean production. The State’s DMR regulates aquaculture in Maine. Aquaculture has been present in Maine waters at least since the 1800s, but the first issuance of a DMR lease of State-owned waters to a private interest for aquaculture was in 1973. DMR records report that there are no aquaculture lease sites in the Town as of 2024. To date, efforts in aquaculture for both kelp and oysters have not proven to be feasible for equipment, time, and cost reasons.

C. Commercial Marine Fishing Licenses

The DMR sells licenses to the Town’s Residents. The licenses shown below in Table G-2 only include residents who may fish in or out of Town, not non-residents who fish in the Town.

Table G-2: Fishing Licenses in Isle au Haut, 2022

License Type	Number of Licenses
Lobster/Crab +70 (LCO)	1
Lobster/Crab Class 2 (LC2)	4
Lobster/Crab Class 3 (LC3)	1
Lobster/Crab Student (LCS)	1
Menhaden Non-Commercial (MENR)	1
Recreational Saltwater Fishing Operator (SWRO)	1
Recreational Saltwater Registry (SWR)	1
Total	10

D. Harbors, Marinas, and Other Public Access to the Coastal Shore

The Town Dock offers community facilities for fishing, boating, kayaking, and commercial activities. Commercial fishing and associated operations (e.g., loading gear, bait, and catch) are permitted at the Town Dock in designated areas so long as items are not stored more than 24 hours. This site is important for working waterfront activities and serves as the docking point for the Mailboat. The Table G-3 below lists coastal access points open to the public.

Table G-3: Public Waterfront Access

Access Site	Owner	Open to Public	Size
Town Landing	Town	Yes	170 ft long and 24 ft wide
Boat Ramp	Town	Yes	70ft ramp to three floats

There have not been any formal inventories of marine visual access, for more information on scenic resources see Chapter E: Land Based Natural Resources.

6. Adequacy of Access

Hundreds of people use the town landing, and it is regularly crowded in the summer. There is only enough room to land two boats at a time, but space is always available for the mailboat to land in case of emergencies. There is one other space to tie to for 30 minutes maximum. It is recommended that people try to only load or unload and not leave their boat at the float. Parking is also very limited at the town landing, and the lot is often at max capacity. There is a three-day limit for vehicle parking in the lot, but this is not often honored.

The future of Isle au Haut's working waterfront is uncertain if the price of lobster drops too low, and lobstermen could not financially support themselves. New federal reporting requirements may also pose challenges to local fishermen.

Limited mooring options are another concern; there is normally a wait list. There are around 50 moorings in the harbor, about 20 at Point Lookout, and a few other moorings in private coves and shorefront. The Town does not have an official mooring plan. Creating and implementing a mooring plan would allow more boats could fit into the harbor, but there is concern about driving out some of the lower income fishermen and the expense of implementing the plan. The Town would benefit from creating a harbor committee to manage the usage and activities in Isle au Haut's waters.

In 2026, the Isle au Haut thorofare will be dredged. This project was funded through Susan Collins's office.

A. Water-Dependent Uses

Water-dependent uses are those that cannot be located away from coastal waters. Fishing activities described above are in balance with recreational and scenic access in using the limited water access points. Commercial, recreational, and scenic activities are important contributors to the Town's economy and may require additional planning to ensure sufficient opportunities for both fishing and tourism.

Traditional water-dependent uses remain stable at present, but if current trends of sea level rise and ocean acidification continue, the working waterfront could look very different in 10 years. It will continue to be important to plan for climate change effects and support those whose livelihoods are made on the water.

7. Effectiveness of Existing Measures to Preserve Marine Resources

Currently, the Town has a Harbor and Waters Ordinance which regulates activities within Isle au Haut Harbors and Isle au Haut Waters. This ordinance details mooring assignment priorities and prohibited activities in Isle au Haut's waters. It is the sole responsibility of the Harbor Master to oversee the activities related to the waterfront and work with State agencies and land trusts to aid marine resource protection. Isle au Haut would benefit from creating a mooring plan to better manage moorings.

The land around the Town Dock is a part of the Town's commercial fisheries/maritime activities district as detailed in the zoning ordinance.

8. Regional Marine Resource Issues

It is apparent from the Marine Resources Map (Figure G-1) that Isle au Haut shares marine habitats and resources with surrounding communities. It is important that Isle au Haut continue to work with these towns, the Hancock County Planning Commission, and with the State environmental agencies to maintain marine resources and preserve fishing as a contributor to the local economy. Currently, there are no local or regional plans in place to eliminate pollution or manage the bay (see Chapter F: Water Resources for more information on water quality).

9. Goals and Objectives

Goal: Improve access and condition of Isle au Haut's marine resources.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Maintain and, where warranted, improve harbor management and facilities.	Continue to maintain and support the Harbormaster position through continuing education.	Selectboard	Ongoing
	Explore options for improving parking at the Town Dock (See Transportation Chapter).	Harbormaster, Harbor Committee Selectboard, IaH Boat Services	2027
	Explore establishing a harbor management plan.	Harbormaster, Harbor Committee	2029
	Encourage participation in clean marine/boatyard programs.	Harbormaster, Harbor Committee	Ongoing
Protect and Preserve Isle au Haut's marine resources and working waterfronts.	Establish a Harbor Committee.	Selectboard, Harbormaster	2027
	Continue to maintain Commercial Fisheries District in the Town's zoning ordinance and amend as needed.	Planning Board	Ongoing
	Identify and monitor potential properties with potential for additional public commercial access or at risk of losing existing public access.	Habor Committee	Ongoing
Protect, maintain and, where warranted, improve marine habitat and water quality.	Work with property owners and others to protect major points of physical and visual access to coastal waters.	Planning Board, Harbormaster, Harbor Committee, CEO	Ongoing
	Continue to organize annual coastal debris cleanup project in coordination with supporting entities.	ANP, Community	Ongoing

Chapter H: Agriculture & Forestry Resources

1. Purpose

This section presents an analysis overview of Isle au Haut's Agriculture and Forest Resources, particularly land available for natural resource utilization and ecosystem services (the various benefits to humans from the natural environment, such as drinkable water, productive soils and farmlands, timber lands, etc.). Specifically, this section will:

- Describe the extent of Isle au Haut's farming and forest land;
- Predict potential future threats to viability by growth and development; and
- Assess the effectiveness of current protective measures to preserve important available lands for farming and forestry production.

2. Key Findings & Issues

There are no large-scale agriculture or commercial forestry operations at present on Isle au Haut. There are small areas of prime agricultural soil. Many residents have home gardens and there is a community garden behind the school. The forest composition on Isle au Haut is predominantly spruce forest. While there is no significant commercial timber harvesting, firewood harvesting occurs on private land. Threats to forest land include wind and ice storms, insects, tree diseases and wildfire. There were 182 acres of land placed in the Open Space tax program and 964 acres in the Tree Growth tax program as of 2024. No land is in the Farmland tax program.

3. Key Findings & Issues from Previous Plan, 2016

Agriculture and forestry are currently viewed as minor resources on Isle au Haut. There are small pockets of soil considered to be suitable for agriculture, but these are spread over numerous parcels and there is no large-scale agriculture activity. The forest on Isle au Haut is predominantly softwood, in the form of mature spruce. Due to its old age, it is prone to disease, insect infestation, acid rain impacts, and ultimately windfall. There is public concern about wildfire risk.

4. Community Engagement

Overall, respondents to the survey think the Town should maintain roughly the same level of involvement or be more involved in protecting land for agriculture (78%) and forestry (84%). When asked where agriculture and forestry should occur in the town, 39% of respondents felt agriculture was appropriate anywhere in the town, 51% responded in designated areas, 1% responded nowhere, and 9% were undecided. For forestry, 19% of respondents felt it was appropriate anywhere in the town, 55% responded in designated areas, 10% responded nowhere, and 16% were undecided.

5. Agricultural Resources

A. Agricultural Soils

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) there are small pockets of prime agricultural soils and soils classified as “soils of statewide importance” on Isle au Haut. These pockets are small and widely dispersed. Figure H-1 shows the prime agricultural soils and soils of statewide importance.

B. Crops, Farms and Related Resources

There are no commercial farms on the island. Historically, grazing was a major agricultural enterprise, with sheep on Isle au Haut and several of the outer islands. There have been several efforts in small-scale grazing of sheep, cows, horses, and goats, which are expected to continue. Pigs, horses, and chickens are also kept in home agricultural operations. Presently, home gardens are common, though shallow acidic soil alongside deer, hare, and rodents are challenges for gardeners. There is a small community garden behind the schoolhouse.

Residents engage in informal sharing and sales of garden resources, with some producers selling produce and eggs at the Island Store and farmstands.

C. Farm and Open Space Enrollment

Another way to estimate current amounts of agricultural land is through the acreage of land held under Farm and Open Space Tax Law. For farmland, owners are allowed property tax breaks for parcels over five contiguous acres if they meet certain conditions, such as minimum farm-derived income. If the property no longer qualifies as farmland, then a penalty will be assessed. Normally, qualifying farmers with a long-term commitment to

Figure H-1: Isle au Haut Agricultural Soils



farming would participate in this program. In 2024, there were no parcels classified as farmland under current use taxation programs.

The Open Space tax program provides for the valuation of land based on its current use as open space, rather than its highest and best use. To qualify for the program, land must be preserved or restricted for uses providing a public benefit. If property no longer qualifies as open space, a penalty will be assessed. On Isle au Haut there were three parcels enrolled totaling 182 acres in 2024.

Table H-1 below shows the annual number of properties and total acres enrolled in the Open Space Tax program since 2014. No land was enrolled in the Farmland program during this time.

Table H-1: Parcels in Open Space Taxation Program, 2014-2024

Year	# of Parcels	Acres
2014	3	3
2015	3	3
2016	3	3
2017	3	197
2018	2	197
2019	3	287
2020	4	522
2021	4	522
2022	4	522
2023	5	546
2024	3	182

*Source: Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary,
Maine Bureau of Taxation Property Tax Division*

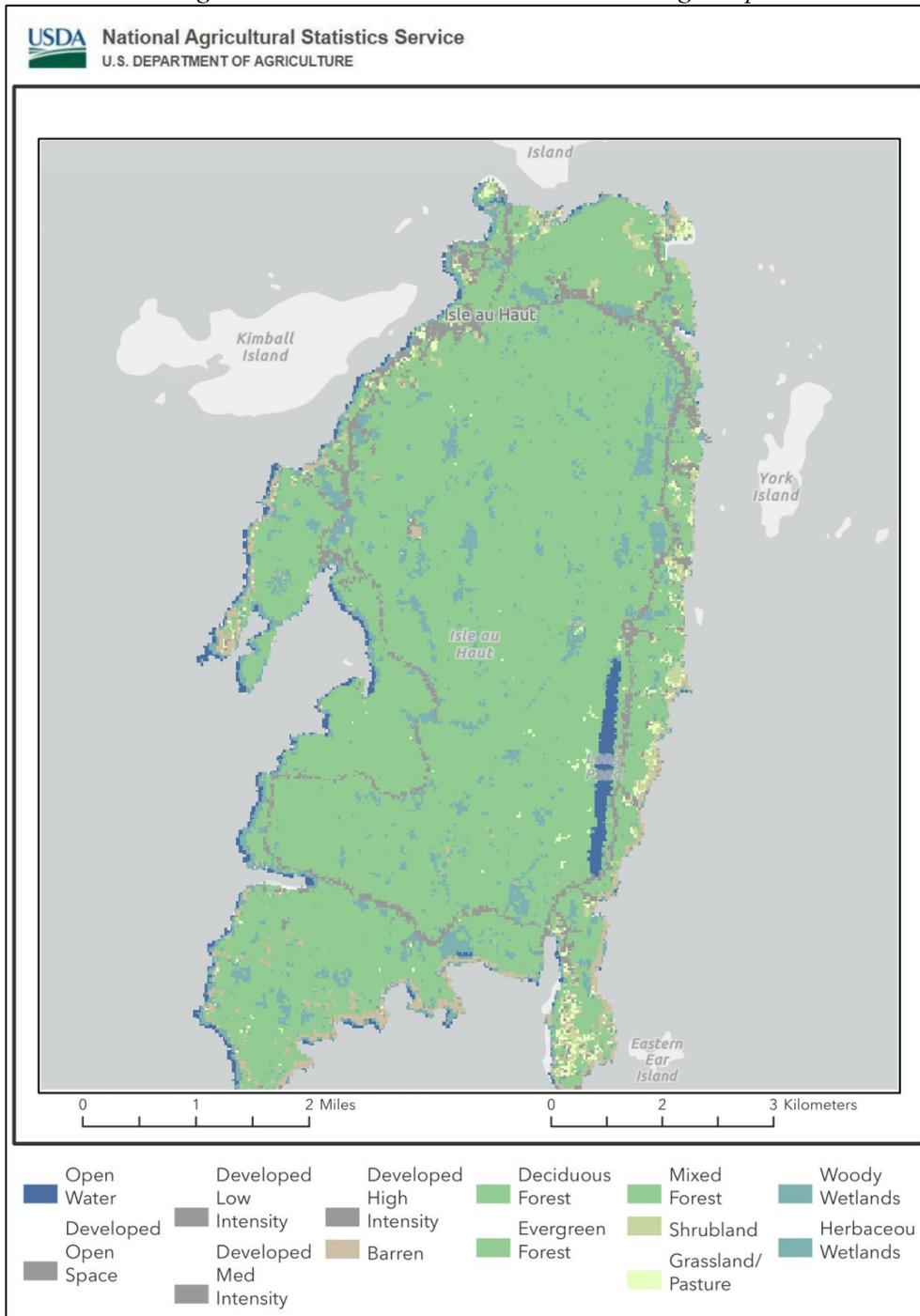
6. Forest Resources

A. Forest Composition

Much of Isle au Haut is forested. Mature red spruce is the most common tree species. Softwood coniferous trees are more common than hardwood deciduous trees. Other tree species include spruce, red oak, red maple, pitch pine, tamarack, cedar, birch, and a few large old white pines and many varieties of apple trees.

The USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service Cropland Data Layer shows land coverage using satellite imagery (this data is displayed Figure H-2: Isle au Haut Estimated Land Coverage Map). According to this source, it’s estimated that over three-quarters of Isle au Haut is evergreen forest with lesser acreage of shrubland, mixed forest and deciduous forest among other land uses. Table H-2 details the percent coverage of each category of land cover.

Figure H-2: Isle au Haut Estimated Land Coverage Map



Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service Cropland Data Layer

Table H-2: Percentages of Isle au Haut Estimated Land Coverage

Category	% of Land Coverage
Evergreen Forest	76.3%
Woody Wetlands	5.9%
Developed/Open Space	3.5%
Herbaceous Wetlands	3.2%
Barren	2.9%
Open Water	1.7%
Shrubland	1.6%
Mixed Forest	1.5%
Grassland/Pasture	1.3%
Developed/Low Intensity	1.1%
Developed/Med Intensity	0.5%
Deciduous Forest	0.4%
Developed/High Intensity	0.1%

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service Cropland Data Layer

B. Tree Growth Enrollment

One source of information on Isle au Haut’s forest resources is data on land held under Tree Growth Tax Law. This classification is similar to Farmland and Open Space in that owners of forested parcels meeting certain conditions can have their property assessed as forest land rather than for its potential development value. As of 2024, there were 10 parcels totaling 964 acres enrolled in the Tree Growth program. Table H-3 details the number of parcels enrolled in the Tree Growth program and forest type over the last 10 years. Enrollment in the program has remained fairly stable, with one 42-acre parcel removed from the program in 2024.

Table H-3: Tree Growth Taxation Parcels, 2014-2024

	# of Parcels	Softwood Acres	Mixed Wood Acres	Hardwood Acres	Total Acres
2014	10	989	166	20	1,175
2015	10	989	166	20	1,175
2016	10	989	166	20	1,175
2017	10	989	166	20	1,175
2018	10	989	166	20	1,175
2019	12	983	166	20	1,169
2020	11	816	106	80	1,003
2021	11	821	106	79	1,006
2022	10	821	106	79	1,006
2023	11	821	106	79	1,006
2024	10	846	99	19	964

*Source: Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary,
Maine Bureau of Taxation Property Tax Division*

C. Timber Harvesting

According to Confidential Year End Landowner Reports to Maine Forest Service, no harvests on Isle au Haut have been reported. Data is reported only where three or more landowner reports reported harvesting in the town.

D. Threats to Forest Resources

There are several threats to Isle au Haut's forest resources. Isle au Haut is prone to strong winds and ice storms, which have damaged forests in the past. Insects, acid rain, and tree diseases also pose a threat to Isle au Haut's forests. Dwarf mistletoe (which causes witch's brooms) has been found on Isle au Haut; repeated infections of this parasite has the potential to cause tree mortality⁴.

Fire is also a threat to Isle au Haut's forest and could also cause property damage and personal injury. The last extensive forest fires on the island were in the late 1940s when drought conditions encouraged major fires. There have been four wildfires on Isle au Haut since 1990, which burned 3.2 acres and cost at least \$2,397. One of these fires was caused by the burning of debris, two were caused by cigarettes, and one was caused by inadequate dousing of a campfire.

7. Analysis of Agricultural and Forest Resources

A. Importance of Agriculture and Forestry to the Town

Agriculture and forestry-related activities are significant to many residents in the Town. Small-scale agricultural enterprises are important to the Town as a whole, with some residents selling produce, eggs, and meat at the Island Store, on farmstands, or neighbor-to-neighbor. There are sawmills producing small amounts of lumber and firewood harvesting on private land.

B. Steps to Protect Productive Farming and Forestry Lands

Approximately 3,200 acres of land in the Town of Isle au Haut are protected by Acadia National Park. The 72-acre Head Harbor Preserve is conserved and managed by Maine Coast Heritage Trust. This land is protected for conservation and recreation purposes rather than for use as productive farming or forestry land.

Agriculture and timber harvesting activities are regulated by the town's zoning and shoreland zoning ordinances. The Maine Forest Service's statewide standards for timber harvesting have been updated since the ordinance was adopted by the Town. The town abides by the timber harvesting standards in its current state-imposed Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, until such a time when the Town updates its ordinance.

Regarding agriculture activities, the storing and stockpiling of manure, soil tilling, and the location of livestock grazing areas is defined by the zoning and shoreland zoning ordinances. Locations in which timber harvesting

⁴ schoodicinstitute.org/long-term-forest-health-monitoring-at-isle-au-haut/

can take place, the allowed volume of cutting and the travel routes of harvesting equipment are other activities regulated by the ordinances.

C. Level of Use of Current Use Tax Laws

In 2024 there were three parcels totaling 182 acres in the Open Space program and 10 parcels totaling 964 acres in the Tree Growth program. No parcels are currently enrolled in the Farmland tax use program or have been in the past decade.

D. Effect of Proximity of Incompatible Uses on Farming and Logging Operations

Currently there are no conflicts between farming, logging, and other land uses. There are no large agricultural or forestry operations on Isle au Haut, and the physical environment is not suited for such operations; relatively limited farming or logging operations are anticipated in the future. If new farming or logging operations are started there is the possibility of conflicts with other neighboring land uses.

E. Sale of Large Tracts of Agricultural or Forest Lands

Given the small amounts of land being used for agriculture or firewood harvesting, there does not appear to be potential for the significant impacts from the sale of large tracts of land. Much of the forested land on the island is within the boundaries of Acadia National Park, where harvesting is prohibited.

F. Support for Community Forestry and Agriculture

The Town of Isle au Haut has a Food Sovereignty Ordinance (2013) “to protect the health and integrity of the local food system”. Under this ordinance citizens of Isle au Haut possess the right to produce, process, sell, purchase, and consume local foods of their choice. Many residents engage in producing, selling, and consuming local foods. The community is generally supportive of agricultural endeavors.

G. Woodland Under Management

The Town does not have any woodlands under its management, nor are there lands that would benefit from such management by the Town.

8. Goals & Objectives

Goal: Protect and promote Isle au Haut’s forestry and agricultural resources			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Support farming and forestry and encourage their economic viability.	Encourage owners of productive farm and forest land to enroll in the current use taxation programs.	Selectboard, Maine Revenue Services	Ongoing
	Continue to permit land use activities that support productive agriculture and forestry operations, including roadside stands, greenhouses, firewood operations, and sawmills.	Planning Board	Ongoing
	Include agriculture, commercial forestry operations, and land conservation that supports them in regional economic development plans.	HCPC	Ongoing
	Review land use ordinances to ensure they do not overly restrict activities that support small farm and woodlot operations.	Planning Board	2028
	Consider proactive measures to reduce conflicts between agriculture, livestock, and other land uses.	Planning Board	2028
	Explore opportunities to partner with other organizations including Maine Farmland Trust, NRCS, and Knox County Soil & Water Conservation when developing land use regulations pertaining to agricultural activities.	Planning Board, HCPC	Ongoing
Investigate whether the town is effectively implementing forestry regulations and collaborating with private landowners.	Consider adopting the Maine Forest Service’s statewide standards for timber harvesting in shoreland areas.	Planning Board, Selectboard, CEO	2028
	Ensure that forest harvests are conducted in a manner that protects water quality and prevents erosion.	Planning Board, CEO	Ongoing

Chapter I: Historical and Archaeological Resources

1. Purpose

Historical and archaeological resources are vital elements of a community's identity. A comprehensive plan must identify important historical and archaeological resources not only for the sake of the historical record, but also to preserve their present-day value to the town's identity and character and to encourage tourism. Specifically, this chapter will:

- Present a brief history of Isle au Haut and the region;
- Describe historical and archaeological resources;
- Assess threats to these resources; and
- Assess the effectiveness of existing measures to protect and preserve these resources.

2. Key Findings & Issues

Isle au Haut has two properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, both of which are threatened by sea level rise and storm surge. There are fifty identified prehistoric archaeological sites, with more anticipated if further study is conducted, and twenty-five archaeological sites, many of which are shipwrecks. The Isle au Haut Historical Society and other outside organizations have made a great effort to document oral histories from island residents to preserve history that has been unwritten.

3. Key Findings & Issues from Previous Plan, 2016

Isle au Haut has a rich history, with numerous historic and prehistoric archeological sites. There are two properties on the National Register of Historic Places, and numerous properties of local historical interest. The town's historical collections committee has collected photographs, documents, artifacts, and oral histories.

4. Community Engagement Results

Community engagement reflected general support for protecting local historical and archeological resources, with some visioning session participants noting a desire for better space and access to artifacts and records. Survey results suggest residents are largely comfortable with the Town's current level of involvement, with limited interest in reducing that role and some support for the town expanding the involvement (about 35% of respondents).

5. Historical Inventory

A. History of Isle au Haut

Isle au Haut is located in Eastern Penobscot Bay, about seven miles south of Stonington on Deer Isle. The town of Isle au Haut includes the main island as well as smaller islands south of Merchant's Row. Although people have lived year-round on some of the smaller islands in the past, currently only the large main island has a year-

round population. Isle au Haut's proximity to deepwater fishing grounds made it an attractive settlement location. Four thousand years ago and possibly as early as 8,000 years ago, Native Americans traveled to Isle au Haut in the summer for fishing and hunting. Shell middens adjacent to the shore attest to this use. By the early seventeenth century, English and French explorers made their way to Penobscot Bay. Samuel de Champlain named the island "Isle Haute" as the Island's mountains cause it to stand above its neighbors. In 1792, Peletiah Barter became the first permanent settler after he was granted a parcel of land by Massachusetts, which at that time included what is now Maine. In 1804 a survey was completed that divided the main island into 40 lots that formed the original basis of the land divisions that exist today. By 1832, 75 families lived on Isle au Haut, many taking advantage of the Island's convenient fishing location. Settlers fished for mackerel, cod, and later, lobster. A lobster cannery was built in the Thorofare in the 1860s. During the off-season, fishermen built boats. Small-scale subsistence farming was also present on the Island. By the end of the nineteenth century nearly 300 people lived on Isle au Haut year-round. At this point Isle au Haut was no longer part of Deer Isle, and the town of Isle au Haut was incorporated in 1874.

By the beginning of the Twentieth Century, the year-round population of Isle au Haut started to decline. This decline was mainly spurred by advances in the internal combustion engine, which allowed fishermen to reach the remote fishing grounds from the mainland. Railroads and improved road systems on the mainland decreased the importance of coastal shipping. Lobster stocks were also in decline. By 1910, the population fell to 178 year-round residents. Thirty-five families depended on fishing. The Island had three general stores and two boarding houses in operation. In 1913, Isle au Haut left Hancock County to join Knox County. The population continued to fall. By 1970, the year-round population was 45. Current residents remember times during the 1970s when the population was as low as 17.

While the year-round population was decreasing, the seasonal population was increasing. Summer resorts and cottage colonies became popular around the end of the nineteenth century. The first summer colony was developed at Point Lookout. The increase in summer visitors led to changes on the Island; a road and town hall were built at the beginning of the twentieth century. Caretaking became a common off-season occupation for fishermen.

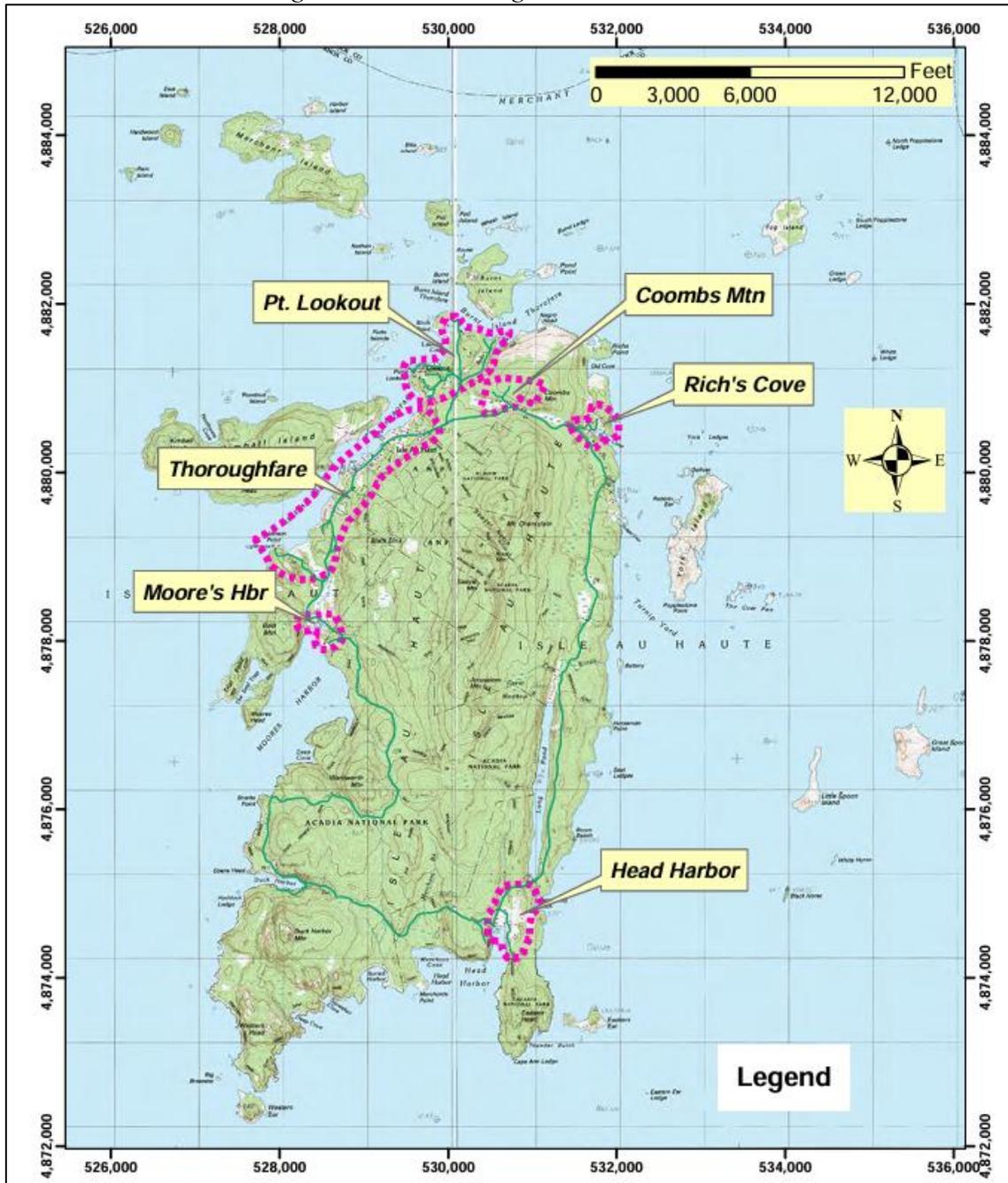
In the 1940s, the Bowditch heirs donated a significant part of the Island to Acadia National Park. This increased Isle au Haut's popularity as a tourist destination. In the early 1980s a series of land swaps consolidated the park holdings to the southwestern portion of the Island, and federal legislation fixed the park's boundaries at their present state.

Automobiles first came to Isle au Haut in 1914, electricity in 1971, and phone service in 1988 after much organization from island residents and summer residents.

Historically, settlement has been concentrated in six pockets on the main island: "Town" near the Thorofare, the seasonal Point Lookout at the north end, Rich's Cove and northeast side, Head Harbor at the southeast end, Duck Harbor and Moore's Harbor, both on the west side. Coombs Mountain has a few dwellings, and Duck Harbor now is part of Acadia National Park. The settlements, most of which are located on sheltered harbors,

reflect that these settlements are sheltered harbors. York Island and Merchant Island each once had large enough populations to support schools. The figure below shows this settlement pattern on the main island.

Figure I-1: Historic Village Areas on Isle au Haut



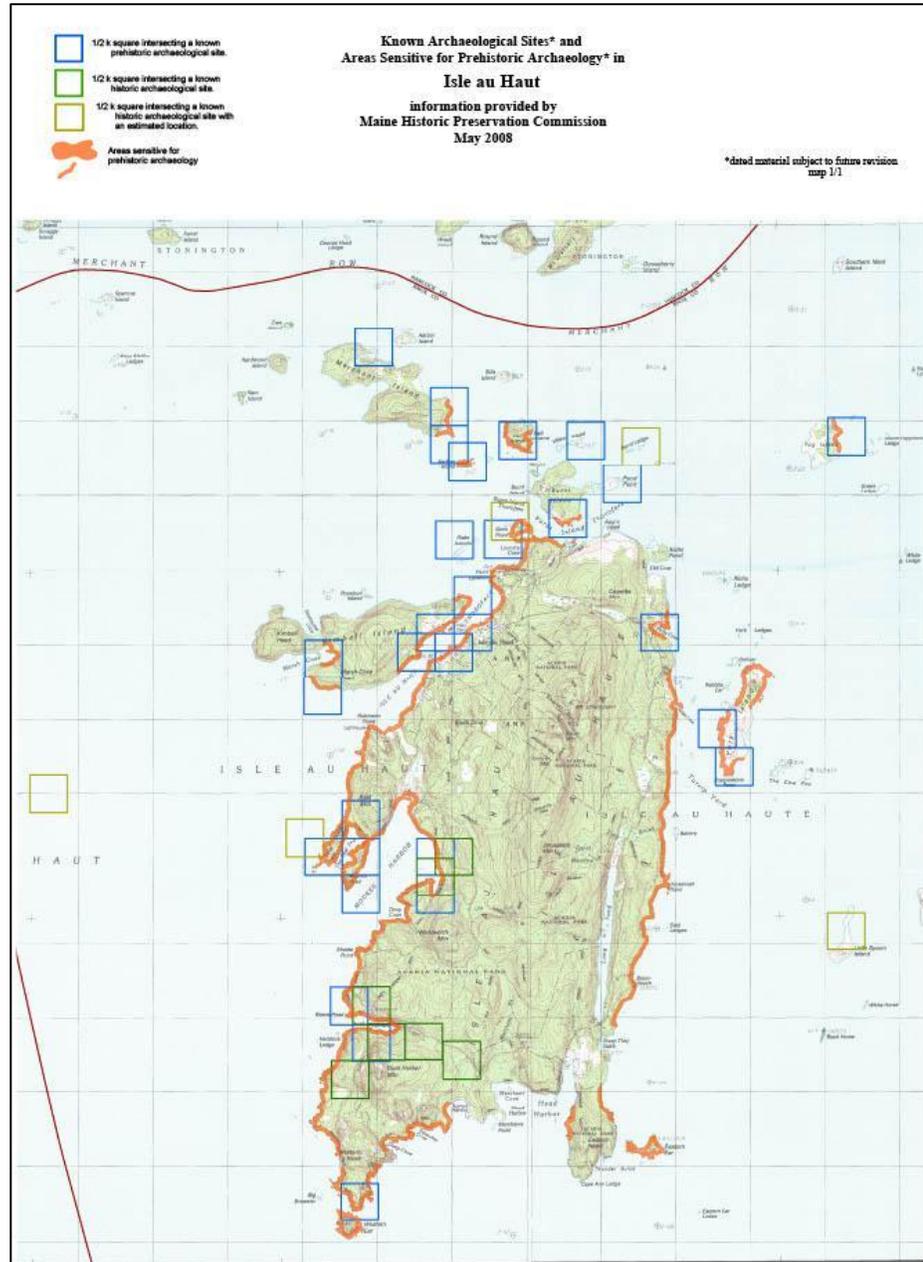
Source: 2016 Isle au Haut Comprehensive Plan

B. Prehistoric Archaeological Sites

Prehistoric archaeological sites are those of indigenous peoples prior to European arrival. Prehistoric sites may include campsites, village locations, rock quarries, stone tool workshops, and petroglyphs or rock carvings.

Fifty sites are known on Isle au Haut, all located along the shoreland zone or on rocky cliffs overlooking the shoreland zone. About half of these are shell middens or other sites that are significant and eligible for listing in the National Register. Several are bedrock quarry sites used for material for stone tools, near Duck Harbor. Approximately two-thirds of the shoreland zone has been surveyed at the reconnaissance level by a professional archaeologist.

Figure I-2: Known Prehistoric Archaeological Sites on Isle au Haut, 2008



A professional archaeological survey in 2013 and 2014 added a couple more quarry-related sites on Acadia National Park property, but detailed information is not publicly available in MHPC files.

The remainder of the shoreland zone needs reconnaissance archaeological survey, and intensive survey is necessary on many sites. Known prehistoric sites are threatened by sea level rise due to their low proximity to the water and location on the shoreline.

The archaeological planning map dated 2008 is still useful and, except for a few new sites, current.

6. Historic Archaeological Sites

Historical period archaeological sites are mostly European-American, after written records began to be created around 1600 A.D. These sites may include cellar holes from houses, foundations from farm buildings, mills, wharves and boat yards, and near-shore shipwrecks. Historical archaeological sites can often be predicted by a review of old records, maps, and deeds. Settlements were determined by transportation corridors, first rivers and then roads as they were built. Archaeological sites from the first wave of European settlement in any town are likely to yield significant information (i.e. National Register eligible).

To date, twenty-five historic archaeological sites have been documented for the town:

Table I-1: Historic Archaeological Sites on Isle au Haut

Site Name	Site #	Site Type	Periods of Significance
New Boxer	ME 213-001	wreck, schooner	Jan. 5, 1912
Mabel	ME 213-002	wreck, schooner	Oct. 24, 1890.
Solomon Hamilton/campground	ME 213-003	domestic	mid-19th century - 3rd quarter 20th century
Solomon [jr.] or Charles Hamilton	ME 213-004	domestic	mid-19th century - 20th century
Hamilton Cemetery	ME 213-005	cemetery	1887 or earlier-1919
Mary Powers	ME 213-006	wreck, schooner	1885
Lizzie W. Hunt	ME 213-007	wreck, schooner	1879-1906
Sunny Region	ME 213-008	wreck, bark	1877
Catherine D. Enos	ME 213-009	wreck, gas screw	1904-1912
George Gress	ME 213-010	wreck, schooner	1885 - Sept. 20, 1940
Eli Creek Cove House	ME 213-011	domestic	unknown, Probably Late 19th c to early 20th c
Moore's Cabin	ME 213-012	domestic, cabin	early 20th century to present
Ebenezer Leland	ME 213-013	settlement	late 18th c to late 19th c
A. Gibson	ME 213-014	wreck, schooner	Went ashore at Isle of Haut, Maine, USA on October 21, 1899
C.T.W.	ME 213-015	wreck, schooner	Struck on Isle Haut, Maine, USA on October 8, 1917
Carrie	ME 213-016	wreck, vessel	Total loss on Ile Haut Bay, Maine on July 11 [1910?]
Frank H. Wilson	ME 213-017	wreck, schooner	Totally lost on Bruno Ledge in 1878.
Duroe	ME 213-018	wreck, schooner	May 10, 1890
Merchants Cove	ME 213-019	domestic	established ca. 1820 to 1840
Duck Harbor Mt	ME 213-020	structure, unidentified	nineteenth century?
W.H. Harvey	ME 213-021	domestic	19th century
Moore's Harbor unknown	ME 213-022	domestic	ca. 1882

Site Name	Site #	Site Type	Periods of Significance
Moore's Harbor stone pile	ME 213-023	structure, unidentified	nineteenth century?
Moore's Harbor marsh rd	ME 213-024	road	ca. 1880
Ely Creek House 2	ME 213-025	domestic	nineteenth century

No town-wide professional surveys for historic archaeological sites have been conducted to date on Isle au Haut. Future archaeological surveys should focus on the identification of potentially significant resources associated with the town's maritime, residential, and industrial heritage, particularly those associated with the earliest Euro-American settlement of the town in the 17th and 18th centuries.

7. Historic Properties

Isle au Haut is rich in history but has a short list of properties on the National Register of Historic Places. The property shown in Table I-2 below comes from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission via two sources: an inventory sheet provided for this Plan, and a public map viewer hosted on-line by MaineDOT.

Isle au Haut currently has two properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Table I-2: Isle au Haut Historic Properties

	National Register of Historic Places	MaineDOT Public Map Viewer
Isle au Haut Light Station	✓	✓
Gooden Grant House	✓	✓

The Isle au Haut Light Station on Robinson Point was the first property in Isle au Haut currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It has recently undergone extensive restoration with attention to its historical architectural integrity thanks to continued fundraising by the Friends of Isle au Haut Lighthouse, a 501(c)3 organization.. These repairs are nearly complete, with a final phase of restoration scheduled for completion within the next year. The lighthouse is owned by the Town. A lighthouse committee oversees the condition of the lighthouse. The members are appointed by the Select Board. The other buildings associated with the lighthouse are in good condition and currently part of a privately owned property designated "The Keeper's House."

The other building on the National Register is the Gooden Grant House at Head Harbor. The Gooden Grant House is a wood-framed, two-story home of late Queen Anne style featuring an octagonal tower with bay windows, wrap-around veranda, and a decorative sunburst clapboard detail on the gable ends. Also, associated with this property is a small garage/shop and the remains of a structure erected for temporary docking of large vessels. The interior of the house retains original plaster walls and woodwork, including varnished bead-board wainscoting in the kitchen and dining rooms, original pine cabinetry in the kitchen, molded baseboards, and varnished interior door/window casings. Built in 1907 by a mainland carpenter for a successful Maine island lobster fisherman during one of Maine's most culturally rich periods of maritime history, the Gooden Grant House retains a high degree of design and architectural integrity.

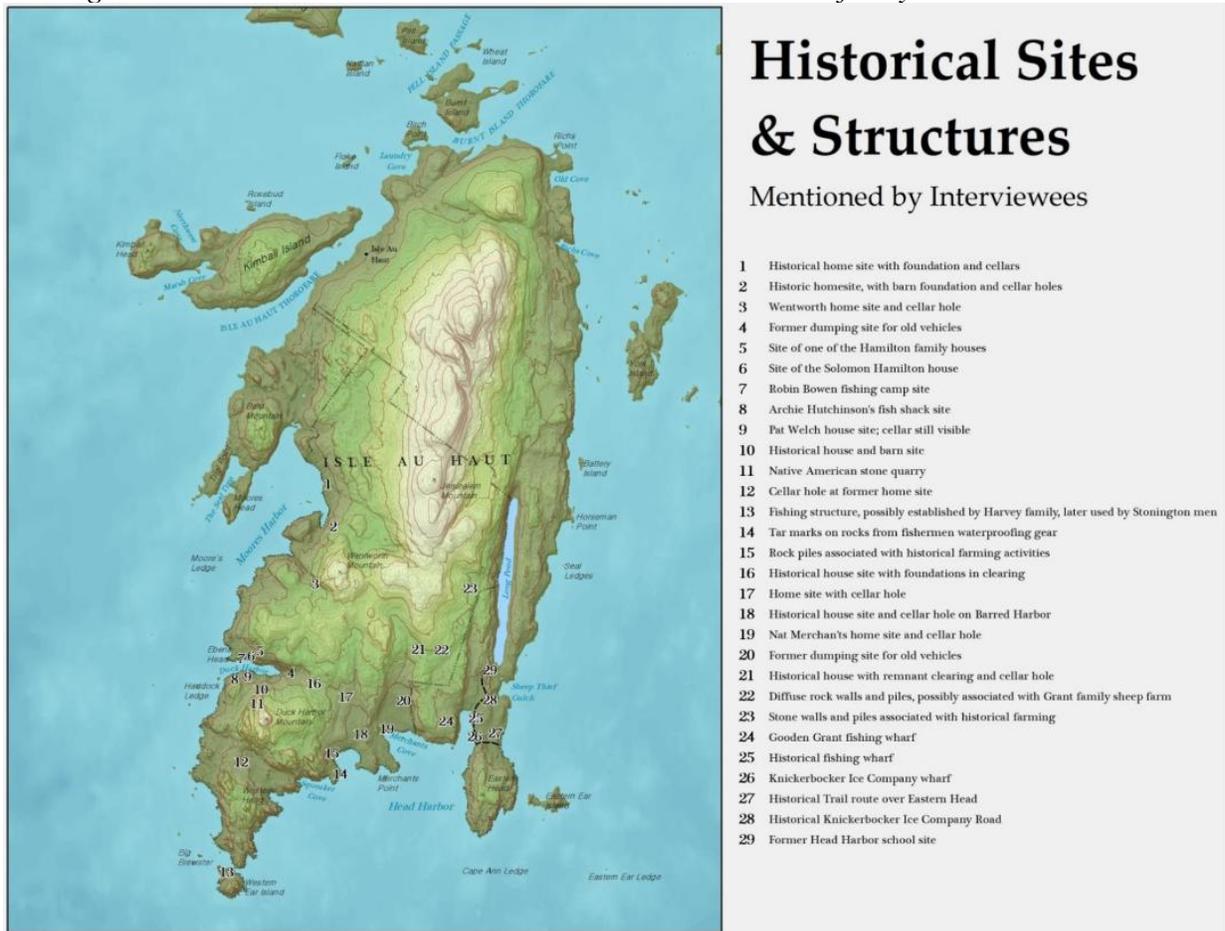
A comprehensive survey of Isle au Haut’s historic above-ground resources needs to be conducted and is almost certain to identify other properties eligible for listing in the National Register.

A. Isle au Haut Oral History

In 2013, the University of Washington and the Northeast Region Ethnography Program National Park Service published a report titled, “The Park Lands of Isle au Haut: A Community Oral History.” This research represents an oral history study of Isle au Haut, and its historical relationship to its physical landscape – primarily the portion of the Island now sitting within Acadia National Park. As a significant proportion of the human experience in this portion of Isle au Haut remains unwritten but is well remembered by some members of the Isle au Haut community on the basis of both personal experiences and Island “oral tradition,” oral history was seen as the most effective and illuminating way of gathering new information on the history of these areas. The figure below is a map of historical sites and structures in what is now Acadia National Park mentioned by interviewees. To read this full report, [click here](#).

One mission of the Isle au Haut Historical Society is to document the history of Isle au Haut and its people. An important part of this effort is the collection of oral history interviews with knowledgeable individuals involved with the Isle au Haut community at some point in time. All of the completed interviews and one recording provided by the Charles Bowen family are located on the Isle au Haut Historical Society [website](#). A transcript is also available in PDF format.

Figure I-3: Acadia National Park Historical Sites and Structures Identified by Isle au Haut Residents



Source: *The Park Lands of Isle au Haut: A Community Oral History, 2013*

B. Cemeteries

Isle au Haut has thirteen town cemeteries, which are identified in the figure below. Additionally, there is the Kimball Family Cemetery on Kimball Island. See the Public Facilities Chapter for more information.

Figure I-4: Isle au Haut Cemeteries



Source: *Isle au Haut, Maine Burials and Cemeteries*

8. Threats to Historic Resources

The major threat to historic and prehistoric sites is inadvertent damage through new development because the sites may be unidentified. The town's code enforcement officer protects such sites by enforcing local ordinances and state guidelines.

Historic Sites and Climate Change

The future of historic properties is sometimes overlooked in the process of planning for the effects of climate change, yet they are also subject to the effects of erosion, high water, intense storms, high winds, and wildfire. Much like parks, schools or town buildings, a community's historic properties help create and sustain a unique sense of place. The historic materials or settings of historic properties may require specialized planning that is sensitive to the historic significance of the property.

Due to the location of both the listed historic properties and other properties of historical interest, coastal erosion and sea level rise could pose a major threat to the infrastructure. Both the Gooden Grant House and Isle au Haut Light Station are vulnerable to 3.9 ft of sea level rise. Other properties of local historical significance and prehistoric archaeological sites, such as shell middens, are located near the water and threatened by sea level rise. Another concern with the increase in severe storms is high wind and damage occurring as a result of fallen trees or debris. See the Climate Change Chapter for more information.

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission has created a webpage to assist entities throughout the state with planning for the effects of climate change on historic properties and cultural resources through the processes of identification, adaptation, resiliency, and mitigation. The website includes toolkits, Maine-specific research, and links to resources from preservation partners, planners and governmental organizations. The site is located at: <http://www.maine.gov/mhpc/programs/protection-and-community-resources/climate-change>.

9. Analyses of Historic and Archaeological Resources

A. Historic Patterns of Settlement

As mentioned above, settlement has occurred in six pockets on the main island: "The Town" near the Thorofare, the seasonal Point Lookout at the north end, Rich's Cove on the northeast side, Head Harbor at the southeast end, Duck Harbor and Moore's Harbor, both on the west side. These settlements reflect the economic dependence on the water for fishing. Most of these settlements are sheltered harbors.

B. Existing Protective Measures for Historic and Archaeological Resources

The various identified historical sites on Isle au Haut receive little or no formal protection or preservation effort, other than being named and listed. It is important for organizations and individuals taking any action on the recommendations of this Plan to check with the organizations listed below and possibly others to obtain the latest information on resources and regulations. Programs and efforts that currently provide protection include:

National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

Sites with national, state, or local significance are eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. This registry protects sites only from intervention or development by a federal agency. Highway projects with federal funding, for example, may be challenged if they impact registered sites. NRHP status is often assumed to protect buildings from alteration or destruction by the property owner, but it cannot restrict this.

Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC)

MHPC coordinates the National Register as it affects Maine. MHCP also maintains an inventory of historic, archaeological and coastal heritage sites in Maine, although the agency has no direct authority to protect sites. MHPC does, however, coordinate the distribution of available funds for preservation, restoration and inventory. Such funds are currently extremely limited but may be more available with future appropriations and/or bonds.

The Isle au Haut Historical Society Committee

The Island has an Historical Society, which is a registered non-profit organization with an active membership, and works closely with the Town. The Historical Society has recorded and transcribed oral histories from long-time residents and maintains a collection of photographs, written records, and historical objects related to Isle au Haut. Past projects include the identification of island cemeteries together with a database of their GPS coordinates. Current projects include converting town reports and documents, other written materials, a large collection of historical photographs, plus images of historical objects into a digitized searchable database. A future project is envisioned that will provide details on all buildings of historical interest on the Island as well as a historical walking tour of downtown Isle au Haut. The holdings of the Historical Society are currently housed in the library and reading room located in Town Hall. The IAH Historical Society publishes a newsletter one or more times each year with articles and photographs relevant to the history of the Island.

Site Plan Review and Subdivision Ordinances

Isle au Haut has standards for preserving historic and archaeological resources in its Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. Section 16(D)(6) of the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance requires that the Planning Board, in order to issue a permit, must make a positive finding based on the information presented that the proposed use would protect archaeological and historic resources as designated in the comprehensive plan.

10. Goals & Objectives

Goal: Protect key historical and archaeological resources from incompatible development and natural causes and undertake measures to assure long-term preservation and enhancement of the Town’s historical sites and structures.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Encourage the discovery, preservation and sharing of Isle au Haut’s history.	Seek additional funds to support the Isle au Haut Historical Society.	Historical Society	Ongoing
	Identify permanent space for the preservation and presentation of Isle au Haut’s historical artifacts.	Historical Society	2029
	Encourage the practice of archiving historical records and artifacts.	Historical Society	Ongoing
	Preserve physical locations of historical significance.	Historical Society, Lighthouse Committee	Ongoing
Prepare historical and archaeological resources for the effects of climate change.	Use sea level rise predictions when planning for maintenance and repair on buildings and locations of historical significance.	Historical Society	2028-Ongoing
Protect to the greatest extent practicable the significant historic and archaeological resources and explore/implement historic preservation initiatives within the community.	For known historic archeological sites and areas sensitive to prehistoric archeology, require subdivision or non-residential developers to take appropriate measures to protect those resources.	Planning Board	2028
	Adopt or amend land use ordinances to require the planning board to incorporate maps and information provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission into their review process.	Planning Board	2028
	Work with the local historical society and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to assess the need for a comprehensive community survey of the community’s historic and archaeological resources.	Historical Society	2029

Chapter J: Recreation

1. Purpose

A community's quality of life is an important factor for most people deciding on a place to live and is often related to the growth and development of a Town or area. This section contains an inventory of current recreation services, facilities, and an analysis of how these may be affected by future change and growth. Specifically, this section will:

- Describe current recreational resources on Isle au Haut;
- Assess the current and future adequacy of these resources; and
- Predict whether the availability of open spaces for public access and recreation will be threatened by future growth and development.

2. Key Findings and Issues

Isle au Haut's recreational resources are dominated by the spectacular natural setting. Over half Island is permanently conserved as a designated low-use part of Acadia National Park (ANP). ANP is challenged for staff and project budgets, so ensuring that this remote part of ANP is served with appropriate staffing and maintenance of park roads and trails remains a priority for the town. Balancing visitor access to the park and retaining the natural beauty of the area remains important to the Town. Beyond ANP and other lands in conservation through the Maine Coast Heritage Trust, access to many of the special places on the Island continue to depend upon the generosity of private owners to allow use of access roads and trails. The Town aspires to ensure that current and future generations will continue to enjoy these Island recreational treasures and has protected the view by limiting construction over certain elevations. A town land conservation trust was created but has remained dormant. Purchase and use of land by the town balances the priorities of open space with the need to make land available for affordable housing. The balance of taxable property versus conserved land that does not generate tax revenue is another ongoing challenge for the Island. Preserving the quality and access to the waterfront is also an important consideration for the community. This includes both freshwater and saltwater frontage. Indoor and/or organized indoor/outdoor recreational programming open to the public remains limited and dependent on individual community volunteers. The importance of increasing public amenities, whether physical structures or programming, should be assessed by survey.

3. Key Findings & Issues from Previous Plan, 2016

Recreation on Isle au Haut is largely informal. The school, town hall and community organizations provide a number of recreational opportunities and facilities. The outdoors provides great recreation opportunities on Isle au Haut. Land conservation is important to the community, with many acres of land already protected for public use through Acadia National Park, the Town or Maine Coast Heritage Trust. Though conservation land is valued, there is also a sentiment that the town cannot afford to lose any more land from the tax rolls, and affordable housing should be the priority on any present or future town-owned land.

4. Community Engagement Results

Visioning session participants emphasized the importance of maintaining access to both land and water for recreation, including a desire to separate recreational and commercial water access where feasible, preserve long-standing access to privately owned land, and maintain town and park roads for walking, biking, and access to outdoor areas. Survey results indicate moderate support for expanding recreation-related investment, with 42.6% supporting increased funding for municipal recreation opportunities if offset by grants and 47.3% supporting similar investment for youth services, while roughly one-third opposed increased spending in each category. Broader investment questions showed that municipal recreation options were among the initiatives with the strongest support for additional funding, with 47% of respondents supporting increased investment even if it requires higher property taxes.

5. Current Recreation and Health Resources

A. Recreation Resources and Facilities

Town owned and/or privately owned but publicly accessible recreational facilities are listed in Table J-1. Organized recreation and cultural facilities are limited but it does not seem to affect the frequency of activities and gatherings that take place. Local land trusts, nature preserves, and the National Park Service also provide numerous nature-based recreation and day use opportunities.

The Town of Isle au Haut has a long history of generosity when it comes to land access. Several of the hiking trails and fields on the island are maintained and kept open by private landowners. Acadia National Park is a huge recreational asset for community members, but issues with road maintenance and access are pertinent.

Maine Coast Heritage Trust owns and maintains a couple of trails on the island and on surrounding islands. The Town maintains a strong working relationship with the organization.

Table J-1: Recreation Resources and Facilities

Facility	Size	Owner	Activities
Revere Memorial Hall		Town	Library, gymnasium, auditorium, town office, kitchen space, stage
Seal Trap/Trial Point		Maine Coast Heritage Trust	Hike
Thunder Gulch		ANP but requires crossing Privately Owned land	Hike
Head Harbor/Bungee Head	72 acres	Maine Coast Heritage Trust	Hike
Herrick Trail		Church	Hike
Boom Beach		Town	Hike
Kennedy Athletic Center		Privately Owned	Multi-purpose field and boat storage
Playground		Isle au Haut School	Play
Community Hub*		Community Hub of Isle au Haut	Commercial kitchen, social and programming space
Acadia National Park	2,900 acres	National Park Service	Walking, running, biking, hiking
Church		Town	Community gathering space

Facility	Size	Owner	Activities
Long Pond Beach		Town	Swimming, canoeing, fishing, ice skating
Isle au Haut Lighthouse		Town but requires crossing Privately Owned land	Historic landmark
Trails Behind Church		Access requires crossing Church and Privately Owned land	Hike
Mt Champlain Trail, West Side		Town	Hike
Community Garden		School	Gardening
Loop Road	13 miles	Town and National Park	Walk, bike, run
Mt Champlain Trail, East Side		Requires crossing Privately Owned Land	Hike
Town Pier		Town	Fishing, swimming, boating
Kimball Island Trails	3 miles	Privately Owned Land	Hike
Point Lookout Tennis Courts		Point Lookout Association, not publicly available	Tennis
Town Float		Town	Fishing
Town Boat Ramp		Town	Boat Launch
*The Community Hub is currently in development			

6. Adequacy of Isle au Haut’s Recreation Resources

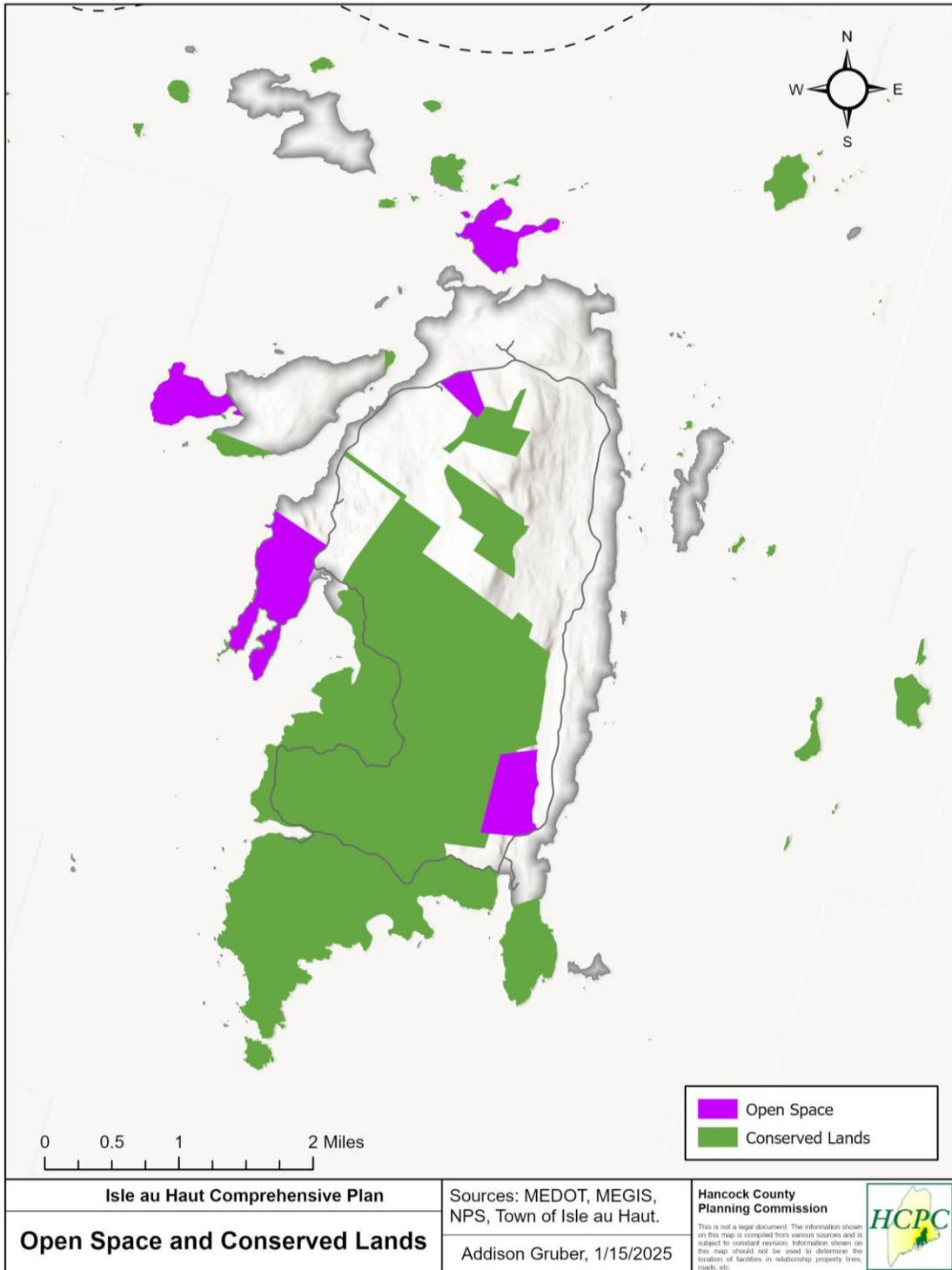
Isle au Haut offers excellent access to a broad range of self-directed outdoor activities. Public programs have been present in the past but are only available if a community member steps up to organize/run it. The Sunbeam has also provided recreational opportunities for seniors. Access to the most beloved places is addressed in the open space section below. The need and desire for more recreational facilities like playing fields, courts and/or a fitness center as well as potential recreational programming should be further evaluated and prioritized based on community feedback.

7. Open Spaces

A. Inventory of Open Space

Open space is a concept related to recreation which is important for a community. Open space is land which contributes to the character of the community or a neighborhood merely by being undeveloped. The contribution may be because the land is particularly scenic, used for recreation, public access, or just provides a natural break in the landscape. A number of techniques can be used to protect open space. Government acquisition, non-profit ownership, voluntary deed restrictions, and the Tree Growth Tax Law Program currently serve to protect open space on Isle au Haut. Isle au Haut land use ordinances do not contain mechanisms for open space or cluster development. Such incentives or requirements for preservation have been used in several other communities.

Figure J-1: Isle au Haut Open Space and Conserved Lands



B. Acadia National Park

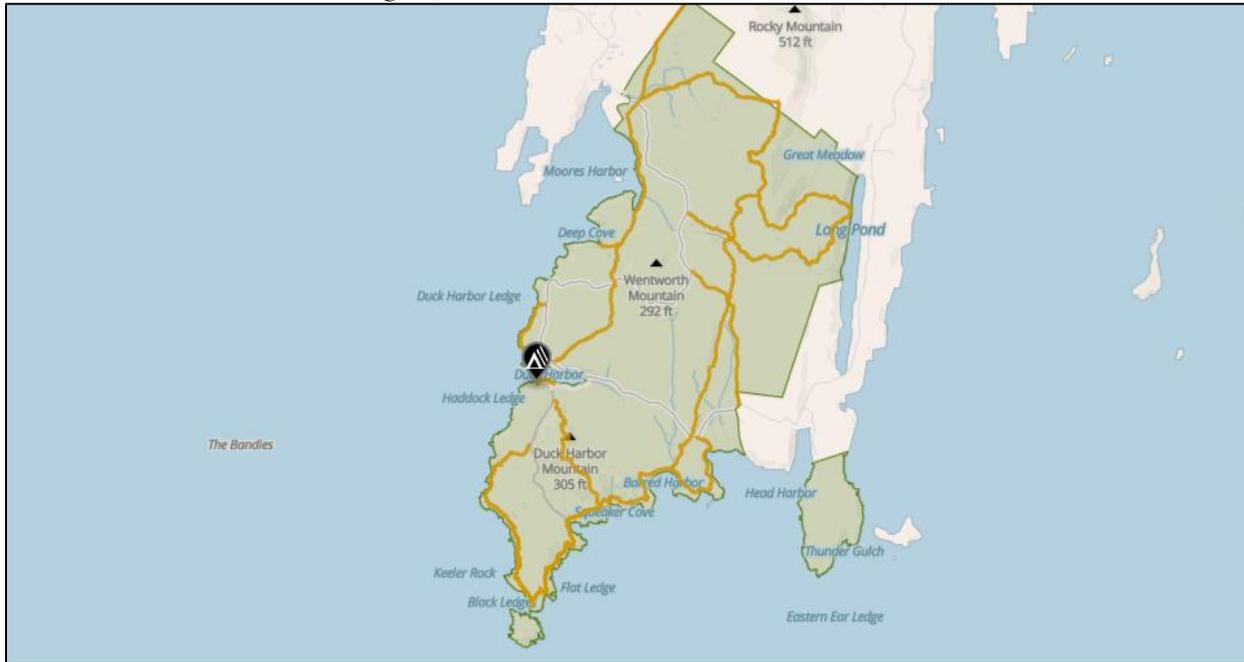
Acadia National Park (ANP) owns about 3,062 acres on Isle au Haut with five lean-tos (a maximum of six people can sleep in each lean-to) and 18 miles of hiking trails (in addition to Park trails there are many other trails available to the public, totaling over 31 miles). The lean-tos are located at the Duck Harbor Campground which is supported by a composting toilet, hand-pump water well, and a boat landing that is served seasonally by IaH Boat Services. The Duck Harbor landing is intended to deliver Park visitors to the Park and avoid a walk from the town dock.

Land was donated to the Park in 1943. ANP attracts 6,000-7,000 visitors annually and there is a park management plan that limits park occupancy rates. The trails are used by visitors and residents alike. Currently, there is no full-time park ranger stationed on Isle au Haut, and the National Park Service is experiencing troubles with budgeting. There is a desire from residents to reinstate this seasonal full-time ranger position on the island.

A number of hiking trails cross private land to reach the ocean and mountains. The landowners allow these trails to be used as long as visitors are courteous. Figure J-1 shows the conservation land within the town of Isle au Haut. These holdings include both fee simple and easement parcels. Most of the conservation land is part of Acadia National Park. Note that many of the hiking trails cross private land. These trails are informally maintained.

The Isle au Haut Land Conservation Trust was established in the 1980s and has been dormant for nearly thirty years. The committee is made up of the chairman of the planning board, the First Selectman, a representative from Acadia National Park, a selectman, and a community member. It currently holds the open space easement on 90 acres of land owned by the Union Congregational Church of Isle au Haut on the southwest side of the Pond.

Figure J-2: National Park Land on Isle au Haut



Source: Acadia National Park Website

C. Potential Threats and Impacts to Open Spaces

A number of techniques can be used to protect open space. Government acquisition, non-profit ownership, voluntary deed restrictions, and the Tree Growth Tax Law program currently serve to protect open space on Isle au Haut. The Town's land use ordinances do not presently contain mechanisms for open space protection or requirements for cluster development. Incentives or requirements for preservation are not uncommon in the ordinances of other towns. The Town does not have an open space fund or a formal partnership with local land trusts to acquire open spaces, but most of the available land is already protected indefinitely through ownership by the National Park Service.

Open space land protection by nonprofit and governmental organizations includes the following:

1. Lands owned outright by governmental or private organizations that acquired the land for conservation purposes where public access is freely granted.
2. Lands owned outright by governmental or private organizations that acquired the land for conservation purposes where public access is controlled or restricted during periods of the year such as bird breeding season. Examples include Doliver and Wheaton Islands, where camping is permitted to members of the Maine Island Trail Association. Little Spoon Island is a part of the U.S. Fisheries and Wildlife Coastal Islands Wildlife Refuge program.
3. Lands owned by private or non-governmental entities that have granted conservation easements to another entity, typically the National Park Service or a private group such as the Nature Conservancy or the Maine Coast Heritage Trust, where public access is permitted and may be limited to passive recreation and sometimes camping.

4. Lands owned by private or non-governmental entities that have granted conservation easements to another entity, typically the National Park Service or a private group such as the Nature Conservancy or the Maine Coast Heritage Trust, where no public access is permitted.
5. Lands restricted for a single purpose such as the Isle au Haut boat launch ramp which is reserved for public access to the water.
6. Lands claimed by the State of Maine through the Island Registry Act and given to specific agencies for specific purposes. Generally, the purpose is for bird or animal habitat protection.
7. A unique agreement between the National Park Service and the Town of Isle au Haut restricts land on the main island of Isle au Haut 300 ft above the Mean High Water to be developed.
8. The Town of Isle au Haut also owns land such as Moxie Island, which is publicly accessible.

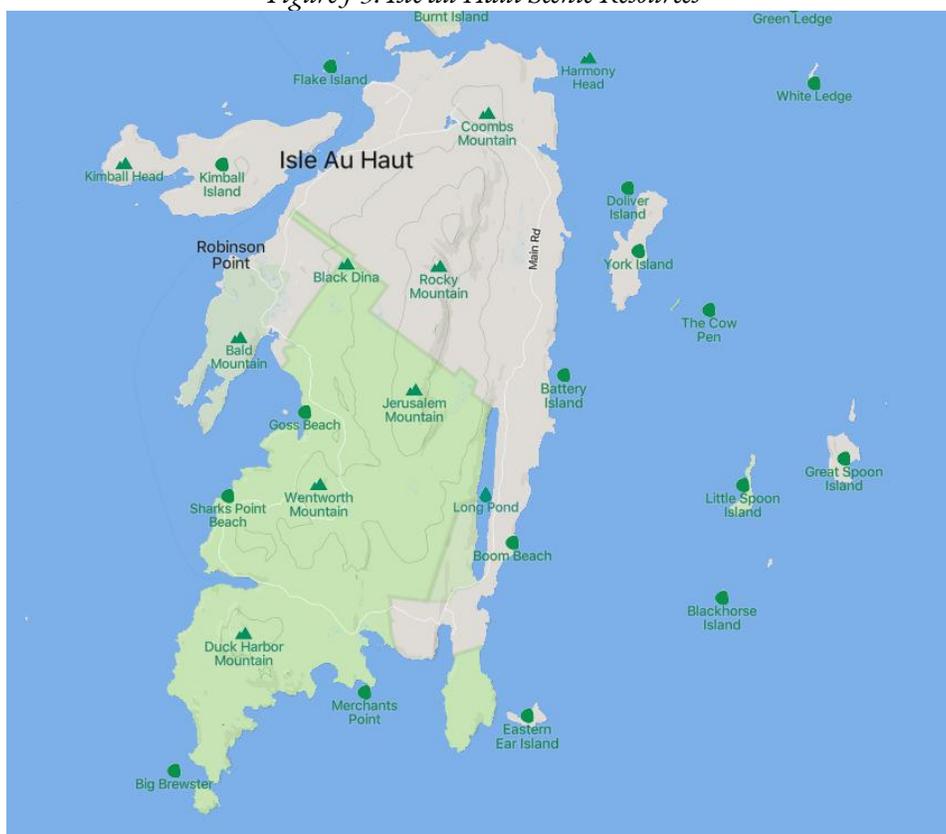
There is no hunting permitted on Isle au Haut but Long Pond is popular for fishing, both in the summer and winter. The State of Maine has historically stocked Long Pond with Brook Trout. In 2023, they stocked the pond with roughly 1,000 fish. Acadia National Park owns land on the northwest side of the pond and the southwest side is conserved land. There is a Town-owned public swimming beach at the southern end, but parking is limited around the beach area. People often use ATVs on public roads, but there are no formal ATV trails on the island.

Unique in the nation, Maine has a tradition of private landowners allowing members of the public to use their property for a wide variety of recreational activities free of charge. On Isle au Haut, access to some popular recreation areas is granted by private citizens. Regardless, the acquisition of land by trusts and other conservation organizations, whether in fee or by easement, to ensure, and to an extent restore, some of the access to the community's natural areas.

8. Scenic Resources

Acadia National Park is a significant scenic resource for the Town and draws thousands of visitors each summer. The community values the scenic rural nature of the Island; ocean, mountains, forests, bogs and a pond. The Town has ordinances and agreements protecting these items as does ANP who is by congressional mandate, a preservation organization. This includes elevation building restrictions, pond building restrictions, public/private agreements to maintain open space etc. Continuing to protect Isle au Haut's scenic resources is important to maintaining the character of the town.

Figure J-3: Isle au Haut Scenic Resources



Source: [Mapcarta](#)

9. Local Issues

The natural landscape provides important recreational opportunities for residents and visitors of Isle au Haut. This includes hiking, biking, kayaking, and nature watching. Public access to salt water is limited to the public landing, Boom Beach, a small area behind the school, and along Acadia National Park's shoreline. The public dock and boat launching capabilities are only available at the Town Landing. Public freshwater access is available at the Long Pond Beach. Float plane landings have posed tensions with recreational pond users, but regulation of float plane landings is controlled by the State. Other recreation activities are largely informal. Community members recognize the importance of conservation but also note that much of the Island is already conserved through Acadia National Park or other organizations.

Some additional recreational issues the Town faces are the lack of public bathroom access at the south end of the island, public access to private land and trails, recreational water access points, limited ranger presence, intertidal zone access rights, condition of the town hall gymnasium floor, lack of organized swim lesson program, and lack of organized recreation opportunities.

One key issue is open land access. This has always been a wonderful part of the community. Over the last 10 years, a lot of the large tracts have been broken up or developed. This does lead to loss of public access when new owners are not as welcoming/trusting of people on their property. Coastal access near town would be nice to

have perpetually available. There is also a component of this that many property owners may not know how much traffic crosses their land in the off season.

10. Regional Issues

The town co-owns the Colwell Boat Ramp in Stonington with the Town of Stonington. There have been some differences in using the ramp as a launch area for kayaks. The Colwell Ramp Committee, made up of representatives from both towns, decides cost-sharing, capital improvements, and is responsible for the general oversight of ramp; however, it does not meet regularly. Looking into reconstituting this committee could be a first step towards finding ways to improve recreational boat access.

11. Goals and Objectives

Goal: Ensure that indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities on Isle au Haut can accommodate the needs of all age groups and abilities in the community.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Maintain and improve existing recreational facilities and programs.	Create a list of current and future recreational needs and explore ways to address identified needs.	Selectboard, School Board	2026
	Continue to appropriate funds to ensure that Revere Memorial Hall is well maintained and pursue alternate funding when needed.	Selectboard	2026
	Build the Town's relationship with Acadia National Park (See Economy Chapter).	Selectboard	Ongoing
	Continue to work with Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to stock Long Pond.	Selectboard	Ongoing
Maintain public access to significant scenic and recreational areas.	Develop a private landowner communication strategy.	Selectboard	2028
	Provide educational materials regarding the benefits and protections for landowners allowing public recreational access on their property.	Selectboard	2028
	Monitor any additional conservation needs balanced with other community priorities.	Selectboard, ANP, Maine Coast Heritage Trust	Ongoing
	Investigate options for improving and protecting current recreational water access points.	Selectboard, Colwell Ramp Committee	2028

Chapter K: Public Facilities and Services

1. Purpose

The adequacy of a community's public facilities is important for the quality of life of its residents as well as for their safety and economic prosperity. This chapter provides an understanding and analysis of current conditions for Isle au Haut and potential future needs and issues. Specifically, the chapter aims to:

- Identify and describe Isle au Haut's public facilities and services; and
- Assess the adequacy of these services to handle current and projected demands.

2. Key Findings and Issues

Isle au Haut's town hall is adequate for current municipal functions but is inadequate for other uses such as a home for historic artifacts and community events. Structure fire and wildfire pose huge risks for the Town as response times are low and mutual aid opportunities with surrounding towns and Acadia National Park are limited. Keeping students enrolled in the school and maintaining cemeteries and broadband infrastructure are important goals for the Town heading into the future.

3. Key Findings & Issues from Previous Plan, 2016

Isle au Haut is governed by a board of selectmen and has an annual town meeting. Some of the positions are paid a small stipend, but most are volunteers. Those community members participating in town government are spread thin. The division of labor is a major concern. This applies to government, planning board, school board, and emergency services.

A new dock was constructed in 2009. This provides public access to the water and serves as the landing area for the mail boat. The new dock addresses a major concern identified in the public opinion survey. There is public concern about the fire protection and emergency services capacity.

The 2007 public opinion survey suggested that a majority of respondents favored a reexamination of the zoning ordinances. In March 2016, the Town meeting approved comprehensive revisions to the Town Zoning Ordinance and created new marine and general use zones on the Thorofare. Changes are required to the State-imposed Shoreland Zoning Ordinance in order to implement the marine and general development zones enacted in the Town Ordinance. Discussions with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) are currently underway as to how to implement those changes. In April 2016, the Selectmen appointed a Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) who votes on Isle au Haut and has been actively fulfilling the duties of a CEO since then.

4. Community Engagement Results

Survey responses show generally high satisfaction with core civic facilities, including the school (83% rated good or excellent), library (76%), town hall (68%), public access to fresh water (68%), and town government services

(64%). Public safety services emerged as the primary area of concern, with 80% of year-round respondents rating fire protection as needing improvement or unacceptable and 60% identifying emergency services as a concern; public bathrooms were also frequently cited (58%). These findings align with the priorities workshop, where fire protection capacity and the long-term viability of essential services ranked among the top challenges. Participants repeatedly raised concern about the Town's reliance on a very small group of active volunteers to operate and sustain key services, noting risks of burnout and limited capacity over time. Some engagement also addressed the potential transition to Hancock County, with moderate support tied to possible service and emergency response benefits and a desire to further study the issue.

5. Existing Conditions

A. Town Administration and Town Hall

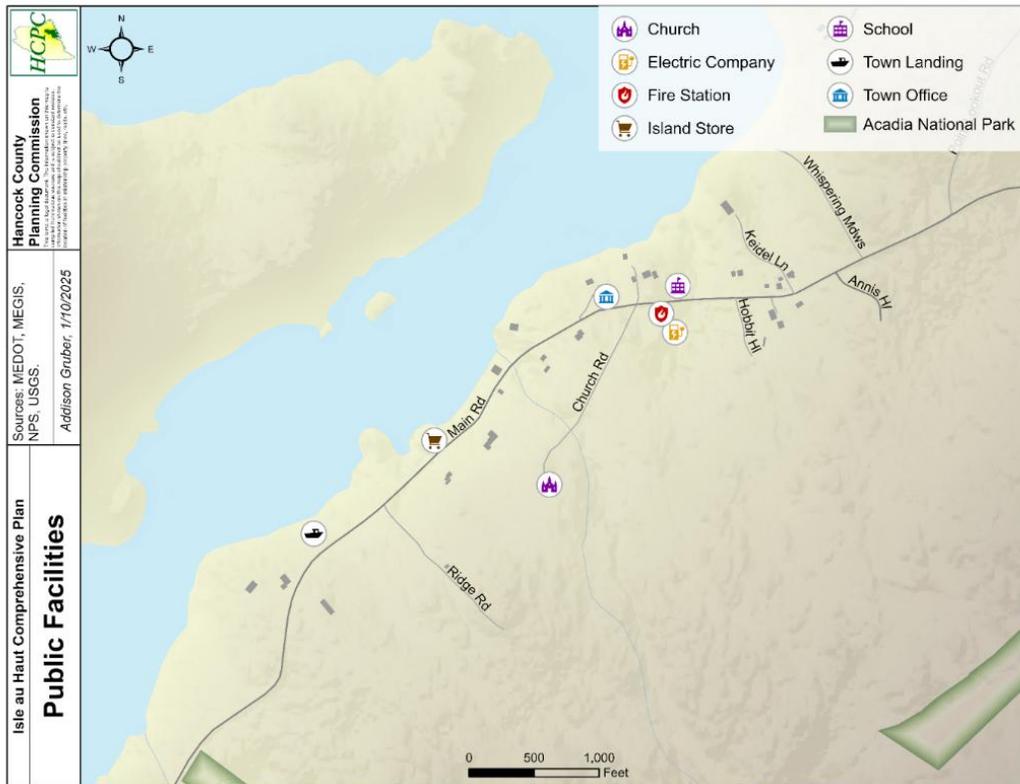
Current Conditions

The Town of Isle au Haut is governed by a town meeting form of government with an elected board of three selectmen. The board of selectmen, town clerks, assessors, treasurer, tax collector, road commissioner, fire chief, school board members, and planning board members are elected at the town meeting, while other positions are appointed by the selectmen. Appointed staff include the Code Enforcement Officer, Tax Collector, Fire Chief, and Harbor Master. Town members also vote on budgets for the school, town administration, road maintenance etc. Town positions are filled by approximately 25 people, making up around 50 positions. Given the very small year-round population (~25 households), many roles need to be filled by individuals who have to balance interests e.g. parents on school board or contractors being part of the planning board.

A planning board approves building permits and subdivisions. Planning board members and planning board of appeals members are elected for three-year terms. Isle au Haut currently has a Code Enforcement Officer who enforces zoning ordinances.

The Town Office is located in Revere Memorial Hall. The town hall also includes a large space with a stage that can be used as an auditorium or gymnasium. The Revere Memorial Library is also housed in the hall. The library includes more than 4,000 volumes. Library coffee hours are an important social opportunity, and a book discussion group meets once a month. New programs are being offered at the library by local volunteers. Wireless internet access and a photocopier are also available at the town hall. In the summer months, summer camps are held in this space, as well as other social gatherings.

Figure K-1: Isle au Haut Public Facilities



Current and Future Adequacy

The Town Hall space is adequate for town administration needs and is expected to remain adequate as the population changes. The building itself is not adequate for functions outside of town administration. For example, the Historical Society keeps their inventory in the shared reading room. Other storage facilities are needed for circumstances such as this.

The Town maintains a public website with the help of a local volunteer. While the website is kept up to date with information, it is not ADA compliant and cumbersome to navigate. Select Town staff have also been trained by the State in a new online tax assessing system.

B. Planning, Plumbing, and Code Enforcement

Current Conditions

Isle au Haut building, plumbing, subdivision and shoreland zoning regulations are enforced by a combination of authorities, a Code Enforcement Officer, a Plumbing Inspector, the Planning Board, and Harbor Master. Together, these groups and individuals ensure adequate enforcement of Town and State ordinances.

Current and Future Adequacy

Staffing the code enforcement position on-island has been a challenge and will continue to be. Accessing the ordinances through the Town’s website is difficult to navigate for users. Additionally, the licensed plumbing

inspector in Stonington who comes out to Isle au Haut for routine inspections will be retiring. The Town has found someone to fill this role and will confirm at the next Town Meeting.

C. Fire Protection and EMS

Current Conditions

Isle au Haut has a volunteer fire department with an elected fire chief. Most of the community serves as volunteer firefighters in the event of an emergency. A Ford F350 first-responder truck was purchased in 2007. The fire engine underwent major repairs in 2008. The town has a firehouse to store trucks and equipment. There are currently no hydrants on the Island. Fire alarm is spread to pagers through Knox County 911 service, an on-island phone tree and VHF channel 74. The fire department is funded through the town and private donations. A fire department’s ISO rating is a determination by the Insurance Services Office by how well your department is able to serve the community. You’re assigned a score between 1 and 10, with lower numbers indicating a better score. High ISO scores can increase home insurance rates in the community. Currently Isle au Haut is rated as ISO 10, and working to a rating of ISO 9, which could result in lower fire insurance rates. The fire department has also organized fire extinguisher inspection and refilling and firefighter training. The fire chief is responsible for periodically checking the trucks to ensure that they are fueled and operational. For mutual aid, the Town is contracted with Acadia National Park for EMS and fire response, but only during the summer months. In the winter, ANP equipment is in storage and is inaccessible.

Table K-1: Fire Department Vehicules, 2024

Type of Vehicle	Year	Condition	Years of Service Left
Ford F350 Fire Pump	2000	Good	15 years

Source: Town of Isle au Haut

As of 2016, Isle au Haut has one summer season EMT and no winter EMT. Knox County 911 services can reach the EMT through pagers. Transport to the mainland is by private boat, mail boat or life flight. In the event of transport by boat, an ambulance will meet the boat in Stonington.

In 2016, the Town finally joined the state-wide 911 emergency notification system. The Planning Board developed the map of road names and addresses, prepared the required Addressing Ordinance, and held a public hearing. The fall 2016 Town Meeting adopted the Ordinance and maps, and the plan was submitted to the Maine Public Utilities Commission for final implementation by the State. Final road names and addresses can be found on the Planning Board section of the Town website. It should be noted that there have been discrepancies found between these early lists and the actual Maine State e911 data. Attempts to correct these are ongoing. In 2024, island medical experts are developing an Emergent Care Station in the Island Store to address emergencies.

Current and Future Adequacy

As of 2025, Isle au Haut has adequate equipment to respond to small fires or emergencies on the island but lacks capacity to contain or extinguish larger fires or forest fires. This is becoming more of a concern for the Town as the weather becomes more unpredictable and extreme. Providing education for homeowners about wild and

structure fire risk is a suggested strategy in this plan. Additionally, the National Park budgets have not allowed for proactive firebreak development on park lands.

Currently, there is no one on the island who is medically trained or certified. The Town would reimburse training costs for anyone interested in becoming a first responder, but there lacks volunteer interest and time.

D. Law Enforcement

Current Conditions

Isle au Haut has no on-island police force, but Knox County Sheriff will respond if necessary. One of the rangers is a federal law enforcement agent, but his jurisdiction does not extend beyond the Park’s boundaries. During the summer season this ranger is available for emergencies.

Current and Future Adequacy

There are rare instances of crime or misconduct on the Island and most situations are handled by town officials. This system remains adequate, but transitioning to Hancock County would help reduce response times and make for a simpler emergency response system.

E. Healthcare

Current Conditions

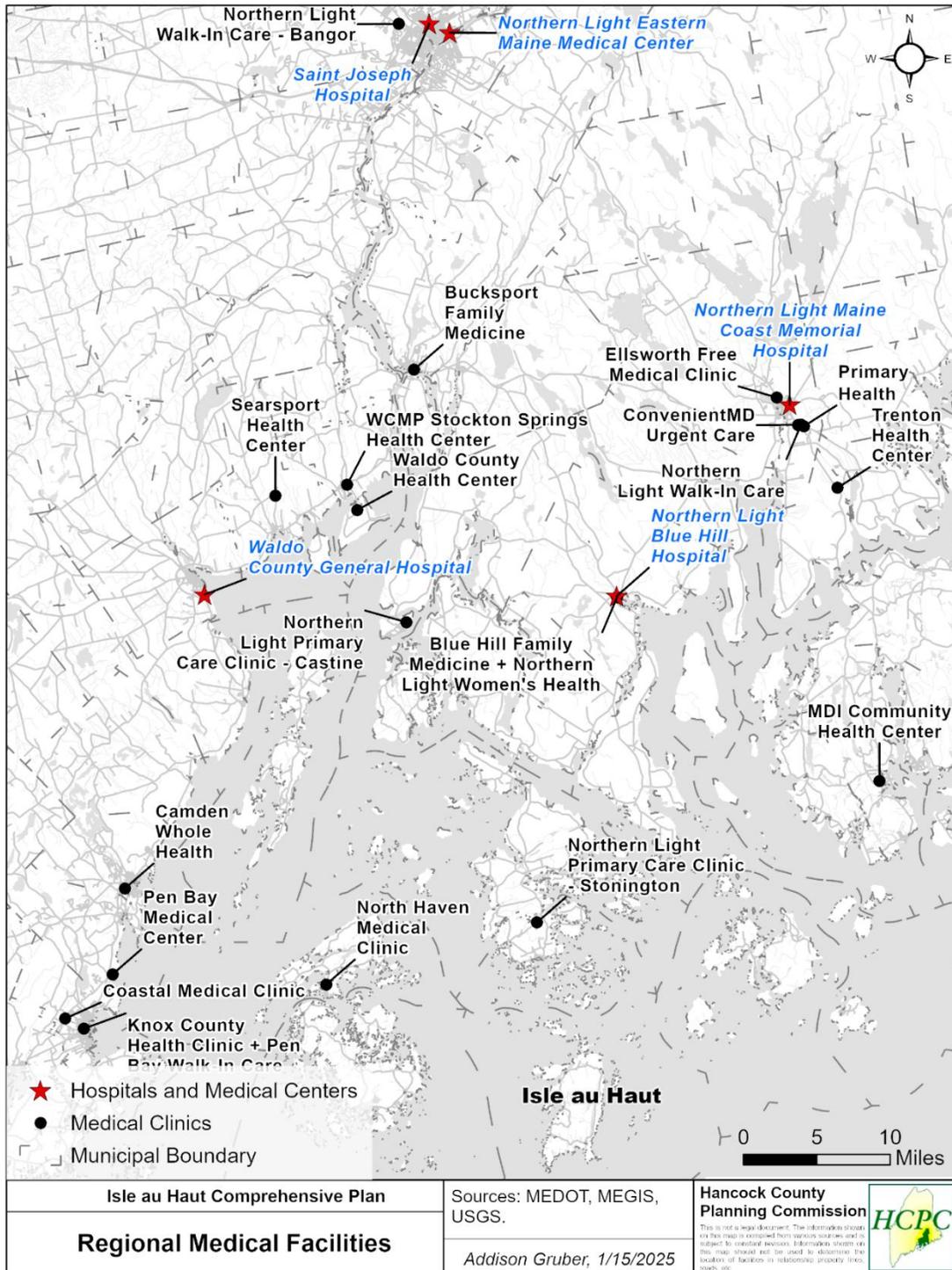
Isle au Haut does not have a clinic or hospital within the community. Telemedicine, through Maine Seacoast Mission’s Sunbeam, provides important medical care every two weeks. A citizens group is actively trying to establish an office on the island within which telemedicine and other on-island medical services can be provided as needed. There are some vacationing doctors on the island in the summer. Definitive care is located in Blue Hill or Ellsworth. Some residents use a primary care doctor at the Island Medical Center in Stonington.

The Sunbeam, a 74-foot long vessel, offering a warm meeting place, the opportunity to visit with crew members familiar with island living, and health care via the ship’s medical staff and state-of-the-art telehealth facilities. About 90% of residents on the outer islands they visit use the boat’s services. The Island Health program arranges for specialists, such as podiatrists, dentists, and ophthalmologists, to visit the islands via the Sunbeam. Staff sets up on-site screening clinics for cholesterol, blood pressure, and diabetes and arranges educational talks on relevant topics such as fishing safety, tick-borne illness, and mental health. The Sunbeam made twenty trips to Isle au Haut between April 2023 and March 2024 and spent approximately 40 days on island.

Table K-2: Regional Health Facilities

Health Facility	Location	Emergency Room/Medicine
Northern Light Primary Care Stonington	Stonington	No
Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital	Blue Hill	Yes
Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center	Bangor	Yes
Saint Joseph Hospital	Bangor	Yes
Northern Light Maine Coast Memorial Hospital	Ellsworth	Yes
Waldo County General Hospital	Belfast	Yes

Figure K-2: Regional Health Facilities



Current and Future Adequacy

Community members are satisfied with the work and offerings of the Sunbeam and often rely on Stonington’s medical services. Although, 67% of year-round survey respondents agreed medical care for residents needs improvement or attention right away. This was the highest percentage of “needs improvement or attention right

away” when asked about the quality of community services and facilities. Currently, there are no trained emergency medical professionals on the island year-round and response times tend to be slow from the mainland. Some year-round residents have expressed concern and fears regarding medical emergencies.

F. Public Works and Road Maintenance

Current Conditions

Isle au Haut has no public water or sewer. Homes all have private wells and private on-site subsurface sewage disposal systems. The harbor is dredged by the Army Corps. Private individuals will organize to coordinate to barge out a tank pumper for resident’s septic systems. Road drainage is accomplished through roadside ditches and culverts.

The town is responsible for about 9.05 miles of 13.74 miles of road on the island. The remaining roads are within Acadia National Park and maintained by the park service or consist of private roads. Park roads are not plowed during the winter. Parts of the town road are paved and parts are gravel. The condition of the road varies from good to poor. See the Transportation chapter for more information.

Table K-3: Municipal Equipment

Type	Year	Condition	Years of Service Left
B+S Water Pump	2020	Great	10+ years
Ford F550 Dump/Plow	2019	Great	20+ years
Chevy 2500 Plow	2005	Fair	10 years
Chevy 3500 Plow/Sand	1994	Poor	5 years
International Water Truck	1983	Poor	10 years
Water US Floto Pump	-	Fair	10 years

Source: Town of Isle au Haut

Current and Future Adequacy

There are several major capital improvements the Town should consider addressing in the planning period (see Fiscal Capacity Chapter for the Capital Improvement Plan):

- Road paving for Town-owned roads.
- Replaced dock hoist at the Town Dock.
- Several bridge replacements: Main Road Bridge, Rich's Cove Bridge, and the Town Bridge by the Island Store.
- Shoulder improvements on Coomb’s Mountain and Annis Hill.
- Cooperative Island Store tank protection.

Additionally, the Town does not have any road maintenance equipment outside of plowing and sanding trucks. Local subcontractors have provided equipment and labor, but this service may not continue to be available. It would be in the best interest of the Town to begin a succession plan and think about how to move forward.

G. Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling

Current Conditions

Isle au Haut contracts for most household solid waste disposal and recycling pick-up. Individuals must make their own arrangements to dispose of food waste, wood waste, and burn paper. Metal, glass, and cardboard can be recycled at the Stonington Transfer Station, where the rest of the household trash is taken. They do not currently recycle plastics. The town budgeted \$35,000 for solid waste disposal in 2024. Isle au Haut's solid waste production is slowly increasing. It should be noted that Isle au Haut's recycling is limited by what is accepted at the Stonington Transfer Station.

The Stonington Transfer Station runs the Town's waste management operations in a safe and legal manner. There are two compactors to take solid waste; a recycling building to take paper, cardboard, glass, and cans; an electronic waste section; a "take-it-or-leave-it" section; a burn pile, a demolition pile, and a metal pile. The Transfer Station also collects returnables and uses the proceeds from them to fund college scholarships for local high school students, but the Isle au Haut Trash Collector does not take returnables off island. The Transfer Station is attended by two people and is open all week.

Current and Future Adequacy

The loss of Fiberright and Penobscot Energy Recovery Company (PERC), two key waste-to-energy facilities, have limited options for transfer of municipal solid waste to one landfill that is filling rapidly. Additional options are critical for long-term viability of all regional transfer stations. Efforts are underway to restart PERC and Fiberright, but the future is uncertain.

Neither Knox or Hancock County have a program for Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection, though MDI towns have a sub-regional annual collection. In past years the Hancock County Planning Commission has operated an annual collection, but participation for Isle au Haut has been light. Additional options for HHW disposal should be explored.

Solid waste disposal remains a challenge for the present and future. Recycling is left to the individual homeowners and there is no provision for Hazardous Material. For the last three years, the Town only received one bid for the trash removal responsibility. Cost and flexibility for disposal on the mainland also continues to pose an issue for the community.

H. Telecommunications and Energy Infrastructure

Current Conditions

In November 2024, fiber-to-the-home broadband service was installed on Isle au Haut through grants from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration and the State of Maine. The project was overseen by the Maine Connectivity Authority and implemented by Axiom Technologies, with fiber extended to more than 120 premises.

The broadband system includes a subsea fiber cable connecting the island to Stonington using an easement provided by the Isle au Haut Power Company. Installing the broadband cable in coordination with a planned replacement of the power company's aging undersea electric cable allowed the community to pursue additional funding through the Northern Border Regional Commission and local donations. The new power cable installation is scheduled for 2026 following additional environmental review.

Broadband infrastructure includes fiber lines installed across the island and equipment housed in a town-owned building at the dock. The Isle au Haut Power Company allows use of its pole infrastructure and has trained staff to assist with routine maintenance.

Current and Future Adequacy

The installation of fiber-to-the-home broadband in 2024 significantly improved internet reliability and capacity for residents and businesses. Maintaining this system will require continued funding for operations, maintenance, and potential repairs to both on-island and subsea infrastructure. Developing a clear operations and maintenance plan and continuing to reserve funds for long-term upkeep will help ensure system reliability.

Energy infrastructure on the island is adequate for current needs but relies on aging equipment and limited capital resources. Fuel storage infrastructure may require upgrades and is vulnerable to flooding, and gasoline supply can be limited during peak summer demand. Converting the Island Store to solar could reduce energy costs but would present financial challenges for the Isle au Haut Power Company.

The Isle au Haut Power Company has acquired land on Coombs Mountain for a potential solar array. However, replacement of the aging mainland power cable has taken priority due to limited resources. The cooperative is also planning for replacement of aging infrastructure, including poles, transformers, meters, and key equipment such as the bucket truck.

In the medium term, the cooperative is exploring a broader system upgrade that could include battery storage to provide power during short-term mainland outages and replacement of the existing diesel generator with a more efficient unit. These improvements would increase system resilience and reduce exposure to rising energy costs but will likely require outside funding due to the cooperative's small customer base and limited operating revenue.

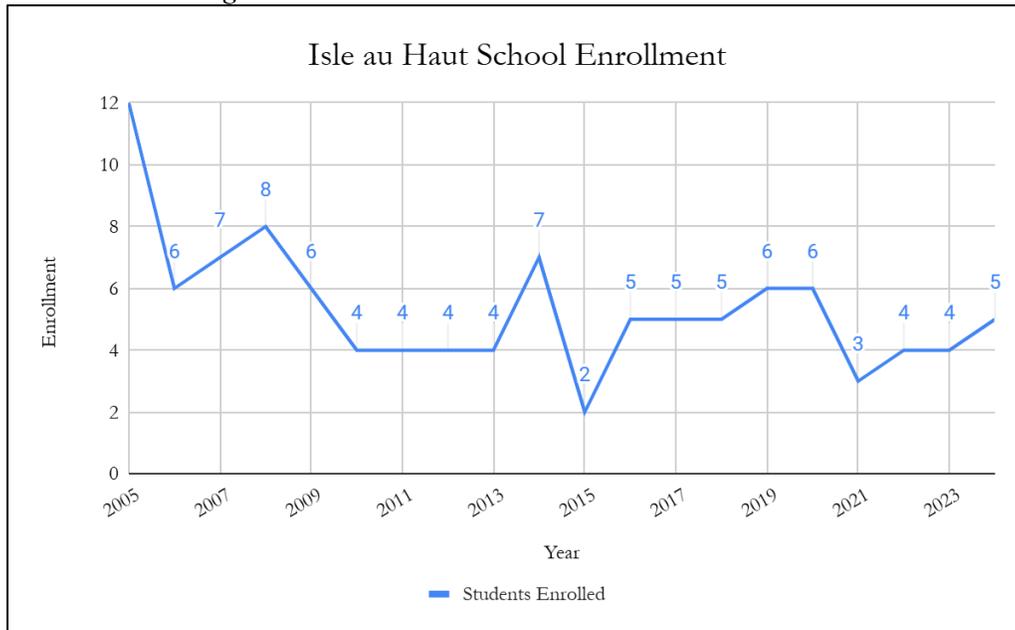
I. Education

Current Conditions

Isle au Haut shares some administrative services with Deer Isle-Stonington (e.g., school superintendent) but maintains its own school board. The Isle au Haut school provides education to students in grades K-8. High school students may attend high school at Deer Isle-Stonington, or other public or private schools of their choice. The town pays tuition equal to the cost of the tuition fee to attend Deer Isle-Stonington. Students attending Deer Isle-Stonington may commute on the mail boat with a modified school schedule.

Figure K-3 shows past enrollment at the Isle au Haut School. Current enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year is 5. Please see the Population and Demographics chapter for more information. There are no students that currently attend high school off island. The Isle au Haut school employs one full time teacher and one full time ed tech. Music, art, phys. ed. and special education teachers work at the school part time, dependent in part on funding and in part on need.

Figure K-3: Isle au Haut School Enrollment Over 20 Years



Source: Maine Department of Education

The total operating budget for the 2024-2025 school year was \$243,691.71. Of this total, \$122,905 is the local share. The local share per K-12 pupil is \$49,990.16. Education costs are addressed further in the Fiscal Capacity chapter.

Current and Future Adequacy

Keeping the school open and enrollment numbers steady is always a priority and concern for the Town. ICDC offers housing to the schoolteacher which helps continue to fill this position and IaH Boat Services has an agreement with the Town to transport high school students to and from Deer Isle/Stonington. While there are

options of commuting to the mainland for high school or going to boarding school, decisions around off-island high school education remain challenging for resident families.

J. Cemeteries

Current Conditions

There are thirteen cemeteries on Isle au Haut, but all are privately owned (see Historical and Archaeological Resources Chapter for map):

- Collins Cemetery
- Turner Cemetery
- Coomb Cemetery
- J. Barter Cemetery
- Greenlaw Cemetery
- Cogan Cemetery
- Rich Cemetery
- Small Cemetery
- Barter/Robinson Cemetery
- Julia Dodge and Calvin Turner Cemetery
- Hamilton Cemetery
- Smith/Tho./Woollen Cemetery
- Blaisdell Cemetery
- Kimball Cemetery

The Town of Isle au Haut is not responsible for mowing burial lots and for road maintenance. Lot owners are responsible for the care of monuments, markers, gravestones on their lots. The Town of Isle au Haut is required by State of Maine law to care for and maintain veterans' graves. This includes veterans' graves in both public and private cemeteries.

Current and Future Adequacy

The Town currently does not collaborate with private landowners to keep veteran's graves in good condition and to place a new American flag on each veteran's grave on Memorial Day. Town officials are interested in a cemetery plan which identifies veteran's graves and assigns responsibility for maintenance and honoring. Part of the Town's responsibility is keeping up to date records of burials but the selectboard is working to update records and develop better record keeping methods.

K. Other Services

In addition to services provided by the Town, Isle au Haut relies heavily on a variety of private and voluntary services. A number of these services that receive Town appropriations are shown in the table below:

Table K-4: Town Support for Non-profit Social Services

Non-Profit	FY 24
American Red Cross	\$250
Downeast Transportation Inc.	\$55
Hospice of Hancock County	\$1,000
Health Equity Alliance (Downeast AIDS Net.)	\$100.
Island Family Medicine (Island Medicine Center)	\$1,000
Island Store Association	\$20,000
Isle au Haut Boat Services	\$50,000
Isle au Haut Community Development Corporation	\$10,000

Non-Profit	FY 24
Life Flight	\$500
Maine Public Radio	\$150
Maine Seacoast Mission	\$1,000
Memorial Ambulance Corps	\$1,000
WERU	\$150
Total	\$85,205

Source: Town Annual Report

6. Regional Coordination

Many services are delivered through regional entities and through interlocal agreements. Additionally, Isle au Haut seeks to coordinate programs that reach beyond our borders with other local and regional governments. These are examples of interlocal coordination but are not an exhaustive list. Many programs are funded through “third party” requests such as LifeFlight of Maine, after school programs and programs for seniors.

Hancock County Planning Commission is contracted by the Town of Isle au Haut for consultation on planning, assistance with comprehensive planning and other planning support. HCPC serves 37 towns in Hancock County.

Regional School Unit 76 serves 5 communities on the Blue Hill Peninsula. The district encompasses Brooklin, Deer Isle, Stonington, Sedgwick, and Isle au Haut. Three elementary schools house students in grades pre-K through five. Middle/High School students attend Deer Isle-Stonington High School. The district enrollment is around 510 students. In addition, the Deer Isle Adult Education Program offers a broad menu of academic and enrichment programs including finance courses.

7. Goals and Objectives

Goal: Provide dependable local services and maintain essential community facilities that resident needs.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Improve public works storage and equipment capacity.	Identify any capital improvements needed to maintain or upgrade public services to accommodate anticipated community changes.	Selectboard, ANP	2026
	Build a salt and sand storage.	Selectboard, Road Commissioner	2027
	Purchase necessary public works equipment and establish additional public works space including renovating the fire house to accommodate additional equipment.	Selectboard, Road Commissioner	2030-2035
Maintain reliable solid waste services.	Collaborate with Deer Isle and Stonington for household hazardous waste disposal services and recycling options.	Selectboard	2027
	Create a plan for long-term solid waste disposal services.	Selectboard	2028

Goal: Provide dependable local services and maintain essential community facilities that resident needs.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Investigate options for collective bulky waste removal.	Selectboard	2028
Efficiently maintain the Town's cemeteries.	Create a Cemetery Plan for Town officials.	Historical Society	2028
	Identify and honor veteran graves on national holidays.	Historical Society	2027
	Continue to keep up-to-date records of burials.	Historical Society	Ongoing

Goal: Maintain a reliable, community-supported emergency response and medical care system that protects residents and property.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Improve emergency and fire preparedness and response.	Assess fire equipment needs and replacement timing.	Fire Chief	Ongoing
	Provide educational materials for homeowners about wild and structure fire risk.	Fire Chief	2026
	Recruit and support volunteers seeking to obtain first responder certification.	Fire Chief	2027
	Continue fire extinguisher program.	Fire Chief	Ongoing
Maintain on-island critical emergency facilities	Maintain access to the helicopter landing area and seek to secure additional emergency landing area.	Selectboard	Ongoing / 2028
	Maintain emergency care space in the Island Store.	Island Urgent Care Station	Ongoing
	Identify space for visiting medical professionals.	Selectboard, Community Hub, Maine Seacoast Mission	2027

Goal: Maintain efficient municipal operations, strong local governance, and active community participation.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Maintain and improve the Town Hall.	Complete necessary upgrades to Town Hall gym space including floor and interior painting.	Selectboard	2027
	Evaluate long-term storage needs and capabilities.	Selectboard	2027
Improve and expand technology for town operations and digital services.	Evaluate current software related to assessing, taxes, and communications.	Selectboard, Tax Assessor, Treasurer, HCPC	2026
	Upgrade and maintain the town website, ensuring ADA compliance.	Selectboard, Web Master	2026
	Digitize and organize municipal paper records.	Selectboard, HCPC	2027
	Implement Town Communications Plan.	Selectboard, Web Master, HCPC	Ongoing

Goal: Maintain efficient municipal operations, strong local governance, and active community participation.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Strengthen municipal and community capacity and coordination.	Improve communications about pressing Town needs and priorities to attract new volunteers and financial support.	Selectboard, Community Hub	2027
	Evaluate the necessity of additional paid staffing or contracted positions.	Selectboard	2027
	Continue to evaluate the pay of municipal officials and staff.	Town Meeting Participants	Ongoing
	Host regular meetings between key community organizations and municipal officials to encourage collaboration on shared priorities.	Selectboard	2026
	Host regular community meetings to encourage public input and identify potential new volunteers.	Selectboard	Ongoing
Explore options for regional delivery of local services.	Explore the possibility of transitioning from Knox County to Hancock County.	Selectboard, HCPC	2027
	Continue to work with the Stonington, Deer Isle, and other island communities to coordinate on shared challenges.	Selectboard, Island Institute	Ongoing

Goal: Support reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy and utility services that meet long-term needs.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Strengthen Isle au Haut's broadband infrastructure.	Continue to reserve funds as the new Town-owned broadband infrastructure is implemented.	Selectboard, Broadband Committee	Ongoing
	Create an operations/repair plan for both on-island and subsea infrastructure.	Broadband Committee, IaH Power Company	2026
Ensure safe and reliable fuel storage	Assess conditions of gasoline and kerosene tanks.	Island Store, HCPC	2026
	Improve tank protection and containment systems if deemed necessary.	Island Store, HCPC	2027
Improve energy independence, reliability, and affordability.	Assess energy transitions that shift revenue from fuel to electric and from electric to solar and identify approaches to support the financial sustainability given the island's small customer base.	IaH Power Company, Island Store, Island Institute	2027
	Support the development of solar systems that fit island needs and capacity.	IaH Power Company, Island Institute	Ongoing

Chapter L: Fiscal Capacity

1. Purpose

This section presents information on Isle au Haut’s ability to pay for the services it provides its residents and businesses. It also looks ahead to how the Town will pay for its long-term infrastructure needs. Specifically, this chapter will:

- Examine trends in such fiscal areas as valuation, taxes, expenditures, and capital projects funding.
- Evaluate the Town’s ability to borrow to pay for capital investments.
- Identify anticipated capital investment needs and anticipated funding mechanisms.

2. Key Findings and Issues

Property taxes continue to provide most of the town’s revenue while education and transportation continue to be the largest expenditures. Planned future investments for the town over the next 10 years include building a salt sand shed, purchasing additional public works equipment and renovating existing space, paving roads and upgrading culverts, and ensuring that mainland barge access is secure.

3. Key Findings & Issues from Previous Plan, 2016

Increasing tax bills are a concern for the property owners of Isle au Haut. Property taxes have increased recently, but Isle au Haut’s valuation and tax rate are among the lowest in Knox County. Property taxes provide most of the town’s revenue. Education is the largest expenditure category, followed by transportation. The state provides minimal contribution to education funding. The town has recently replaced the public landing and has borrowed money to purchase several properties.

4. Community Engagement Results

Community engagement indicated broad acceptance of additional municipal investment across most service areas, with relatively few initiatives receiving opposition. Survey results show that respondents were generally more supportive of increased spending when costs are offset by grants or outside funding, but several areas also received strong support for funding through increased property taxes. The highest levels of support for tax-supported investment were for town road improvements (53% overall; 67% year-round), the town dock and thorofare (51% overall; 52% year-round), bulky waste disposal (47% overall; 58% year-round), municipal recreation options (47% overall; majority year-round support), barge services (39% overall; 50% year-round), and solid waste disposal (35% overall; 50% year-round). Visioning discussions also emphasized the importance of clearly communicating the Town’s financial priorities and long-term challenges to residents and potential donors to strengthen private fundraising and overall fiscal capacity.

5. Conditions and Trends

Understanding fiscal capacity requires an examination of revenue sources that the Town uses to fund its operations and capital improvements as well as its debt capacity in the forms of notes, bonds or long-term loans. The analysis is historical, how Isle au Haut raised funds in the past; comparative, how does Isle au Haut compare to other similar towns in Knox County; and forward looking to future funding opportunities.

In Maine, towns raise most operating funds through property taxes. Property taxes are calculated based on the assessed value of property times a millage rate set by each town. A town's property tax revenue capacity is simply the value of its Total Taxable Valuation as determined by the State times the Tax Rate. In 2024, the Isle au Haut millage tax rate was \$0.0087 per \$1,000 valuation. Isle au Haut's municipal taxable valuation for 2024 was \$81,195,030.

A. Valuation and Tax Assessment

The table below shows the Town's state valuation since 2014 along with its total local valuation, tax commitment and mil rate.

Table L-1: Isle au Haut Valuation, 2014-2024

Year	State Valuation	Total Municipal Valuation	Tax Commitment	Tax Rate
2014	\$85,100,000	\$76,882,048	\$519,723	0.00676
2015	\$84,850,000	\$76,751,339	\$564,890	0.00736
2016	\$85,250,000	\$77,661,555	\$609,643	0.00785
2017	\$84,350,000	\$78,124,164	\$592,181	0.00758
2018	\$83,600,000	\$79,274,150	\$632,608	0.00798
2019	\$79,850,000	\$79,255,406	\$725,187	0.00915
2020	\$78,900,000	\$79,225,572	\$648,065	0.00818
2021	\$76,800,000	\$79,776,959	\$628,642	0.00788
2022	\$74,150,000	\$80,652,901	\$662,160	0.00821
2023	\$70,250,000	\$80,937,029	\$655,590	0.00810
2024	\$73,600,000	\$81,195,030	\$706,397	0.00870

Source: Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary, Maine Revenue Services, Property Tax Division

B. Tax Base and Revenue Sources

As shown in the table and chart below, taxable personal property is less than 1% of Isle au Haut's total local valuation—most of the valuation is in land and buildings. This is true for neighboring towns as well.

Table L-2: Valuation of Isle au Haut, Neighboring Towns and Knox County

Town	Land	Buildings	Land & Buildings	Machinery & Equipment	Business Equipment	All Other Personal Property	Total Personal Property	Total Real & Personal Property
Isle au Haut	\$55,238,553	\$25,929,027	\$81,167,580	\$0	\$0	\$27,450	\$27,450	\$81,195,030
Vinalhaven	\$359,978,350	\$253,723,220	\$613,701,570	\$0	\$0	\$625,798	\$625,798	\$614,327,368
North Haven	\$296,279,800	\$164,930,400	\$461,210,200	\$1,413,800	\$236,900	\$2,000	\$1,652,700	\$462,862,900
Knox Co.	\$4,701,116,436	\$5,636,881,257	\$10,337,997,693	\$53,629,539	\$5,872,095	\$51,724,739	\$111,226,373	\$10,449,224,066

Source: 2024 Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary, Maine Revenue Services, Property Tax Division

C. Municipal Revenues and Expenditures

The table below provides information on Isle au Haut’s revenues and expenses from 2019 to 2023. Taxes and program revenues make up the bulk of the Town’s revenues. In terms of expenses, education and transportation account for the largest total municipal expenditures. Total revenue has fluctuated during this time period while expenses have decreased annually since 2020.

As seen in Table M-3 and Figure M-1 below, most of Isle au Haut’s revenue comes from taxes (84.9%), followed by program revenues (12%). Investments/interest, intergovernmental, interest & lien fees, contributions & grants, and other sources accounted for less than 3% of revenues in FY 2023.

The financial figures presented in Table M-3 and Figure M-1 are derived from standardized accounting categories used in municipal financial reporting. These categories follow governmental auditing conventions that group several related accounts together rather than reflecting how residents typically think about municipal spending. For example, the audit category labeled “Administration” includes multiple functions such as General Government, Town-Owned Buildings, Broadband, Property Tax Revaluation, and Town Lands. The audit methodology also accounts for fund balances carried over from prior years. When funds remain in specific accounts, such as grant funding held for a broadband project, those balances are included in the category totals and may reduce the reported net expenditures for that category in a given year. As a result, large grant balances or one-time transactions can affect how spending appears in the audit tables even though they represent funding for separate projects rather than reductions in routine administrative costs. Because these standardized audit groupings combine multiple activities and incorporate prior-year balances, the resulting figures may not align with how municipal expenditures are typically presented in town reports or understood by the public.

Table L-3: Isle au Haut Revenues and Expenses, 2019-2023

	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023
<i>Revenues</i>					
Tax Revenues	\$646,916	\$739,081	\$664,144	\$650,017	\$668,105
Program Revenues	\$69,758	\$40,525	\$50,650	\$43,041	\$94,803
Investments/Interest	\$(699)	\$7,761	\$1,612	\$2,016	\$(1,903)
Intergovernmental	\$26,200	\$11,820	\$22,426	\$19,541	\$19,913
Interest & Lien Fees	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,519
Contributions & Grants	\$9,481	\$5,576	\$12,789	\$294,033	\$0
Other	\$12,260	\$13,403	\$15,798	\$6,254	\$781
Total	\$763,916	\$818,166	\$767,419	\$1,014,902	\$785,218
<i>Expenses</i>					
Administration	\$108,317	\$118,826	\$129,759	\$138,391	\$51,461
Protection	\$13,534	\$5,726	\$5,778	\$9,247	\$16,063
Health/Sanitation	\$26,593	\$25,945	\$26,891	\$24,670	\$24,698
Transportation	\$175,925	\$229,939	\$190,565	\$184,853	\$194,038
Education	\$291,772	\$300,720	\$236,714	\$241,527	\$165,300

	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023
Unclassified	\$95,452	\$113,871	\$110,945	\$96,729	\$117,278
Assessments and Debt Service	\$98,314	\$96,057	\$95,745	\$92,807	\$88,183
Total	\$809,907	\$891,084	\$796,397	\$788,224	\$657,022

Source: Annual Audit Reports

Figure L-1: Isle au Haut Revenue Sources, 2023

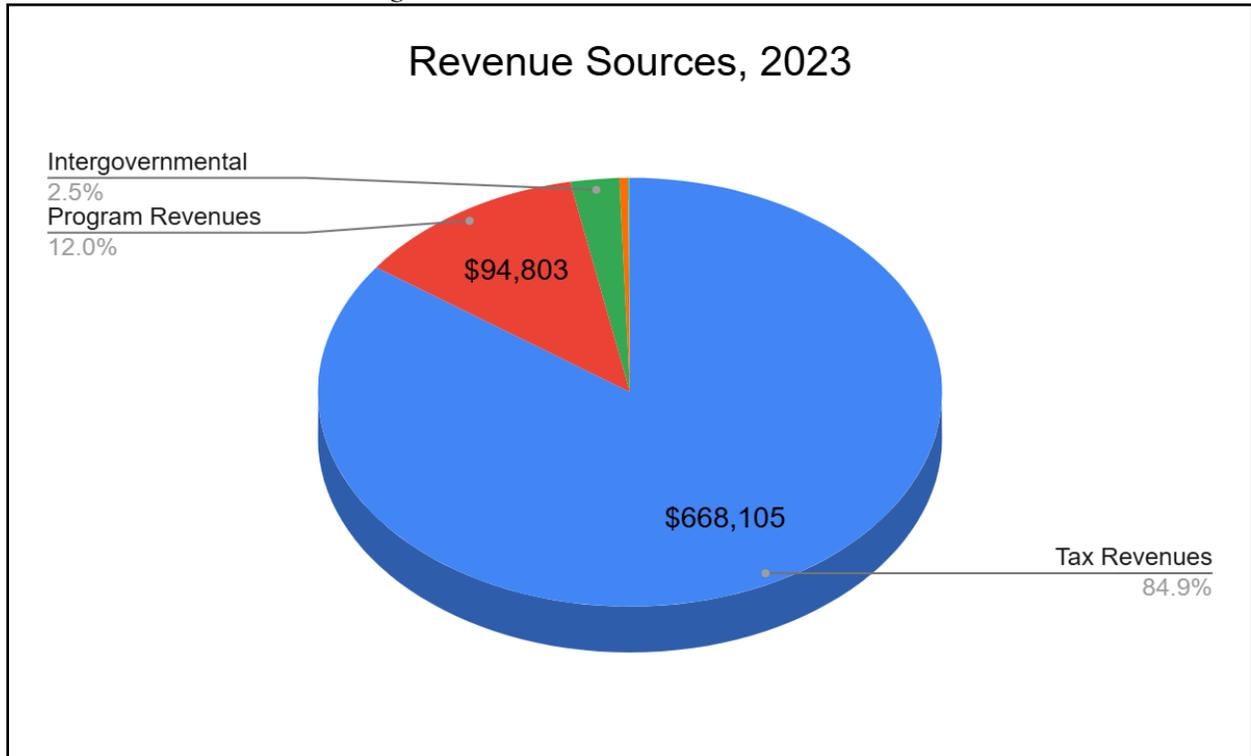
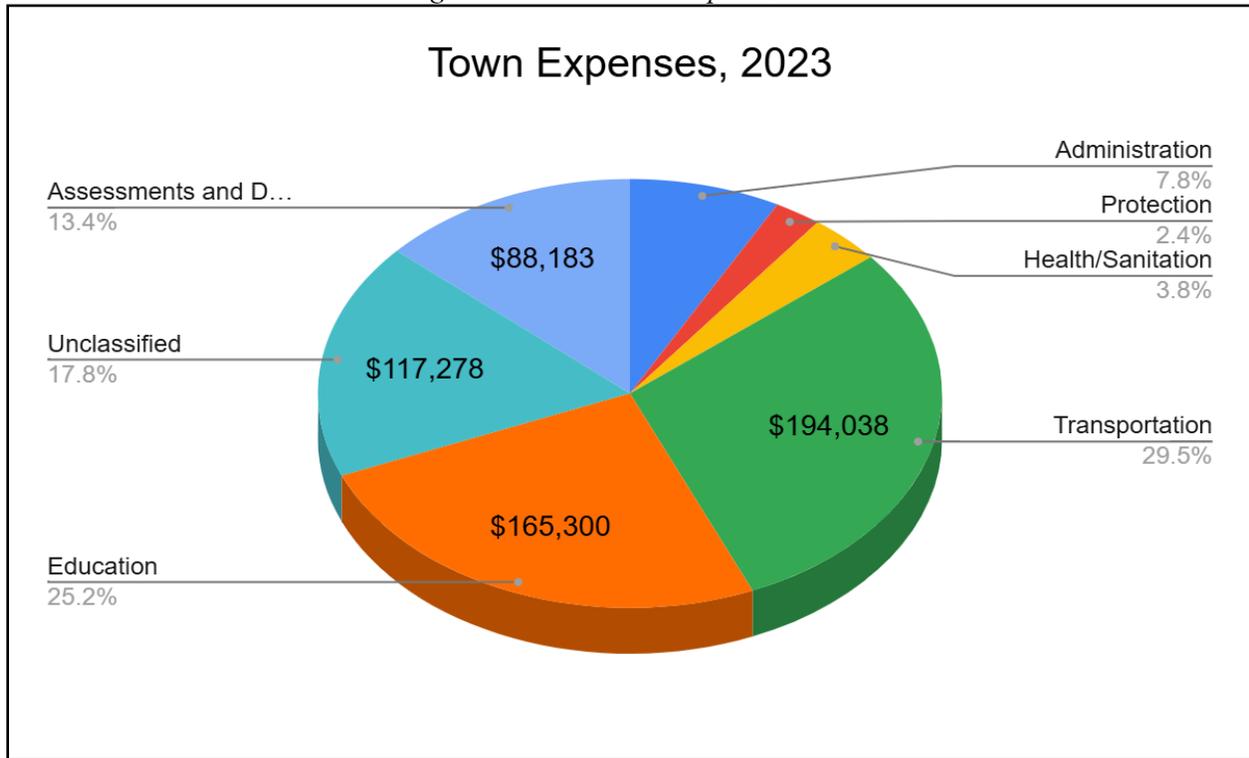


Figure L-2: Isle au Haut Expenses, 2023



D. Funding for Capital Items

The means by which the Town funds its capital items is through taxes and through surplus and reserve funds. Grants have provided some funds for infrastructure projects. Table L-4 below shows the division of the Town's fund balances into the general fund, special revenue fund, and permanent fund. In fiscal year 2023, the amount of money in the general fund was over \$770,000.

Table L-4: Isle au Haut Fund Balances, FY 2020 – FY 2023

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY2023
General Fund	\$495,286	\$438,049	\$564,515	\$770,371
Special Revenue Fund	\$0	\$0	\$3,542	\$0
Permanent Fund	\$57,628	\$58,316	\$59,648	\$57,123
Total Fund Balances	\$552,914	\$496,365	\$627,705	\$827,494

Source: Annual Audit Reports

E. Debt Limit

As seen in the table below, Isle au Haut's total municipal debt load is well under the statutory limit of 7.5%. It also is well below the Maine Bond Bank's overall suggested limit of 15% of state valuation.

Table L-5: Isle au Haut Debt Compared with the Statutory Debt Limit, 2020-2023

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Long-Term Debt	\$329,667	\$311,243	\$292,727	\$274,119
State Valuation	\$78,900,000	\$76,800,000	\$74,150,000	\$70,250,000
Percent Debt of Valuation	0.42%	0.41%	0.40%	0.40%
Statutory Debt Limit	7.5%	7.5%	7.5%	7.5%
Note: The statutory debt limit is exclusive of debt incurred for school purposes, for storm or sanitary sewer purposes, for energy facility purposes or for municipal airport purposes.				

Source: Annual Town Audits and M.R.S.A. Title 30-A, Ch. 223, Sec. 5702.

6. Capital Investment Plan

Isle au Haut’s capital investment plan identifies major facility, infrastructure, transportation, planning, and waterfront projects anticipated over the next ten years. These investments are intended to maintain basic municipal services, address aging infrastructure, improve public safety and accessibility, and reduce risks associated with flooding and sea level rise.

The plan reflects the Town’s limited tax base, high construction and transportation costs, and reliance on property taxes as the primary revenue source. As a result, capital planning emphasizes advance budgeting, use of reserves, and external funding whenever possible. The community could consider taking out loans as an option to finance road paving, culvert upgrades, and improving road ditching. The town will continue to explore opportunities with mainland communities such as Deer Isle and Stonington on ways to plan for or finance capital improvements.

Table L-6: 10-Year Capital Investment Plan

Item	Priority	Year	Estimated Cost	Anticipated Funding Source
Public Facilities & Services				
Improve ADA accessibility at the Town Hall.	Low	2035	\$50,000	Grants, taxes, surplus, reserves
Complete necessary upgrades to Town Hall gym space including flood and interior painting.	Medium	2027	\$60,000	Taxes, surplus, reserves
Build a salt and sand shed.	High	2027	\$25,000	Taxes, surplus, reserves
Purchase necessary public works equipment and establish additional public works space including renovating the fire house to accommodate additional equipment.	High	2030-2035	\$800,000	Taxes, surplus, reserves
Build broadband cable reserve fund until target amount is reached (\$150,000)	Medium	Annually (2026-2028)	\$30,000	Taxes, surplus, reserves
Establish a capital reserve fund for road maintenance, climate infrastructure adaptations, and other public works needs.	High	Annually	\$30,000	Taxes, surplus, reserves
Transportation				

Item	Priority	Year	Estimated Cost	Anticipated Funding Source
Evaluate options for improving sustainability of existing roads to sea level rise and flooding.	Medium	2028	\$50,000	Grants
Pave roads and upgrade culverts.	High	2028-2030	\$2 million	Grants, loans, taxes, surplus, reserves
Improve road ditchings to prepare for increased flooding events.	High	2028	\$25,000	Grants, loans, taxes, surplus, reserves
Secure mainland barge access.	High	2028	TBD	Grants, taxes, surplus, reserves
Planning				
Assess short-term rental management options.	High	2027	\$10,000	Grants
Adopt new land use regulatory State requirements.	High	2026	\$10,000	Grants
Marine Resources & Working Waterfront				
Develop and implement a harbor management and mooring plan.	Medium	2028	\$25,000	Grants, taxes, surplus, reserves

7. Goals and Objectives

Goal: Advance the health, safety, and welfare of Isle au Haut by ensuring the provision of government services in a fiscally responsible manner.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Establish and maintain a Capital Investment Plan.	Update the plan annually to reflect changing objectives and costs.	Selectboard	Ongoing
Maintain and fund capital reserve accounts for anticipated major expenditures.	Annually raise and appropriate revenues for reserve accounts.	Selectboard	Ongoing
Seek grant and private funding whenever available for local projects.	Identify local projects for which match funding may be appropriate.	Selectboard	2026
	Set aside reserves as matching funds.	Selectboard	2026-Ongoing
	Clearly articulate priority community projects to attract private fundraising.	ICDC, Selectboard	2027
	Continuously monitor available grant programs and seeking application assistance when necessary.	Selectboard, HCPC	Ongoing
Explore opportunities to work with mainland communities and other islands to plan for and finance capital improvements.	Remain active in regional municipal organizations.	Selectboard	Ongoing
	Establish regular dialogue with Stonington and Deer Isle.	Selectboard	Ongoing

Chapter M: Existing Land Use

1. Purpose

This section discusses current and likely future land use patterns in Isle au Haut. An understanding of land use trends is particularly important in determining Isle au Haut's ability to absorb future growth. Specifically, this section:

- Summarizes the breakdown of developed and undeveloped land;
- Explores the potential for new development in the next ten years; and
- Suggests measures Isle au Haut may want to consider for managing its residential and non-residential growth.

2. Key Findings & Issues

Nearly half of Isle au Haut land is within Acadia National Park boundaries, and nearly 15% of the land in town is placed within the Tree Growth current use tax program. Roughly one-tenth of parcels on the island are undeveloped, and a similar number is currently residential use. Most development on the island occurs lot by lot. Land use is regulated by Zoning, Shoreland Zoning, Floodplain Management, and Subdivision ordinances. Land use regulation is administered by a Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer, Local Plumbing Inspector, and Planning Board of Appeals.

3. Key Findings & Issues from Previous Plan, 2016

Most residents of Isle au Haut feel that future land use must be consistent with the wild character of the island, except in the Thorofare area which has been the traditional place of higher density residential use and commercial use. There is little commercial land use on Isle au Haut and about 47% of the main island is within Acadia National Park's boundaries. Isle au Haut has a municipal zoning ordinance that regulates land use within the Town. A State-mandated Shoreland Zoning Ordinance jointly governs land use within 250 feet of the normal high-water line of tidal areas and several large stream/wetland complexes. A Planning Board and Code Enforcement Officer oversee new development and enforcement of land use ordinances.

4. Existing Land Use Conditions & Trends

A. Historical & Existing Land Use Patterns

Isle au Haut is a rural, remote community. There is little commercial land use, heavy industry or large-scale tourism, and 47% of the main island is part of Acadia National Park. The population is small, falling below 50 in the winter months of January, February and March. Like other surrounding towns, lobster fishing is important as a source of income to the island. There are many seasonal homes, and home construction and maintenance is a source of local income although plumbers, electricians, and propane technicians must be brought from Deer Isle or farther away.

Residential development in the past has been focused in several neighborhoods on the main island: The Thorofare, Point Lookout, Rich's Cove, Head Harbor and Moore's Harbor. Point Lookout, Moore's Harbor, and Rich's Cove are predominantly seasonal settlements. Additional residential development, some of which is year-round, occurs along the roadway on the East side of the island. The outer islands do not currently have any year-round residents, although there have been year-round settlements on some of the outer islands in the distant past. Anecdotal evidence suggests there has not been any significant conversion of former year-round homes to seasonal homes. Recent development has mostly occurred lot by lot, except for several small subdivisions east of Long Pond.

Apart from individual workshops, the Island Store, several people selling arts and crafts from their homes, and an earthworks construction business, Isle au Haut has little commercial land use. The largest employer of the early part of the 2010s, Black Dinah Chocolatiers, moved off the island in 2015 for better expansion opportunities.

B. Existing Land Uses & Acreages

Figure M-1 below shows existing land uses for the Town of Isle au Haut. Land use was determined primarily based on the Town's assessing data. The predominant land use, conservation, is primarily Acadia National Park. About 15% of land is in the Tree Growth current use tax program, and about 11% of parcels are undeveloped. Almost 11% of land is residential, and these residential lots may or may not have space available for further development.

Figure M-1: Existing Land Use

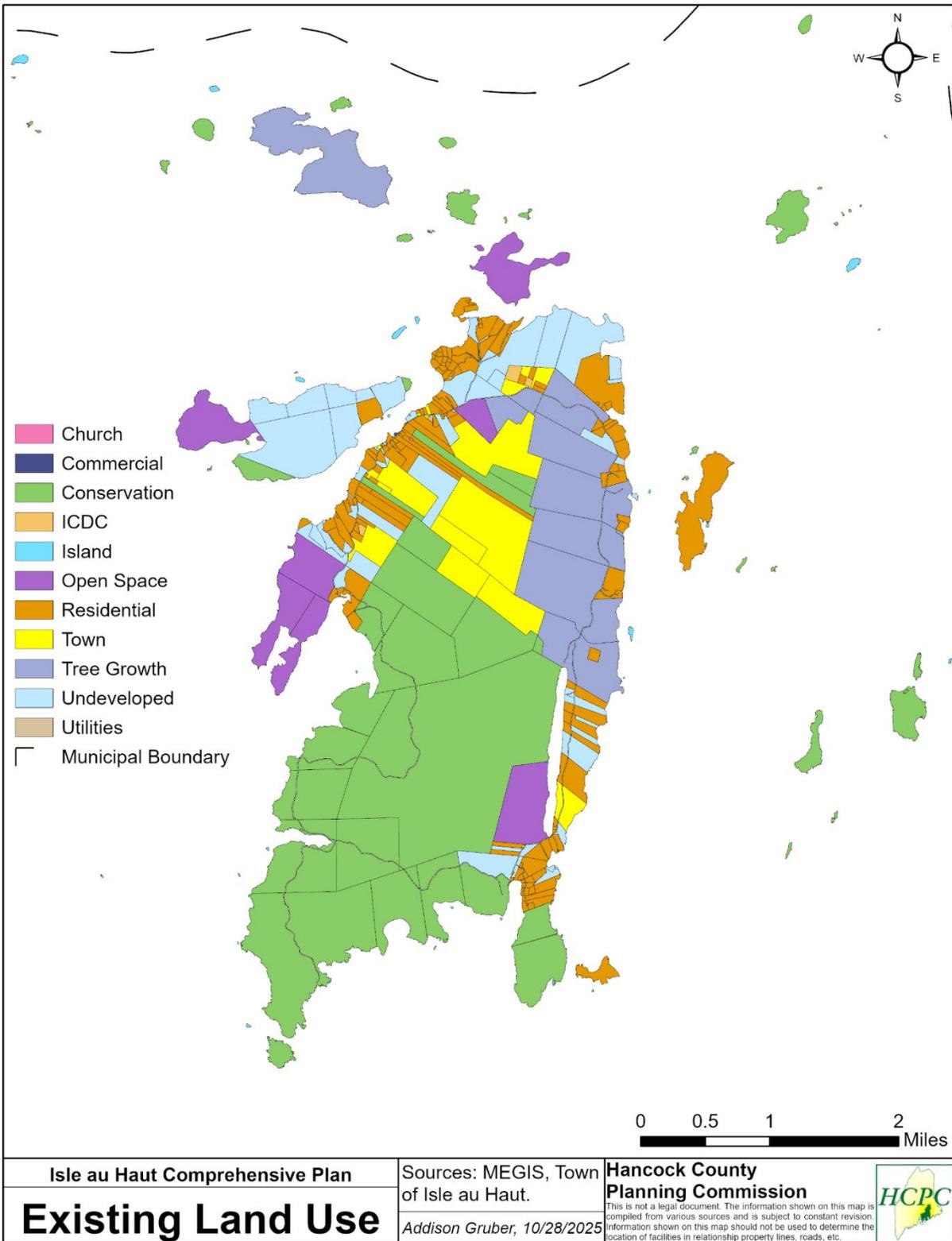


Table M-2 shows the approximate total acreage of various land uses (waterbodies are excluded).

Table M-1: Existing Land Use (Acreages)

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Church	0.387	0.005%
Commercial	0.301	0.004%
Conservation	3,561.211	45.122%
ICDC	12.808	0.162%
Community Hub	4	0.050%
Islands	20.339	0.258%
Open Space	602.131	7.629%
Residential	859.577	10.892%
Roads	53.706	0.680%
Town	659.606	8.358%
Tree Growth	1,197.639	15.175%
Undeveloped	917.727	11.628%
Utilities	2.924	0.037%
Total	7,892.356	100%

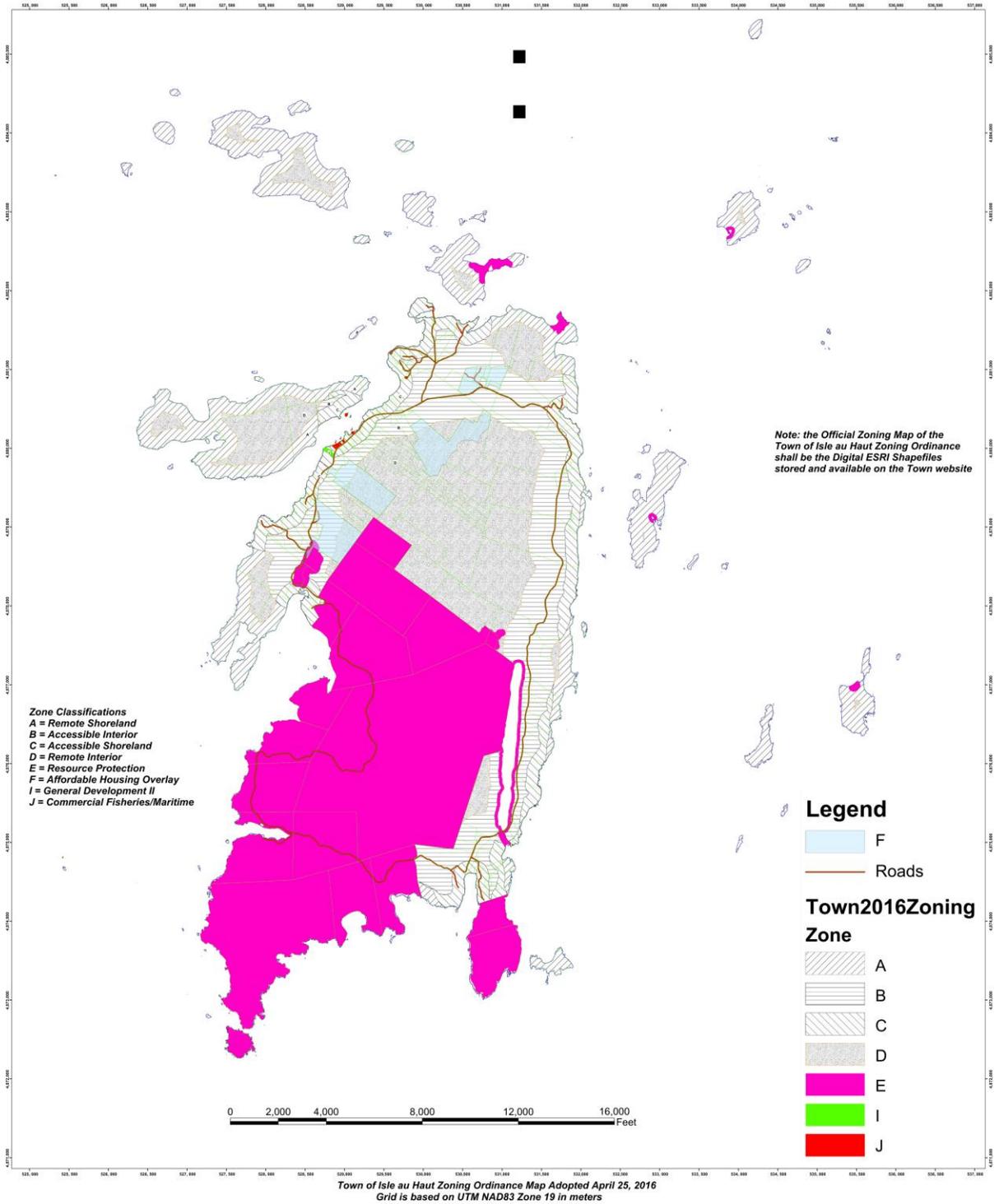
C. Current Lot Dimension Standards

Isle au Haut’s Zoning Ordinance, last amended in 2016, establishes the below (Table M-2) districts and minimum lot sizes for each. Figure M-2 shows the current official zoning map. If a residential lot consists of more than one zone, the total acreage of the parcel must equal or exceed an intermediate size, computed as the acreage of the above minimum sizes (A through D) with each such minimum size weighted according to the percentage of that zone contained in the parcel. For the purpose of this computation only, any resource protection district area contained in a parcel will be computed on the basis of the minimum lot size that would prevail if the land had not been designated as a resource protection district. If more than one residential dwelling unit is constructed on a single lot, the minimum lot size requirement shall be met for each additional dwelling unit except where that unit consists of a single unit not exceeding 600 square feet. The ordinance establishes standards for other more specific land uses.

Table M-2: 2016 Zoning Ordinance Minimum Lot Standards

District	Minimum Lot Size
Residential Zone A: Remote Shoreland	10 acres
Residential Zone B: Accessible Interior	2 acres
Residential Zone B: Accessible Interior (lots existing January 1, 1978, surrounding Long Pond Greenbelt)	<2 acres, unless the owner owns other lots which share a common border with it, then they must combine such lots in order to meet the 2 acre minimum, or to comply as nearly as possible with such minimum
Residential Zone C: Accessible Shoreland	0.7 acre
Residential Zone D: Remote Interior	20 acres
Residential Partially of Zone E: Resource Protection District	N/A
Zone F: Affordable Year-Round Housing Overlay Zone	1 acre
Zone G: Limited Commercial District	40,000 sq. ft.
Zone H: General Development I District	40,000 sq. ft.
Zone I: General Development II District	40,000 sq. ft.
Zone J: Commercial Fisheries/Maritime Activities District	0

Figure M-2: Official Zoning Map, 2016



Minimum lot standards in the shoreland zone, defined in the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, are shown in Table M-3 below. The Ordinance, last amended in 1994, also includes provisions for minimum shore frontage and standards for land uses in the shoreland zone.

Table M-3: 1994 Shoreland Zoning Ordinance Minimum Lot Standards

District	Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	Min. Shore Frontage (ft.)
Residential per Dwelling Unit: Within the Shoreland Zone Adjacent to Tidal Areas	30,000	150
Residential per Dwelling Unit: Within the Shoreland Zone Adjacent to Non-Tidal Areas	40,000	200
Governmental, Institutional, Commercial or Industrial per Principal Structure: Within the Shoreland Zone Adjacent to Tidal Areas Exclusive of Those Areas Zoned for Commercial Fisheries & Maritime Activities	40,000	200
Governmental, Institutional, Commercial or Industrial per Principal Structure: Within the Shoreland Zone Adjacent to Tidal Areas Zoned for Commercial Fisheries & Maritime Activities	0	0
Governmental, Institutional, Commercial or Industrial per Principal Structure: Within the Shoreland Zone Adjacent to Non-Tidal Areas	60,000	300
Public and Private Recreational Facilities: Within the Shoreland Zone Adjacent to Tidal & Non-Tidal Areas	40,000	200

D. Existing Land Use Regulations & Land Management Tools

The Town of Isle au Haut has several land use ordinances, these include:

- Floodplain Management Ordinance: establishes a Flood Hazard Development Permit system and review procedure for development activities in the designated flood hazard areas.
- Shoreland Zoning Ordinance: regulates development in shoreland areas to protect wildlife habitat, historical resources, freshwater and coastal wetlands, commercial fishing and maritime industries, the natural environment and more.
- Subdivision Ordinance: regulates the division of land and structures into multiple lots and residential units.
- Zoning Ordinance: regulates development and conservation to facilitate economic and social life and to promote public health and safety.

E. Development within the Last 10 Years

According to the Decennial Census, in 2020, there were 152 total housing units on Isle au Haut. This is a 20-unit decrease from 172 units in 2010 and less than 165 in 2000 (see Chapter C: Housing for more information). Local records suggest this decline is inaccurate. Since 2010, the Comprehensive Plan Committee estimates that approximately 18 new housing units have been constructed. This estimate is supported by e911 addressing data.

A Town-led e911 addressing effort in 2016 identified 183 separate detached dwellings on the island, and by 2024 an additional 10 residential addresses were added to Knox County’s E-911 records.

Table M-4: Permits Issued, 2016-2024

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Deck/Patio/Porch						1	1	1	2
New Residence/House	1	2	1						1
House Addition			1						
Renovations				1		1		2	
Parking						1			
Duplex Conversion								1	
Garage or Workshop	2	2				1		1	
Dock/Fish House/Wharf	1		1					1	
Foundation	1								
Driveway/Road	2	2	1			1			
Septic/Leech Field				1		1		1	
Yurt Structure/Platform			1						
Accessory Structures	4	2	3				2	3	2
Solar Array					1				
Other	3	3	1						

Source: Annual Town Reports

F. Legislation Impacting Land Use

LD 2003, “An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission to Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions”, was signed into law by Governor Mills on April 27, 2022, and later amended in April 2023. For towns with a town meeting form of government, such as Isle au Haut, this law had an implementation date of July 1, 2024.

In addition to establishing housing production goals, this piece of legislation is designed to remove unnecessary regulatory barriers to housing production in Maine. There are three primary components to the law:

- A requirement that municipalities allow at least two and, where applicable, up to four dwelling units per lot where housing is permitted;
- A requirement that municipalities allow accessory dwelling units to be located on the same lot as a single-family home, under certain conditions; and
- The creation of a density bonus for certain affordable housing developments in a “designated growth area” under section 4349-A of the Growth Management Act or in an area served by public water and sewer.

LD 1829, “An Act to Build Housing for Maine Families and Attract Workers to Maine Businesses by Amending the Laws Governing Housing Density”, was signed into law by Governor Mills on June 20, 2025. For Isle au Haut this law has an implementation date of July 1, 2027.

This piece of legislation is intended to reduce zoning and land use barriers to housing production at the municipal level. Notable components of this law include:

- Establishing new minimum lot size and density allowances for certain areas and zones
- The requirement that wherever residential uses are allowed, at least three dwelling units must be allowed per lot
- Establishing that fire suppression sprinklers are not required for an accessory dwelling unit unless the ADU is within or attached to a structure of more than 2 dwelling units
- Prohibiting residential units created in designated growth areas from being counted towards rate of growth ordinances
- The requirement of towns to provide qualifying projects with a one-story height bonus
- Prohibiting towns from requiring planning board review of structures with four or fewer housing units

Both LD 2003 and LD 1829 have the potential to accelerate residential development, including the development of affordable housing in the Town's growth areas. The Town should ensure that applicable land use ordinances are in compliance with this piece of legislation.

G. Projected Land Acreage Needed for Development

According to the Maine State Economist, Isle au Haut's population will continue to increase in consistent increments into 2040, then level off (see Chapter C: Housing for additional information). An estimated five units will be needed in the next 10 years to accommodate population growth on Isle au Haut; additionally, about five households currently in rental housing on the island would like to build homes. To accommodate these 10 households an estimated 20 acres of land will be needed. It is assumed that this development will occur in Residential Zone B: Accessible Interior (closer to existing infrastructure), where the minimum lot size is two acres. The availability of land, its suitability for development, water and septic accessibility, costs to build, and the ability to obtain both materials and labor will all impact how and where development can happen.

5. Analyses

A. Recent Development Trends and Consistency with the Community Vision

Most development on Isle au Haut occurs lot by lot. Considering that part of the town's vision is to carefully manage development to protect natural resources, landscapes and ecosystems continuing this pace and pattern of development would help the town to stay aligned with this vision. Most recent developments have been seasonal residences.

B. Measures to Ensure Development Fits with the Community Vision

Measures in the Town's zoning and shoreland zoning ordinances administered by the planning board ensure development fits with the community's vision. Currently, the town does not have a Site Plan Review Ordinance which could further regulate how development fits with the community's vision.

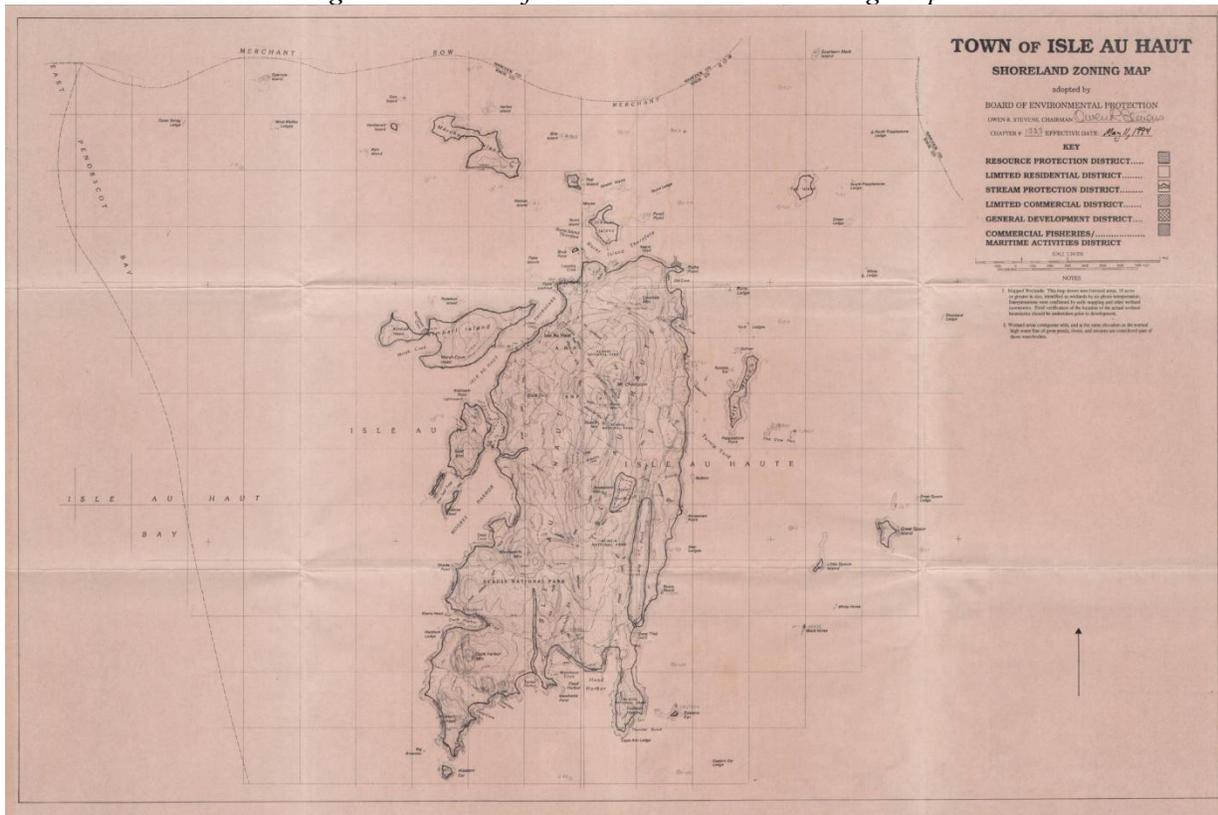
C. Land Use Regulation Administrative Capacity

Isle au Haut has a Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer, Local Plumbing Inspector, and Planning Board of Appeals which adequately manages its land use regulation program. The current level of administrative capacity has difficulty in keeping up to date with changing rules and regulations at the state level and integrating them into local regulations.

D. Floodplain Regulations

Isle au Haut is a participating community in the National Flood Insurance Program, with a current effective map date of July 6, 2016. Isle au Haut has a 1994 state-imposed Shoreland Zoning Ordinance which identifies floodplain areas. The Town is currently working on updating its shoreland zoning ordinance and map. The Town also has a Floodplain Management Ordinance which is consistent with state and federal standards, enforced by the planning board and code enforcement officer.

Figure M-3: Town of Isle au Haut Shoreland Zoning Map



Chapter N: Future Land Use

1. Purpose

This section discusses likely future land use patterns in Isle au Haut. An understanding of land use trends is particularly important in determining Isle au Haut's ability to manage future growth. Specifically, this chapter:

- Attempts to predict growth areas for the town;
- Identifies land areas suitable and unsuitable for potential growth over the next ten years;
- Describes options for growth management; and
- Provides a set of steps that can be taken to engage residents in the growth management process.

2. Key Findings and Issues

Residents consistently express a strong desire to preserve Isle au Haut's rural, remote, and wild character. Located seven miles from the mainland, the island is defined by remoteness, solitude, and a development pattern shaped by limited access, fragile natural resources, and a traditional resource-based economy. Nearly 47% of the island lies within Acadia National Park, and a large portion of the remaining land is permanently conserved. Long stretches of undeveloped shoreline are managed for low-density backcountry visitor use and hold high scenic and recreational value. These conditions reinforce a community-wide expectation for restraint in development.

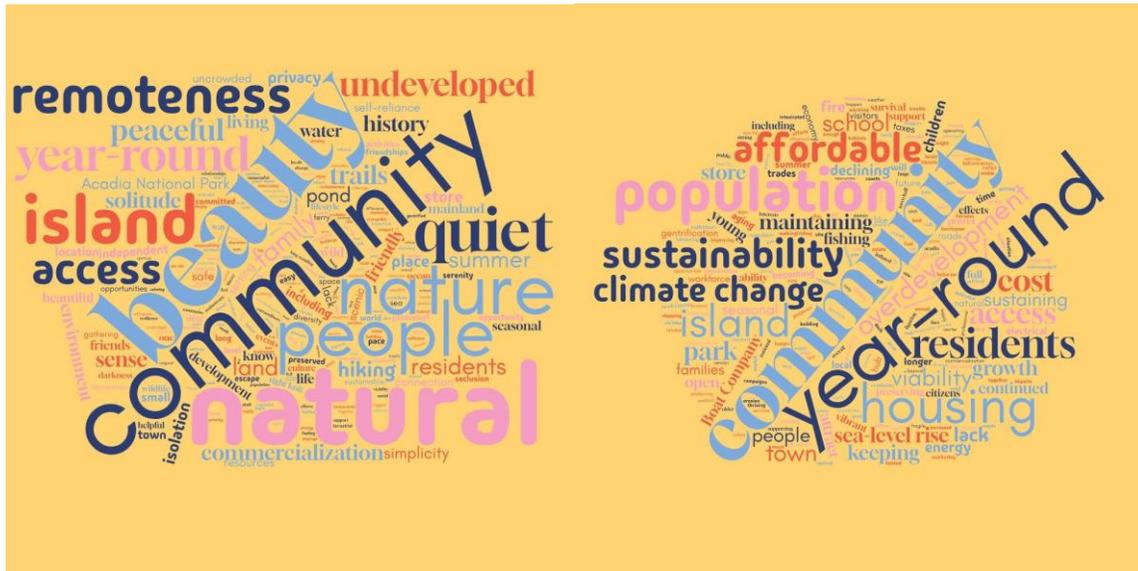
Physical growth on the island has remained extremely limited. Between 2016 and 2024, only five permits were issued for new housing units and one for a housing addition. Population levels have remained relatively stable over the past decade, and this slow, incremental pace of development is consistent with long-standing trends and is expected to continue. Commercial, industrial, and tourism-related land uses remain minimal, further reinforcing the island's rural land use pattern.

Housing availability and affordability remain significant challenges to sustaining a year-round population. The supply of buildable land is constrained by extensive ledge, shallow soils, steep slopes, wetlands, and conservation lands. Road construction is expensive, and reliance on barging materials substantially increases development costs. While affordable housing tools such as overlay zones exist, these physical and logistical constraints continue to limit housing options.

The community faces competing pressures related to housing needs and climate resilience. There is interest in modest growth in year-round residences, but only in controlled locations and at a density that reflects the island's physical constraints and community values. Residents express concern about growth driven by short-term rentals and seasonal residences and their effect on housing availability for year-round residents. There is also concern that the scale of growth assumed under state growth-area standards, and the associated minimum lot size and density expectations, would not align with Isle au Haut's environmental constraints, infrastructure limitations, or long-standing goal of maintaining its remote and wild character.

3. Community Engagement

When asked to identify the things they value most about Isle au Haut, large numbers of survey respondents cited the sense of community, small town rural atmosphere, and the natural beauty of the island. Issues of concern included affordable housing, maintaining a year-round population, overdevelopment, and climate change.



Approximately 33% of respondents supported greater Town investment in workforce and affordable housing, even if it meant raising Town taxes. More respondents (49%) supported greater Town investment in workforce and affordable housing if grants or subsidies reduced the costs. Around 18% opposed investment altogether.

More than 68% of respondents felt single-family housing should be allowed anywhere. Majorities also concurred that affordable housing, workforce housing, seasonal properties, senior housing, and short-term rentals should be allowed anywhere. There was little support for mobile homes (40%) or mobile home parks (67%) being allowed anywhere. For most land use types, respondents felt that they should only be allowed in designated areas including forestry, agriculture, aquaculture, commercial fishing, commercial operations, gravel pits, solar farms, wind farms, retail stores, restaurants, inns and hotels, and campgrounds.

When asked to identify the main barriers to housing development on Isle au Haut, survey respondents most frequently cited construction costs including labor and materials, land availability and buildability including physical constraints, and infrastructure gaps such as lack of roads and power.

4. Principal Future Land Use Recommendations

The prior chapters of this Plan contain specific strategies to achieve stated goals and objectives. Many of these might affect Isle au Haut's future land use, if implemented. In this section, there is discussion and focus on the principal recommendations that are relevant to future land use.

Due to the island's remote location, extensive conservation lands, widespread ledge, steep slopes, shallow soils, limited road network, and reliance on barge transport for materials, this Plan supports modest, carefully sited growth but proposes that Isle au Haut remain exempt from establishing state-defined growth areas. Population levels and development activity have remained low and stable, and this scale of growth is expected and desired to continue. Designating an official growth area would trigger state minimum lot size and density standards that do not reflect on-the-ground constraints, Acadia National Park management plans, or the community's long-standing commitment to preserving the island's rural, remote, and wild character alongside limited, well-managed year-round housing growth.

The Town's current zoning ordinance has been largely successful in promoting development in line with the community's vision and provides a starting point for the future land use plan. The zoning currently includes seven zones: accessible interior, accessible shoreland, remote interior, remote shoreland, resource protection, general development, and marine and fisheries activities. This Plan proposes two changes to the existing zoning map: the removal of the General Development and a revision of the location(s) of the Affordable Housing Overlay Zone to better align with physical constraints.

Remote Interior and Remote Shoreland

The Remote Interior and Remote Shoreland zones are intended to remain extremely rural and largely undeveloped. These areas are not easily accessible by road and have large minimum lot sizes of 10 and 20 acres. While these lot sizes appear large, they are necessary to accommodate the physical realities of the island, including ledge, shallow soils, and the need to locate both a buildable house site and legal septic and well systems on a single parcel. These districts function as the Town's primary low-density and conservation-oriented land use areas and are intended to limit new development.

Accessible Interior and Accessible Shoreland

The Accessible Interior zone includes areas near Coombs Mountain and traditional settlement areas such as Moore's Harbor, Head Harbor, Rich's Cove, Point Lookout, and the Thorofare. This zone is defined by proximity to existing roads and generally requires minimal capital improvements to support additional development. Public input continues to show support for limiting the focus of new development within or adjacent to these traditional settlement areas. The zone generally includes land located less than 1,000 feet from a road and more than 500 feet from mean high water.

The Accessible Shoreland zone includes land located less than 500 feet from mean high water and less than 1,000 feet from a road. There is little remaining available land for new building in this zone due to shoreline protection standards, environmental constraints, and existing development.

Resource Protection

The Resource Protection zone includes Acadia National Park lands, the Great Meadow, and several other significant natural areas. Any area in the shoreland zone is considered Resource Protection. These districts are intended to protect critical ecological, scenic, and wildlife resources and to maintain the natural and wild character of the island.

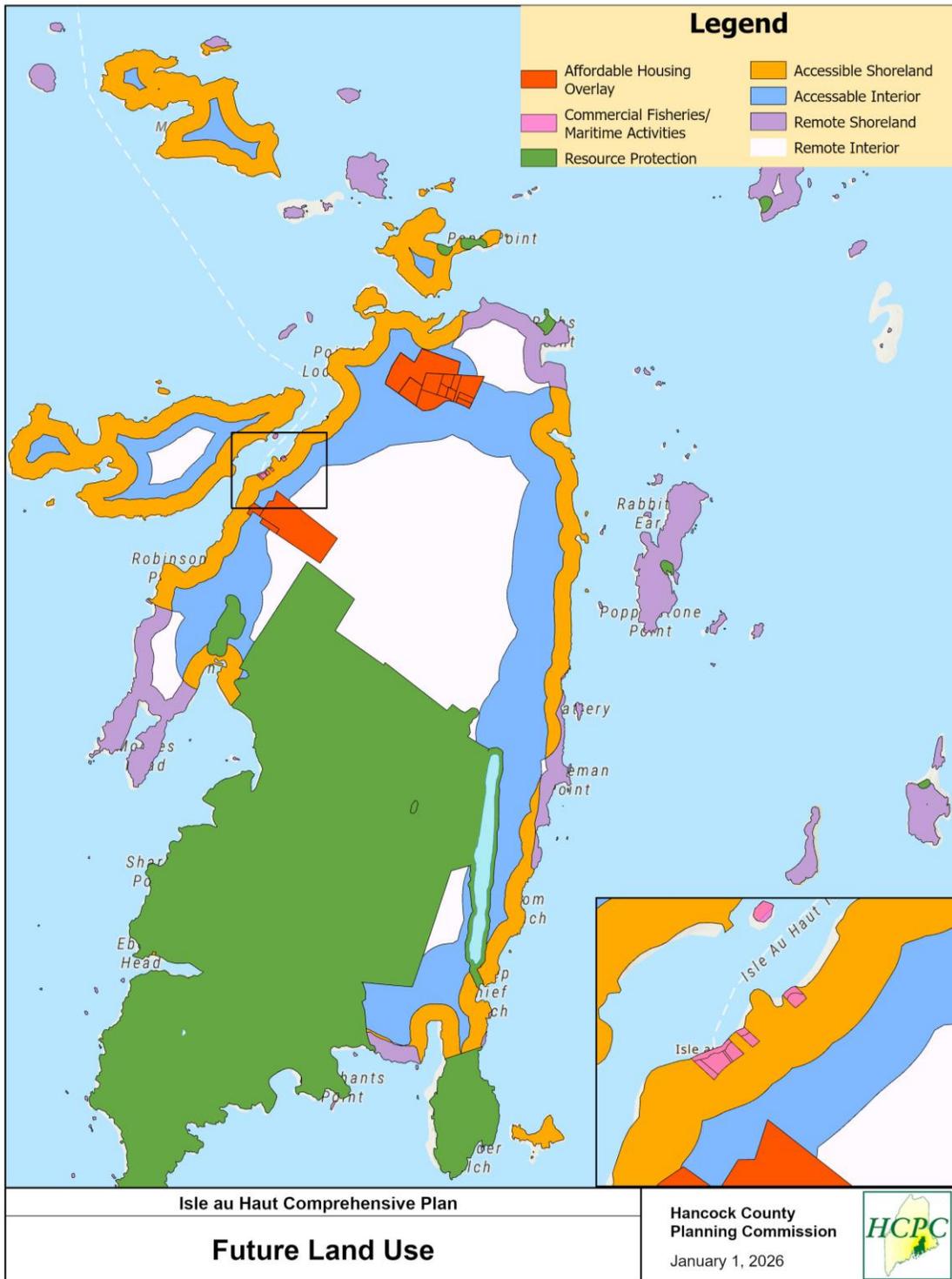
Affordable Housing Overlay Zone

The Affordable Housing Overlay was created in 2012 on selected Town-owned and Isle au Haut Community Development Corporation (ICDC) parcels to support year-round housing in appropriate, controlled locations. This overlay permits a reduced minimum lot size of one acre in areas where underlying zoning would otherwise require significantly larger lots. These lands are generally located near or adjacent to the Thorofare area, where soil characteristics are comparable to other nearby development areas and access to existing roads is more feasible. Some additional road development may be required to access certain Town-owned parcels. The existing overlay was based solely on the locations of town-owned and ICDC parcels, however, development in two of these areas is not realistic given the physical constraints of these parcels. This Plan proposes to remove those areas and to extend the overlay boundary on the north side of the island around existing ICDC housing developments to better reflect feasible locations for year-round housing.

Marine and Commercial Fisheries Areas

The Marine and Commercial Fisheries zone includes the Town Dock, Island Store, and other waterfront parcels that support water-dependent and marine related uses. These areas accommodate essential functions such as commercial fishing activity, ferry and freight access, and deliveries that serve the island's year-round population, including fuel and supplies. Continued protection of this district is necessary to maintain the working waterfront, support marine-based economic activity, and ensure reliable access for both commercial and municipal marine operations. Land use within this district should remain focused on water-dependent and marine-related uses, with limited non-water-dependent development to avoid conflicts and preserve access.

Figure N-1: Future Land Use



5. Goals and Objectives

Goal: New development shall be encouraged in areas designated for growth, where environmental conditions are suitable, in an effort to meet the anticipated challenges of the next decade and maintain the character of the Town in line with the community vision.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Support the locations, types, scales, and intensities of land uses the community desires as stated in the vision.	Amend zoning map in line with the future land use map.	Planning Board	2026
	Amend ordinances to comply with new state law.	Planning Board	2026
	Investigate options for managing short-term rentals.	Planning Board, HCPC	2027
	Provide the code enforcement officer with the tools, training, and support necessary to enforce land use regulations, and ensure that the Code Enforcement Officer is certified in accordance with 30-A M.R.S.A. §4451.	Select Board	Ongoing
Protect critical rural and critical waterfront areas from the impacts of development.	Consider amending Floodplain Ordinance to go above State requirements to discourage development in the floodplain.	Planning Board, HCPC	2027
	Encourage coordination between conservation groups, conservation easement properties and landowners on outreach and educational materials.	Community	Ongoing
	Periodically (at least every five years) evaluate implementation of the plan in accordance with Section 2.7.	Planning Board	Ongoing

Chapter O: Climate Change

1. Purpose

As an island community in Maine, climate change will have impacts on Isle au Haut. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to describe how Isle au Haut is planning for climate change impacts. This chapter assesses projected impacts on the community, including infrastructure, human habitation, coastal and inland habitats, historical and archeological assets, and economic and future development. Climate change is a key cross-cutting theme in all the chapters; highlighted here are findings and strategies with critical importance. Specifically, this chapter:

- Examines data in Maine related to changes in temperature, precipitation, drought, and wildfire;
- Analyzes the potential effects of climate change on transportation and other infrastructure, public facilities, natural resources and habitats, the economy, and future development on Isle au Haut; and
- Makes recommendations for actions to adapt to and mitigate climate change impacts on Isle au Haut, with a correlation to the Town's Capital Improvement Plan to ensure significant expenditures such as engineering plans and construction projects related to mitigating future conditions like sea level rise, extreme rain, and drought are captured in future budget planning.

2. Key Findings & Issues

Maine has increasingly experienced more intense and frequent precipitation events, more short-term dry periods, and rising temperatures. Changes in climate can affect the town's marine resources and habitat; drinking water; agricultural, forest and natural resources; historic resources; and the economy. Isle au Haut is a participating community in the National Flood Insurance Program, and its Floodplain Management Ordinance is one measure for guiding future development in safe and suitable locations. Monitoring state-level recommendations and adhering to those that pertain to the town will help in adapting to future changes.

3. Community Engagement Results

Community engagement consistently identified climate change as a major and growing risk to Isle au Haut's infrastructure, economy, and daily life. Visioning session participants raised repeated concerns about road washouts and the need to pave and improve drainage in high-risk areas. At the priorities workshop, the two highest-ranked climate challenges were inadequate wildfire prevention and forest management, and the threat of flooding to critical infrastructure caused by sea level rise. Participants in the future land use workshop emphasized that development should not be encouraged in flood-prone or potentially isolated areas, such as Moore's Harbor. Open-ended survey responses pointed to long-term risks from stronger storms, shoreline loss, warming waters, and the potential decline of the lobster industry, as well as vulnerabilities in roads, culverts, the power system, and coastal facilities, with some questioning the town's ability to afford major resilience investments. Climate impacts were also linked to essential services and local economic stability, including flood

risk to the Island Store's location and concerns that transitions to solar energy and electric heating could significantly reduce heating-oil sales, further undermining the Island Store's long-term viability.

4. Current Conditions and Trends

A. Precipitation and Extreme Storms

Maine has increasingly experienced more intense and frequent precipitation events, with statewide annual precipitation (rainfall and snowfall) increasing by 6 inches since 1895. Heavy storms of 2 to 4 inches of precipitation are becoming more frequent, which increases the probability of floods that will erode infrastructure and degrade water quality in ponds, lakes, streams, rivers, and coastal areas. Precipitation variability between years is increasing and has recently produced impactful seasonal extremes. For example, the 2020 growing season was the driest on record, while summer 2023 was the wettest. This increasingly variable precipitation, including droughts and extreme weather events, will likely cause harm to aquifers, vegetation and other natural habitats on Isle au Haut.

Extreme storm events also cause power outages, with the majority of Maine's electrical grid located above ground and therefore susceptible to downed poles and lines from winds, heavy precipitation, and tree damage. Extended power outages can cause economic burdens, as well as impact residents who rely on electricity to support their public health. Without a generator, extended outages during periods of extreme cold or heat, can be detrimental to residents. In addition, since 1983, the Island has received its power by a 7-mile undersea cable from Stonington. The cable was expected to have a lifetime of 15-20 years; it is now 43 years old. While the existing cable is still functional, the IaH Power Company is in the midst of adding a new cable that will go into service in 2026 which will provide redundancy. When Stonington loses power, which is frequent, mainland power is cut off from Isle au Haut, but islanders enjoy fewer outages of more than 10-20 minutes because the IaH Power Company switches the entire island to generator power. However, the existing generator is old and inefficient. In the coming years, the cooperative hopes to be able to raise funds to add a more efficient new generator and to keep the old one for redundancy.

B. Wildfire

In addition to a greater number of extreme precipitation events, Maine has been experiencing more short-term dry periods, with extreme drought occurring in 2016, 2002, 2020 and 2022. As seen in the Natural Resources chapter, there is a significant amount of forested land on Isle au Haut, which could present increased wildfire risk during dry periods. This danger is exacerbated by the difficulty that Isle au Haut and many other communities in rural areas of Maine have in maintaining their volunteer fire departments (See Chapter K: Public Facilities). There are also associated challenges with fighting wildfire for island communities due to lack of available freshwater and mutual aid from neighboring towns. Fire fighters get their water supply from Long Pond, brooks running through the island, and tanks by the fire house, if needed, they will pull water from the ocean. Isle au Haut is interested in working more closely with Acadia National Park to plan for the event of a wildfire on the island.

C. Extreme Temperatures

The past four years in Maine (2020-2023) have ranked among the ten warmest on record. Across the globe, record high temperatures were set by a large margin in 2023. Temperature projections for Maine are for a 2–4°F increase by 2050 and up to 10°F by 2100. Temperature projections worldwide and for Maine are based on modeled Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs), which define a range of possible greenhouse emissions based on estimates of future energy use and development worldwide.

Maine residents are vulnerable to extreme heat as public facilities and households currently utilize low rates of air conditioning due to the rarity of severe heat experienced in years past. In the winter months, increased storm frequency and storm severity result in power outages, sometimes lasting days. Having an on-island generator helps reduce the length of power outages, and residents who rely on electricity to heat their homes and get water, and who do not have a generator, can become extremely vulnerable to cold temperatures if something were to happen to the island generator. There is no formal warming and cooling center, as people often rely on neighbors in times of need, but some community members will use the Town Hall for running water and wifi during the colder months.

D. Climate Migration

Wildfires in the western United States and increased flooding events due to hurricanes and storms along the Gulf Coast and southern Atlantic coastal regions have contributed significantly to increased climate induced human migration. The Blue Hill Peninsula and its islands may not always be seen as a place of climate refuge, but trends show that people move to a place that has other types of climate impacts from what they are currently experiencing.

The Maine Climate Council has a goal of developing a stronger understanding of potential migration patterns and population shifts. More information is needed to enable projections of climatic impacts on population, including settlement patterns and migration to and within the state. This information—gathered using demographic projections, build-out scenarios, and real estate data—would provide a better understanding of the impacts of shifting populations and settlement patterns on a wide range of human systems including housing, transport, electrical grids, healthcare systems, tourism and tax revenues. The Town of Isle au Haut, with assistance from organizations such as the Hancock County Planning Commission, should monitor this data and trends once they become more readily available.

5. Isle au Haut Infrastructure and Habitats

A. Town Infrastructure and Transportation

See Vulnerability Assessment for more information on threats to Town infrastructure and transportation.

B. Floodplain Management

According to FEMA's Community Status Book Report, Isle au Haut is a participating community in the National Flood Insurance Program, with a current effective flood map date of July 20, 2016. It is the intent of

the Town to require the recognition and evaluation of flood hazards in all official actions relating to land use in the floodplain areas having special flood hazards (i.e. the 100-year floodplain and the 500-year floodplain). Isle au Haut's Site Plan Review Process (approved in 2021) requires that all principal structures located within designated Flood Hazard Areas be constructed with the lowest floor, including the basement, at least 1-foot above the 100-year base flood elevation. The vulnerability assessment will address these areas and, given climate projections, may suggest the Town consider requiring the elevation of development within designated Flood Hazard Areas to be greater than 1-foot above the base flood elevation.

C. Future Development

Isle au Haut's Site Plan Review Process includes criteria related to development within the floodplain and the shoreland zone (per State requirements). No additional land use development controls that would mitigate climate change's impacts upon any future development (residential, commercial, or industrial) exist at this time. Isle au Haut could consider providing guidance or educational materials to developers on climate change. The Town could also consider incorporating modified or additional land use standards into their land use ordinance and site plan review process that would help to mitigate damage from climate impacts. Guidance for municipalities who are interested in pursuing regulations and policies that promote resilience are available for review. An example is "Municipal Guidance for Coastal Resilience: Model Ordinance Language for Maine Municipalities" developed by the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission and FB Environmental Associates.

D. Marine Habitat

Climate change will continue to have significant impacts on marine resources. As in many coastal Maine towns, harvesting lobsters is the principal focus of Isle au Haut's commercial fishing fleet. While the lobster resource is currently viewed as being stable, there are substantial risks on the horizon due to the uncertain effects of warming water temperatures and increased acidification of the water. The warming ocean water has also led to an increase in invasive species, like green crabs, and the colonization of lobster gear and sea scallop habitat by native sea squirts. Northward shifts in mid-Atlantic species are likely to result in established local populations in the future. In the short term, species interactions and/or competition may threaten inshore lobster populations.

E. Wastewater and Drinking Water

The Town does not have a wastewater treatment facility and is entirely dependent on private wells for its drinking water supplies. With continued development activity, there is heightened risk that unsustainable volumes of water may be extracted, leading to dry wells or saltwater intrusion. While overdevelopment isn't a huge concern for Isle au Haut, the quality of water being extracted is concerning and some residents have faced issues regarding saltwater intrusion, high levels of hard metals, and traces of PFAs. Isle au Haut residents have also faced issues with location of development and wells, having to dig hundreds of feet to reach water. Future climate change, to the extent it results in lower rainfall amounts and drought – even seasonal, could exacerbate this emerging issue.

F. Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resources

Algae and invasive species are spreading due to warmer waters. In a warming climate, Maine's marine and freshwater environments and drinking water sources may be exposed to water-borne diseases, invasive species, and flooding-related contamination that pose public health and environmental risks. The State is planning to increase the assessment, monitoring, and communication of the risk of illness from waterborne diseases and harmful algal blooms. The State also encourages expanding the monitoring of drinking water sources, especially after severe storms, for bacteria, saltwater intrusion, and wellhead contamination from flooding can proactively identify and mitigate potential public health risks.

Saltwater inundation of freshwater features and sources could also pose problems for already threatened species that habitat in these areas on Isle au Haut. For example, the bog near Moore' Harbor is in danger of saltwater intrusion and Spoons and Seal Island are nesting islands for birds that would be threatened as a result of sea level rise. Chapter E: Land Based Natural Resources has maps and more information on this risk.

G. Historic Resources

Due to the location of both the listed historic properties and other properties of historical interest, coastal erosion and sea level rise could pose a major threat to the infrastructure. According to Figures O-1 and O-2 below, both the Gooden Grant House and Isle au Haut Light Station are vulnerable to 3.9 ft of sea level rise. Another concern with the increase in severe storms is high wind and damage occurring as a result of fallen trees or debris.

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission has created a webpage to assist entities throughout the state with planning for the effects of climate change on historic properties and cultural resources through the processes of identification, adaptation, resiliency, and mitigation. The website includes toolkits, Maine-specific research, and links to resources from preservation partners, planners and governmental organizations. The site is located at: <http://www.maine.gov/mhpc/programs/protection-and-community-resources/climate-change>.

Figure O-1: Gooden Grant House 3.9 ft Sea Level Rise Vulnerability



Source: *Weathering Maine: Mapping Threats to Maine's Historical and Cultural Resources*

Figure O-2: Isle au Haut Light Station 3.9 ft Sea Level Rise Vulnerability



Source: *Weathering Maine: Mapping Threats to Maine's Historical and Cultural Resources*

H. Economy

The repercussions of a changing climate will affect those at the most local level but will have ripple effects statewide and nationwide. Migration will have an impact on housing and rentals. Rising sea levels will have an impact on the working and recreational waterfronts. Invasion of new species, from increasing ocean temperatures and acidity, impacts local harvestable species and marine industries. In addition, sea squirts are fouling gear and competing with mussel spat thread attachment.

For Isle au Haut, the Town is primarily a residential and seasonal community with limited economic activity. Isle au Haut's economy is intrinsically linked with its coastal character and working waterfront activities. The Town's long-standing businesses: bait fishing, lobster and shellfish harvest, tourism through ANP, and the mailboat company all revolve around the waterfront. Losing the waterfront as a result of climate change would be detrimental to Isle au Haut's small economy and year-round working population. A small part of Isle au Haut's economy is also tourism, and any deviation away from the coastal character and natural resources can harm this industry and visitation. In addition, half of the island is owned by Acadia National Park. Thus, if there is impact to the Park, the Town would also be impacted. With this in mind, the recommendations noted in other sections would help to alleviate impacts on the local economy if implemented (i.e. transportation adaptation projects, working with partners on adapting to climate change, waterfront adaptation projects, etc.)

6. Goals & Objectives

The goals and objectives in this chapter summarize the climate-related issues and associated goals and objectives identified throughout the comprehensive plan. The Vulnerability Assessment and Action Plan further expands on strategies related to flooding and sea-level rise.

Goal: Implement adaptation practices in order to counter climate change effects already occurring and those anticipated over the next decade.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Adapt to sea level rise, storm events, high and variable winds, flooding, and erosion.	Distribute educational materials to residents and town officials about shoreline stabilization best practices.	Town, HCPC, MaineDEP	2026
	Gather data on private well and septic system vulnerability to flooding.	Town	2027-Ongoing
	Consider revisions to land use ordinances with a focus on resilience - such as reviewing stormwater runoff, low impact development, floodplain management, subdivision, and shoreland zoning standards and provisions.	Planning Board, HCPC	2026
	Consider conducting a study for alternative docking locations for the mailboat service.	Town, IaH Boat Services	2028
	Continue to stay up to date on research and data on the Gulf of Maine. This includes updated data and maps with sea level rise scenarios and areas prone to erosion. Increase education to residents and town officials on this data when it becomes available.	Island Institute, Gulf of Maine Research Institute, State of Maine Office of Resilience	Ongoing
	Continue to plan for and fund routine road ditching to ensure stormwater runoff is not impeded.	Town	Ongoing
	Conduct preliminary study of culverts in low-lying sections of town-owned road to understand feasibility of raising and/or moving roads and increasing stormwater runoff capacity if needed.	Town	2026-2027
	Conduct preliminary study of the stormwater drainage system in the “village” area - primarily between the town landing and the town office/school to ensure adequate capacity for both inland runoff and tidal surge. Study should include an evaluation of bank stabilization on the shoreland side of the roadway.	Town	2026
	Support the ongoing resilience planning of the Island Store and the fuel tanks. Assist with implementation of recommended actions.	Town, Island Store Board and Staff	2026-2027

Goal: Implement adaptation practices in order to counter climate change effects already occurring and those anticipated over the next decade.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Host community conversations on managed retreat (“out of harm’s way”) strategies	Town, HCPC, Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve	2027
Adapt to warming ocean temperatures.	Explore opportunities for aquaculture. Provide education and technical assistance to assist those looking to diversify.	Island Institute, Downeast Institute, Maine Aquaculture Association, Maine SeaGrant, Gulf of Maine Research Institute	Ongoing
	Host community conversations with those in the commercial fishing industry to identify local challenges and develop strategies to support the workforce.	Island Institute, Town	2027
	Consider and plan for other industries that would be viable to sustain year-round residents. Gather resources and educational materials to support these new industries.	Island Institute, MCOG	2027
Adapt to extreme temperatures and drought.	Consider revisions to the land use ordinance with a focus on fire suppression and life safety.	Planning Board	2027
	Develop a plan to identify and ensure there are water sources available for fire suppression.	Town	2026
	Educate and provide resources to property owners on fire breaks and forest management best practices.	Town	2026
	Maintain ongoing conversations with the Park Service on fire reduction and response strategies.	Town	Ongoing
	Coordinate a public outreach campaign with the Park Service on campfire safety - to be targeted toward park visitors and short-term rental guests.	Town	Ongoing
	Support continued training for volunteer firefighters.	Town	Ongoing
	Research the possibility of creating a community program to reduce costs of forest management services and/or an equipment lending program to remove dead vegetation.	Town	2026
Improve emergency preparedness and response.	Conduct a wildfire response and mitigation plan.	Knox County EMA, Town, Park Service, IaH Boat Services, Maine Forest Service	2026
	Develop, update, and maintain an implementable Emergency Operations Plan.	Knox County EMA, Town, Park Service, IaH Boat Services	2026
	Consider a town-wide emergency notification system	Town	2026

Goal: Implement adaptation practices in order to counter climate change effects already occurring and those anticipated over the next decade.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Develop a post-storm plan, particularly surrounding debris removal - identify responsible parties for cleanup and locations to store debris.	Town	2026
	Identify town heating/cooling center location and provide outreach to inform residents	Town	2026
Transition to renewable energy.	Study transitioning to more renewable energy sources and reducing reliance on fossil fuels without impacting island-based essential service providers.	Island Institute	2027
	Provide training to volunteer firefighters to prepare for responding to fires involving EV batteries, energy storage, and solar installations.	Town	2027
	Consider conducting a solar/renewable energy assessment on town-owned land/buildings to determine suitable types and locations.	Island Institute	2028
	Develop an outreach program sharing case studies of residents that have installed solar at their homes to help inform others who may be interested in doing the same.	Island Institute	2028
	Consider forming an energy coaching program to help residents understand options for making energy improvements to their homes.	Island Institute, ICDC	2028
Fund proactive resiliency projects.	Continue to be enrolled in the Community Resilience Partnership. Continue to designate and commit town stakeholders and volunteers as members of the Climate Resilience Committee.	Town, HCPC	Ongoing
	Integrate results of the Vulnerability Assessment into the Town's capital improvement plan.	Town	2026
	Continue a relationship with the Regional Resilience Coordinator.	Town, HCPC	Ongoing
	Create a capital reserve account to fund resilience and adaptation projects over time. This fund could also be used to match eligible federal and state grants.	Town	Ongoing
	Understand resiliency priorities of neighboring islands and communities to potentially share resources and leverage external support.	HCPC, Island Institute	Ongoing
Protect the island's water quality.	Provide education and outreach on how to reduce stormwater runoff from individual properties - i.e. low impact development, rain gardens/barrels, etc.	HCPC, Select board	2027
	Consider a watershed plan for Long Pond to identify flood mitigation priorities that co-benefit water quality and habitat protection.	Town	2028

Chapter P: Implementation and Evaluation

Each chapter of the comprehensive plan contains goals (desired outcomes), specific outcomes (measurable milestones on the way to those goals), strategies (methods for achieving those objectives), a responsible party (who will implement the strategy), and a timeframe (when will it start and when will it be completed). The suggested goals, strategies, objectives, parties, and timeframes serve as a framework for future action and a tool for decision making by elected and municipal officials.

Implementation of the plan will depend on the Town's limited staff capacity and small number of volunteers. Some strategies will require leadership and direct action from community members, civic groups, and local organizations. Progress will occur incrementally, based on available time, funding, and volunteer involvement.

The Growth Management Act, Title 30-A, Chapter 187 of the Maine State Statutes, requires that progress on the Plan be evaluated, at a minimum, every five years to determine the following:

- The degree of implementation of Future Land Use strategies;
- The location of new development; and
- The amount of critical natural resources, waterfront and recreation and open spaces protected through the acquisition of property, conservation easements, and other methods available.

Chapter Q: Regional Coordination

Each chapter of the comprehensive plan identifies regional coordination challenges and opportunities pertinent to each topic. These are either within a subsection labeled Regional Issues or embedded within the Goals and Objectives section. This section summarizes the most important areas of ongoing and recommended regional coordination.

Although Isle au Haut maintains a strong tradition of independence, its sustainability as a year-round community depends on vital regional connections. Since the town shares no land borders, its most critical environmental and economic partnerships focus on the sea. Isle au Haut continues to work with neighboring Penobscot Bay communities, including Stonington, Vinalhaven, North Haven, and Swan’s Island, to protect water quality and maintain healthy fisheries through Lobster Management Zone C and the Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries.

The town’s primary physical link to the mainland is through Stonington via the mail boat. This relationship necessitates ongoing coordination regarding parking, wharf access, and the maintenance of the Deer Isle Bridge. Similarly, the town shares a school superintendent with the Deer Isle–Stonington district and relies on the Maine Seacoast Mission and the Outer Island Teachers Group to provide the technology and social connections that reduce isolation for students and staff.

Managed land use is uniquely complex on Isle au Haut, as approximately 50% of the island is part of Acadia National Park. The town is committed to building a stronger, shared management relationship with the Park. While emergency services and 911 dispatch are currently provided by Knox County, the town has identified a need to evaluate whether its official county designation aligns with its natural ties to Hancock County.

Finally, Isle au Haut remains integrated into a broader network of island support. The town continues to send representatives to the Maine Islands Coalition to advocate for unbridged communities and maintains a close relationship with the Island Institute. Through participation in the Hancock County Planning Commission and the Midcoast Council of Governments, the town accesses the professional planning and economic development resources necessary to thrive in a changing regional landscape.

Isle au Haut Vulnerability Assessment

As an island community with critical waterfront and nearshore infrastructure and an active lobster fishing fleet, the Town of Isle au Haut is especially vulnerable to hazards such as sea level rise, storm surge, and shoreline erosion. These threats put critical infrastructure, essential public services, private property, and natural resources at risk of incurring damage and ultimately loss of use or access.



Photo of The Gas House at Point Lookout by Tucker Runge

A vulnerability assessment uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative information such as historical data, current trends, and future projections to assess the impacts of specific hazards on the community, local resources, and infrastructure. During a vulnerability assessment, this information is analyzed and used to develop and prioritize strategies for addressing hazards and their impacts. Vulnerability assessments provide an opportunity to identify and proactively respond to current and future threats before they require more substantial and costly solutions down the line.

The extent of vulnerability assessments varies, often focusing on a subset of known hazards. This vulnerability assessment will focus on the impacts of flooding, sea level rise, and storm surge. While this assessment provides detailed analysis of the aforementioned hazards, it is by no means a comprehensive overview of every vulnerability faced by the Town of Isle au Haut.

The timing of this vulnerability assessment coincides with the update of the Town’s comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan acts as a town’s guide for future decision-making and development; it outlines a community’s current status and challenges, identifies its vision for the future, and determines how it wants to work towards achieving that vision. The timing of both the vulnerability assessment and the comprehensive plan update provides a valuable opportunity to incorporate insight on hazards and applicable resilience strategies into the more extensive comprehensive plan.

Through the comprehensive planning process, other hazards of interest to the community have also been identified: wildfire, extreme storms, extreme temperatures, drought, shoreline and coastal bluff erosion, and changing marine conditions. These hazards warrant further investigation but fall outside of the scope of this vulnerability assessment. These other hazards and their need for future attention will be captured in the updated comprehensive plan.

Additionally, the analysis, results, and strategies outlined in this vulnerability assessment are impacted by the availability of data on the specific hazards generally and their impact on Isle au Haut specifically. This vulnerability assessment should be used for general planning purposes only and specific issues may warrant further exploration or research to effectively interpret and implement the identified strategies.



Photo of Barter Creek Tucker Runge

Methodology

The vulnerability assessment included compiling data from local, state, and federal sources for analysis in ArcGIS Pro. Further information on the data sources and analysis conducted are outlined below. The area analyzed for this assessment includes Isle au Haut and the other islands within the town's boundary.

Data Sources

Existing Conditions Data: Background data, including contours, boundaries, conserved lands, and aerial imagery, were obtained from the Maine GeoLibrary. The locations of existing infrastructure were obtained from the Maine GeoLibrary and the MaineDOT, and critical facilities/assets within the Town were obtained from the Town of Isle au Haut (identified by the Comprehensive Plan committee and Town officials as important and critical). This data includes the location of roads and facilities such as the town office, school, fire station, electric co-op, boat landings, store, and church. Hydrologic data was sourced from the US Geological Survey. Parcel boundaries were obtained from the Town of Isle au Haut and were last updated in 2019. Boundaries for Acadia National Park and the locations of sites on the National Register of Historic Places were obtained from the National Park Service.

Vulnerability Assessment Data: Data on the highest astronomical tide (HAT) was obtained from the Maine Geological Survey (MGS), a program of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry (DACF). This assessment analyzed three sea level rise scenarios (SLR) from the MGS. The MGS SLR scenarios are based on the amount of elevation rise above the HAT and include: HAT plus 1.6 feet, HAT plus 3.9 feet, and HAT plus 8.8 feet. The Maine Climate Council's Scientific and Technical Subcommittee's 2024 report recommends that Maine communities "commit to manage" HAT + 1.5 feet of sea level rise by 2050 and HAT + 3.9 feet of sea level rise by 2100. In addition, the Subcommittee recommends that communities "prepare to manage" for HAT + 8.8 feet of sea level rise by 2120. These state-wide initiatives provide context for municipalities to plan for climate resiliency and therefore these scenarios were used in this assessment to assist Isle au Haut with future climate resiliency planning. For HAT plus 1.5 feet of sea level rise, the closest available inundation scenario data available from the MGS, HAT plus 1.6 feet of sea level rise, was used.

Inundation areas from hurricanes (categories 1, 2, 3, and 4) were derived from MGS's Sea Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) dataset. These inundation scenarios depict potential areas of inundation at mean high tide. The dataset accounts for combined predicted astronomical tides and storm surges from the SLOSH model, and does not account for the additional impacts of waves, precipitation, or freshwater flow.

Flood hazard data was obtained from the US Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) effective National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL). This data shows the inundation boundaries of flooding of both inland freshwaters and coastal waters due to extreme precipitation events. The flood inundation boundaries shown as part of this assessment are for the 100-year (base) flood. Areas of the 100-year floodplain are designated as zones A, AE (1% or greater annual chance of flooding), or VE (coastal areas with 1% chance or greater of flooding with an additional hazard of storm waves).

GIS Analysis

ArcGIS was used to overlay extreme weather and sea level rise scenarios (SLR scenarios, SLOSH, and FEMA Flood Hazard Areas) with Isle au Haut's mapped infrastructure features and assets to identify areas at risk. This process allowed for the identification and quantification of locations where predicted hazard areas intersect with critical infrastructure and assets. Infrastructure features that overlapped with areas of inundation in the three datasets listed above were then exported and geospatial analysis was used to determine the total length, area, or number of infrastructure features located within the hazard area on Isle au Haut. In addition, members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee used maps of the 100-year floodplain and sea level rise projections to identify culverts and bridges in these areas that may be at risk. These features were digitized so the Town may use this data in future analyses.

Results

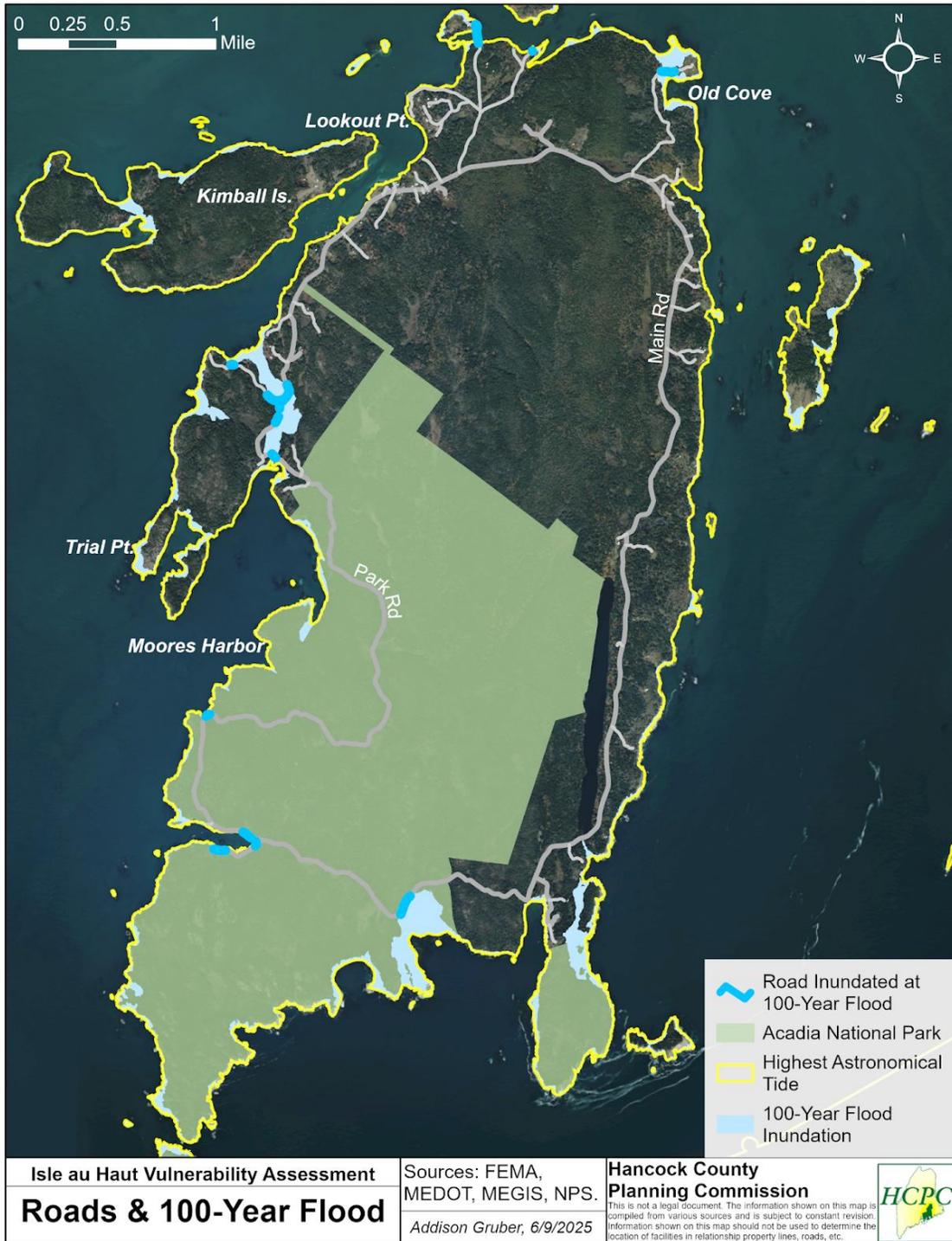
The results of the GIS analyses described in the Methodology section above are presented here. These results are based on projections using the best available science and data. They should be viewed as approximations that can assist with identifying and planning for strategies and actions that will increase resilience, particularly to Isle au Haut's critical assets and infrastructure. As aforementioned, reading through this section, note that the State of Maine suggests municipalities commit to manage for HAT + 1.5 feet of SLR by 2050 and HAT + 3.9 feet of SLR by 2100, but prepare to manage for HAT + 3.9 feet of SLR by 2050 for low-risk-tolerant infrastructure (1.6 feet of SLR was used in place of the 1.5 feet SLR due to availability of data).

FEMA Flood Risk

Areas Impacted: According to FEMA data, approximately 515 acres of land within Isle au Haut are inundated during a 100-year flooding event (Zones A, AE, and VE), equating to approximately 6% of the Town's land area. The 100-year flood maps show 182 parcels (out of 310) impacted by a 100-year flood event. However, out of these parcels, 13 have associated e911 addresses, indicating that while many of the Town's parcels would be impacted by flooding during a 100-year storm event, potentially only 13 would result in damage to the built environment.

The most significant areas of flooding on the island include: the village area near the Isle au Haut Thorofare, near Robinson Point, Moore's Harbor, near Merchant's Cove, Birch Point, Head Harbor, and Old Cove. In addition, there are areas within the Acadia National Park boundary that are within the 100-year flood zone, including access to the Duck Harbor boat landing.

Figure 0-1: Roads at Risk, 100-Year Flood



Roads Impacted: Approximately 1,055 linear feet of town-owned and maintained road (Main Road) are modeled to be inundated during a 100-year flood event. Portions of town-owned road are paved (the village area and the east side of the island), while others are gravel. Those areas that are dirt and gravel are more susceptible to washouts and sedimentation, which can then clog storm drainage infrastructure and result in pooled

flooding. Paved roads are more likely to increase stormwater and the velocity of runoff, resulting in flash flooding and possible erosion of both public and private property along roadways. In addition to town-owned roads, private roads (Barter Creek Road, Old Cove Road, Robinson Point Road, and Birch Point Road) and roads within Acadia National Park (Park Road and Duck Harbor Road) are also susceptible to 100-year flooding.



Photo of a Seasonal Property in Barter Creek by Tucker Runge

There are two areas of town-owned road that are at-risk because they are in more low-lying areas of the island. These include the bog area between Robinson Point and Moore's Harbor, as well as where the Main Road and Head Harbor Road intersect on the south eastern part of the island. These areas are not only susceptible to inland flooding, as shown by zone AE on the flood maps, but also to coastal flooding, as shown as zone VE. Given their greater risk to flood exposure, these areas, in addition to the town's most critical village area, should be prioritized when considering future flood mitigation and resiliency measures.



Photo of the bog between Robinson Point and Moore's Harbor by Greg Piduch

Culverts/Bridges Impacted: Culverts and bridges on town-owned roads within the 100-year flood zone have greater risk of being inundated during a storm event. One culvert near Moore's Harbor is within the 100-year floodplain and susceptible to both inland and coastal flooding. There are no other culverts on town-owned roads that are within the floodplain.



Photo from culvert on Main Road in Moore's Harbor by Janna Richards

While the town is not responsible for culverts and bridges on private and Acadia National Park roads, their susceptibility to flooding does impact accessibility and evacuation; therefore, they have been analyzed. There are 3 culverts/bridges located on private roads (2 on Robinson Point Road and the causeway bridge to Birch Point) and 5 out of 6 culverts/bridges located within the Park that could be at-risk to flooding from a 100-year flood event. One of the culverts is located on the road that provides access to Duck Harbor boat landing, which could impede using this as a potential evacuation route.

Figure 0-2: Culverts at Risk, 100-Year Flood

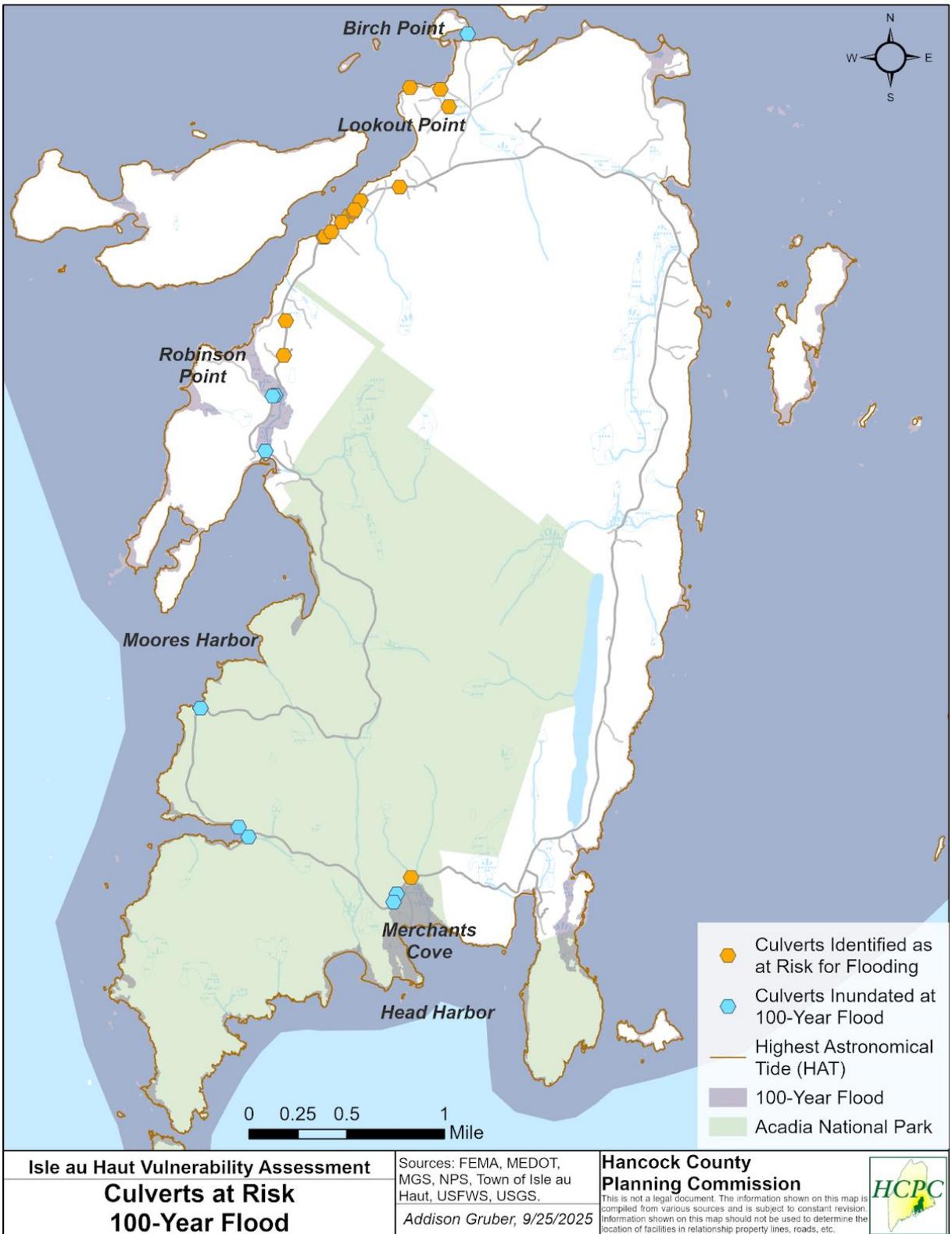


Figure 0-3: 100-Year Flood Inundation Near Moore's Harbor



Critical Facilities/Assets Impacted: Much of the 100-year flooding is concentrated along the coastline. Therefore, critical infrastructure, facilities, and assets near the shore, such as all three boat landings (town-owned, private, and Park-owned) and the Island Store, are more at-risk. In addition, historic sites near the shore, such as Isle au Haut Light and the Gooden Grant House, are within the 100-year flood zone.

Table 1: Summary of features inundated by the FEMA flood zones (100-year flood)

Flood Zone	Area of land (acres)	Parcels	Critical Facilities	Town-owned Road (Linear ft)	Boat Landing	Bridges	Culverts	Historic Sites
100 - Year Flood (A, AE, VE)	515	182	1	1,055	3	1	8	2

It is important to note that the 100-year flood hazard area on Isle au Haut encompasses more land area (6%) than each of the three sea level rise scenarios, which are described further below. This may be because the flood hazard data takes into account wave action and storm surge during extreme weather events, while at this time, the SLR scenarios do not. As such, much of the Town’s infrastructure, assets, and facilities that are shown to be impacted by the 100-year flood are similarly impacted by the three SLR scenarios used in this assessment, with only the HAT + 8.8 feet scenario showing variation.

Sea Level Rise Scenarios

Highest Astronomical Tide + 1.6 feet:

Areas Impacted: During the HAT +1.6 feet SLR scenario, approximately 97 acres of land within the Town would be inundated. This is 1% of the Town’s land area. One of the largest concentrated areas of flooding during this scenario occurs on the northern point of Rich’s Point, near the low-lying beach area. 180 out of the Town’s 310 parcels are inundated (either fully or partially) during this scenario; however, analysis of e911 addresses show that 2 properties with built structures could potentially be impacted.

Roads/Culverts/Bridges Impacted: During this scenario, approximately 265 linear feet of Birch Point Road, a privately owned road, would be inundated. The inundation impacts the causeway/bridge section of the road, which would sever Birch Point’s access to the rest of the Island. In the HAT + 1.6 feet SLR scenario, there is no additional town- or Park-owned Road or culverts shown to be inundated more than what is projected under the 100-year flood scenario. Birch Point causeway is the only “bridge” that would be impacted by this scenario. While it is a privately owned road and causeway, the State would recommend planning to manage this infrastructure by 2050.



Photo of the Birch Point Causeway by Tucker Runge

Critical Facilities/Assets Impacted: Being on the water, all boat landings are impacted in this scenario. While the Island Store's building footprint does not appear to be impacted, the sea level does rise to its foundational footprint, close enough to consider preparing the Island Store for this scenario. Isle au Haut Lighthouse and the Gooden Grant House property would also be inundated by the HAT +1.6 sea level rise scenario.

Highest Astronomical Tide + 3.9 feet:

Areas Impacted: During the HAT + 3.9 feet scenario, approximately 194 acres of land within the Town would be inundated. This is 2% of the Town's land area. 183 parcels would be impacted with the HAT + 3.9 foot sea level rise, which is only 3 additional parcels compared to the HAT +1.6 foot scenario. Five e911 addresses show to be impacted by this scenario.

Within this scenario, Rich's Point becomes almost cut off from the interior section of Old Cove Road, making it more of an island than a peninsula. Similarly, Birch Point's access would be completely cut off during this scenario. Other areas that show greater inundation during this scenario include Merchant's Cove/Head Harbor, Moore's Harbor, and near Robinson Point.

Roads/Culverts/Bridges Impacted: During this scenario, double the amount of Birch Point Road is impacted and is shown to be inundated, from 265 linear feet in the HAT +1.6-foot scenario, to approximately 530 feet in the HAT +3.9-foot scenario. While additional portions of the road are impacted in this scenario, the access point is lost by the HAT +1.6 scenario. While there is greater road inundation during this scenario, additional culverts/bridges other than those impacted by the 100-year flood and the HAT +1.6 scenario do not seem to be impacted.

Critical Facilities/Assets Impacted: There are no additional critical facilities or assets impacted during this scenario, though the Gooden Grant House property does become more inundated, impacting all buildings on the property. Below is a map showing the property in relation to the sea level rise models.



Photo of a Private Dock in the Thorofare by Kyle Devereux

Figure 0-4: Sea Level Rise Near Head Harbor



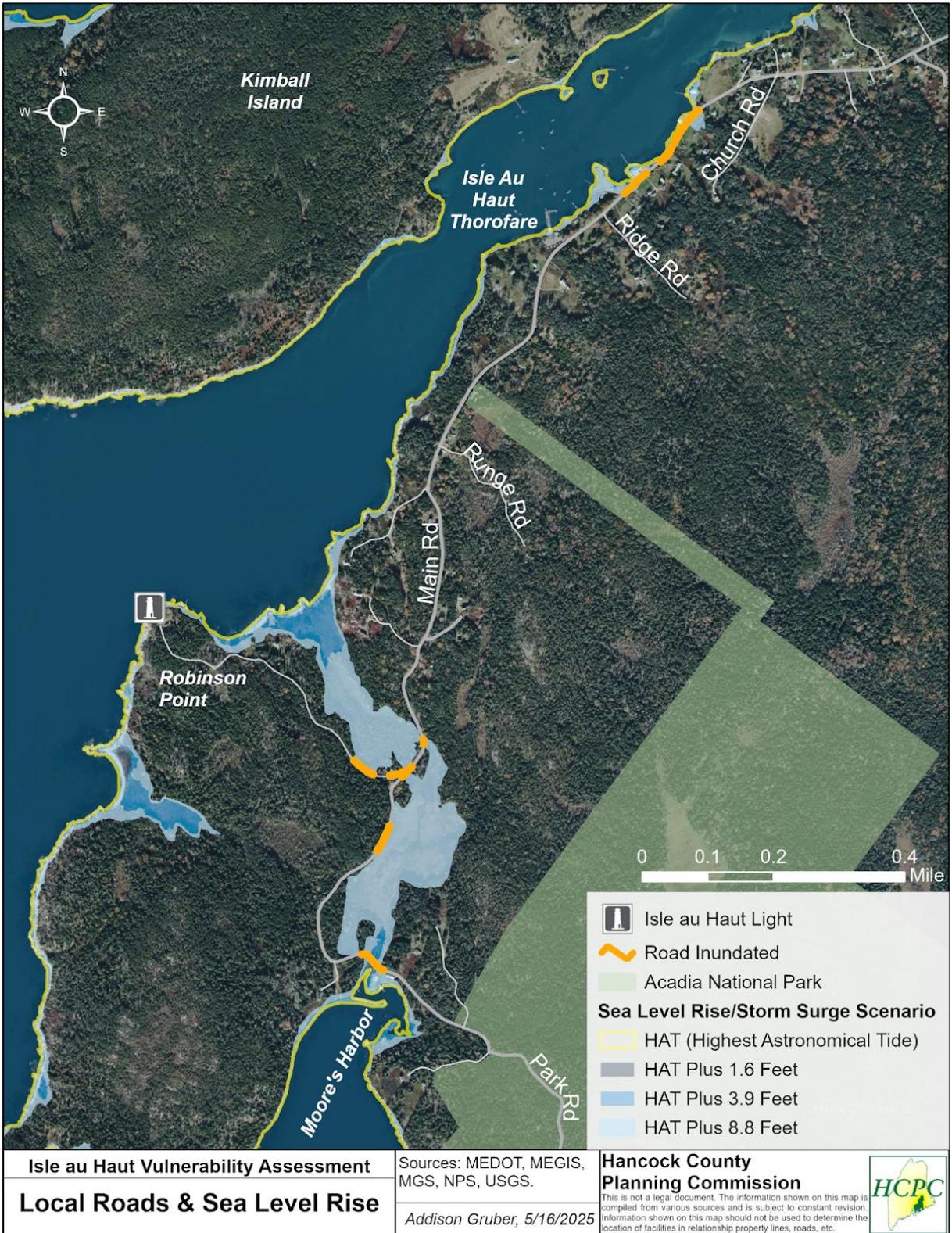
Highest Astronomical Tide + 8.8 feet:

Areas Impacted: During the HAT +8.8 feet sea level rise scenario, approximately 431 acres of land on Isle au Haut would be inundated, which is 5% of the Town's land area. Areas that show to be impacted during the 1.6- and 3.9-foot scenarios continue to be significantly impacted with the 8.8-foot scenario. An additional 11 parcels (194) are impacted in this scenario versus the 3.9 foot scenario (183), with the greatest percentage of parcel inundation being shown on Birch Point, in the area between Robinson Point and Moore's Harbor, near Merchants Cove, the northern point of Eastern Head near Head Harbor Road, the coastal side of the Main Road between the boat landing northerly toward the Town Office (in the vicinity of the Turners Cemetery), and Rich's Point. The e911 analysis shows that 21 properties that have built structures would be impacted under this scenario.

Roads/Culverts/Bridges Impacted: The Main Road near Robinson Point and Moore's Harbor becomes significantly inundated, cutting off access on the western side of Isle au Haut. The Main Road from the Island Store northerly toward the Town Office becomes cutoff, severing access to the Town's critical facilities and infrastructure from residents. In addition, Merchant's Cove begins to inundate the Park Road and Head Harbor Road also becomes susceptible to flooding. Rich's Point, Birch's Point, and Robinson Point become completely inaccessible. In this scenario, Lookout Point begins to show vulnerability to flooding along Point Lookout Road, impeding access to the boat landing. Greater impact to roads occurs during this scenario, with the following roads being inundated:

- Town-owned
 - Main Road in the areas of the village, near the intersection with Robinson Point Road, and by Moore's Harbor
- Privately-owned
 - Point Lookout Rd
 - Barter Creek Rd
 - Old Cove Rd
 - Robinson Point Rd
 - Overhang Rd
 - Birch Point Rd
- Park-owned
 - Park Road
 - Duck Harbor Road

Figure 0-5: Local Roads & Sea Level Rise



Just over 3,800 feet of road are shown to be inundated in this scenario, almost 3,300 more linear feet than in the 3.9 foot scenario. Just under half of this inundation (1,760 linear feet) occurs on Town-owned road, with the remainder (2,040 linear feet) occurring on privately-owned (1,615 linear feet) or Park-owned (425 linear feet) roads.

Similarly, additional culverts become impacted in this scenario. Of most significance, in this scenario, four of the eight culverts located in the village area are inundated, as is one culvert located on the road that accesses the Point Lookout boat landing.

Critical Facilities/Assets Impacted: There are no additional critical facilities and assets that are impacted in this scenario.

Table 2: Acres, parcels, critical facilities, and historic sites partially or fully inundated

Scenario	# of Acres	# of Parcels	# of Critical Facilities	# of Boat Landings	# of Bridges	# of Culverts	# of Historic Sites
HAT+1.6	97	180	1	3	1	0	2
HAT+3.9	194	183 (+3)	1	3	1	0	2
HAT+8.8	431	194 (+11)	1	3	1	9	2

Table 3: Summary of roads impacted during each SLR scenario

Road	Linear Feet of Road Inundated (Approximate)		
SLR Scenario	+1.6 feet	+3.9 feet	+8.8 feet
Main Road	0	0	1,327
Birch Point Road	283	521	631
Point Lookout Road	0	0	610
Barter Creek Road	0	0	157
Old Cove Road	0	0	267
Robinson Point Road	0	0	307
Overhang Road	0	0	79
Park Road	0	0	78
Duck Harbor Road	0	0	357
Total linear feet of road projected to be inundated is shown for each scenario.			

Hurricane Scenarios (SLOSH)

The total amount of land area inundated during a Category 4 hurricane is 648 acres. This is approximately 8% of the Town’s land area. Similar to the 8.8 feet SLR scenario, the areas of greatest impact during a Category 4 hurricane are: Robinson Point, Birch Point, Rich’s Point, Moore’s Harbor, Merchant’s Cove, and the village area between the boat landing, near the Island Store, and north to the cemetery. The boat landings and the Island Store would be impacted by both a Category 3 and Category 4 hurricane scenario. During a Category 4 hurricane, water depths over the road near Merchants Cove and Birch Point reach between 6-9 feet, with 3-6 feet

of water depth over the road near Rich's Point and Moores Harbor. Variable flood inundation ranging between 3 feet to 9 feet show over the Main Road in the village area.

Table 4: Amount of land within the Town of Isle au Haut inundated during various hurricane storm categories.

Storm Category	Acres of Land Inundated	% of Town Inundated
1	243	3%
2	376	4.7%
3	518	6.4%
4	648	8%

Summary of Vulnerability

Isle au Haut’s vulnerability assessment allows for the identification of vulnerable areas where flooding and critical assets and infrastructure intersect. One of the greatest vulnerabilities is the flooding of transportation infrastructure. Flooded roadways can be impassable temporarily until water levels retreat or inaccessible long-term if the road is damaged during the flooding event. Unpaved roads, which make up a portion of Isle au Haut’s road network, are far more susceptible to washouts from heavy rainfall than paved roads. Their porous surfaces and unsealed composition make them vulnerable to water erosion, leading to washouts, rutting, and sediment runoff. The area of paved road in the village area of Isle au Haut is more resilient to water damage; however, it is imperative for drainage systems to be sized correctly and maintained so they can handle the capacity of increased flood waters (both coastal and inland) and allow for runoff to occur effectively. Increased water levels and velocities attributed to storm surges, extreme precipitation events, and SLR can cause severe damage to roadways and stream crossings. Temporarily impassable roads can leave residences stranded and unable to access critical resources such as emergency health care, disaster response, and food supplies. As such, emergency operations planning and evacuation planning will be a crucial next step for Isle au Haut to ensure preparedness for future storm and weather events.

The residences located around Birch’s Point, Rich’s Point, Robinson Point, Moore’s Harbor and Head Harbor are vulnerable to flooding of critical transportation infrastructure. The roads connecting these areas to the main island road system show to be impacted by the 100-year flood zone and become inundated during various SLR scenarios and during hurricane events, isolating communities. Many homes in these areas, aside from Head Harbor, are seasonal in nature, and therefore, at this point in time, with stronger storms (including hurricanes) and surges occurring primarily in the off-season, there is less concern of individuals being at risk. However, property damage to homes and property can occur year-round, and with homes being unattended in the off-season, resources may still need to be allocated to tending to storm damage in these areas, such as removing downed trees and powerlines, responding to gas leaks, and putting out fires. In addition, while storms may occur on a seasonal basis, sea level rise is not dependent on seasonality. With these areas being susceptible to inundation from sea level rise, planning should start to occur now, especially in those areas that show to be vulnerable to HAT+1.6 feet and HAT+3.9 feet scenarios.

In addition, the Main Road in the village area becomes inundated during a HAT +8.8 SLR scenario, impacting access to the Town’s sources of food, fuel, and other goods and services. The Island Store, one of the sole

providers of goods and services, shows to be threatened by inundation in a HAT +1.6 SLR scenario, meaning even if the road to access the Island Store is not flooded, the Island Store itself could be. Resiliency planning has begun to floodproof the Island Store and the fuel tanks, and the Town should continue to be engaged in and support these efforts through implementation.



Photo of the Island Store by Kyle Devereux

On an island community, critical transportation infrastructure also includes boat landings/docks/piers/wharfs, which serve as part of the supply chain and as evacuation off the island. All three boat landings - the Town's, the Park's, and the private landing at Point Lookout - all show to be at-risk to inundation from a 100-year flood event, as well as SLR scenarios. As such, evaluating this infrastructure, including materials and height above flood elevations, will be important as part of resilience planning for Isle au Haut.



Photo of a Private Boathouse and Dock in the Thorofare by Kyle Devereux

In addition to transportation infrastructure vulnerabilities, developed parcels and buildings in areas projected to be inundated will be faced with structural damage to buildings and septic system infrastructure. Septic systems flooded temporarily during storm surges or repeatedly during SLR and groundwater rise are at risk of malfunctioning or failing, causing costly repairs and polluting local water resources such as fishing areas. Saltwater intrusion into freshwater wells is also a potential risk as sea levels rise over developed areas. On Isle au Haut, with limited access to fresh water, continuous monitoring of fresh water sources, including bogs, Long Pond, and wells, should occur and a plan devised to mitigate freshwater from becoming saline.

In contrast to areas on Isle au Haut that are more low-lying and are projected to experience large areas of inundation during flooding events and SLR scenarios, some coastal areas showed little impact in the vulnerability assessment. This includes the eastern shoreline of Isle au Haut. This is likely due to more vertical relief in these areas, making these shorelines more resilient to inundation in the face of rising sea levels. However, this also means that these areas are likely vulnerable to bluff erosion. Wave action and the resulting extreme forces exerted on the shoreline during storm surge and hurricane events can cause severe erosion of the shoreline. Bluffs, or steep shorelines formed in sediment and elevating three feet or more above the high tide line, can be very susceptible to erosion, especially if they are less vegetated and are composed of sand or gravel sediments.

While infrastructure in these areas is not currently at risk to inundation according to models evaluated in this assessment, these areas could be of higher risk to coastal erosion and shoreline bank failure.

Isle au Haut will face flooding due to increased precipitation and storm frequency. As a coastal, island community, Isle au Haut faces the risk of heavy precipitation events coinciding with high tides, exacerbating flood risks. Coastal communities in Maine are evaluating their existing infrastructure and land use planning regulations and adapting them to mitigate the impacts of future conditions. Many communities are investing in the development of action plans to help guide them towards becoming more resilient to coastal hazards. An action plan will be developed based on results from this vulnerability assessment to help provide strategies and recommendations for next steps to address the vulnerabilities identified within Isle au Haut.

Impacts and Strategies

The table in this section was developed based on the results of the vulnerability assessment. It provides recommendations and strategies for next steps to address the greatest impacts from flooding and sea level rise scenarios identified within the Town. The recommendations and strategies focus on key infrastructure and assets, as well as the areas of the island that are most vulnerable to flooding and inundation.

- High priority actions provide strategies for key infrastructure and assets that are vulnerable to the 100-year flood and sea level rise scenarios for HAT + 1.6 feet and HAT + 3.9 feet.
- Medium priority actions provide strategies for areas that are not deemed to be key infrastructure/assets, but are vulnerable to the HAT + 3.9 sea level rise scenario.
- Low priority actions provide strategies for areas that are vulnerable to the HAT + 8.8 sea level rise scenario.

Key steps to addressing a town's coastal vulnerabilities include developing/defining a team or committee to manage the effort, identifying and prioritizing strategies and action items, and identifying and securing the funding necessary to implement the strategies/recommendations. While each step of the process is equally important, this section of the assessment focuses on providing information on the identification of resiliency strategies and action items. While these have been prioritized as described above, the Town may choose to prioritize these action items based on factors such as funding availability and/or stakeholder interest.

Coastal resiliency strategies generally fall into three main categories: protect, accommodate, and managed retreat. The actions identified in the table include all three strategies.

- Protection strategies aim to defend or stabilize an area against SLR, storm surge, and flooding. This strategy uses engineered solutions to protect resources and infrastructure in their existing locations and does not require modification of the resources themselves. Solutions can include both conventionally engineered and nature-based techniques. Examples of protection strategies include dikes, seawalls, breakwaters, living shorelines, and wetland restoration efforts.
- Accommodate strategies involve the adaptation or modification of existing and new infrastructure to decrease their vulnerability to coastal flooding and SLR. Some examples of this include raising buildings and roads, floodproofing buildings, and raising existing seawall heights.

- Managed retreat strategies involve the strategic relocation of existing infrastructure to less vulnerable areas. This management strategy also includes limiting new development in vulnerable areas such as those impacted by SLR. Examples include the relocation of public facilities, road and utility infrastructure, and residential homes.

Different types of coastal resilience measures are necessary for different types of vulnerabilities. A suite of resiliency strategies may be required to properly mitigate the impacts of climate change and SLR in Isle au Haut.

Location	Impact Summary	Recommended Actions	Suggested Timelines	Responsible Party
High Priority - Planning for impacts from 100-year storm event; HAT +1.6 feet SLR by 2050; and HAT + 3.9 feet SLR for key infrastructure and assets				
Island Store	The Island Store shows vulnerability to 100-year flooding and the HAT +1.6 and HAT + 3.9 SLR scenarios. While it is privately owned, it is the sole source of goods and services on the island, including fuel. The fuel tanks and fuel dock are also vulnerable.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to conduct resiliency planning to understand floodproofing options for the Island Store and fuel tank infrastructure 2. Recommendations of initial resiliency planning may require additional engineering and design work. At this time, consider including resiliency planning for the fuel dock and bank stabilization. 3. Implement results of resiliency planning - results may include floodproof options but may recommend “retreat” or moving of the Island Store and fuel tanks outside of at-risk areas. 	<p>Planning & Design: 0-2 years</p> <p>Implementation: 2-5 years</p>	Island Store Board and Staff, Town of Isle au Haut
Boat Landings	All boat landings (the Town, the Park’s, and Point Lookout’s) are susceptible to the 100-year flood and HAT + 1.6 and HAT +3.9 SLR scenarios. Boat landings are necessary for supply chain purposes, working waterfront economy, and evacuation measures. The Town only has jurisdiction over their own landing and the recommendations provided are solely for this critical infrastructure.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Owned by the Town, the Town landing should be evaluated by a marine engineer to ensure resilience to future storms and SLR scenarios. 2. Recommendations identified in the engineer’s evaluation should be implemented. 	<p>Evaluation: 0-3 years</p> <p>Implementation: 3-6 years</p>	Isle au Haut Boat Service, Town of Isle au Haut
Main Road - Village	The Main Road in the village area of Isle au Haut is the location of many critical facilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct engineering/design plans to stabilize the shoreland side of the Main Road in the village area. 	Engineering and design: 0-3 years	Town of Isle au Haut

Location	Impact Summary	Recommended Actions	Suggested Timelines	Responsible Party
	and assets. Any impediment to accessing this area would disrupt daily life for residents and visitors. This scenario would not cut off road access; however, wave action and surge would damage coastal banks and slopes, potentially threatening the integrity of the road that is closest to the shoreland side.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Conduct engineering/design to ensure stormwater infrastructure for both inland runoff and tidal surge is adequate and that culverts can accommodate flood events/SLR. 3. Continue routine ditching and maintenance to prolong integrity of the road. 	<p>Implementation: 3-5 years</p> <p>Routine Ditching and Maintenance: Ongoing</p>	
Main Road - Southeast	The southeast portion of the island where Main Road and Head Harbor Road intersect is a low-lying area that is susceptible to both inland and coastal flooding. While the road does not show to be completely inundated in these scenarios, wave action and surge would damage coastal banks and slopes, potentially threatening the integrity of the road that is closest to the shoreland side.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct engineering/design plans to stabilize the shoreland side of the road. 2. Continue routine ditching and maintenance to prolong integrity of the road. 	<p>Engineering and design: 0-3 years</p> <p>Implementation: 3-5 years</p> <p>Routine Ditching and Maintenance: Ongoing</p>	Town of Isle au Haut
Main Road - West side	Significant road inundation and impact to one culvert near Moore's Harbor on the Main Road occur in this scenario. This is a low-lying area susceptible to flooding, which could cut off access to the village area.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct engineering/design to evaluate options for elevating the road in this section. 2. Conduct engineering/design to evaluate capacity of the culvert on the Main Road near Moore's Harbor. Ensure StreamSmart and CoastWise principals are taken into consideration, and that culvert can accommodate SLR. 	<p>Engineering and Design: 0-3 years</p> <p>Implementation: 3-5 years</p>	Town of Isle au Haut

Location	Impact Summary	Recommended Actions	Suggested Timelines	Responsible Party
		3. Continue routine maintenance and ditching to maintain integrity of the road and avoid washouts.	Routine Ditching and Maintenance: Ongoing	
Birch Point	The causeway to Birch Point becomes inundated during these scenarios, cutting off access from residences located on this peninsula to the mainland. Property damage to homes located on Birch Point is also likely during these scenarios. The causeway is part of a private road network and therefore the Town does not have responsibility for implementing protection and/or accommodation strategies. However, the Town can inform property owners of the results of this assessment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide property owners with results of this assessment. 2. Provide property owners with educational resources on shoreline stabilization. 3. Provide property owners with educational resources on emergency preparedness. 4. Provide property owners with educational resources on floodproofing residential structures. 5. Provide property owners with educational resources on managed retreat. 6. Discuss potential to relocate septic systems out of inundated areas if feasible. 	Education & Outreach: 0-2 years	Town of Isle au Haut, Residents of Birch Point
Lighthouse & Gooden House	The Isle au Haut Lighthouse and Gooden House are two properties on the National Historic Register. They are both at-risk to flood inundation in both the 100-year flood and HAT + 1.6 SLR scenarios. The Gooden House is not owned by the Town, so outreach to stakeholders and partners is encouraged.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Share results of this assessment with stakeholders/partners. 2. Provide educational materials on shoreline stabilization and floodproofing methods that may protect the properties, or accommodate them for future flooding and sea level rise. 	Education and Outreach: 0-2 years	Town of Isle au Haut, Historical Society

Medium Priority - Planning for impacts from HAT + 3.9 feet SLR by 2100

Location	Impact Summary	Recommended Actions	Suggested Timelines	Responsible Party
Main Road - Southeast part of island	This section of road is low-lying; however, it does not show partial inundation until HAT + 3.9, and complete inundation until HAT + 8.8. While shoreland bank stabilization and routine maintenance/ditching is being recommended as High Priority (see above), evaluating options to elevate the road can wait until recommendations for other more vulnerable sections of town-owned road are completed.	1. Conduct engineering/design to evaluate options for elevating the road in this section. Ensure stream crossings and culverts can accommodate SLR.	Engineering/Design: 5-7 years Implementation: 7-10 years	Town of Isle au Haut
Low Priority - Planning for impacts from HAT + 8.8 feet SLR				
Main Road - Village Area	While this section of road is critical to the livelihood of town residents and visitors, it does not show inundation until the HAT + 8.8 SLR scenario. While shoreland bank stabilization, evaluation of stormwater infrastructure, and routine maintenance/ditching is being recommended as High Priority (see above), evaluating options to elevate or potentially move the road (if need be) can wait until recommendations for other more vulnerable sections of town-owned road are completed.	1. Conduct engineering/design to evaluate options for elevating/re-routing the road in this section.	Engineering/Design: 8-10 years Implementation: 10-12 years	Town of Isle au Haut

Location	Impact Summary	Recommended Actions	Suggested Timelines	Responsible Party
Townwide	Residents located around Rich’s Point, Robinson Point, Moore’s Harbor and Head Harbor will need to be more aware of flooding of critical transportation infrastructure and property damage during this scenario. While Birch Point residents will experience impacts during the 100-year flood and HAT + 1.6 SLR scenarios, other areas of the Town may not experience these impacts until the HAT + 8.8 SLR scenario. Strategies recommended for Birch Point under “high priority above” can apply.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide property owners with results of this assessment. 2. Provide property owners with educational resources on shoreline stabilization. 3. Provide property owners with educational resources on emergency preparedness. 4. Provide property owners with educational resources on floodproofing residential structures. 5. Provide property owners with educational resources on managed retreat. 6. Discuss potential to relocate septic systems out of inundated areas if feasible. 	Education and Outreach: 5-7 years	Town of Isle au Haut, Residents of Isle au Haut

Regulatory and Land Use Policy Priorities

Updating local policies and ordinances is a key step toward embedding adaptation and resilience in long-term decision making. Considerations for Isle au Haut include:

- Review shoreland zoning, floodplain management, subdivision, and zoning to ensure compliance with State law and to build the foundation for incorporating resiliency measures into future updates
- Update the town's floodplain management ordinance when FEMA releases new Flood Insurance Rate Maps
- Provide training and professional development opportunities to the Code Enforcement Officer and Planning Board on floodplain and shoreland regulations
- Review maps of the vulnerability assessment and consider restricting development in areas prone to flood inundation, while prioritizing development in areas that are less at-risk.
- Integrate flood considerations into road development standards to accommodate sea level rise, storm surge, and flooding impacts;
- Review stormwater runoff standards and consider additional standards for more low-impact development
- Consider regulating the placement of new septic systems and wells away from mapped inundation areas
- Consider creating standards or policies for shoreline stabilization - explore resources for nature-based solutions through MaineDEP's O.U.R. S.H.O.R.E Program
- Integrate the results of this assessment into the Town's capital improvement plan
- Create a capital reserve account to fund resilience and adaptation projects over time
- Understand resiliency priorities of neighboring islands and communities to potentially share resources and leverage external support

Concerns and Considerations for Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning

The results of this vulnerability assessment help to inform future emergency preparedness and response planning, such as a town Emergency Operations Plan and Evacuation Plan. Concerns and considerations to be further evaluated during these planning efforts include:

- While the Town owns a boat landing, conversations with the National Park Service and Point Lookout management, who also own and maintain boat landings, should be considered in coordinating alternative options for docking and evacuation during an emergency, especially if damage occurs to the Town's landing. The Isle au Haut Boat Service should also be included in discussions. Other modes of transportation off the island, including by air, should be explored and identified further.
- As part of this vulnerability assessment, an analysis of e911 addresses impacted by various flooding and sea level rise scenarios was conducted. This information can be provided to Town/County officials if helpful in planning for emergency response.
- Table top exercises and training for emergency responders can be based off of the flooding and road inundation scenarios depicted in this vulnerability assessment.

- This assessment does not include an analysis of wildfire or drought. A wildfire mitigation and response plan; fire reduction strategies; and evaluation of water sources for fire suppression could be conducted as part of future emergency preparedness and response planning.
- Educational materials and resources on emergency preparedness for private property owners should be assembled and provided by the Town to residents.
- With limited resources on Isle au Haut, considerations for offering core services, such as food, energy, and warmth, during an emergency/extended power outage should be taken into consideration.

GIS Data Sources

USA Structures <https://gis-fema.hub.arcgis.com/pages/usa-structures>

National Register of Historic Places <https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2305746>

National Flood Hazard Layer <https://www.fema.gov/flood-maps/national-flood-hazard-layer>

SLOSH <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mgs/hazards/slosh/index.shtml>

Sea Level Rise/Storm Surge https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mgs/hazards/slr_ss/index.shtml

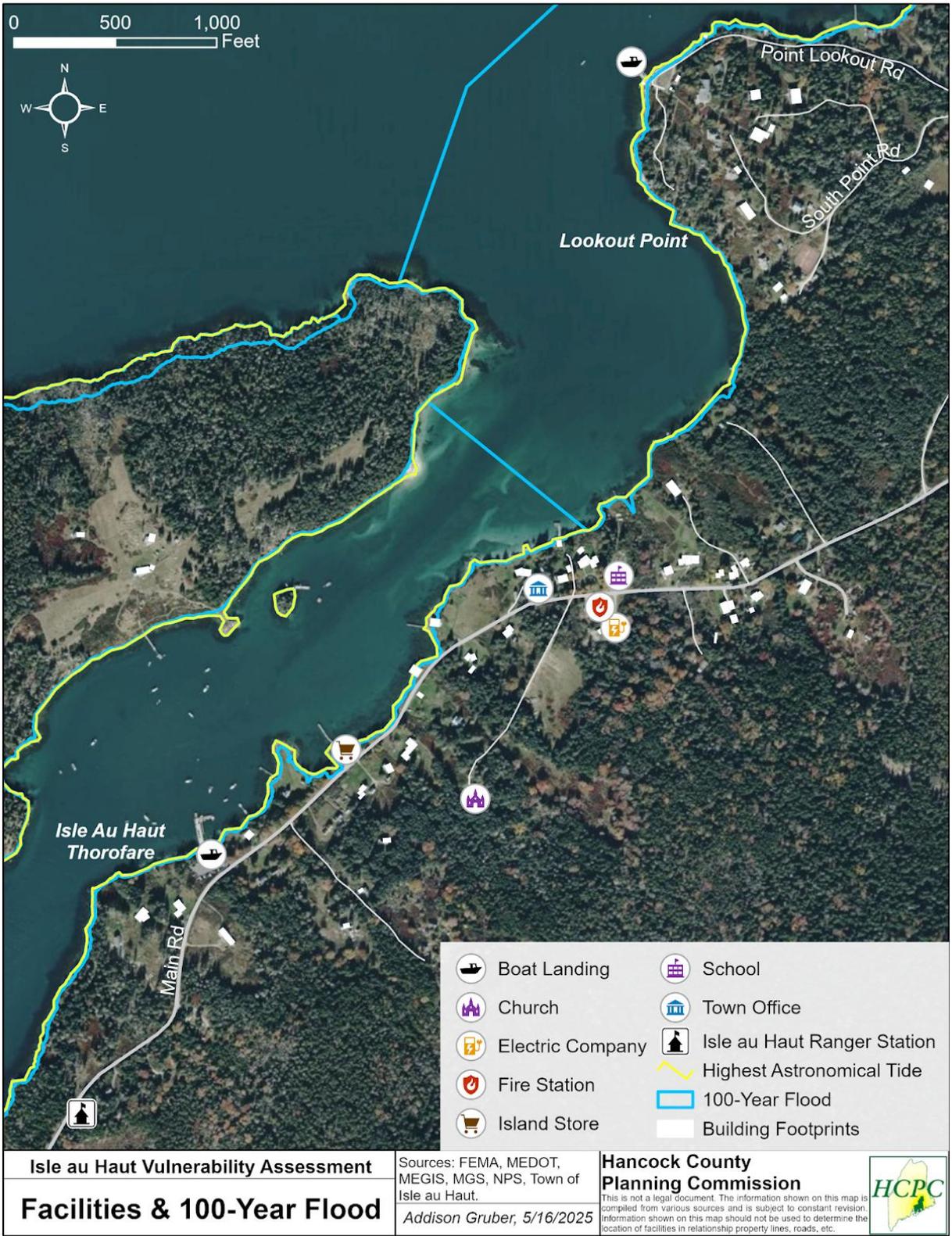
Maine GeoLibrary <https://www.maine.gov/geolib/catalog.html>

Cited Resources and Links

Scientific Assessment of Climate Change and Its Effects in Maine

https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/inline-files/STS_2024_digital.pdf

Map Appendix

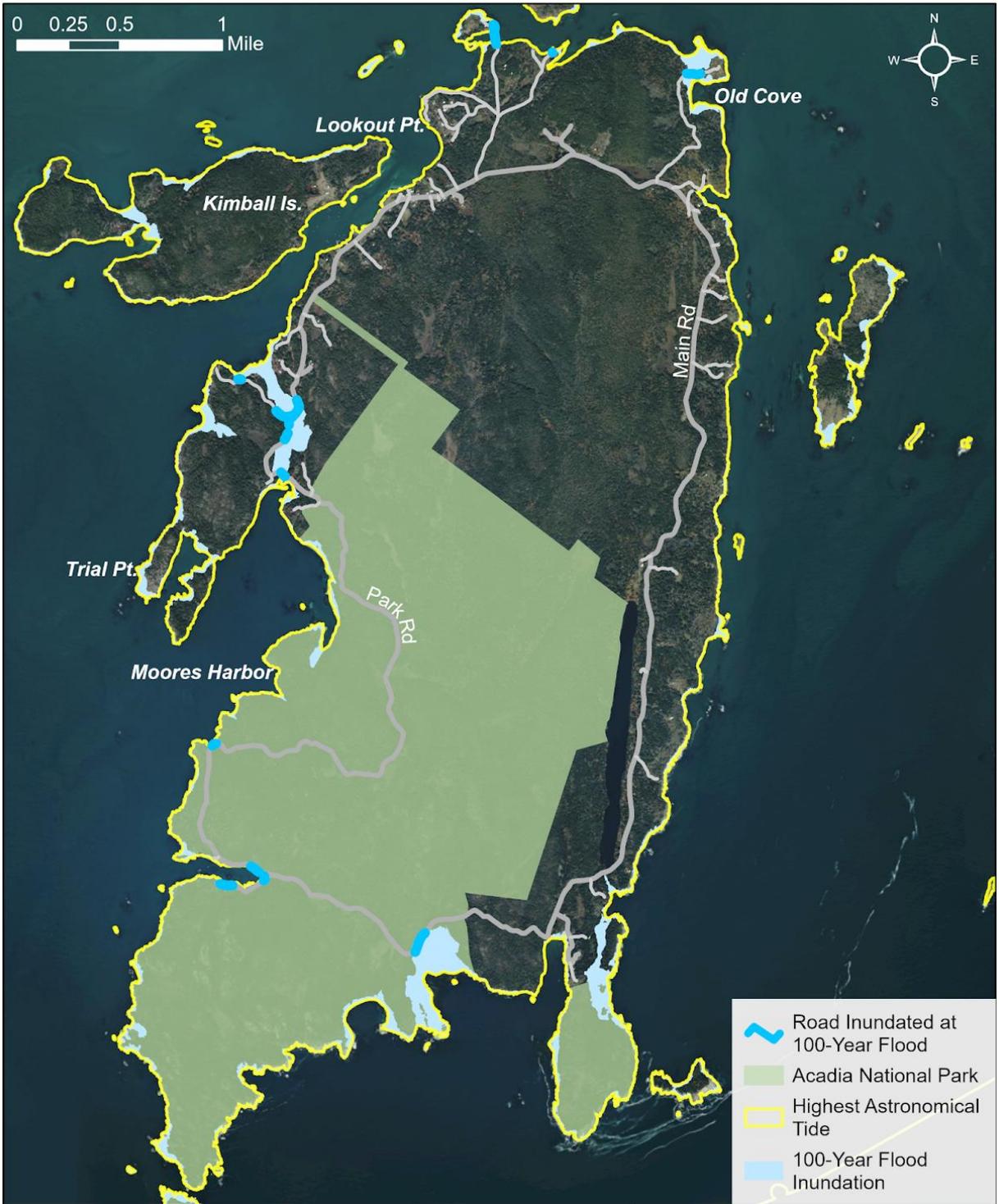


Isle au Haut Vulnerability Assessment
Facilities & 100-Year Flood

Sources: FEMA, MEDOT, MEGIS, MGS, NPS, Town of Isle au Haut.
 Addison Gruber, 5/16/2025

Hancock County Planning Commission
 This is not a legal document. The information shown on this map is compiled from various sources and is subject to constant revision. Information shown on this map should not be used to determine the location of facilities in relationship property lines, roads, etc.



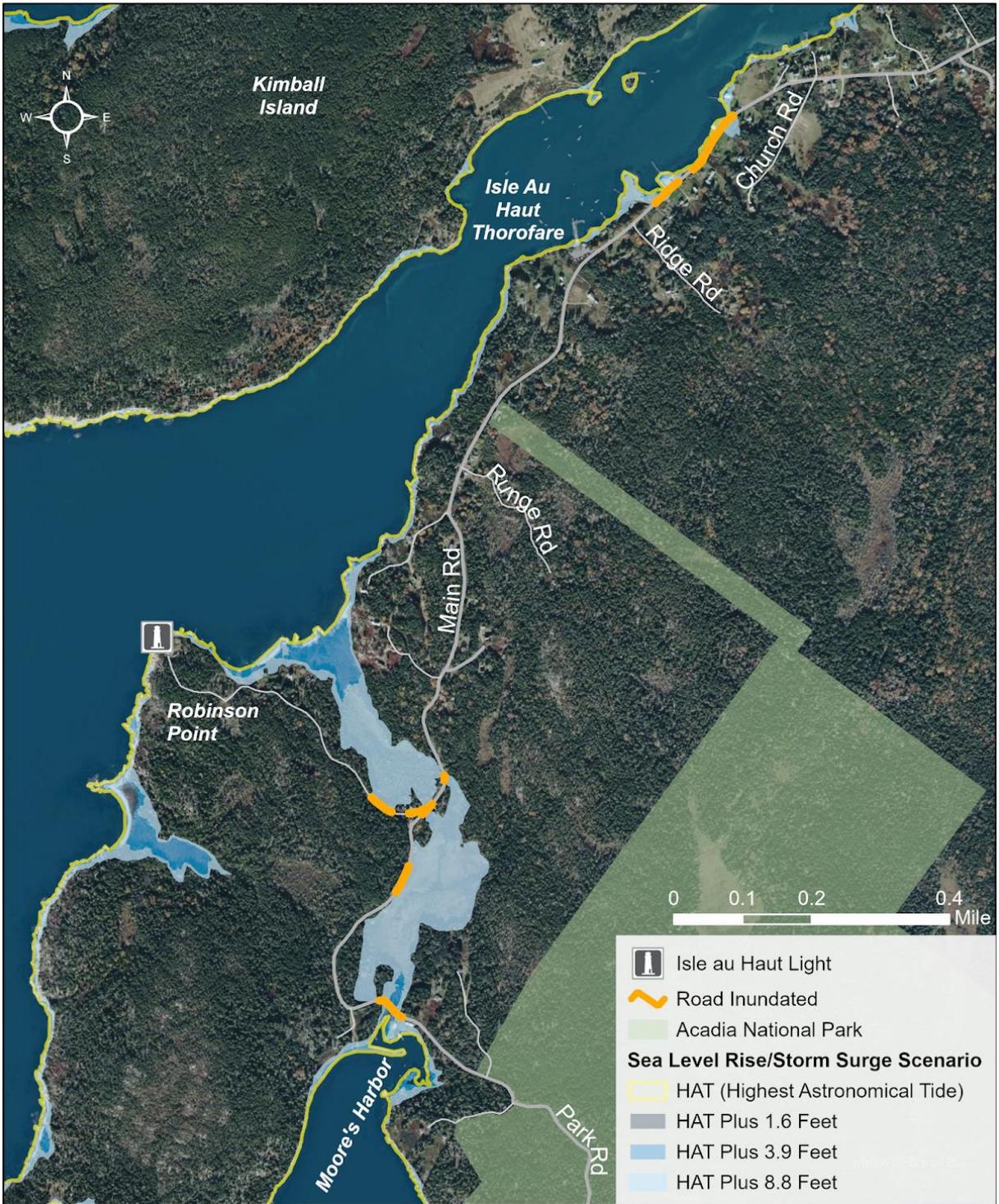


Isle au Haut Vulnerability Assessment	Sources: FEMA, MEDOT, MEGIS, NPS.	Hancock County Planning Commission	
Roads & 100-Year Flood	Addison Gruber, 6/9/2025	<small>This is not a legal document. The information shown on this map is compiled from various sources and is subject to constant revision. Information shown on this map should not be used to determine the location of facilities in relationship property lines, roads, etc.</small>	





<p>Isle au Haut Vulnerability Assessment</p>	<p>Sources: MEDOT, MEGIS, MGS, NPS, USGS.</p>	<p>Hancock County Planning Commission</p>
<p>Roads & Sea Level Rise</p>	<p>Addison Gruber, 6/9/2025</p>	<p><small>This is not a legal document. The information shown on this map is compiled from various sources and is subject to constant revision. Information shown on this map should not be used to determine the location of facilities in relationship property lines, roads, etc.</small></p> 



Isle au Haut Vulnerability Assessment
Local Roads & Sea Level Rise

Sources: MEDOT, MEGIS, MGS, NPS, USGS.
 Addison Gruber, 5/16/2025

Hancock County Planning Commission
 This is not a legal document. The information shown on this map is compiled from various sources and is subject to constant revision. Information shown on this map should not be used to determine the location of facilities in relationship property lines, roads, etc.







<p>Isle au Haut Vulnerability Assessment</p>	<p>Sources: MEDOT, MEGIS, MGS, NPS, USGS.</p>	<p>Hancock County Planning Commission</p>
<p>Roads & Sea Level Rise</p>	<p>Addison Gruber, 6/9/2025</p>	<p><small>This is not a legal document. The information shown on this map is compiled from various sources and is subject to constant revision. Information shown on this map should not be used to determine the location of facilities in relationship property lines, roads, etc.</small></p> 

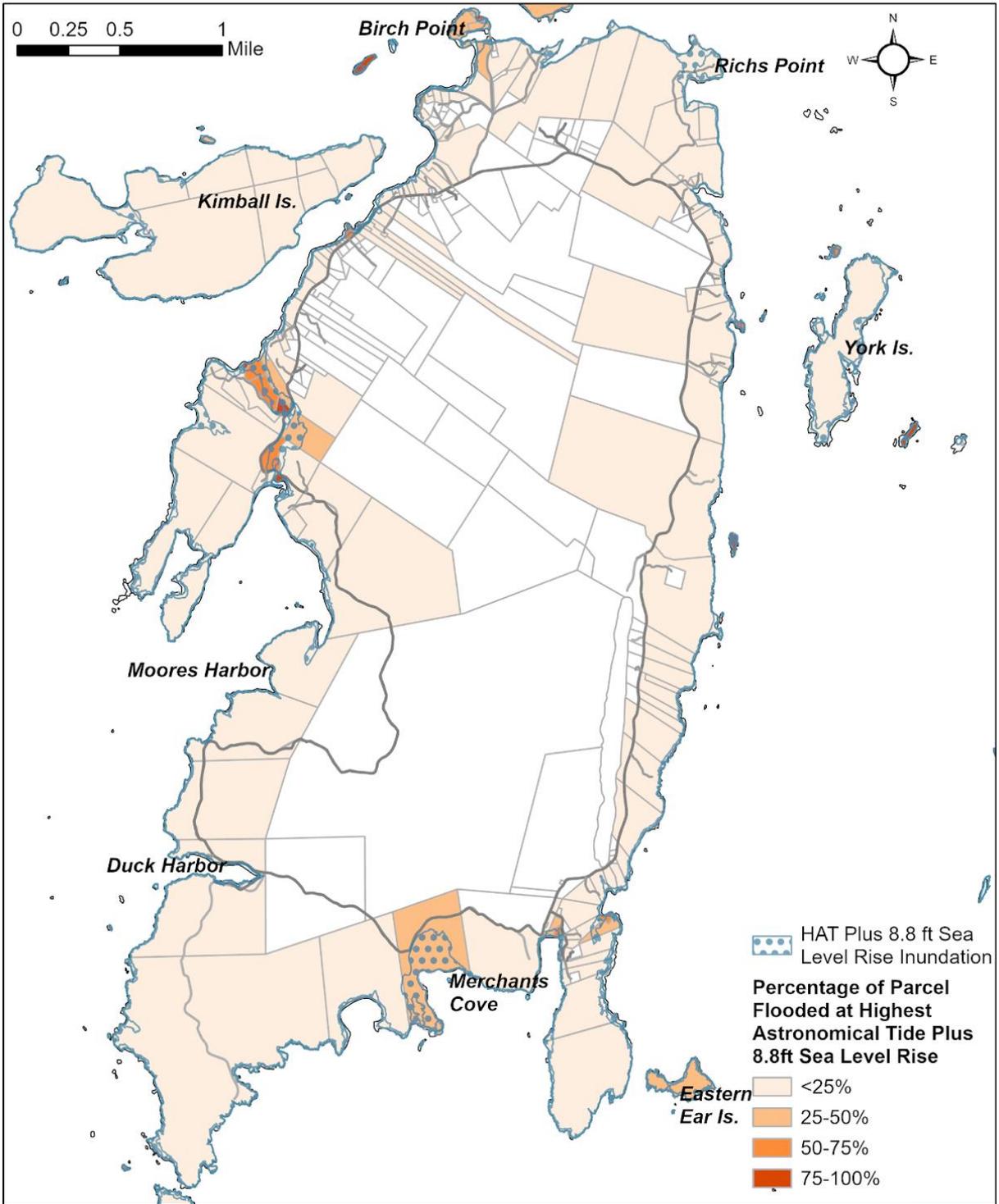
Isle au Haut Vulnerability Assessment
Sea Level Rise at Northern Isle au Haut

Sources: FEMA, MEDOT, MEGIS, MGS, NPS, Town of Isle au Haut.
 Addison Gruber, 6/9/2025

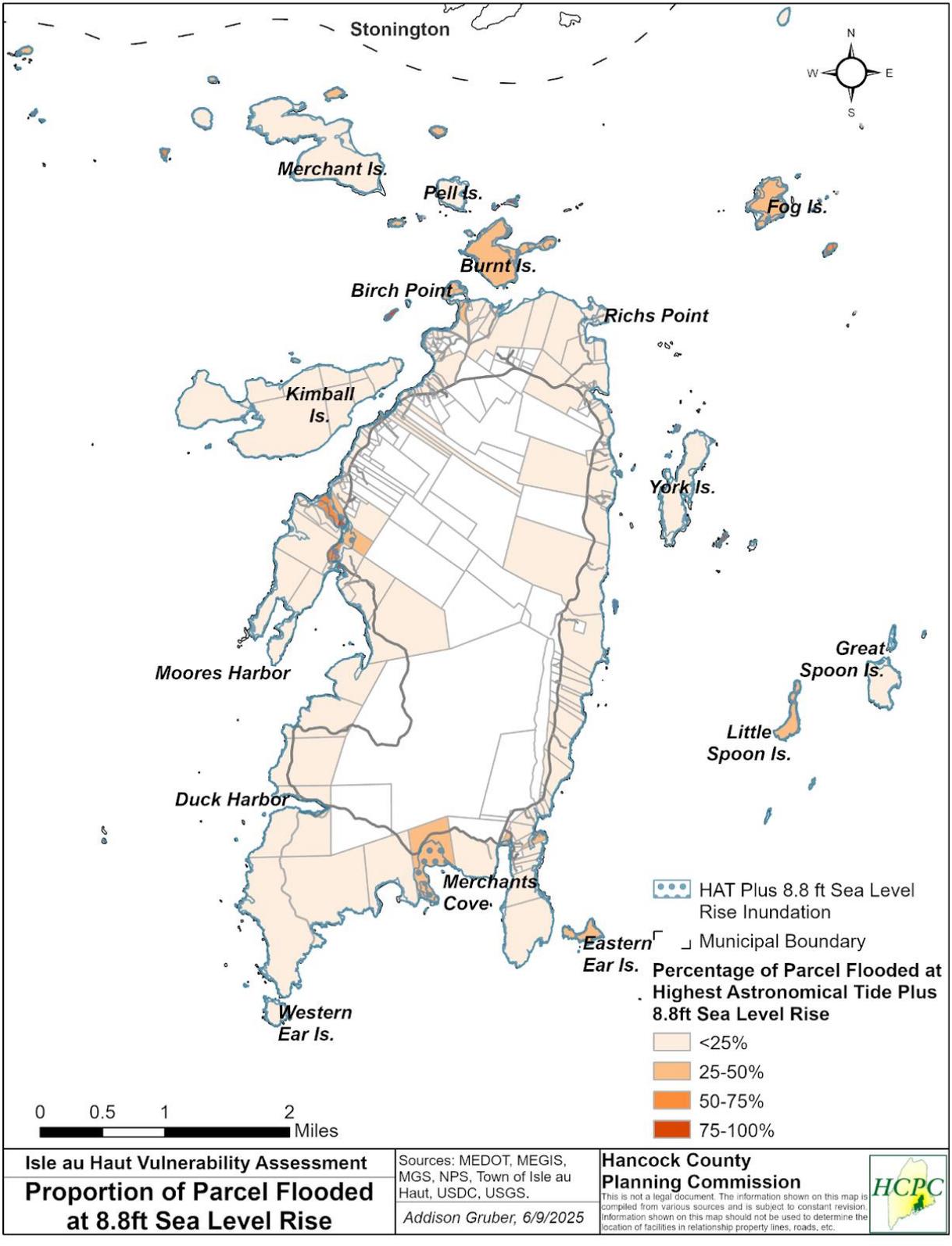
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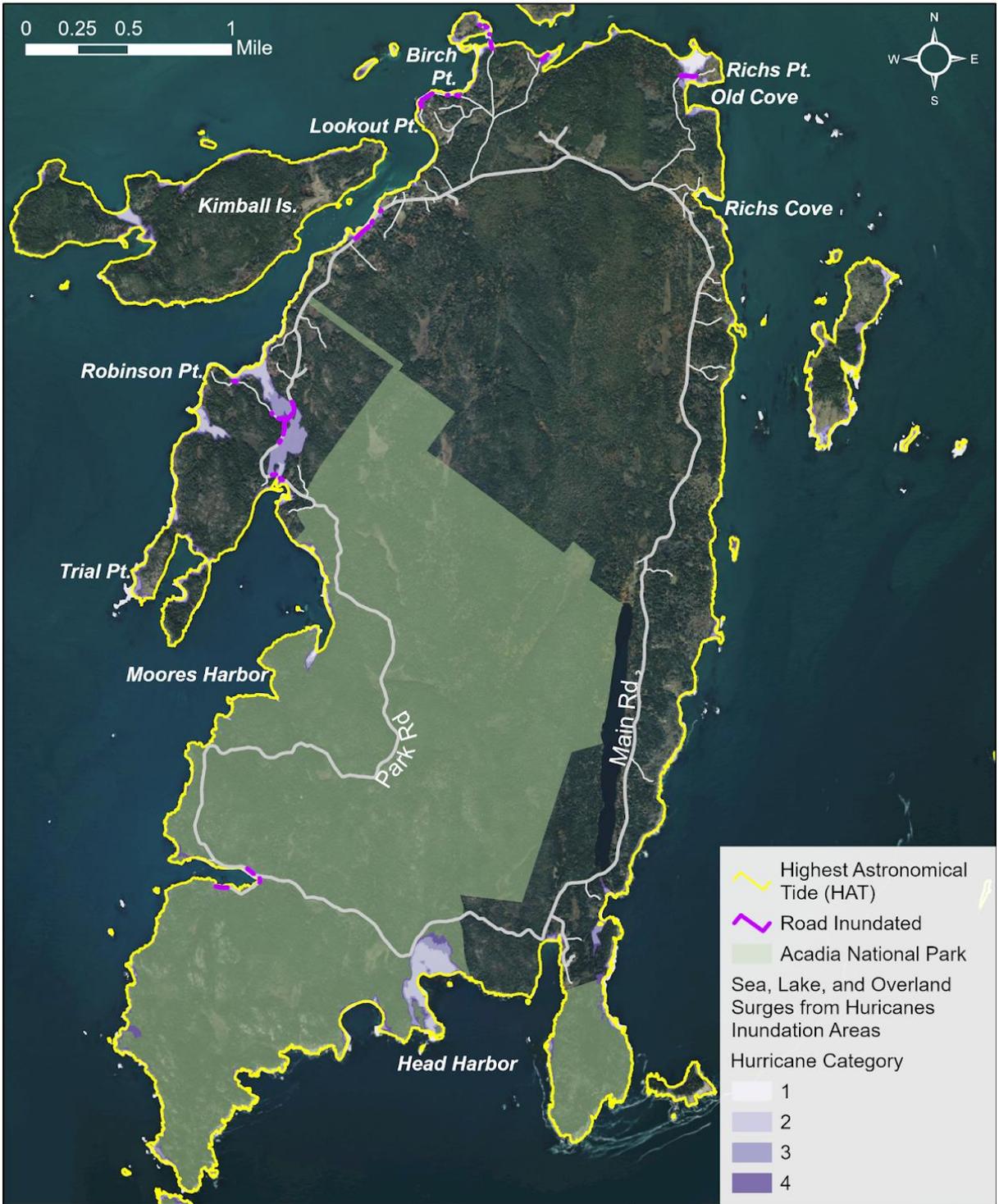




<p>Isle au Haut Vulnerability Assessment Proportion of Parcel Flooded at 8.8ft Sea Level Rise</p>	<p>Sources: MEDOT, MEGIS, MGS, NPS, Town of Isle au Haut, USDC, USGS. Addison Gruber, 6/9/2025</p>	<p>Hancock County Planning Commission <small>This is not a legal document. The information shown on this map is compiled from various sources and is subject to constant revision. Information shown on this map should not be used to determine the location of facilities in relationship property lines, roads, etc.</small></p> 
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Isle au Haut Vulnerability Assessment
Roads & Hurricane Flooding

Sources: MEDOT, MEGIS, MGS, NPS, USGS.
 Addison Gruber, 5/28/2025

Hancock County Planning Commission
 This is not a legal document. The information shown on this map is compiled from various sources and is subject to constant revision. Information shown on this map should not be used to determine the location of facilities in relationship property lines, roads, etc.



Q1 What are two to three things you value most about Isle au Haut?

Answered: 109 Skipped: 2

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1.	100.00%	109
2.	97.25%	106
3.	83.49%	91

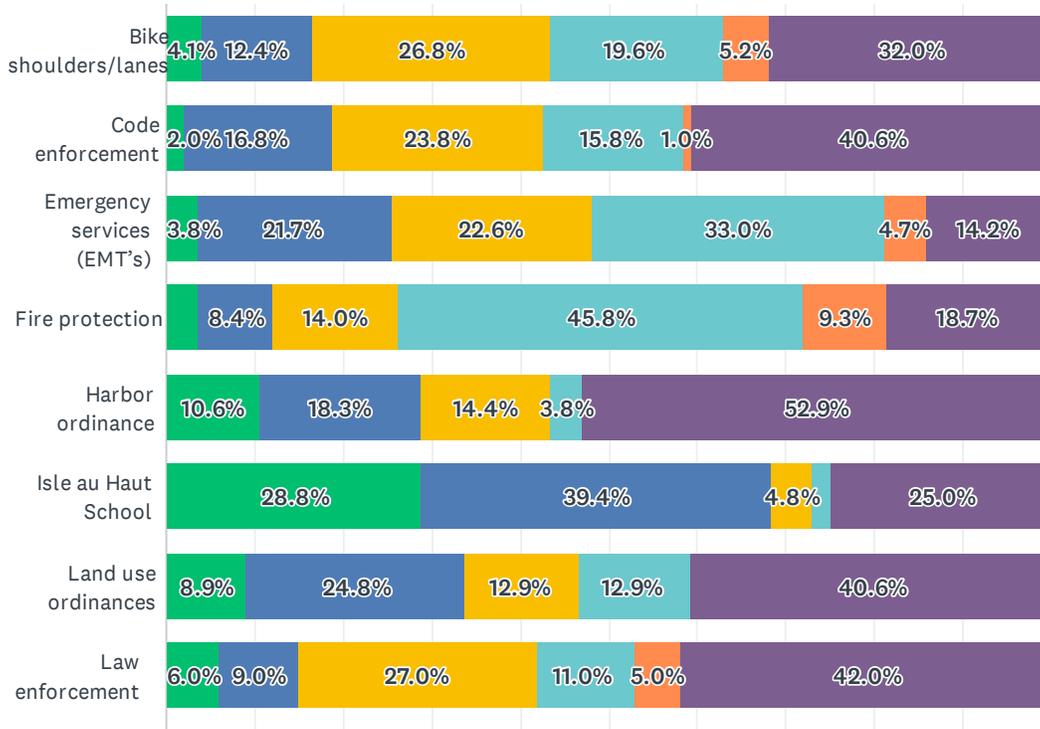
Q2 What are two to three issues that concern you most about Isle au Haut during the next 20 years?

Answered: 107 Skipped: 4

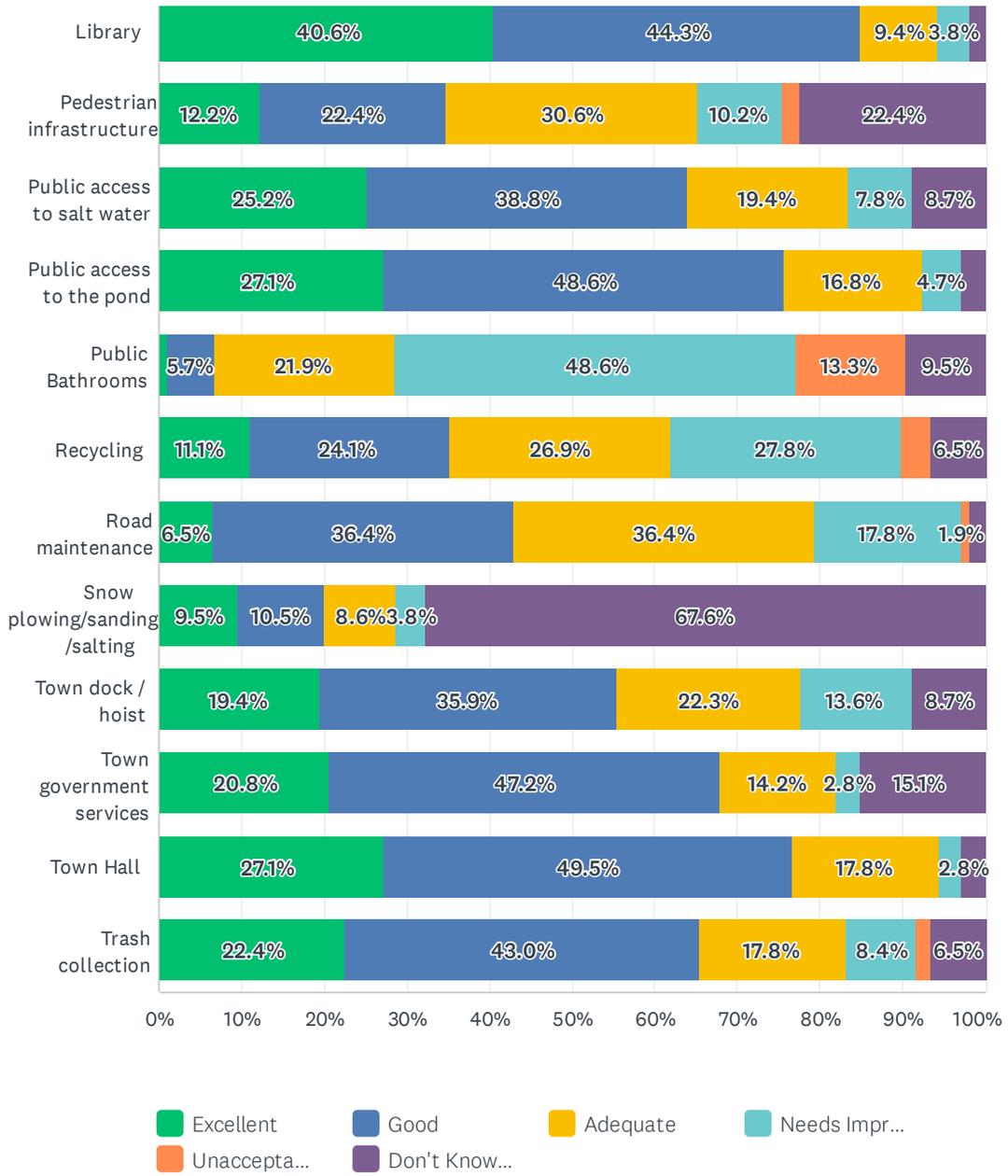
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1.	100.00%	107
2.	89.72%	96
3.	67.29%	72

Q3 Please provide your opinion of the quality of these town services and facilities (Please check only one box per row)

Answered: 108 Skipped: 3



Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey



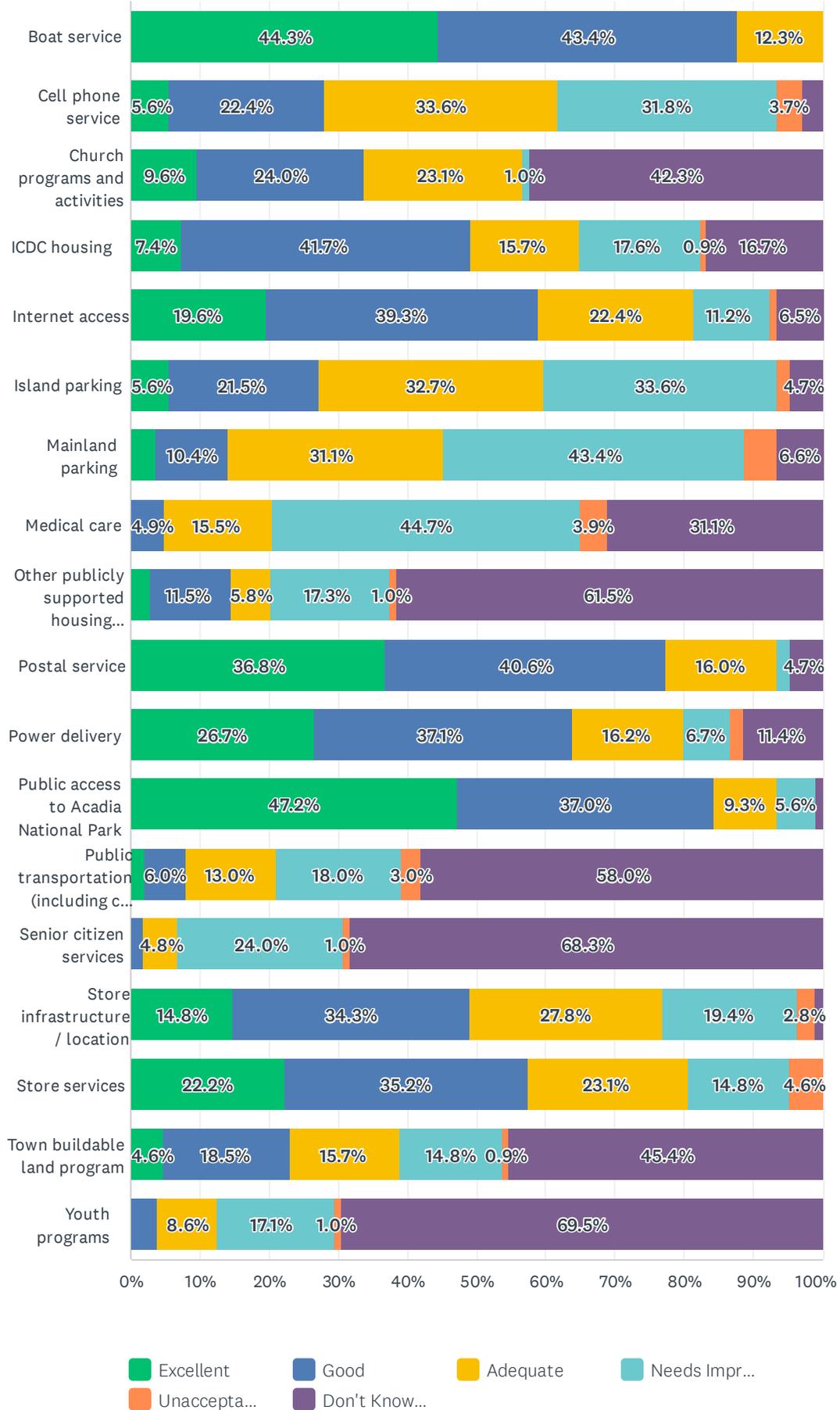
Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	ADEQUATE	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	UNACCEPTABLE	DON'T KNOW/UNSURE	TOTAL
Bike shoulders/lanes	4.1% 4	12.4% 12	26.8% 26	19.6% 19	5.2% 5	32.0% 31	9
Code enforcement	2.0% 2	16.8% 17	23.8% 24	15.8% 16	1.0% 1	40.6% 41	10
Emergency services (EMT's)	3.8% 4	21.7% 23	22.6% 24	33.0% 35	4.7% 5	14.2% 15	10
Fire protection	3.7% 4	8.4% 9	14.0% 15	45.8% 49	9.3% 10	18.7% 20	10
Harbor ordinance	10.6% 11	18.3% 19	14.4% 15	3.8% 4	0.0% 0	52.9% 55	10
Isle au Haut School	28.8% 30	39.4% 41	4.8% 5	1.9% 2	0.0% 0	25.0% 26	10
Land use ordinances	8.9% 9	24.8% 25	12.9% 13	12.9% 13	0.0% 0	40.6% 41	10
Law enforcement	6.0% 6	9.0% 9	27.0% 27	11.0% 11	5.0% 5	42.0% 42	10
Library	40.6% 43	44.3% 47	9.4% 10	3.8% 4	0.0% 0	1.9% 2	10
Pedestrian infrastructure	12.2% 12	22.4% 22	30.6% 30	10.2% 10	2.0% 2	22.4% 22	9
Public access to salt water	25.2% 26	38.8% 40	19.4% 20	7.8% 8	0.0% 0	8.7% 9	10
Public access to the pond	27.1% 29	48.6% 52	16.8% 18	4.7% 5	0.0% 0	2.8% 3	10
Public Bathrooms	1.0% 1	5.7% 6	21.9% 23	48.6% 51	13.3% 14	9.5% 10	10
Recycling	11.1% 12	24.1% 26	26.9% 29	27.8% 30	3.7% 4	6.5% 7	10
Road maintenance	6.5% 7	36.4% 39	36.4% 39	17.8% 19	0.9% 1	1.9% 2	10
Snow plowing/sanding/salting	9.5% 10	10.5% 11	8.6% 9	3.8% 4	0.0% 0	67.6% 71	10
Town dock / hoist	19.4% 20	35.9% 37	22.3% 23	13.6% 14	0.0% 0	8.7% 9	10
Town government services	20.8% 22	47.2% 50	14.2% 15	2.8% 3	0.0% 0	15.1% 16	10
Town Hall	27.1% 29	49.5% 53	17.8% 19	2.8% 3	0.0% 0	2.8% 3	10
Trash collection	22.4% 24	43.0% 46	17.8% 19	8.4% 9	1.9% 2	6.5% 7	10

Q4 Please provide your opinion of the quality of these community services and facilities (Please check only one box per row)

Answered: 108 Skipped: 3

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey



Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

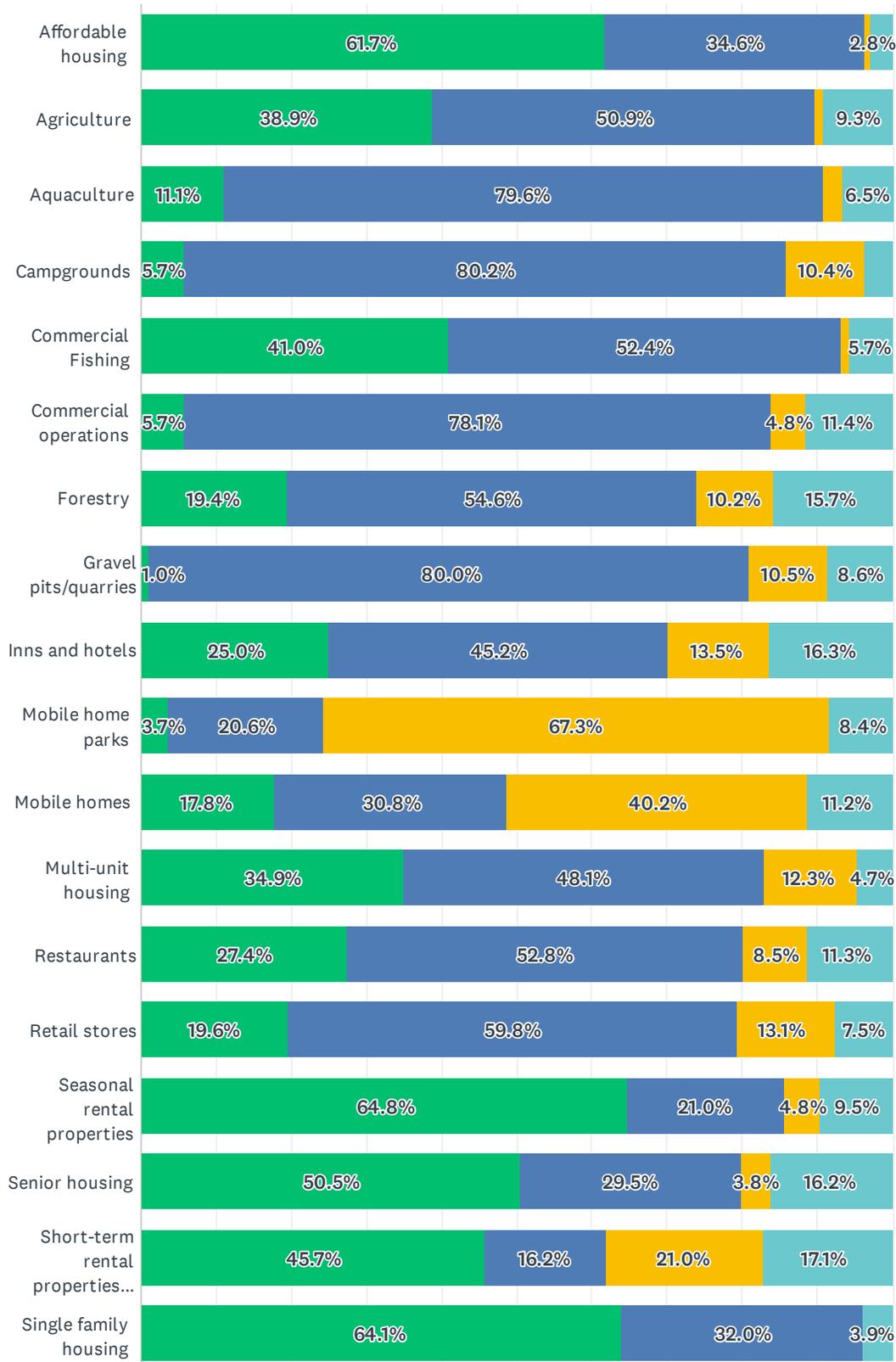
	EXCELLENT	GOOD	ADEQUATE	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	UNACCEPTABLE	DON'T KNOW/UNSURE	TOTAL
Boat service	44.3% 47	43.4% 46	12.3% 13	0.0% 0	0.0% 0	0.0% 0	106
Cell phone service	5.6% 6	22.4% 24	33.6% 36	31.8% 34	3.7% 4	2.8% 3	107
Church programs and activities	9.6% 10	24.0% 25	23.1% 24	1.0% 1	0.0% 0	42.3% 44	104
ICDC housing	7.4% 8	41.7% 45	15.7% 17	17.6% 19	0.9% 1	16.7% 18	108
Internet access	19.6% 21	39.3% 42	22.4% 24	11.2% 12	0.9% 1	6.5% 7	107
Island parking	5.6% 6	21.5% 23	32.7% 35	33.6% 36	1.9% 2	4.7% 5	107
Mainland parking	3.8% 4	10.4% 11	31.1% 33	43.4% 46	4.7% 5	6.6% 7	106
Medical care	0.0% 0	4.9% 5	15.5% 16	44.7% 46	3.9% 4	31.1% 32	103
Other publicly supported housing programs	2.9% 3	11.5% 12	5.8% 6	17.3% 18	1.0% 1	61.5% 64	104
Postal service	36.8% 39	40.6% 43	16.0% 17	1.9% 2	0.0% 0	4.7% 5	106
Power delivery	26.7% 28	37.1% 39	16.2% 17	6.7% 7	1.9% 2	11.4% 12	105
Public access to Acadia National Park	47.2% 51	37.0% 40	9.3% 10	5.6% 6	0.0% 0	0.9% 1	108
Public transportation (including car services)	2.0% 2	6.0% 6	13.0% 13	18.0% 18	3.0% 3	58.0% 58	100
Senior citizen services	0.0% 0	1.9% 2	4.8% 5	24.0% 25	1.0% 1	68.3% 71	104
Store infrastructure / location	14.8% 16	34.3% 37	27.8% 30	19.4% 21	2.8% 3	0.9% 1	108
Store services	22.2% 24	35.2% 38	23.1% 25	14.8% 16	4.6% 5	0.0% 0	108
Town buildable land program	4.6% 5	18.5% 20	15.7% 17	14.8% 16	0.9% 1	45.4% 49	108
Youth programs	0.0% 0	3.8% 4	8.6% 9	17.1% 18	1.0% 1	69.5% 73	105

Q5 If you would like to comment on these or other services and facilities identified as needing improvement, please do so here:

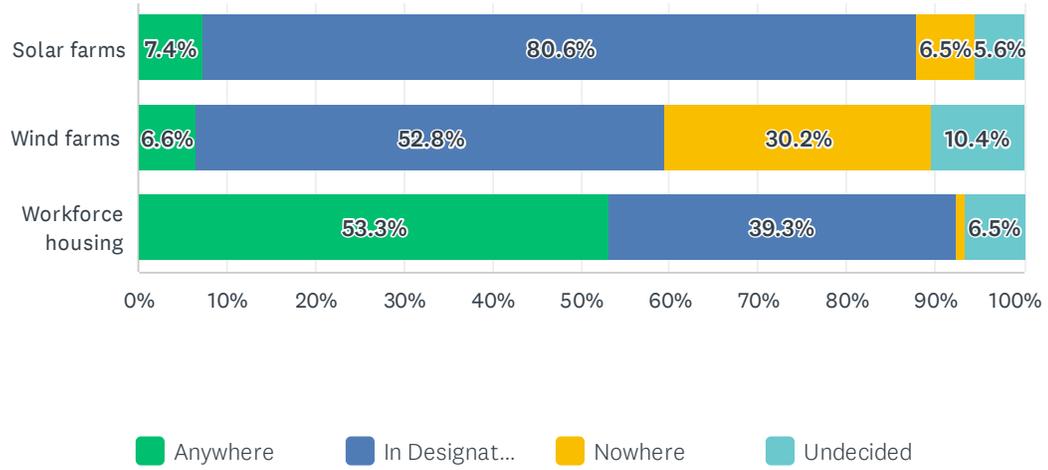
Answered: 39 Skipped: 72

Q6 Please check where you feel it is most appropriate for the following land uses to occur in the future: (Please check only one box per row)

Answered: 109 Skipped: 2



Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey



Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

	ANYWHERE	IN DESIGNATED AREAS	NOWHERE	UNDECIDED	TOTAL
Affordable housing	61.7% 66	34.6% 37	0.9% 1	2.8% 3	107
Agriculture	38.9% 42	50.9% 55	0.9% 1	9.3% 10	108
Aquaculture	11.1% 12	79.6% 86	2.8% 3	6.5% 7	108
Campgrounds	5.7% 6	80.2% 85	10.4% 11	3.8% 4	106
Commercial Fishing	41.0% 43	52.4% 55	1.0% 1	5.7% 6	105
Commercial operations	5.7% 6	78.1% 82	4.8% 5	11.4% 12	105
Forestry	19.4% 21	54.6% 59	10.2% 11	15.7% 17	108
Gravel pits/quarries	1.0% 1	80.0% 84	10.5% 11	8.6% 9	105
Inns and hotels	25.0% 26	45.2% 47	13.5% 14	16.3% 17	104
Mobile home parks	3.7% 4	20.6% 22	67.3% 72	8.4% 9	107
Mobile homes	17.8% 19	30.8% 33	40.2% 43	11.2% 12	107
Multi-unit housing	34.9% 37	48.1% 51	12.3% 13	4.7% 5	106
Restaurants	27.4% 29	52.8% 56	8.5% 9	11.3% 12	106
Retail stores	19.6% 21	59.8% 64	13.1% 14	7.5% 8	107
Seasonal rental properties	64.8% 68	21.0% 22	4.8% 5	9.5% 10	105
Senior housing	50.5% 53	29.5% 31	3.8% 4	16.2% 17	105
Short-term rental properties (AirBnBs, Vrbo, etc)	45.7% 48	16.2% 17	21.0% 22	17.1% 18	105
Single family housing	64.1% 66	32.0% 33	0.0% 0	3.9% 4	103
Solar farms	7.4% 8	80.6% 87	6.5% 7	5.6% 6	108
Wind farms	6.6% 7	52.8% 56	30.2% 32	10.4% 11	106
Workforce housing	53.3% 57	39.3% 42	0.9% 1	6.5% 7	107

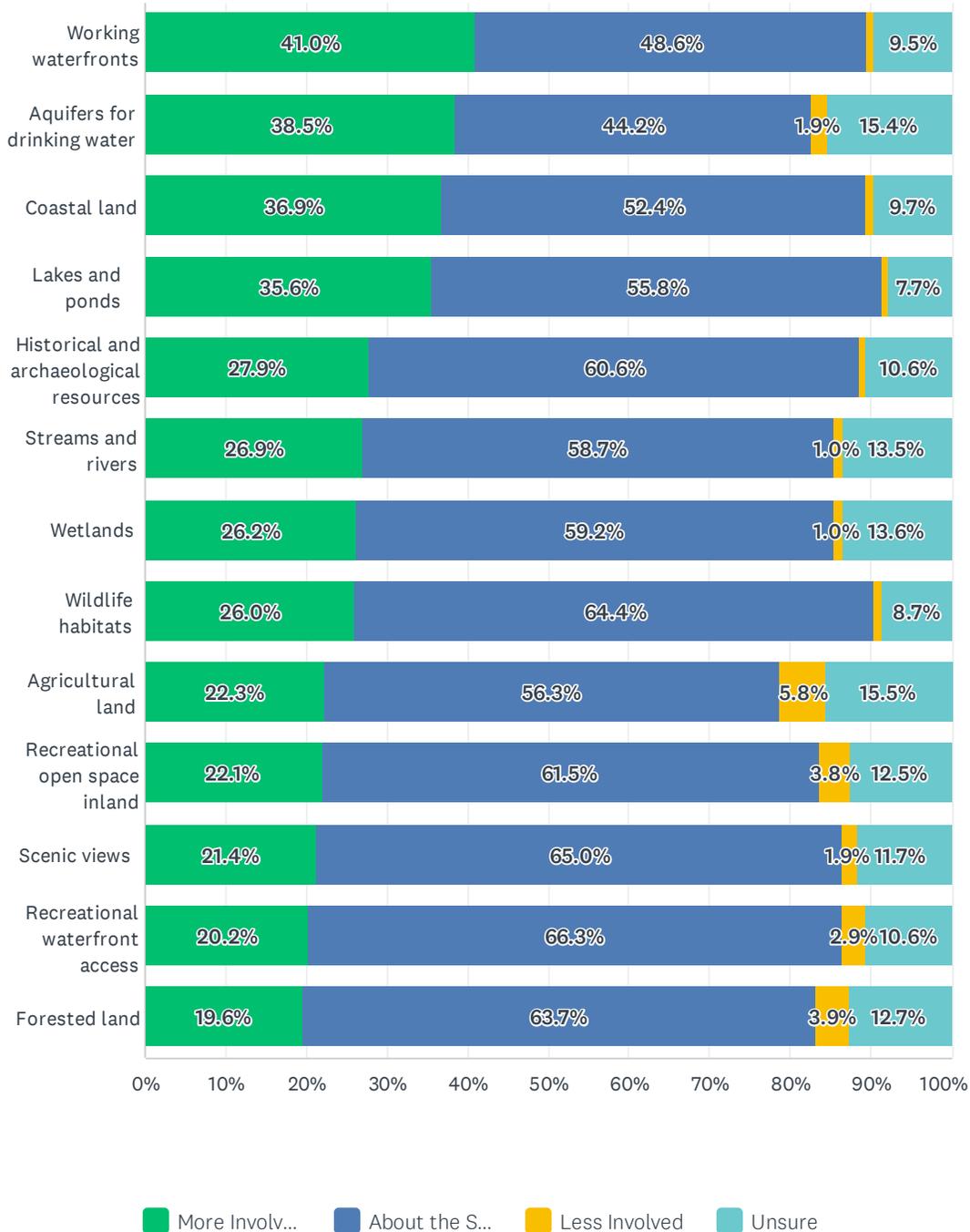
Q7 Are there any other land uses that you think should be more actively managed?

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

Answered: 26 Skipped: 85

Q8 How involved should the Town be in protecting the following: (Please check only one box per row)

Answered: 105 Skipped: 6



Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

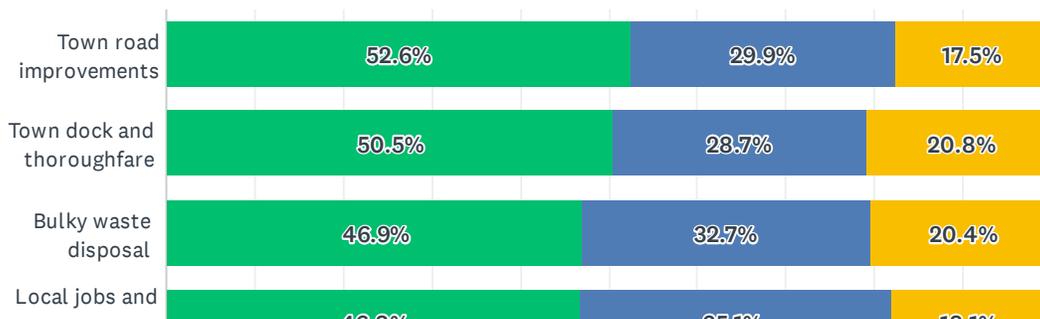
	MORE INVOLVED	ABOUT THE SAME	LESS INVOLVED	UNSURE	TOTAL
Working waterfronts	41.0% 43	48.6% 51	1.0% 1	9.5% 10	105
Aquifers for drinking water	38.5% 40	44.2% 46	1.9% 2	15.4% 16	104
Coastal land	36.9% 38	52.4% 54	1.0% 1	9.7% 10	103
Lakes and ponds	35.6% 37	55.8% 58	1.0% 1	7.7% 8	104
Historical and archaeological resources	27.9% 29	60.6% 63	1.0% 1	10.6% 11	104
Streams and rivers	26.9% 28	58.7% 61	1.0% 1	13.5% 14	104
Wetlands	26.2% 27	59.2% 61	1.0% 1	13.6% 14	103
Wildlife habitats	26.0% 27	64.4% 67	1.0% 1	8.7% 9	104
Agricultural land	22.3% 23	56.3% 58	5.8% 6	15.5% 16	103
Recreational open space inland	22.1% 23	61.5% 64	3.8% 4	12.5% 13	104
Scenic views	21.4% 22	65.0% 67	1.9% 2	11.7% 12	103
Recreational waterfront access	20.2% 21	66.3% 69	2.9% 3	10.6% 11	104
Forested land	19.6% 20	63.7% 65	3.9% 4	12.7% 13	102

Q9 Is there anything else you think the Town should or should not be involved in protecting?

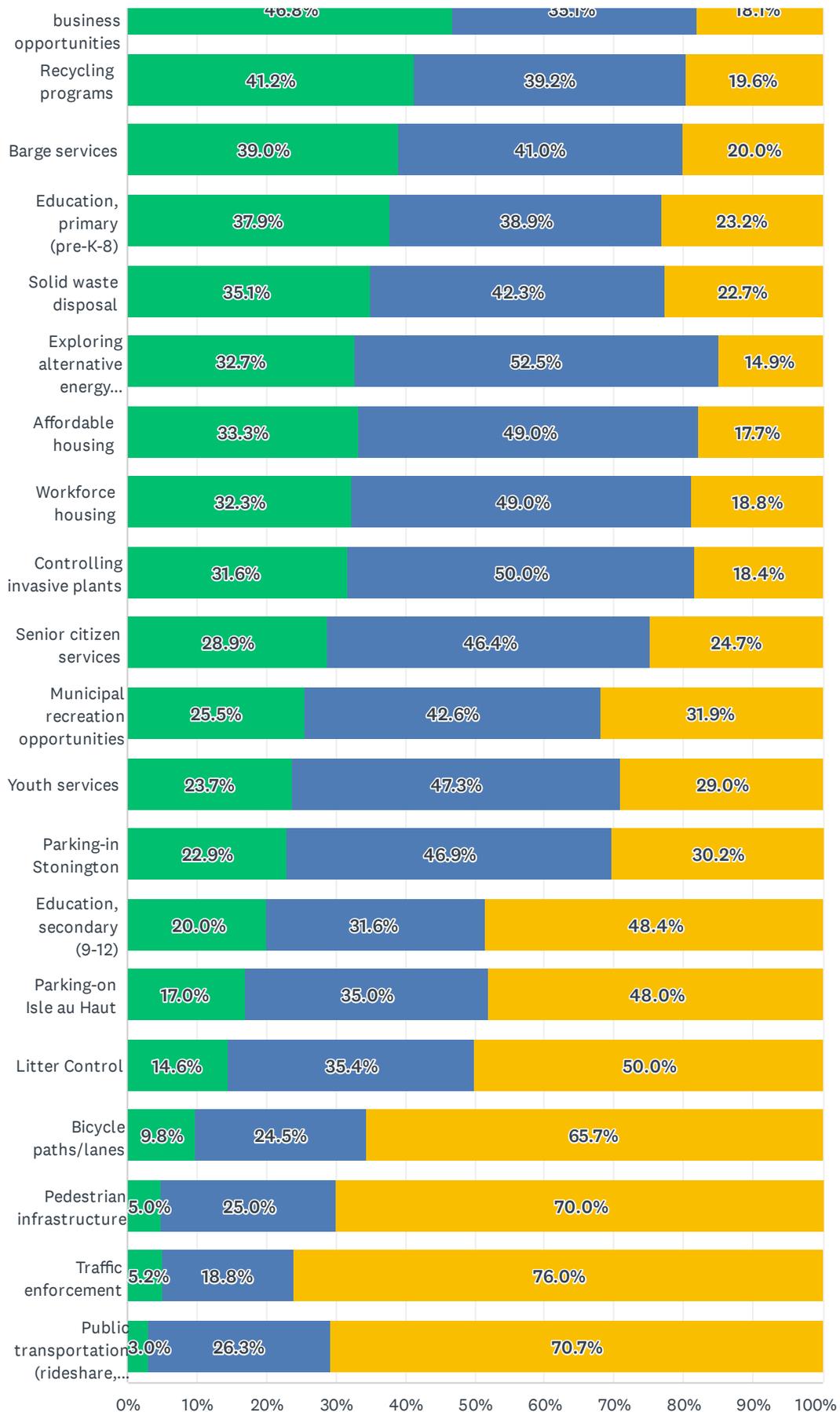
Answered: 21 Skipped: 90

Q10 I would like the Town to invest more in: (Please check one box per row)

Answered: 107 Skipped: 4



Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey



Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

YES - Includ... YES - But o... NO

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

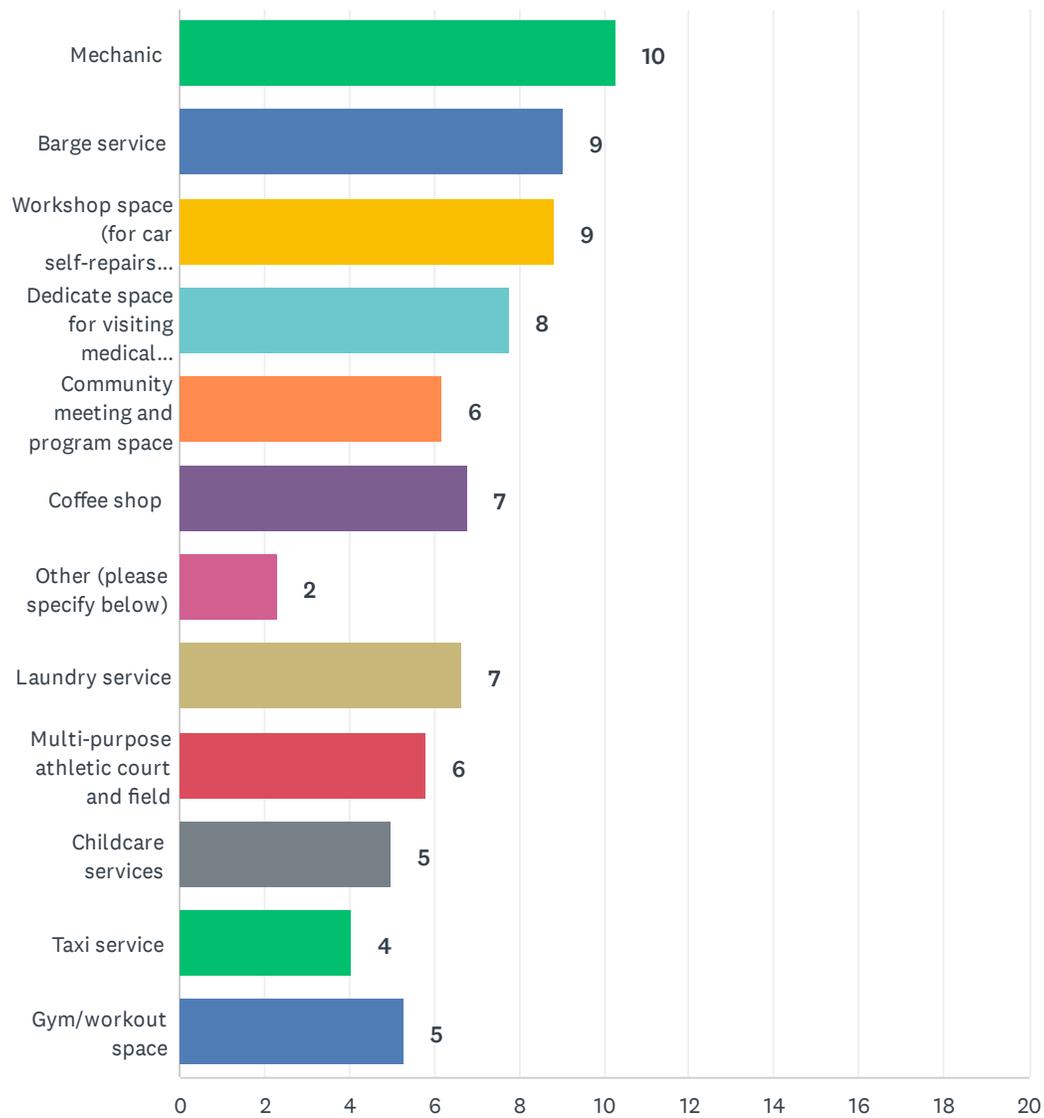
	YES - INCLUDING RAISING PROPERTY TAXES	YES - BUT ONLY IF GRANTS/SUBSIDIES/PRIVATE DONATIONS REDUCE COST	NO	TOTAL
Town road improvements	52.6% 51	29.9% 29	17.5% 17	97
Town dock and thoroughfare	50.5% 51	28.7% 29	20.8% 21	101
Bulky waste disposal	46.9% 46	32.7% 32	20.4% 20	98
Local jobs and business opportunities	46.8% 44	35.1% 33	18.1% 17	94
Recycling programs	41.2% 40	39.2% 38	19.6% 19	97
Barge services	39.0% 39	41.0% 41	20.0% 20	100
Education, primary (pre- K-8)	37.9% 36	38.9% 37	23.2% 22	95
Solid waste disposal	35.1% 34	42.3% 41	22.7% 22	97
Exploring alternative energy development	32.7% 33	52.5% 53	14.9% 15	101
Affordable housing	33.3% 32	49.0% 47	17.7% 17	96
Workforce housing	32.3% 31	49.0% 47	18.8% 18	96
Controlling invasive plants	31.6% 31	50.0% 49	18.4% 18	98
Senior citizen services	28.9% 28	46.4% 45	24.7% 24	97
Municipal recreation opportunities	25.5% 24	42.6% 40	31.9% 30	94
Youth services	23.7% 22	47.3% 44	29.0% 27	93
Parking-in Stonington	22.9% 22	46.9% 45	30.2% 29	96
Education, secondary (9- 12)	20.0% 19	31.6% 30	48.4% 46	95
Parking-on Isle au Haut	17.0% 17	35.0% 35	48.0% 48	100
Litter Control	14.6% 14	35.4% 34	50.0% 48	96
Bicycle paths/lanes	9.8% 10	24.5% 25	65.7% 67	102
Pedestrian infrastructure	5.0% 5	25.0% 25	70.0% 70	100
Traffic enforcement	5.2% 5	18.8% 18	76.0% 73	96
Public transportation	3.0%	26.3%	70.7%	

Q11 Is there anything else you think the Town should invest in? Or would like to comment on?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 92

Q12 Please rank the following businesses and services by their importance to the future of Isle au Haut, with 1 being most important.

Answered: 107 Skipped: 4



Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL	SCORE
Mechanic	38% 41	21% 23	18% 19	4% 4	7% 7	6% 6	1% 1	2% 2	4% 4	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	107	10.29
Barge service	18% 19	15% 16	16% 17	11% 12	20% 21	6% 6	5% 5	6% 6	3% 3	1% 1	1% 1	0% 0	107	9.06
Workshop space (for car self-repairs, etc.)	9% 10	26% 28	13% 14	14% 15	9% 10	7% 8	8% 9	5% 5	4% 4	3% 3	1% 1	0% 0	107	8.83
Dedicate space for visiting medical professionals	9% 10	7% 8	13% 14	15% 16	14% 15	7% 7	10% 11	6% 6	12% 13	5% 5	2% 2	0% 0	107	7.74
Community meeting and program space	7% 8	6% 6	7% 8	7% 7	11% 12	9% 10	9% 10	10% 11	3% 3	7% 7	18% 19	6% 6	107	6.20
Coffee shop	6% 6	11% 12	7% 7	15% 16	7% 8	10% 11	7% 8	7% 8	7% 7	8% 9	7% 8	7% 7	107	6.78
Other (please specify below)	5% 5	2% 2	1% 1	1% 1	1% 1	2% 2	4% 4	0% 0	0% 0	2% 2	4% 4	79% 85	107	2.30
Laundry service	3% 3	6% 6	14% 15	10% 11	7% 7	17% 18	2% 2	15% 16	9% 10	10% 11	7% 7	1% 1	107	6.66
Multi-purpose athletic court and field	2% 2	0% 0	4% 4	9% 10	9% 10	12% 13	18% 19	13% 14	13% 14	14% 15	6% 6	0% 0	107	5.81
Childcare services	2% 2	1% 1	3% 3	6% 6	8% 9	7% 7	14% 15	11% 12	10% 11	21% 23	14% 15	3% 3	107	5.01
Taxi service	1% 1	0% 0	1% 1	3% 3	2% 2	11% 12	8% 9	7% 8	16% 17	15% 16	34% 36	2% 2	107	4.05
Gym/workout space	0% 0	5% 5	4% 4	6% 6	5% 5	7% 7	13% 14	18% 19	20% 21	14% 15	7% 8	3% 3	107	5.28

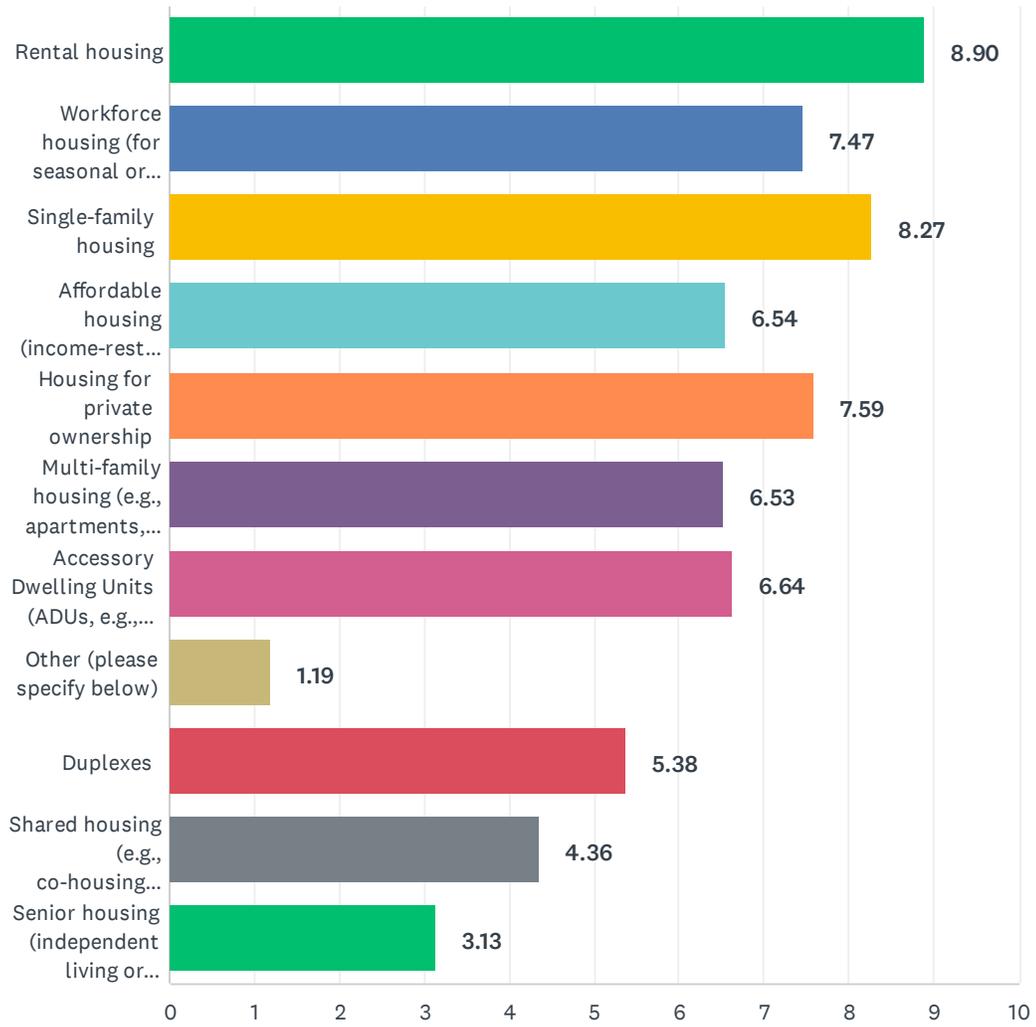
Q13 If you answered "other," please specify below:

Answered: 22 Skipped: 89

Q14 Please rank the following types of housing development you feel should be prioritized, with 1 being the highest priority.

Answered: 104 Skipped: 7

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey



Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Rental housing	30.77% 32	15.38% 16	19.23% 20	15.38% 16	7.69% 8	1.92% 2	3.85% 4	0.96% 1	3.85% 4	0.96% 1	0.00% 0
Workforce housing (for seasonal or essential workers)	22.12% 23	13.46% 14	9.62% 10	6.73% 7	10.58% 11	8.65% 9	5.77% 6	10.58% 11	8.65% 9	1.92% 2	1.92% 2
Single-family housing	17.31% 18	11.54% 12	18.27% 19	22.12% 23	10.58% 11	10.58% 11	3.85% 4	5.77% 6	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Affordable housing (income-restricted)	12.50% 13	12.50% 13	10.58% 11	9.62% 10	7.69% 8	4.81% 5	3.85% 4	7.69% 8	25.00% 26	5.77% 6	0.00% 0
Housing for private ownership	9.62% 10	26.92% 28	12.50% 13	8.65% 9	10.58% 11	10.58% 11	1.92% 2	6.73% 7	4.81% 5	5.77% 6	1.92% 2
Multi-family housing (e.g., apartments, townhouses)	3.85% 4	7.69% 8	16.35% 17	10.58% 11	15.38% 16	9.62% 10	11.54% 12	9.62% 10	9.62% 10	5.77% 6	0.00% 0
Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs, e.g., in-law apartments, tiny homes)	2.88% 3	7.69% 8	10.58% 11	12.50% 13	17.31% 18	18.27% 19	15.38% 16	9.62% 10	2.88% 3	2.88% 3	0.00% 0
Other (please specify below)	0.96% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.96% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	1.92% 2	0.96% 1	95.19% 99
Duplexes	0.00% 0	0.96% 1	0.96% 1	9.62% 10	10.58% 11	25.96% 27	25.00% 26	11.54% 12	11.54% 12	2.88% 3	0.96% 1
Shared housing (e.g., co-housing communities)	0.00% 0	1.92% 2	1.92% 2	2.88% 3	6.73% 7	5.77% 6	18.27% 19	27.88% 29	22.12% 23	12.50% 13	0.00% 0
Senior housing (independent living or assisted living)	0.00% 0	1.92% 2	0.00% 0	1.92% 2	2.88% 3	2.88% 3	10.58% 11	9.62% 10	9.62% 10	60.58% 63	0.00% 0

Q15 If you answered "other," please specify below:

Answered: 8 Skipped: 103

Q16 What are your barriers to developing housing? What would incentives be?

Answered: 50 Skipped: 61

Q17 What are the biggest benefits you feel the Store provides the community?

Answered: 97 Skipped: 14

Q18 What are the biggest challenges facing the Store in the next 10 years?

Answered: 91 Skipped: 20

Q19 What are the biggest benefits you feel the School provides the community?

Answered: 92 Skipped: 19

Q20 What are the biggest challenges facing the School in the next 10 years?

Answered: 88 Skipped: 23

Q21 What are the biggest benefits you feel the Power Company provides the community?

Answered: 82 Skipped: 29

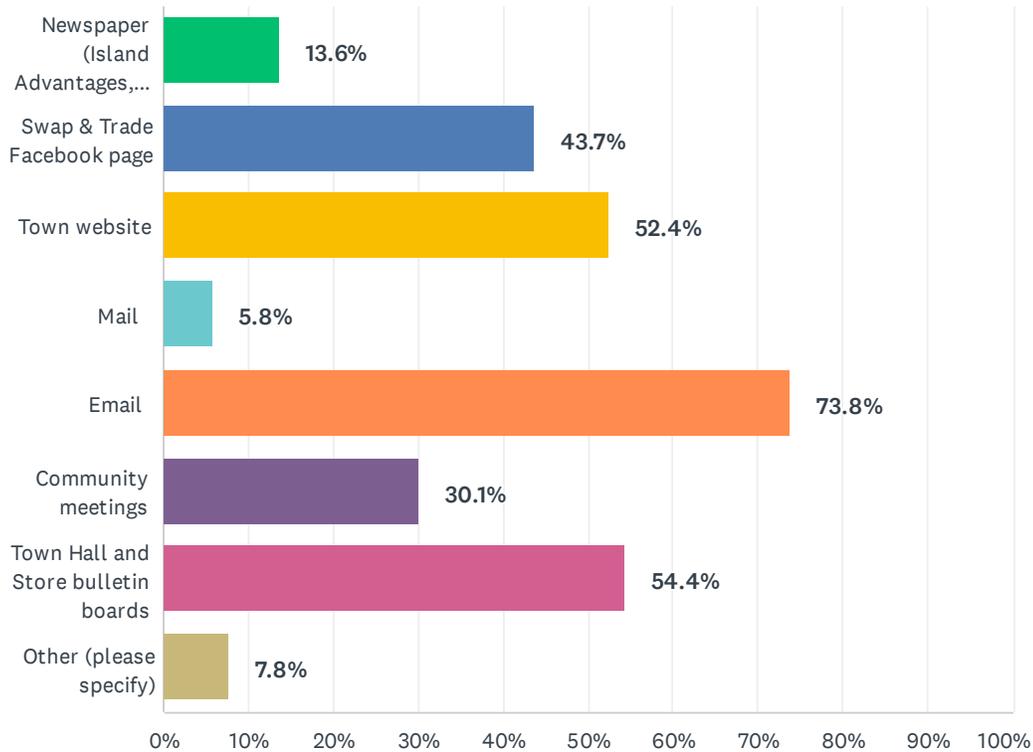
Q22 What are the biggest challenges facing the Power Company in the next 10 years?

Answered: 79 Skipped: 32

Q23 How would you prefer to learn about municipal services and events?

Answered: 103 Skipped: 8

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Newspaper (Island Advantages, Working Waterfront, etc)	13.6%	14
Swap & Trade Facebook page	43.7%	45
Town website	52.4%	54
Mail	5.8%	6
Email	73.8%	76
Community meetings	30.1%	31
Town Hall and Store bulletin boards	54.4%	56
Other (please specify)	7.8%	8
Total Respondents: 103		

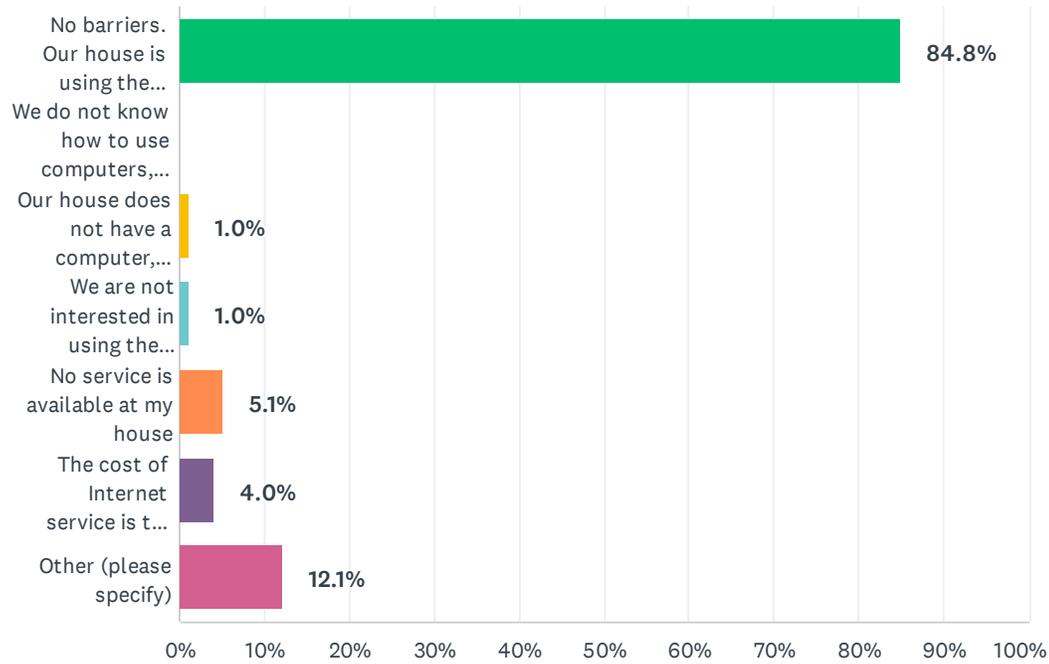
Q24 What can the Town government do to improve service to, and communication with, residents?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 62

Q25 What barriers, if any, prevent you from using the internet?

Answered: 99 Skipped: 12

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

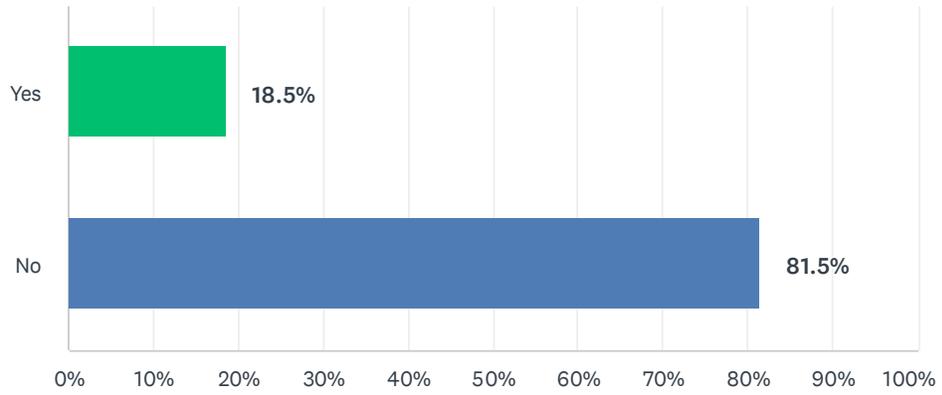


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No barriers. Our house is using the internet.	84.8%	84
We do not know how to use computers, tablets or other internet devices	0.0%	0
Our house does not have a computer, tablet or or other internet device	1.0%	1
We are not interested in using the internet	1.0%	1
No service is available at my house	5.1%	5
The cost of Internet service is too high	4.0%	4
Other (please specify)	12.1%	12
Total Respondents: 99		

Q26 Would you be interested in educational opportunities (workshops, courses) to improve your computer skills needed to live, learn, and work?

Answered: 92 Skipped: 19

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

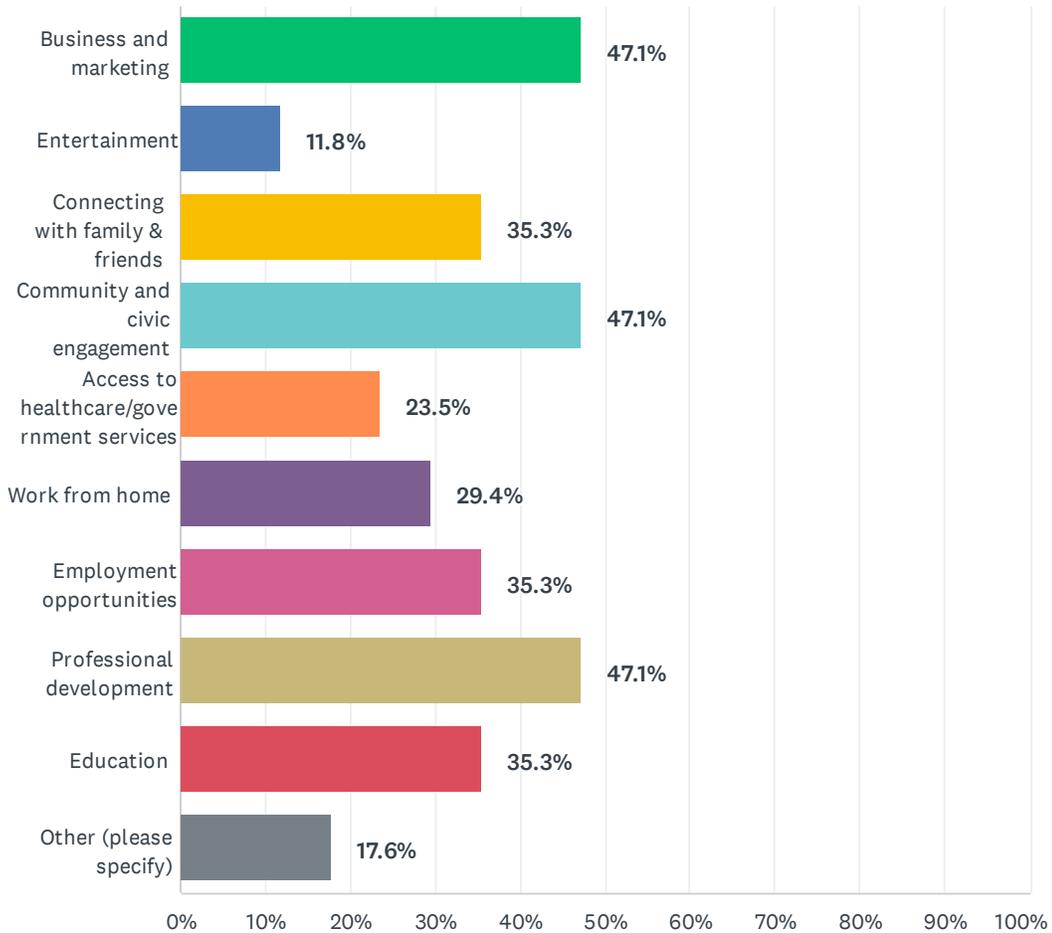


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	18.5%	17
No	81.5%	75
TOTAL		92

Q27 If you answered yes, what types of educational opportunities would be of interest to you?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 94

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

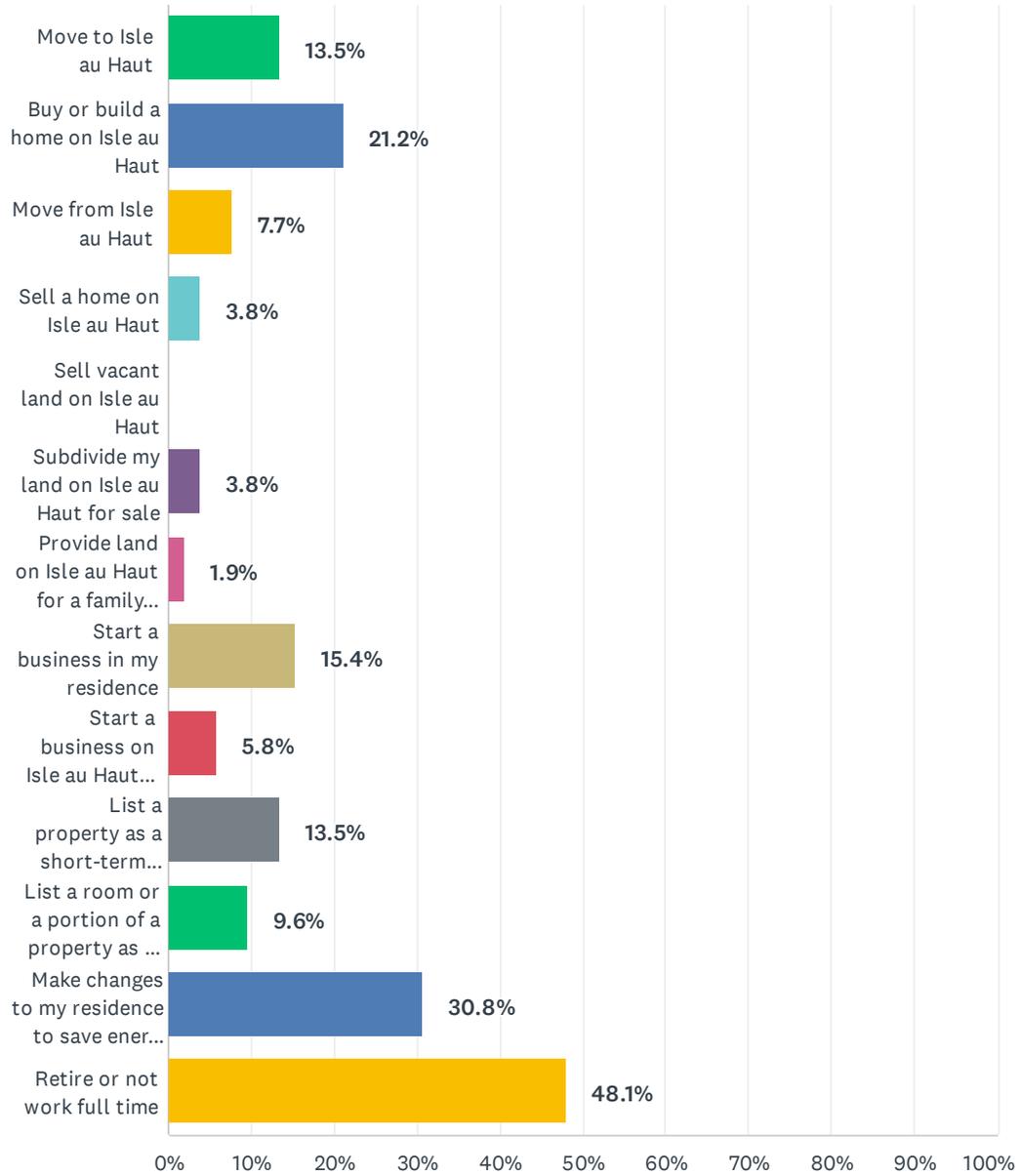


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Business and marketing	47.1%	8
Entertainment	11.8%	2
Connecting with family & friends	35.3%	6
Community and civic engagement	47.1%	8
Access to healthcare/government services	23.5%	4
Work from home	29.4%	5
Employment opportunities	35.3%	6
Professional development	47.1%	8
Education	35.3%	6
Other (please specify)	17.6%	3
Total Respondents: 17		

**Q28 Which of the following do you expect to do over the next 5 years?
(Check all that apply)**

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

Answered: 52 Skipped: 59

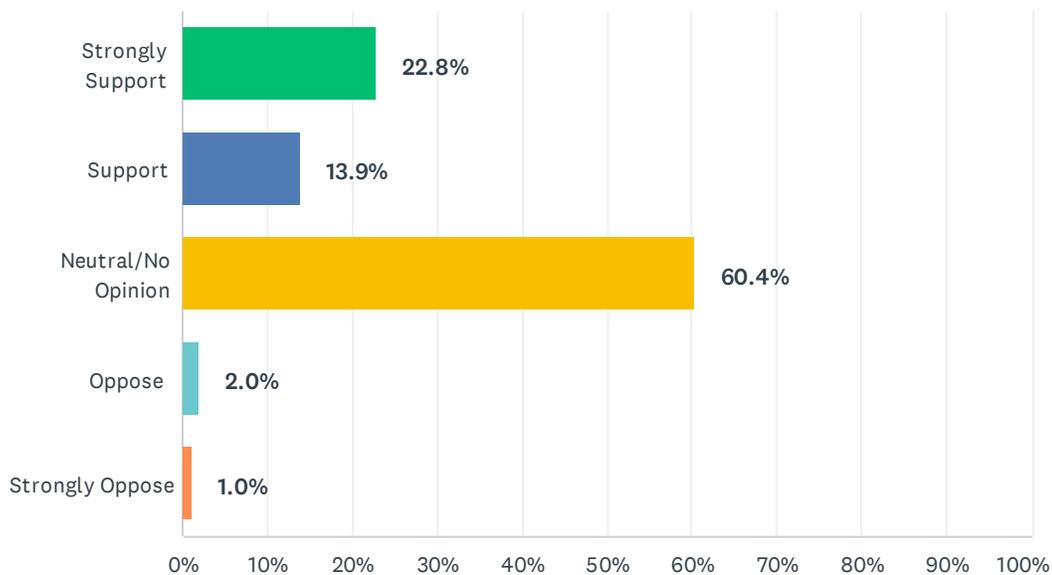


Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Move to Isle au Haut	13.5%	7
Buy or build a home on Isle au Haut	21.2%	11
Move from Isle au Haut	7.7%	4
Sell a home on Isle au Haut	3.8%	2
Sell vacant land on Isle au Haut	0.0%	0
Subdivide my land on Isle au Haut for sale	3.8%	2
Provide land on Isle au Haut for a family member to build a home	1.9%	1
Start a business in my residence	15.4%	8
Start a business on Isle au Haut outside my residence	5.8%	3
List a property as a short-term rental (e.g., AirBnB/VRBO)	13.5%	7
List a room or a portion of a property as a short-term rental (e.g., AirBnB/VRBO)	9.6%	5
Make changes to my residence to save energy or switch to a renewable source	30.8%	16
Retire or not work full time	48.1%	25
Total Respondents: 52		

Q29 Do you support the idea of the Town of Isle au Haut moving from Knox County to Hancock County?

Answered: 101 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly Support	22.8%	23
Support	13.9%	14
Neutral/No Opinion	60.4%	61
Oppose	2.0%	2
Strongly Oppose	1.0%	1
TOTAL		101

Q30 What potential benefits or challenges do you think a transition from Knox County to Hancock County would pose?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 50

Q31 What issues do you anticipate the Town of Isle au Haut will face during the next decade? During the next 20 years?

Answered: 81 Skipped: 30

Q32 What else do you want to share with the Comprehensive Plan Committee to help make sure the plan is useful?

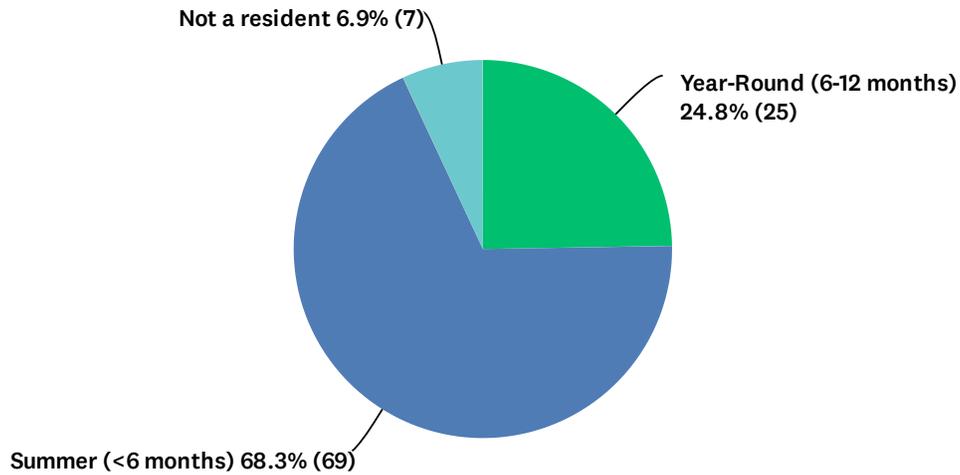
Answered: 26 Skipped: 85

Q33 How many months out of the year do you spend on Isle au Haut?

Answered: 97 Skipped: 14

Q34 What type of Isle au Haut resident are you?(Select One Answer Only)

Answered: 101 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Year-Round (6-12 months)	24.8%	25
Summer (<6 months)	68.3%	69
Property Owner	0.0%	0
Not a resident	6.9%	7
TOTAL		101

Q35 How many years have you been visiting or living on Isle au Haut?

Answered: 97 Skipped: 14

Q36 Years visiting seasonally:

Answered: 84 Skipped: 27

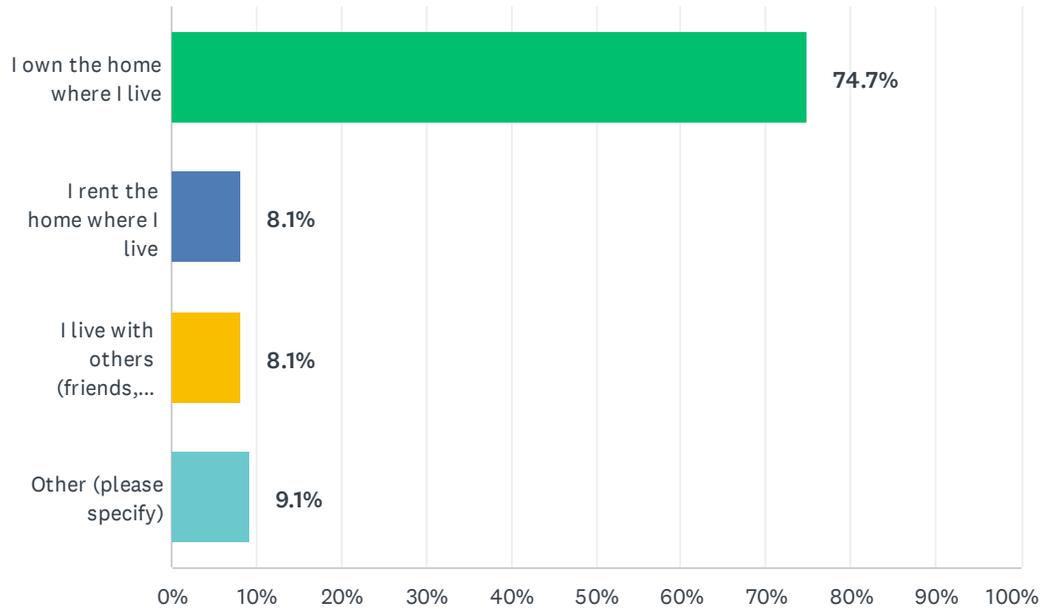
Q37 Years living on Isle au Haut year-round:

Answered: 79 Skipped: 32

Q38 How would you best describe your current living situation when on Island?

Answered: 99 Skipped: 12

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I own the home where I live	74.7%	74
I rent the home where I live	8.1%	8
I live with others (friends, family, etc.)	8.1%	8
Other (please specify)	9.1%	9
TOTAL		99

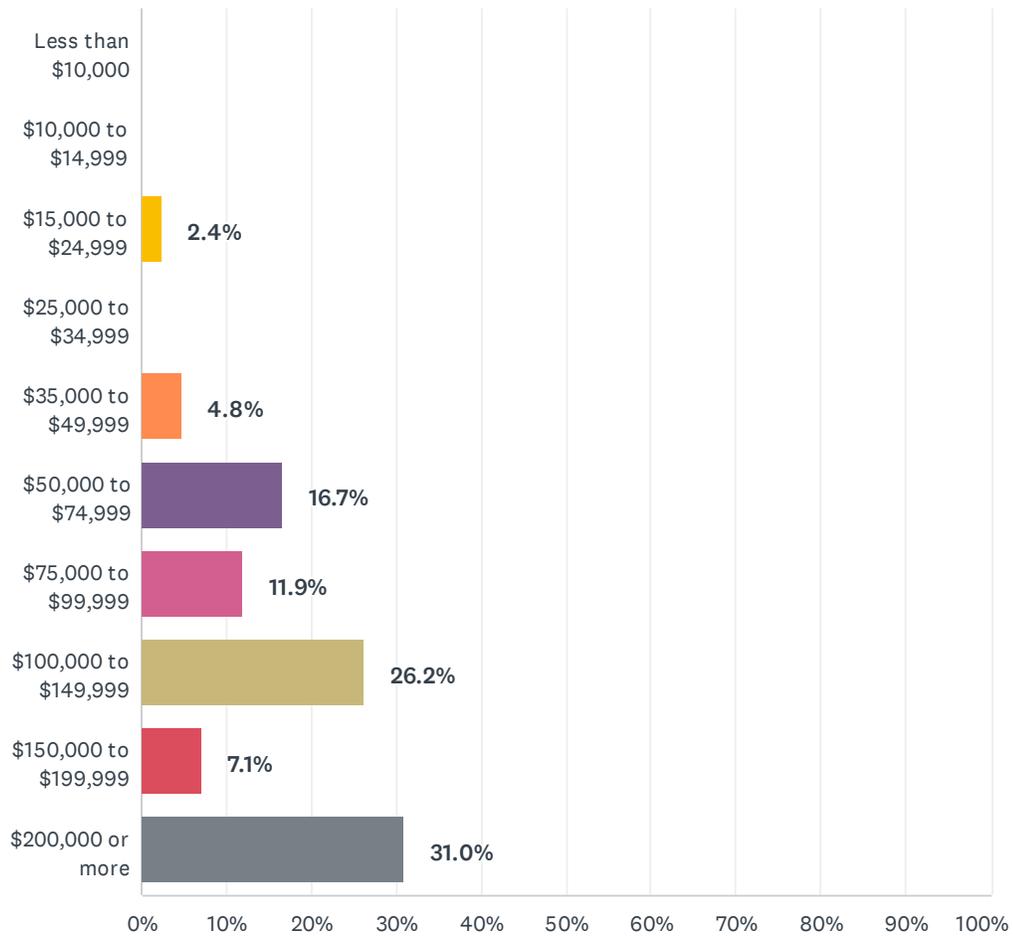
Q39 How old are you?

Answered: 93 Skipped: 18

Q40 What is your annual household income?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 27

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

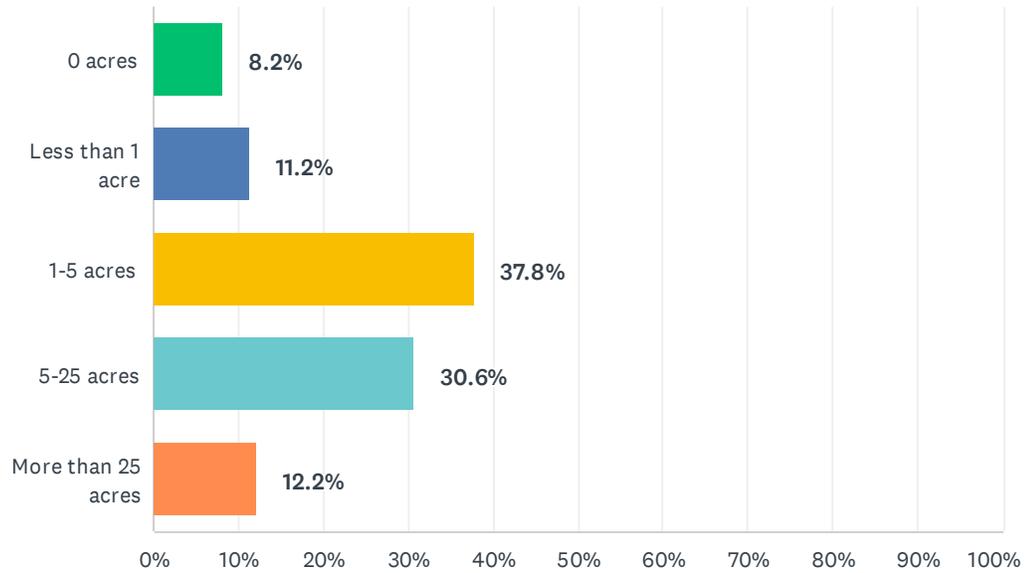


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than \$10,000	0.0%	0
\$10,000 to \$14,999	0.0%	0
\$15,000 to \$24,999	2.4%	2
\$25,000 to \$34,999	0.0%	0
\$35,000 to \$49,999	4.8%	4
\$50,000 to \$74,999	16.7%	14
\$75,000 to \$99,999	11.9%	10
\$100,000 to \$149,999	26.2%	22
\$150,000 to \$199,999	7.1%	6
\$200,000 or more	31.0%	26
TOTAL		84

Q41 How much land do you own on Isle au Haut

Answered: 98 Skipped: 13

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0 acres	8.2% 8
Less than 1 acre	11.2% 11
1-5 acres	37.8% 37
5-25 acres	30.6% 30
More than 25 acres	12.2% 12
TOTAL	98

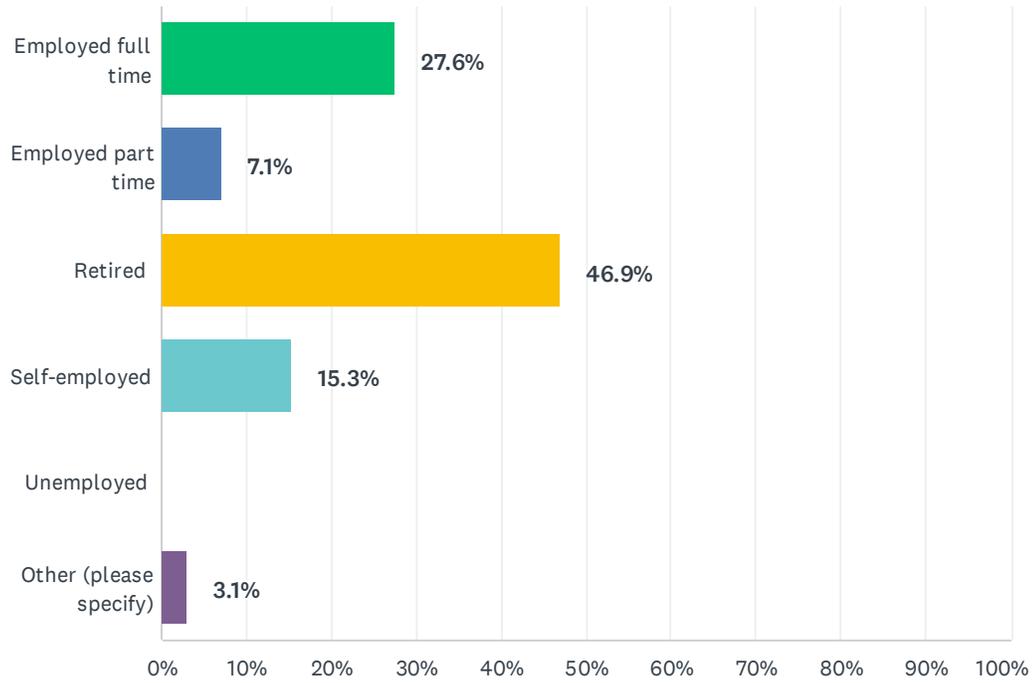
Q42 What is your household size? (Number of people living in your home)

Answered: 93 Skipped: 18

Q43 What is your employment status? (Select One Answer Only)

Answered: 98 Skipped: 13

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Employed full time	27.6%	27
Employed part time	7.1%	7
Retired	46.9%	46
Self-employed	15.3%	15
Unemployed	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)	3.1%	3
TOTAL		98

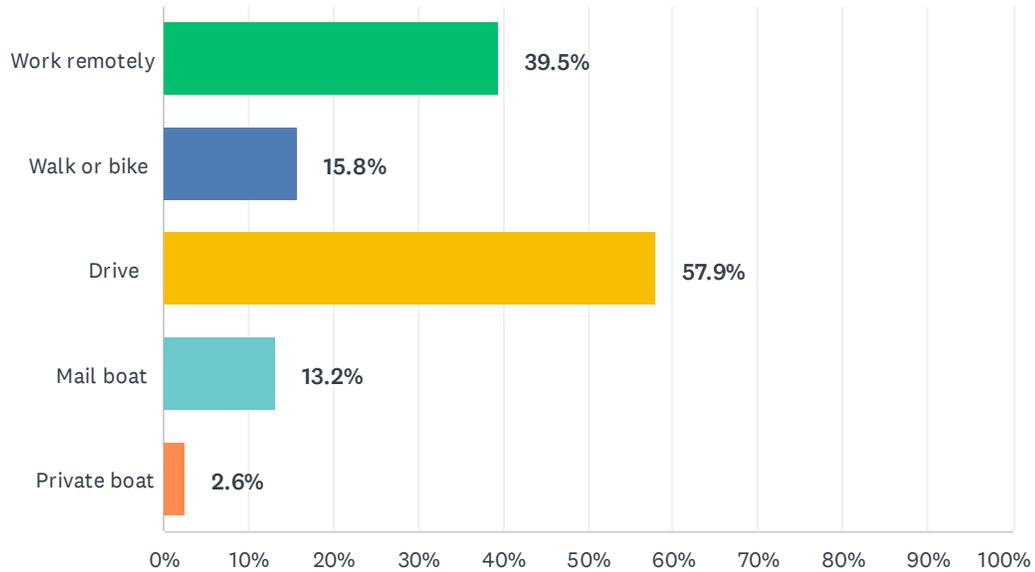
Q44 What is your primary occupation:

Answered: 61 Skipped: 50

Q45 If you are a year-round resident or work on island, how do you commute to work? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 38 Skipped: 73

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Work remotely	39.5%	15
Walk or bike	15.8%	6
Drive	57.9%	22
Mail boat	13.2%	5
Private boat	2.6%	1
Total Respondents: 38		

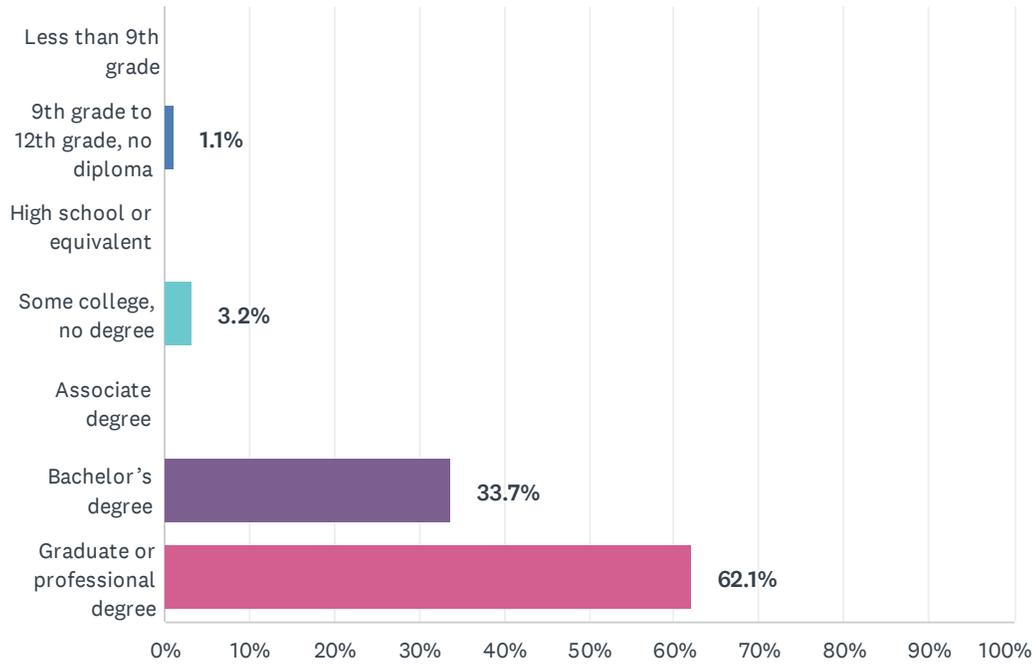
Q46 If you are a year-round resident or work on island, how long is your commute (minutes)?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 80

Q47 What is your educational attainment?

Answered: 95 Skipped: 16

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey

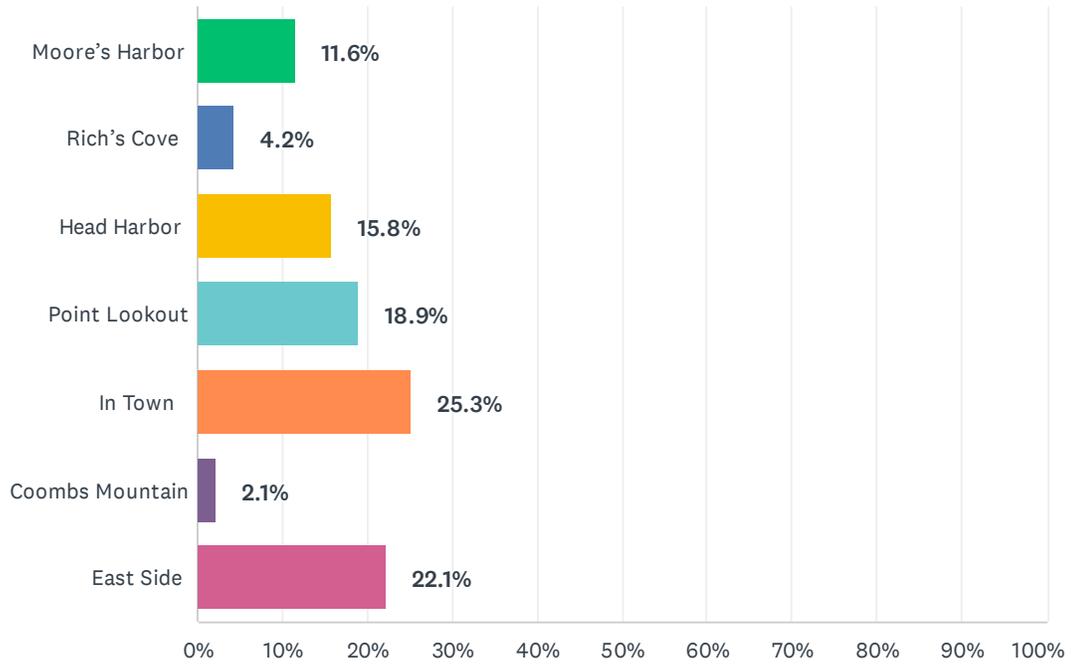


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 9th grade	0.0%	0
9th grade to 12th grade, no diploma	1.1%	1
High school or equivalent	0.0%	0
Some college, no degree	3.2%	3
Associate degree	0.0%	0
Bachelor's degree	33.7%	32
Graduate or professional degree	62.1%	59
TOTAL		95

**Q48 In what area of Isle au Haut do you live (year-round or seasonally)?
(Select One Answer Only That Best Applies)**

Answered: 95 Skipped: 16

Isle au Haut Public Opinion Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Moore's Harbor	11.6%	11
Rich's Cove	4.2%	4
Head Harbor	15.8%	15
Point Lookout	18.9%	18
In Town	25.3%	24
Coombs Mountain	2.1%	2
East Side	22.1%	21
TOTAL		95