

Chapter II: Major Trends and Issues Affecting Outdoor Recreation in Maine.

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Key Understandings

Maine's population is among the oldest in the nation. While Maine saw a brief rise in population in the early part of the decade, patterns of slow or negative growth continue in Maine's most rural counties. Demographic patterns will continue to be a major force shaping recreation demand.

The loss of rural lands, open space, and overall quality of place is a threat to Maine's economy and way of life. Recreational opportunities are threatened as sprawl and unplanned growth erodes the valuable character of Maine's outdoor areas. Recreation planning and investments are a tool for protecting quality of place.

Maine needs to work to ensure youth actively connect with nature. Outdoor recreation is a health measure addressing youth wellness while also fostering the development of future land stewards.

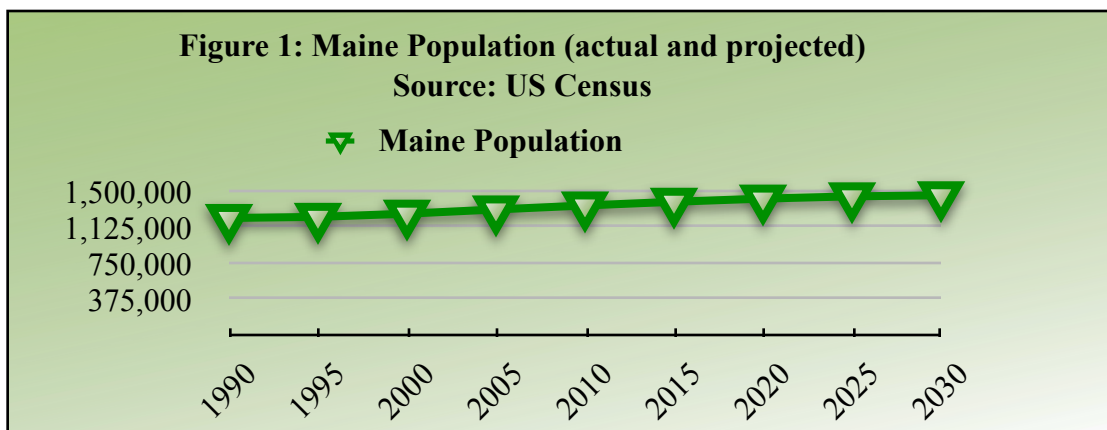
Maine's vast forests are not as stable as in past decades. Rapid changes in ownership of large-scale private forest lands give rise to concerns over recreation access and experiences. Maine must continue to work to ensure public access to private lands.

A. Trend: Evolving Demographic Patterns

Population

According to a July 2008 estimate by the US Census Bureau, Maine's population stands at 1,316,456. This is up from 1,274,923 in 2000 and 1,227,928 in 1990. Maine's population growth from 2000 to 2006 represents an increase of 3.3% (compared to the national rate of 6.4%). Future US Census Bureau projections predict Maine's population increasing 10.7% between 2000 and 2030. This growth places Maine 32nd nationally, based on estimates (US Census Bureau, Population Division, Interim Population Projections, 2005).

Population growth in Maine is expected to be driven primarily by immigration from (predominantly) interstate migration, with limited international immigration. Natural increase is not seen as the major force behind Maine's anticipated modest population growth. Maine's birth rate has been declining since the mid-1900s and has, since at least as far back as 1990, been below the national rate. Maine's rate of death per 1000 has been slightly above the national rate during that same time. Maine's recorded and projected population is depicted in **Figure 1**.



Population in Maine has fluctuated with the ebb and flow of people moving in and out of the state. In the early years of this decade, net in-migration boosted the population. Since 2004, there has been a net out-migration dampening Maine's population growth to a near stall. The Brookings Institution's *Charting Maine's Future: an Action Plan for Promoting Sustainable Prosperity and Quality Places* (2006) explored, among other things, demographic and geographic patterns affecting Maine. In their report, the Brookings Institution suggested that Maine had reversed course and was growing once again, as reflected by the following excerpts:

- "Following on the state's average net loss of 440 people per year in the 1990s, Maine gained an average of 8,200 net new residents per year between 2000 and 2004—7.5 times more than its average annual natural increase of 1,100 and the largest in-flow in over 50 years"
- "In fact, every one of Maine's 16 counties is now experiencing net gains of people from *outside* the state" (i.e., immigration exceeded emigration).

- Maine moved up 20 places in its population growth rank since 2000. This turnaround from 46th to 26th was the biggest jump in the nation.
- Only Nevada, Arizona, Florida, and Idaho saw more domestic in-migration (from other states) than did Maine.

The subsequent downturn in this growth was reported by economist Charles Lawton in the March 16, 2008 Portland Press Herald; “In 2005, according to census estimates, our net in-migration fell to 2,400; in 2006, it dropped to zero, and in 2007 the inward movement turned to an outward movement of 5,400 people. In four years, that’s a net swing of over 15,000 people – from a net gain of over 10,000 in 2003 to a net loss of more than 5,000 in 2007”.

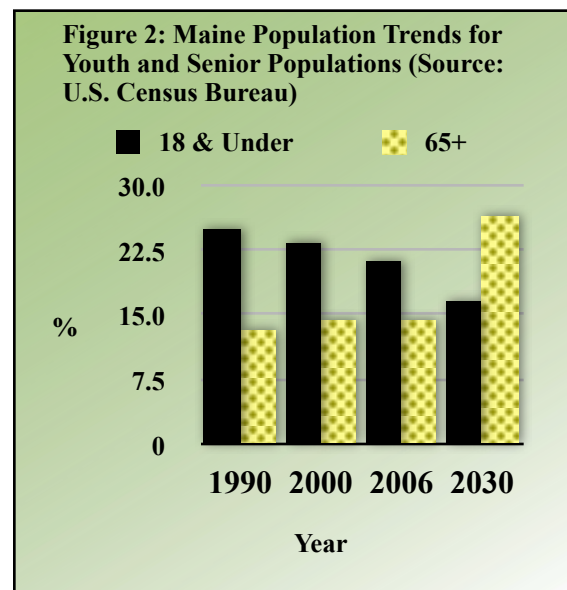
Recent population projections issued by the U.S. Bureau of the Census show 10 of 16 counties lost population between 2007 and 2008, and 3 counties (Aroostook, Piscataquis, and Washington) have dropped in total population since 2000 (population estimates, U.S. Census Bureau March 19, 2008).

Age

According to a report issued by the Maine State Planning Office and authored by Dr. Henry Renski, “the aging of Maine’s population is the driving force behind demographic change in every county. Maine’s population is steadily aging” (Renski, 2008). In 2000, Maine was the 12th oldest state in the nation, based on percent of population at or over 65 years old. By 2010, Maine is expected to move to third oldest (with 15.6% of the population 65 or older). In 2030, only Florida is projected to have a higher percentage of senior citizens. In 2030, Maine is projected to have 26.5% of its population in the 65 or older category.

Not only is Maine’s percentage of older citizens expected to rise, its number of younger citizens is expected to dip. The U.S. Census Bureau population estimates for 2008 show that 397,911 boomers (composed of those aged 45 to 64) live and work in Maine, as opposed to 331,809 Gen Xers (aged 24 to 44). For additional perspective on youth and senior population trends in Maine, see **Figure 2**.

Despite views to the contrary, US census data shows quite similar percentages of young adults across Maine’s 16 counties. As noted, these percentages are on a decline, but the declines appear to be somewhat consistent across regions. In short, all across Maine, older residents are becoming a more and more significant group and younger generations are reducing in proportionate significance.



Income and Education

Income is not homogeneous across Maine's 16 counties. The USDA Economic Research Service lists Cumberland County, with a median household income in 2007 of \$54,992, as having a median income level 120% that of Maine's rate (\$45,832). Conversely, Washington County, at a median income level of \$32,624, only represents 71.2% of median state household income (USDA, 2009). According to the Rural Policy Research Institute (2006), in 2004, only Cumberland County had a per capita income of \$35,000 or more. Oxford, Franklin, Somerset, Piscataquis, and Washington Counties all had per capita incomes below \$25,000.

Maine has a higher proportion of high school graduates and a somewhat lower proportion of college graduates compared to the US. Maine's median household and

Table 1: Educational Attainment by County. Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

County	% 25 or older with B.S. Degree or higher (2007)
Androscoggin	17.2%
Aroostook	16.1%
Cumberland	38.9%
Franklin	26.7%
Hancock	28.7%
Kennebec	25.3%
Knox	25.4%
Lincoln	30.1%
Penobscot	22.9%
Piscataquis	13.3% (2000 data)
Oxford	16.2%
Sagadahoc	26.2%
Somerset	15.1%
Waldo	20.2%
Washington	18.6%
York	26.2%

family incomes and its per capita income are all below national levels. A greater proportion of Maine households have social security and retirement incomes, consistent with its older population. Maine has a smaller percentage of families and individuals below the poverty level.

As with income, educational attainment has geographic variation in Maine. The Brookings Institution (2006), reported that "25.6 percent of Maine's population over age 25 possesses a Bachelor's degree. This achievement now ranks the state 25th in the nation, up from 44th in 1970 and 27th as recently as 2000". In fact, based upon the US Census Bureau's 2005-2007 American Community Survey, which collected data for geographic regions with at least 20,000 inhabitants, 15 of the 16 counties in Maine saw an increase in the percentage of its population having a bachelors degree or higher (2005-2007 American Community Survey data was unavailable for Piscataquis County due to its low population) **Table 1** lists bachelor's degree or higher attainment for Maine counties.

The significance of educational attainment and income relate to recreation in that researchers have documented associations between outdoor recreation participation patterns and education and income. Lee, Scott, and Floyd (2001), for example, cite numerous studies where higher levels of education are correlated with increased park visitation, increased outdoor recreation participation, and increased use of outdoor

recreation areas. Other sources, such as the Outdoor Recreation in America Report (1996), identify income as a major factor influencing participation in outdoor recreation. **Tables 2 and 3** show Maine resident participation in snow/ice activities broken down by education and by income. This information is presented to show that specific activities appear to appeal more or less to certain demographic groups. Furthermore, the information is shown to highlight that there is an ongoing need to understand the evolving attributes of Maine's population and the recreational experiences they seek.

Disability

According to US Census figures (American Community Survey), 19% of Maine's 2007 population over the age of 5 has some type of disability. The proportion of people 65 and older with disabilities is significantly higher than other age groups. Over 40% of Maine residents 65 years and over have at least one disability as compared to 16.3% of the 16-64 cohort and 10.0% for 5-15 year-olds. This higher proportion of people with

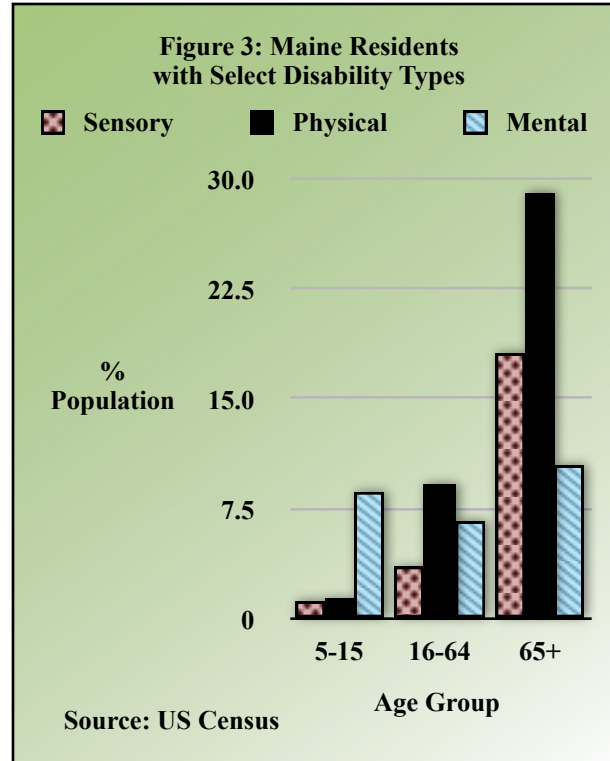
Activity	Less than high school %	High school graduate %	Some college%	College degree%	Post- graduate degree %
Snow/ice activities (any type)	21.0	30.3	25.4	15.6	7.6
Snowmobiling	24.7	41.2	19.2	12.0	3.0
Cross country skiing	10.6	24.6	22.1	27.4	15.4
Downhill skiing	20.5	17.8	27.1	24.3	10.3
Sledding	24.4	34.1	21.8	15.6	4.1
Snowboarding	46.6	15.6	24.0	11.3	2.6
Ice skating outdoors	10.8	27.6	29.0	25.2	7.4
Snowshoeing	7.3	32.6	26.9	21.4	11.8
Ice fishing	21.8	29.7	27.5	15.9	5.2

Activity	<\$15,000 %	\$15,000-\$24,999%	\$25,000-\$49,999%	\$50,000-\$74,999%	\$75,000-\$99,999%	\$100,000-\$149,999%	\$150,000+%
Snow/ice activities (any type)	12.1	6.8	41.1	23.8	8.5	5.9	1.8
Snowmobiling	14.2	5.8	41.2	22.4	10.1	4.4	2.0
Cross country skiing	3.1	8.9	41.4	25.7	11.9	8.2	0.8
Downhill skiing	9.5	8.3	33.8	18.8	15.6	9.7	4.3
Sledding	21.4	9.9	37.7	18.8	4.8	7.4	0.0
Snowboarding	18.5	10.7	32.6	19.8	10.4	7.9	0.0
Ice skating outdoors	16.0	13.0	33.7	17.9	7.8	11.6	0.0
Snowshoeing	22.2	12.1	28.3	20.3	8.0	5.2	3.8
Ice fishing	25.0	3.9	31.0	20.2	11.3	8.7	0.0

disabilities among the older population will become increasingly important as the number and relative proportion of older people in Maine increases. Select, recreation-relevant types of disabilities and percentages of the Maine public with those disabilities are shown in **Figure 3**.

Racial/Ethnic Diversity

The US population is increasingly diverse. Black/African Americans and people of Hispanic/Latino origins together accounted for more than one quarter of the country’s 2005-2007 population. Native Americans, Asian Americans and “other” racial/ethnic groups comprise additional segments of the population. Maine, by comparison, is about 97% white. Maine racial/ ethnic groups comprising 0.5% or more of the state’s 2005-2007 population include: people of 2 or more races (1.6%); people of Hispanic/Latino origins (1.1%); Asians (1.0%); Native Americans (0.5%); and Black/African Americans (1.1%).



Box II-A: a Second Look at Racial/Ethnic Diversity

Maine is predominantly a state marked by a relative lack of racial/ethnic diversity. However, that surface assessment may miss several important points. For one, Maine has several locations, notably Portland (Maine’s largest city) and Lewiston (the second largest city), in which immigration from outside of the US has resulted in a more diverse population. In the case of both Portland and Lewiston, there are sizable Somali populations. Overall, according to the US Census Bureau, Maine’s foreign born population is estimated at 3.2% of the total state population.

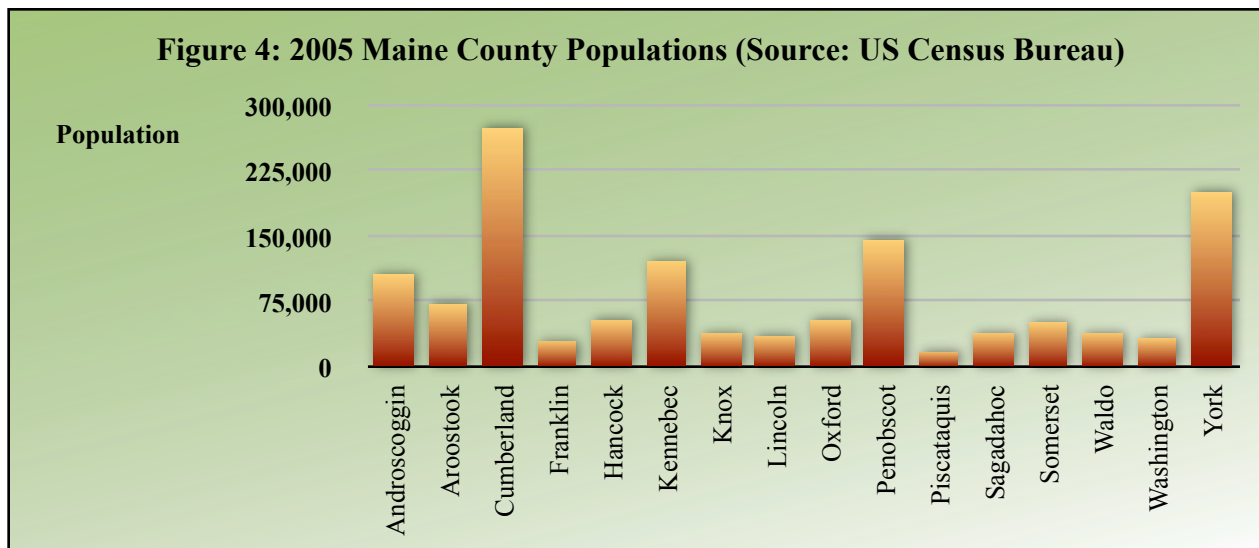
It is also important to note that the St. John Valley in northern Maine, as well as current or former mill towns such as Lewiston/Auburn, Biddeford, Augusta, Waterville/Winslow, Rumford, and Millinocket have a strong French-Canadian cultural aspect and language tradition (especially amongst older Franco-American residents). Additionally, Maine shares a border with Quebec, and therefore receives French-speaking tourists. The American Community Survey lists Spanish or Spanish Creole as being spoken by 1.1% of Maine residents while 5.5% speak another Ind-European language and 1% speak Asian/Pacific Island or other languages.

Maine’s history and heritage has been and continues to be shaped by cultural groups. It is only wise to continually consider the cultural make-up of Maine residents and visitors as outdoor recreation resources are developed and managed. Not only do cultural characteristics such as language need to be considered for the recreating public, but there may also be opportunities to interpret and celebrate the heritage found in Maine.

Other Characteristics of the Maine Population

As noted above, by comparison with the United States, Maine has an older, more rural and less ethnically diverse population. Other notable departures from national characteristics include: somewhat smaller average household and family sizes (a function of an older population); and a higher percentage of veterans. Economically, Maine has a slightly higher proportion of people in the labor force; a higher proportion employed in education, health, and social services and retail trade; a lower proportion employed in professional, scientific, management administrative services; a lower percentage of private wage and salary workers and a higher percentage self-employed in their own businesses.

One of the most notable departures from national characteristics is Maine’s high proportion of housing units that are vacant and for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use – the highest rate in the country. Maine’s attractive landscapes and recreational amenities, along with its proximity to large population centers in the Northeast contribute to high percentages of seasonal homes. Of the 16 counties in Maine, York County has the largest number of vacation homes, but Piscataquis and Franklin Counties have the highest proportions of seasonal homes. Areas around Penobscot Bay and Mount Desert Island have some of the highest concentrations of seasonal homes. In some small coastal communities, vacation homes account for more than one-third of all the housing. On the other hand, Maine has a higher than average percentage of owner-occupied housing, reflecting a largely rural population.



**B. Issue: Development Patterns and Sprawl
Geographic Distribution**

Maine is largely a rural state, especially by national standards. In 2000, Maine’s overall persons per square mile equaled 41.3 versus the national average of 79.6.

Furthermore, just over 20% of Mainers live in a county with between 4 and 26 persons per square mile. County populations are shown in **Figure 4** (pg. 6).

While Maine is a rural state, that is not to say that it is completely rural or that it is unchanging. Cumberland County has approximate 318 persons per square mile versus the US average of 79.6. Cumberland County and York County (188.4 persons/mile) are Maine's southernmost counties and are home to over 35% of Maine's population while only laying claim to 6% of Maine's land area. Furthermore, trends show the most rural counties in Maine (Oxford, Franklin, Somerset, Piscataquis, Aroostook, Washington, Hancock, and Waldo) falling from a 35% share of Maine's population in 1960 to 27% in 2005 (Brookings Institution, 2006). Additionally, even more populated counties tend to have population patterns in which a city or set of cities account for a large percentage of the population (e.g., Bangor/Brewer in Penobscot County or Lewiston/Auburn in Androscoggin County).

This pattern of greater growth in the southern counties is predicted to continue.

Figure 5 displays predicted county populations. Estimates from the Maine State Planning Office (Renski, 2008) predict the sharpest growth in York County and losses in

Table 4: Estimates of the Resident Population for Maine Counties 2000-2008, Including Annual Change in Residents. Source: Population Division, US Census Bureau. Note: shaded cells indicate negative growth.

	2000 Pop.	2008 Pop.	Change 2000	Change 2001	Change 2002	Change 2003	Change 2004	Change 2005	Change 2006	Change 2007	Change 2008
Maine Total	1277179	1316456	2257	7484	9004	9062	5175	3140	2311	2043	1058
Androscoggin	103846	106877	53	292	704	904	616	222	332	-215	176
Aroostook	73863	71676	-75	-1011	-109	-161	-122	-166	-269	-73	-276
Cumberland	266028	276047	418	1920	1722	2125	1375	737	194	781	1165
Franklin	29480	29857	16	59	276	-102	-28	0	204	11	-43
Hancock	51863	53137	72	52	130	606	434	-16	130	13	-75
Kennebec	117213	120959	98	752	457	725	582	428	331	198	273
Knox	39684	40686	66	280	468	210	195	125	-157	-82	-37
Lincoln	33699	34628	84	296	262	268	307	50	-88	-25	-141
Oxford	54802	56741	45	204	472	125	349	244	230	230	85
Penobscot	144904	148651	-15	668	635	854	-495	336	937	688	124
Piscataquis	17244	16961	7	-107	0	76	25	50	-110	-16	-201
Sagadahoc	35226	36332	12	274	307	884	-94	-264	88	-77	-12
Somerset	50893	51377	5	-119	12	163	-121	122	472	158	-203
Waldo	36468	38342	188	550	506	298	189	134	320	4	-127
Washington	33892	32499	-49	-462	-234	-40	-40	-275	-111	-26	-205
York	188074	201686	1332	3836	3396	2127	2003	1413	-192	474	555

both Aroostook and Washington Counties. **Table 4** uses US Census Bureau county population estimates to examine Maine county trends in population from 2000-2008. It shows that 2007 and 2008 saw population losses in a majority of counties. Washington, Aroostook, and to a Piscataquis Counties have experienced net population loss from 2000-2008.

Figure 5: Population Trends and Predictions (Source: Renski, 2008)

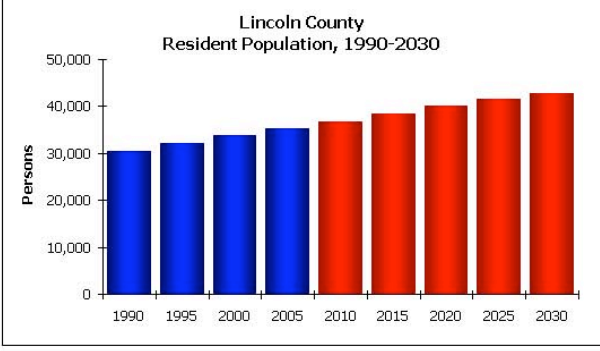
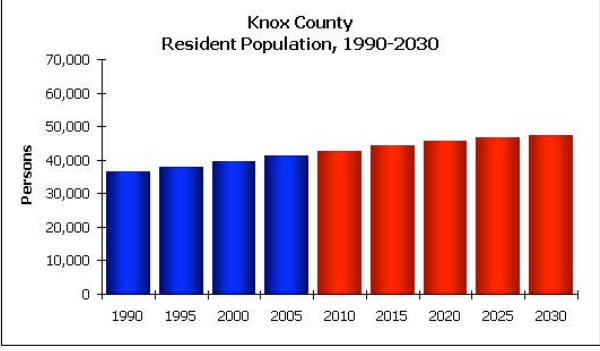
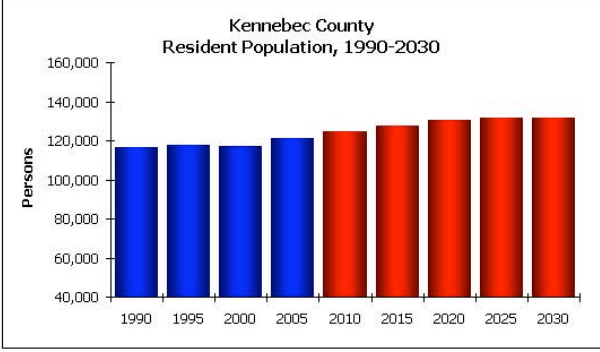
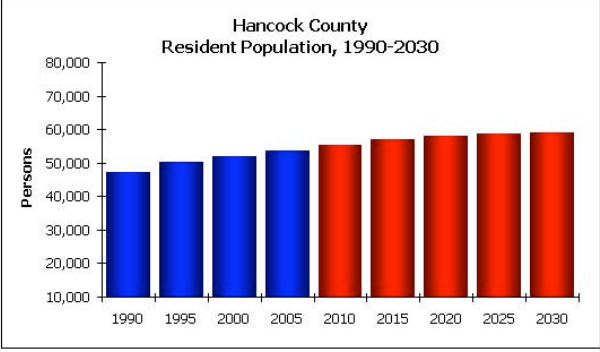
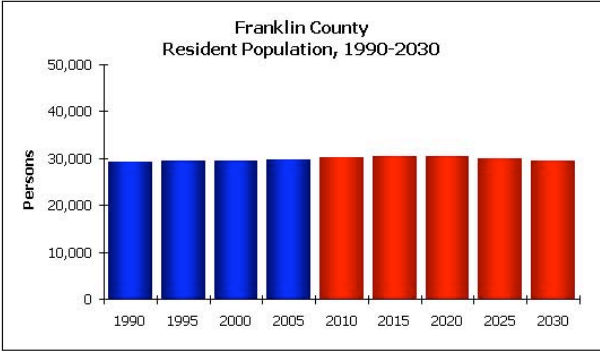
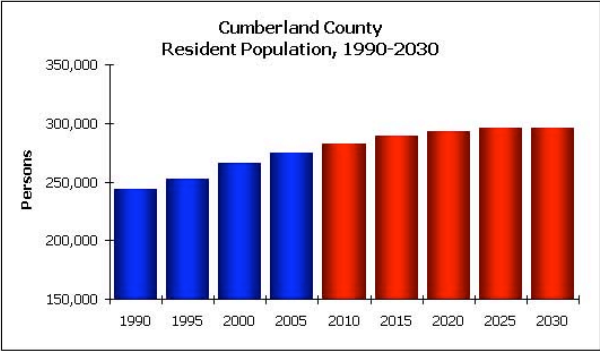
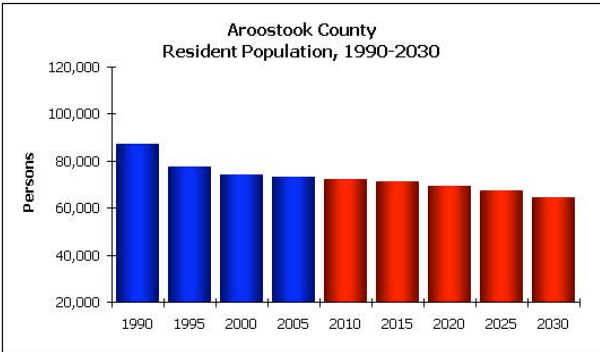
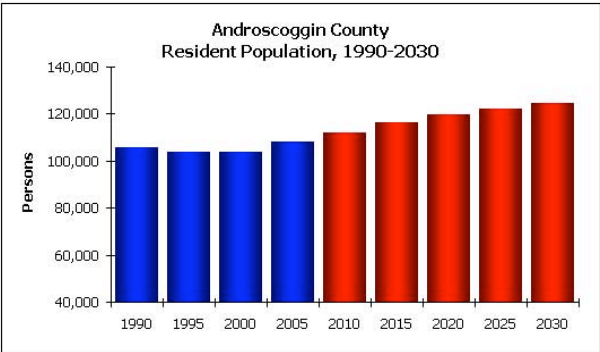
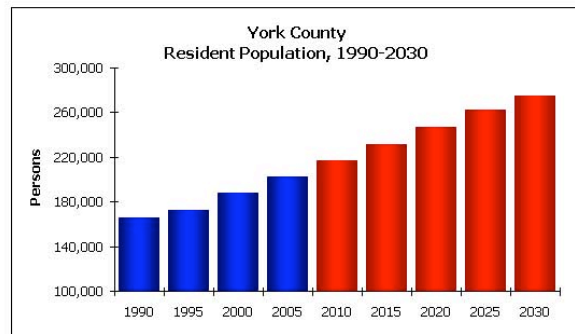
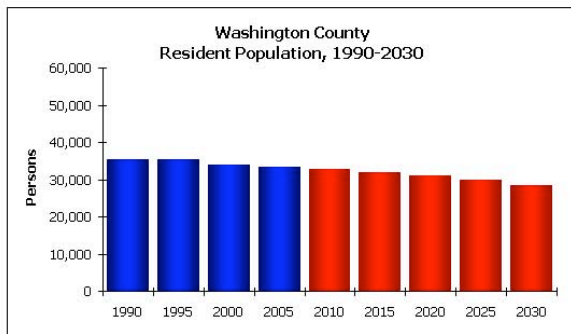
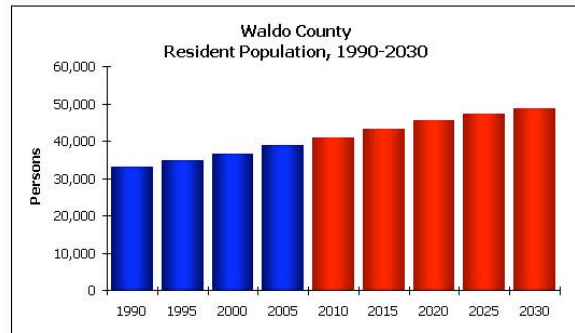
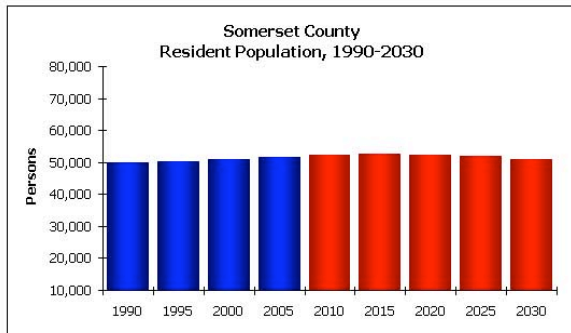
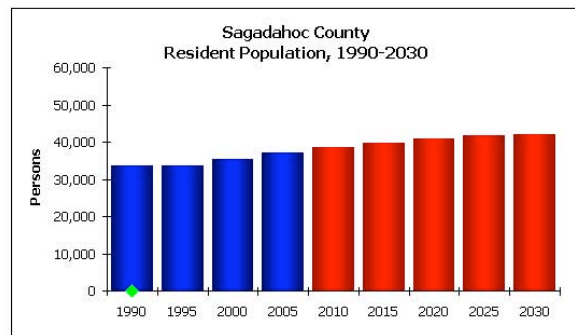
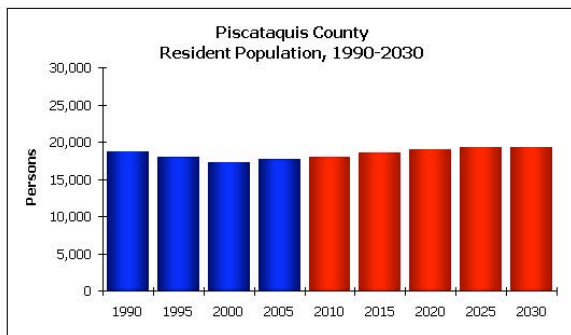
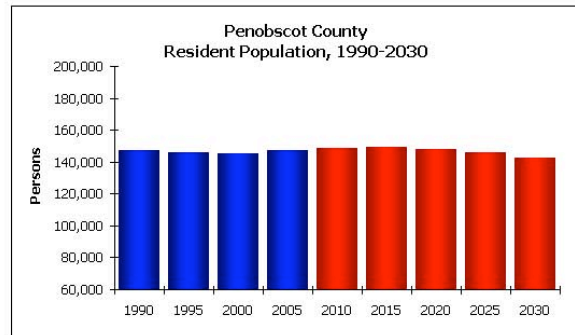
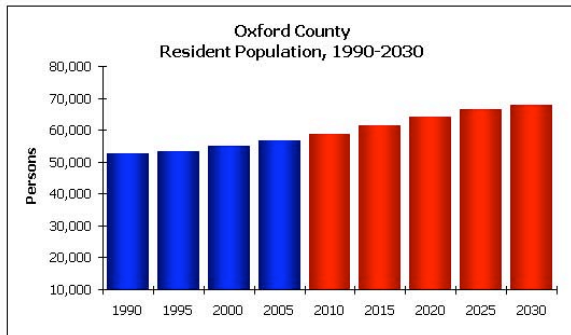


Figure 5 (Continued): Population Trends and Predictions
(Source: Renski, 2008)



Development

Charting Maine’s Future: An Action Plan for Promoting Sustainable Prosperity and Quality Places (Brookings Institution, 2006) discusses Maine’s patterns of population movement and development. The excerpts below are but a few points illustrating significant patterns related to development

- In the period from 2000 to 2006, 77 percent of growth has taken place in surrounding towns, newer emerging towns, and rural areas distant from traditional centers. Sparsely populated rural towns are the most popular destinations.
- “Southern Maine saw home construction and other development change the character of 100,000 of its rural acres between 1980 and 2000—some 30 percent of its total. Cumberland County alone lost over 56,000 rural acres—a 39-percent reduction.” .

In short, much of the development and population shifting that has taken place within the last 20+ years has been a migration out of relatively more concentrated villages and cities into rural areas (notably to rural areas in Maine’s more populace southern counties).

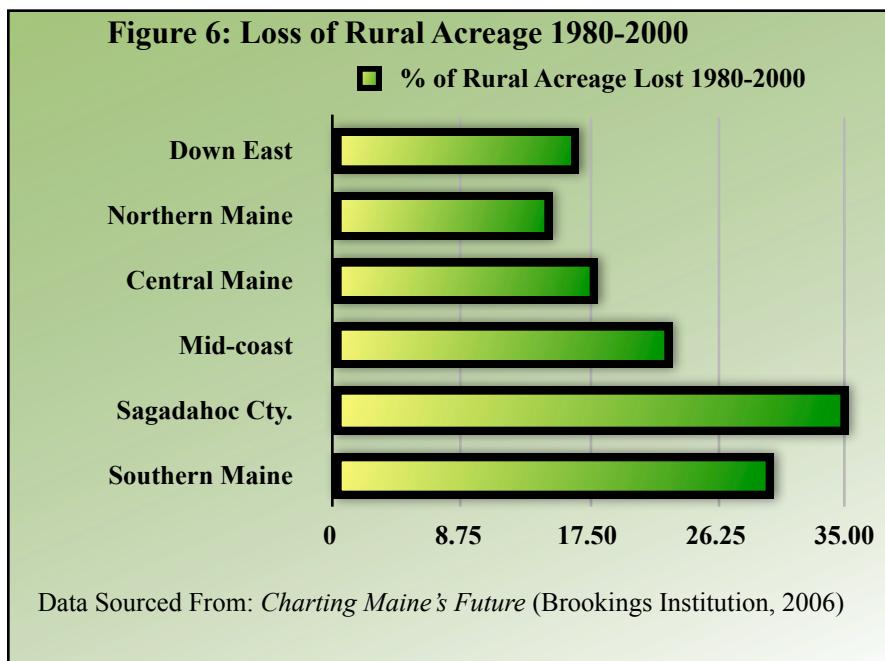
Sprawl

The conservation and recreation community in Maine is very cognizant that the loss of wildlife habitat, rural lands, and general open space is a vital issue requiring continual focus. As the Maine State Planning Office’s *Regional Landscape Conservation in Maine :Best Practices for Enhancing Quality of Place* (Richardson, 2008) starkly states, “Maine’s sprawling land use patterns threaten to transform many of the state’s rural areas into suburbs.” **Figure 6** depicts the losses of rural lands in Maine by region.

According to the Brookings Institution (2006), only Virginia saw a greater loss of rural land than Maine in the 1990s. This pattern of converting rural land to suburban development

(sprawl) is a major concern to anyone who values outdoor recreation in Maine’s natural environments.

In a recent *Maine Outreach Meeting* associated with the New England Governors Conference’s Commission on Land Conservation (CLC), “the fragmentation and degradation of natural features and assets that have historically defined Maine and New England in the public imagination



and enhanced the lives and livelihoods of all” was listed as one of two big questions facing conservation in New England. This echoes the Brookings Institution’s (2006) comments that:

“the suburbanization of so much of Maine threatens to degrade the very qualities of the state’s countryside and settlement areas that make them so appealing. Strip development along once-scenic roads, development in Maine’s forests and agricultural lands, and the threat of residential conversion of working waterfronts all endanger the value of Maine’s distinct quality of place—a critical asset for future competitiveness.”

There are numerous distressing issues associated with sprawl (e.g., habitat fragmentation, loss of scenic character, etc.), and loss of open space with potential loss of access to quality outdoor experiences is certainly one. Unplanned development has shown the potential to reduce the availability of the outdoor spaces that support the activities Mainers have made cherished parts of their lives. Maine’s outdoor recreation opportunities are vital assets for both livability and tourism. Local snowmobile and ATV clubs, hunters, hikers, birdwatchers, anglers, mt. bikers, Nordic skiers, and a host of other recreationists look to Maine’s waters, woods, fields, and shorelines as a source of renewal, adventure, peace, and even employment.

In its recent meeting of Maine conservation leaders, the New England Governors’ Commission on Land Conservation listed “Sprawling development patterns at several scales across the landscape; slavery to the private automobile and lack of public transportation; fragmentation of forested lands and open space, physically and legally; loss of wildlife habitat, especially connectivity and corridors; diminished public access and increased “nature-deficit” disorder; and chronic underinvestment in green public infrastructure” in their list of major conservation challenges facing Maine (and New England). These challenges are potential obstacles not only to conservation in general but more specifically to the goal of ensuring sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities.

Box II-B: Programs of Note- Land for Maine’s Future and Beginning with Habitat

◆The Land for Maine’s Future program (LMF) is run by the Maine State Planning Office and is established to protect lands with exceptional natural and/or recreational value. Since its inception in 1987, the LMF program has managed four bonds totaling \$170 million. Each bond has received strong voter support. The LMF program has acquired 490,000 acres over its history, with 247,000 of those acres in the form of conservation easement. More information can be found online at www.maine.gov/spo/lmf/index.htm

◆Beginning with Habitat (BWH) is a landscape-scale approach to conserving wildlife habitat. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife leads this collaborative program in which towns or land trusts work with BWH to identify and map important habitat areas (such as wetlands and unbroken forest blocks). As such, BWH serves an important planning function at the local level. More and more interest is emerging concerning having a specific recreation component to the BWH process. This interest should be explored further. Beginning with Habitat can be found online at www.beginningwithhabitat.org.

C. Issue: Quality of Place and Recreation

“Maine’s place-based assets, both natural and built, are diverse and plentiful, yet are today at risk from sprawling development and the lack of investment in downtowns and historic assets, the selling off of industrial forest ownership to new investor groups with diverse interests, and the loss of agricultural land and access to working waterfronts and outdoor recreational opportunities”.

-Source: *An Order to Create a Maine Quality of Place Jobs and Investment Strategy*. Signed by Governor John Baldacci on June 6, 2008

Maine Quality of Place is described by the Maine State Planning Office as Maine’s as:

“...our majestic mountains, unbroken forests, open fields, wild rivers, pristine lakes, widely-celebrated coast, picturesque downtowns, lively arts and culture, authentic historic buildings, and exceptional recreational opportunities.” (Maine State Planning Office, 2009).

It is a concept that touches upon many areas, from economics to history to ecology. In essence, it focuses on sustaining and even enhancing the unique attributes that make Maine attractive to live in and visit. The rising level of concern about maintaining quality of place reflects the changes associated with the loss of, among other things, outdoor areas with scenic and recreational value to Maine communities. In the 2007 report, Place and Prosperity, prepared by the Maine State Planning Office, Reilly and Renski write:

“Quality of Place initiatives embrace landscape protection, downtown revitalization, historic preservation, the creative economy, outdoor recreation, nature- and heritage-based tourism, and local and regional planning initiatives. By implication, it also touches upon affordable housing, transportation, education, and health care.”

Focus group input in the SCORP process lines up with much of the interest in quality of place. Suggestions, such as making urban trails and greenspaces more interconnected or working to continue traditional public access to large privately owned forestlands, reflect a desire to protect access to outdoor recreation and a way of life focused on the outdoors. Quality of place is seen as an issue that bridges outdoor recreation/conservation interests and community economic development goals.

D. Issue: Youth and the Outdoors


“One-third of the 74 million children under age 18 in the U.S. are either dangerously overweight or obese. This number represents a 300 percent increase in just the last 10 years. The Center for Disease Control says the current generation of youth may be the first to live shorter lives than their parents because of growing health issues with a sedentary lifestyle”

- Acadia N.P. Superintendent Sheridan Steele quoted by the Children & Nature Network

Table 5: National Figures on Children & Electronic Media
Nationally, kids aged 2-18 spend an average of over 4 hours/day viewing a screen (TV, computer, etc.)
1 in 5 kids watch more than 5 hours of TV per day.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation, 1999

Among the many concerns associated with the fear that youth are not active in the outdoors is that a generation of American youth are not outdoors burning calories through active play. In a 2008 speech at The Governor’s Conference on Youth and the Natural World (sponsored by the Maine Department of Conservation), Larry Selzer, president and CEO of the Conservation Fund was quoted stating, “A healthy nation asks how it is that children now gain 3-5 times as much weight during the summer as they do during the school year.” Considering that, as reported by Maine Public Health Director Dr. Dora Anne Mills, 25% of Maine high school students are overweight and 36% of Maine kindergartners have a Body Mass Index at or above the 85th percentile, it is vital that youth are able to and encouraged to get outside, get active, and get

Table 6: Maine High School Students- Attributes.
93% do not have daily physical education classes.
23% watch 3 or more hours of TV on an average school day.
22% used a video game or computer for at least 3 hours of leisure time per day.
Source: Maine Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2005

Box II-C: What do young people do and what gets them into the outdoors?	
<p>Data provided in the <i>Maine & the Maine Market Region</i> report (2009), shows activities such as mountain biking, backpacking, kayaking, rafting, using a personal watercraft, snowmobiling, downhill skiing, sledding, snowboarding, and outdoor sports such as jogging, tennis, soccer, etc., as popular activities for 16-24 year-olds in Maine. As for who influences youth to be active in the outdoors, the Outdoor Industry Foundation’s Outdoor Recreation Participation Report (2008) cites parents and then friends as the top influences on youth starting to participate in outdoor activities. The same report lists “it’s fun” as the overwhelming reason kids enjoy outdoor activities (“discovery/ exploration” trailed in second place).</p>	

healthy. **Tables 5 and 6** show some of the statistics underlying concern over youth health and outdoor lifestyles.

Future stewards

There is growing concern that if youth are not engaged in the outdoors, they will grow up to be adults who are not inclined to spend time recreating outdoors. This has a number of potential impacts, such as a less active adult population that is more prone to obesity and obesity-related health problems. However, that is not the only impact if a generation

loses its connection to nature and the outdoors. Parks, preserves, and other public, and for that matter, private lands need advocates and stewards. If fewer people are available to take the torch passed by older generations of land stewards and outdoor advocates,

capacity to protect and support outdoor recreation and conservation areas will be diminished.

E. Senior Recreation Needs

Maine is rapidly becoming one of the oldest states in the nation (based on percent of senior citizens). There are significant considerations associated with serving this group of Mainers - a group that will be becoming even more significant with time. However, it may be a mistake to treat a new generation of seniors as previous generations have been treated.

In 2011, the first of America's Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) will turn 65. Will meeting the needs of Boomers, as Cochran, et al. (2006) predict, "require a change in traditional attitudes about the needs and desires of older participants"? If so, (as is predicted by researchers (e.g, Ziegler, 2002), then Maine should be prepared to embrace a wave of seniors who intend to continue their active lifestyles into their later years.

The first ME 2009-2014 SCORP focus group included participants who held expertise in senior issues. Some of the ideas to come out of that session included having

clear, easy to obtain information on outdoor recreation opportunities (including difficulty); having socially interactive recreation offerings available; including a mix of intellectual and physical opportunities; considering cost, transportation, and other barriers; as well as other considerations.

In addition to serving resident seniors, planning for senior outdoor recreation needs and interest has economic development implications. For instance, One-third of active travelers are over the age of 45. (Outdoor Industry Foundation, Outdoor Recreation Participation Report 2006). The more Maine can position itself to offer senior friendly opportunities, the more tourism can benefit. Also, attracting retirees can be an economic development strategy

Box II-D: Participation in Outdoor Recreation by Older Maine Residents

According to data obtained from the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment as part of the *Maine & the Maine Market Region* report (2009), there is a noticeably decline in participation for most outdoor recreation activities when comparing the 45-54 and 55-64 age brackets. Similarly, participation rates are relatively low in the 65+ group as well. One grouping of outdoor recreation activities in which senior Mainers participate relatively more is the "viewing/learning activities" including activities such as viewing/photographing birds; sightseeing; gathering mushrooms, berries, etc.; and several other activities. For a detailed look at participation rates for older Maine residents, see **Exhibit II-A** at the end of this chapter.

Exhibit II-A lists participation rates for the 55-64 and 65+ age brackets as well as the 45-54 age bracket. The 45-54 bracket is included due to the fact that "Boomers" today are aged 45-63.

for communities, in that relocating retirees are often a net economic benefit to the communities they move to.

F. Issue: Changes in Maine's Large-scale Forest Landscapes

As is frequently cited, Maine is the nation's most forested state. All throughout its history, even well before statehood, Maine's forests provided economic, cultural, and inspirational sustenance. Not surprisingly, then, Maine's forest lands, including intermingled waters, wetlands, and mountains, have been the foundation of long-standing recreational activities.

Maine's robust outdoor recreation traditions, most notably nature-based activities, rely on access to forests, coastlines, and the like. Many, perhaps the majority of, Maine's publicly-owned lands, from federal to state to municipal levels, are intended, along with other goals, to provide access for outdoor recreation. However, these fee-owned lands make up under 6% of Maine's land area (total conservation acres owned by public and private entities, including both fee and easement lands, covers over 17% of the state). Therefore, private lands, including private lands with public easements, have traditionally played a vital role in supplying Mainers and guests with places to recreate.

Maine citizens and visitors alike still have remarkable access to private lands (when viewed by national standards) due to the tradition of Maine's large private landowners, historically large paper company interests, allowing public use of their lands. However, concern is steadily rising about the future of public recreational access to private lands. Several developments appear to be driving this concern.

Changing Ownership Patterns in the North Woods

In the Winter 2007 issue of the *Maine Policy Review*, LeVert, Colgan, and Lawton write that:

“Over the past two decades, this unique area [Maine's north woods] has experienced greater change than it has seen in the previous century. The industrial structure of the

Box II-E: The Birding Bus

The Waldo County YMCA based out of Belfast, Maine has developed a popular senior recreation offering built around bird watching. Each trip aboard the “Birding Bus” brings together bird watchers and a trip leader. The groups travels together to Maine birding destinations where participants can hear and observe birds, learn from one another, and generally socialize.

Birding, like other viewing/learning activities is a popular senior activity. In Maine, people in the 65+ age bracket make up the largest portion (22.9%) of bird photographers/viewers. (Source: *Maine & the Market Region* report, 2009).



forestland has changed; the residential and conservation demand for this land has increased; and the price of land has risen to unprecedented levels”.

From the late 1800s until the late 1980s, the bulk of the private northwoods ownership resided in industrial forest product companies in which a land base was owned and managed to produce pulp or timber for mills owned by the same company. As this model began to become less prevalent, other types of ownership grew. For instance, Hagan, Irland, and Whitman (2005) report that:

“The shift from industrial forest ownership to various new owner types is nearly complete. In Maine in 1994, forest industry owned about 60% (4.6 million acres) of the large tracts (>5000 ac) of timberland and financial investors owned about 3%. By May, 2005, financial investors owned about one-third of the large forest tracts and industry owned only 15.5% (1.8 million acres, mostly in a single ownership)”.

Box II-F: Changing Forest Ownership in the Mahoosuc Region

The Mahoosuc Region on the edge of Maine and northern New Hampshire is but one of the areas in Maine where the historic pattern of land ownership is quickly changing. According to Weinberg and Larson (2008), 40,000 -150,000 acres in the region is estimated to sell within 5-10 years. Furthermore, the fragmentation of the forest ownership has reduced forest-related jobs, increased harvest rates, increased posted property, and encouraged development of previously undeveloped waterfront.



This change, in which historically stable industrial ownership quickly evolved into investment -oriented owner types, continues to cause anxiety regarding public access to private lands. This new set of owners with short-term profit oriented goals is more likely to sell land holdings after short-term goals are realized. However, for the present time, large landowners, including new landowners, appear to largely acknowledge that public access to private lands is a tradition worth maintaining and is important to local economies (Daigle, 2008).

While much apprehension comes from the fear of development and fragmentation in private landscape-scale contiguous forests, there is also concern over changes in public and/or private management priorities. For instance, some recreational constituencies fear conservation lands (including private conservation lands) will become off limits to one or more activities (e.g., hunting/trapping, ATV & snowmobile use, vehicle access, etc.). There are also broad fears that regions will lose their primitive character and their ability to provide backcountry experiences if motorized uses are allowed to proliferate without regard to these values. While there is debate over the correct balance of recreation opportunities in Maine’s large forest landscapes,

fragmentation and rapid changes in ownership are considered a serious issue by the majority of outdoor recreation interests.

Abuse of Private Lands

Focus group comments as well as ongoing research by Maine SCORP steering committee member and University of Maine professor Dr. John Daigle point to abuse of private lands by the recreating public as a significant issue leading to the closure or potential closure of previously openly accessible private lands. With so much of Maine's supply of outdoor recreation areas being on private lands, this is an acutely important issue. Professor Daigle's work with large private landowners in northern New England and New York lists "To prevent damage to my property" as the top-ranked reason for landowners posting their properties to public access (Daigle, 2008). Whether in large landowner regions or in regions defined more by smaller landowners, the abuse of private lands through rogue ATV or truck traffic, dumping, littering, vandalism, and/or overall careless/malicious actions threatens recreational access.



Summary

The quality of outdoor recreation opportunities has a significant bearing on Maine's economic future, and the future of access to large landscapes is in question. Additionally, sprawl, especially in southern areas, continues to be an issue facing conservation/recreation planning. Maine's unique "quality of place" is threatened by these potentially erosive factors. All the while, Maine's population continues to become relatively older and somewhat geographically realigned. Plus, there is growing concern about youth being disconnected from the outdoors and all its benefits. Outdoor recreation planning in Maine will need to consider these factors as projects and efforts are undertaken over the course of the next five years.

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Exhibit II-A: Participation Distribution by Age for Outdoor Recreation Activities. Source: 2009 Maine and the Maine Market Region report. Note: 45-54, 55-64, and 65+ age groups are highlighted. Percentages shown sum across to 100%, though rounding may make the total value differ from 100% exactly.

Participation Distribution By Age Developed-setting Land Activities.

Activity	Age 16-24 %	Age 25-34 %	Age 35-44 %	Age 45-54 %	Age 55-64 %	Age 65+ %
Walk for pleasure	14.5	17.3	20.9	18.2	11.7	17.3
Picnicking	9.8	18.5	23.8	18.5	12.7	16.7
Driving for pleasure	12.6	15.5	21.4	20.8	14.1	15.6
Bicycling	18.6	20.7	27.9	14.9	8.4	9.3
Horseback riding (any type)	18.2	22.9	19.1	24.6	9.5	5.7
Attend outdoor concerts, plays, etc.	9.0	28.1	24.1	20.6	4.1	14.1

Participation Distribution by Age for Viewing/Learning Based Activities.

Activity	Age 16-24 %	Age 25-34 %	Age 35-44 %	Age 45-54 %	Age 55-64 %	Age 65+ %
View/photograph natural scenery	12.8	15.3	22.1	20.0	12.6	17.1
View/photograph other wildlife	9.4	18.3	24.0	21.0	13.1	14.3
View/photograph wildflowers, trees, etc.	12.5	13.2	22.4	20.6	12.7	18.6
Visit nature centers, etc.	12.4	19.0	23.1	18.4	12.4	14.7
View/photograph birds	5.3	12.7	21.5	22.2	15.4	22.9
Sightseeing	11.4	13.2	21.7	23.6	13.1	16.9
Gather mushrooms, berries, etc.	12.9	17.4	22.4	21.2	10.1	16.0
Visit historic sites	10.3	15.9	24.6	18.6	13.3	17.3
View/photograph fish	11.7	22.9	26.9	18.3	9.2	11.0
Visit prehistoric/ archeological sites	10.8	18.5	27.3	19.4	12.7	11.4
Boat tours or excursions	8.2	12.5	27.9	28.8	3.2	19.5

Participation Distribution by Age in Water-Based Activities

Activity	Age 16-24 %	Age 25-34 %	Age 35-44 %	Age 45-54 %	Age 55-64 %	Age 65+ %
Swimming in lakes, streams, etc.	17.1	19.0	24.8	16.8	10.3	11.9
Boating (any type)	16.4	19.1	23.6	18.9	10.6	11.2
Visit a beach	16.1	16.5	26.1	17.7	11.7	11.9
Motorboating	10.7	20.3	24.5	18.0	12.3	14.1
Freshwater fishing	13.7	22.0	26.5	21.3	9.2	7.2
Canoeing	18.6	21.8	25.3	18.4	8.9	6.9
Visit other waterside (besides beach)	21.2	19.7	23.9	16.7	8.4	10.1
Coldwater fishing	13.9	18.2	28.8	21.8	9.5	7.7
Swimming in an outdoor pool	18.1	16.4	30.2	17.3	9.3	8.7
Kayaking	22.8	25.0	18.6	18.4	10.2	5.0
Warmwater fishing	11.5	32.0	26.6	17.9	7.2	4.8
Saltwater fishing	15.4	20.0	22.6	21.3	9.0	11.6
Rafting	44.9	20.4	13.6	11.4	6.6	3.0
Rowing	10.7	21.8	19.3	21.2	12.0	15.0
Sailing	14.6	19.2	24.3	21.0	5.8	15.0
Waterskiing	25.8	24.2	27.7	17.3	2.5	2.4
Use personal watercraft	40.6	20.0	25.0	9.1	3.1	2.1
Snorkeling	13.5	15.7	33.6	23.5	7.0	6.8
Anadromous fishing	15.5	13.0	35.5	22.0	4.3	9.7

Participation Distribution by Age for Outdoor Sports.

Activity	Age 16-24 %	Age 25-34 %	Age 35-44 %	Age 45-54 %	Age 55-64 %	Age 65+ %
Attend outdoor sports events	23.3	14.3	25.3	21.2	5.1	10.8
Running or jogging	24.5	27.2	22.7	16.8	1.4	7.4
Golf	13.4	18.7	25.7	28.4	9.4	4.5

Participation Distribution by Age for Nature-Based Land Activities.

Activity	Age 16-24 %	Age 25-34 %	Age 35-44 %	Age 45-54 %	Age 55-64 %	Age 65+ %
Visit a wilderness or primitive area	16.4	17.8	24.9	18.4	10.9	11.5
Day hiking	16.4	20.2	25.5	17.7	8.4	11.8
Developed camping	14.1	21.5	26.6	14.9	10.7	12.1
Mountain biking	21.3	21.8	28.6	14.7	6.9	6.7
Primitive camping	13.6	29.2	26.1	14.3	8.6	8.1
Visit a farm or agricultural setting	10.8	15.1	25.3	20.5	11.3	17.0
Drive off-road	20.1	18.9	21.5	21.1	9.3	9.1
Backpacking	20.6	28.4	24.2	16.7	6.3	3.8
Hunting (any type)	12.6	14.0	26.1	20.9	12.8	13.5
Horseback riding on trails	19.3	20.8	24.1	30.6	3.7	1.5
Mountain climbing	11.8	21.6	16.9	37.2	5.3	7.2

Participation Distribution by Age for Snow/Ice-Based Activities.

Activity	Age 16-24 %	Age 25-34 %	Age 35-44 %	Age 45-54 %	Age 55-64 %	Age 65+ %
Snowmobiling	20.8	21.7	26.2	14.9	8.1	8.4
Cross country skiing	16.6	18.9	29.0	19.6	11.2	4.7
Downhill skiing	27.0	23.0	29.3	15.0	3.0	2.7
Sledding	28.6	23.5	24.4	15.6	4.2	3.6
Snowboarding	45.9	19.3	29.1	2.5	1.7	1.6
Ice skating outdoors	10.8	17.4	34.6	24.4	10.2	2.6
Snowshoeing	13.8	23.9	21.2	31.5	6.8	2.9
Ice fishing	8.7	10.2	22.0	49.7	6.4	3.0