



THE COMMUNITY INSTITUTE

Building strong places, communities and leaders

FINAL REPORT

Session #5

Farms, Food and the Conservation Connection to Economically Healthy Communities

Thursday, February 4, 2016

Waterfall Arts, Belfast, Maine

The Community Institute

A Program of Friends of Midcoast Maine



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Introduction

On Thursday, February 4, 2016, over 40 people attended Session #5 of The Community Institute, a program of Friends of Midcoast Maine. "Farms, Food and the Conservation Connection to Economically Healthy Communities" was held at Waterfall Arts in Belfast, Maine. Attendees represented 18 different communities from Maine and other New England states.

In keeping with the successful format of The Community Institute, the session featured national guest faculty members as well as state and local faculty practitioners, thought leaders and experts in the subject matter. The overall mission of The Community Institute is to "build strong places, people and leaders" in Maine.

Agenda

The agenda transitioned from policy to practice, beginning with Jessica Sargent of the Trust for Public Lands, followed by John Piotti of Maine Farmland Trust. Additional speakers included Catherine Johnson, Esq. of the Natural Resources Council of Maine and Bryan Wentzell of the Appalachian Mountain Club. The afternoon sessions included local and state practitioners who focused on success stories and tools communities could use for farmland preservation and open space and land conservation. Lastly, Jane Lafleur of Friends of Midcoast Maine focused on concrete tools to assess our communities for farm friendliness, open space and place making. The post lunch session included a one hour walking tour of downtown Belfast and public spaces along the waterfront, using the Project for Public Spaces tool to assess public spaces. This assessment was led by Jane Lafleur, with permission from Project for Public Spaces.

- 8:30 a.m. *Registration and coffee*
- 8:45 a.m. *Welcome and Introductions - Jane Lafleur, Executive Director of FMM*
- 9:00 a.m. ***Policy: Setting the Stage – The Economic Benefits of Conservation and Open Space – Jessica Sargent, Trust For Public Land***
- 10:00 a.m. *Brief break*
- 10:15 a.m. ***Farming in Maine: The Economics of Agriculture: John Piotti, Maine Farmland Trust***
- 11:00 a.m. ***Open Space, Land Conservation and Parks***
Catherine B. Johnson, Esq., Natural Resources Council of Maine
Bryan Wentzell, Appalachian Mountain Club
- 11:45 p.m. *Catered lunch with table discussions and networking*
- 12:30 p.m. ***Field Work: A Walk-about – The Flip Side of Rural: Place-making, Streets, and Parks (outside)***
- 1:30 p.m. ***On the Ground: Tools and Resources Farming, Open Space and Park Land***
Nicole Briand, Bowdoinham - Connecting Conservation Ordinances & Economic Development
Jeffrey Kendall, Maine Revenue Services - farm land and open space tax programs
Darryl McKenney, Waldoboro tax assessor – farmland taxes in practice
- 2:30 p.m. *Brief Break*
- 2:45 p.m. ***On the Ground: Tools and Resources for Farming, Open Space and Park Land-Success Stories***
Karen Kleinkopf, FARMS program *Stephenie MacLagan, The Island Institute*
Angela Twitchell, Merrymeeting Bay Initiative *Gray Harris, Coastal Enterprise*
- 3:45 p.m. ***Taking Action: tools for assessing your community for farm friendliness, conservation and economic health - Jane Lafleur, Friends of Midcoast Maine***
- 4:30 p.m. *Adjourn **Optional social hour at ROLLIES, 4:30 p.m.- 6:00 p.m. Social hour, cash bar.*

Faculty



Jessica Sargent is the Director of Conservation Economics for The Trust for Public Land. As The Trust for Public Land's lead economist Jessica runs TPL's Conservation Economics program which conducts research on the economic benefits of parks and land conservation at the local, regional, state, and national levels. Since 2007 she has overseen more than 20 economic benefits of land conservation studies. Prior to joining TPL, Jessica spent five years working for Industrial Economics, Incorporated where she conducted analyses of the costs and benefits of proposed environmental and natural resources policies, program evaluation, and natural resource damage assessment for various state, federal, and international agencies. Jessica holds a M. S. in Ecology and Environmental Sciences and a B.S. in Natural Resources from the University of Maine.



Nicole Briand is the Director of Planning & Development for the Town of Bowdoinham. Nicole manages various projects from the planning phase through construction, works with the Town Committees/Boards and coordinates several of the Town's events. Prior to joining the Town of Bowdoinham, Nicole worked for Land Use Consultants as a planner where she conducted feasibility studies and handled project permitting. Nicole holds a B. S. in Environmental Conservation from the University of New Hampshire.



Gray Harris is the Director of Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems at CEI, a community development financial institution (CDFI) in Maine. Gray supervises all work in CEI's agriculture and food system program, an integrated value-chain program whose mission is to support the growth of Maine's sustainable agriculture sector. In her role, Gray assesses sector needs and identifies sources of specialized technical assistance and financing for farm and food start-up and expanding businesses; and sources and aligns investment-ready projects with CEI lending and investment staff. In the past five years CEI has provided over \$10 million of loans and investments into local farm and food businesses in Maine and the northeast, creating 635 jobs and keeping 8,377 acres of farmland in working production. She participates in numerous action-oriented agricultural initiatives statewide, such as the Beginning Farmer Resource Network; and serves on the steering committee of Slow Money Maine, and the boards of the Wolfe's Neck Farm, MOFGA Certification

Services (organic), among others. Gray holds a M.A. from the Muskie School of Public Service at USM and a B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania.



Cathy Johnson, Esq. is the Senior Staff Attorney at the Natural Resources Council of Maine. She attended Yale University, then transferred to College of the Atlantic where she received her B.A. in 1974. She has worked for the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as for the National Parks Office of Nepal, before going to law school. She received her J.D. from the University of Maine School of Law in 1983 and was a trial lawyer in Damariscotta before joining NRCM staff in 1990. She and her partner, artist and illustrator Jon Luoma, live in Alna. They spend their leisure time hiking and canoeing Maine's North Woods, traveling the less developed parts of the world, gardening, and playing the violin and viola.



Jeffrey Kendall is the Chief of Training and Certification at Maine Revenue Services. After graduating from UMaine, Jeffrey Kendall has spent the last 31+ years under the employ of the State of Maine. He has been with the Property Tax Division of Maine Revenue Services since 2000 in the Municipal Services Unit. As Chief of Training and Certification, Kendall is in charge of the annual State of Maine Property Tax School. His unit is heavily involved in municipal assistance in all aspects of to property tax administration and in providing information, education, and outreach regarding the four current use taxation programs: Tree Growth, Farm,

Open Space and Working Waterfront. Jeffrey Kendall and his wife Sue live in Augusta and have two grown children. He enjoys golf, fishing, the coast of Maine and feels fortunate to spend lots of time with his 8 year old granddaughter, Brooklynn.



Karen Kleinkopf holds a B.A. in Sociology from Clark University and a M.Ed. in Creative Arts in Learning and Elementary Education from Lesley University. She taught first grade for nine years in the Maine public school system and one year on the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico. Karen founded Miles of Friends, an intergenerational program between elders and second graders in Lincoln County. In 2004, Karen co-founded FARMS, Focus on Agriculture in Rural Maine Schools, and since 2010, has been working as a Farm-to-School Educator. In this role, Karen has collaborated with kitchen staff, teachers, students, farmers, parents and community members to bring local foods into the schools through weekly cafeteria offerings, classroom taste tests, a healthy snack program, cooking clubs, school gardens, and the annual Harvest Lunch event. Presently, Karen is the Youth Program Director for the FARMS Community Kitchen in Damariscotta. The Community Kitchen opened in the fall of 2014. Over 60 school groups have come to the Kitchen for cooking classes using seasonal local foods.



Stephenie Maclagan serves as an Economic Development Associate at the Island Institute. Stephenie supports efforts to address island and remote coastal communities' priorities related to strengthening diverse economies and workforce development initiatives. Currently, she is helping individuals in fisheries or business to diversify their income by establishing shellfish or kelp aquaculture operations along the coast of Maine. She is also providing encouragement to islanders who are seeking best practices for farm businesses. Stephenie obtained her M.S. in Resource Economics and Policy from the University of Maine, where she studied soft-shell clam management while working at the Senator George J. Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions. She earned her B.S. in Environmental Policy from Unity

College, and has worked in the public, private and non-profit sectors. Stephenie resides in Old Town, cultivating over 1,000 square feet of gardens outside and growing food in the winter under 72 linear feet of lighting.



Darryl McKenney has been in the assessing profession since 1982. He serves as Assessor for the towns of Waldoboro and Palermo. Darryl also serves on many community boards. He has served on the Maine Association of Assessing Officers board since 1993. Since that time he has held the following positions: Regular Board Member for various years, President in 1996 and 2012-2013 and Vice President in 1995 and 2010-2011, not to mention the many years serving in the Past President Role.



John Piotti is the current President and CEO of Maine Farmland Trust. He has been at the forefront of agricultural issues in Maine for 20 years. He is the past chair of the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (NESAWG) and a past director of the National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture. John has also served in Maine’s State Legislature, where he chaired the Agriculture Committee and later served as House Majority Leader. John holds three degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT): in engineering, public policy, and management. In 2013, John was named to Maine Magazine’s inaugural list as one of the 50 people who have done the most for the state.



Angela Twitchell has been the Executive Director of Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust since 2008. Prior to that, she worked as the Government and Community Relations Coordinator for the Nature Conservancy’s Maine Chapter. She also managed two successful campaigns to pass \$50 million and \$35 million public land bonds in Maine in 1999 and 2007 respectively. She worked for Project Vote Smart from the inaugural year in 1991 through 1997, directing the project’s national voter information and research services. She has also been active in her community serving as Chair of the Topsham Conservation Commission, Board member of the Maine League of Conservation Voters Education Fund, and (previous to her hiring) as Vice President of the Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust. She is currently serving as a member of the Maine Land Trust Network Steering Committee, TerraFirma Members Committee, Brunswick FoodShed Board of Directors, and Merrymeeting Soccer Club Board of Directors. She is a graduate of Bates College and studied ecology in the Brazilian rain forest through the School for International Training. She is a Maine native, having grown up in Turner and Auburn, and currently resides in Topsham with

her husband and four children.



Bryan Wentzell is the Maine Policy and Program Director for the Appalachian Mountain Club. He directs AMC’s conservation work in Maine, and is closely involved with the Maine Woods Initiative – AMC’s strategy for conservation in the 100-Mile Wilderness region, including ownership of 70,000 acres of FSC-certified forestland. Through this innovative effort AMC has created dozens of new jobs, managing three Wilderness Lodges and 120 miles of recreational trails all open to the public. Bryan has worked in AMC’s conservation department since 2001, and previously worked for five seasons in AMC’s White Mountain Huts. A main theme of Bryan’s work is leveraging outdoor recreation and land conservation for rural economic development. Bryan is also involved with Maine Woods Discovery, the Piscataquis Tourism Development Authority, Moosehead Trails Advisory Committee, Maine Woods Forever, and serves on the Portland Land Bank Commission. He holds a B.A. in Environmental Studies from Middlebury College.



Jane Bechtel Lafleur is the Executive Director of Friends of Midcoast Maine (FMM), a regional smart growth, planning and civic engagement organization. She developed The Community Institute, a program of Friends of Midcoast Maine, and has been named a program champion and coach for the Orton Family Foundation Heart & Soul planning program. Jane grew up in Lewiston, Maine and has been a city and regional planner since 1981. She served as Town Planner in Conway, New Hampshire and as City Planner in South Burlington, Vermont, as well as a private planning consultant. Jane is a past board member of Maine Association of Planners (MAP) and the Northern New England Chapter of the American Planning Association (NNECAPA) and GrowSmart Maine and has served on local planning boards and comprehensive planning committees. Her work has received the MAP Plan of the year award in Damariscotta and in South Burlington Vermont and she was recently named The Professional Planner of the Year by both the Maine Association of Planners and the Northern New England Chapter of APA.

Jane is a sought after lecturer and trainer on planning topics at the local level as well as at national and state conferences including NNECAPA, APA, New Partners for Smart Growth, Community Matters, and MAP Annual Meetings. She has recently published an article in the “Communities and Banking” magazine of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston as well as other publications. Jane graduated from the University of Maine and received her master's degree in City and Regional Planning from Harvard University and lives in Camden, Maine.

Sponsors

This session of The Community Institute was generously sponsored by our donors and these fine businesses and organizations:



Special Thanks

Friends of Midcoast Maine and The Community Institute give special thanks to Greta Huff who offered her assistance throughout the day including taking detailed, comprehensive notes so that this final report could be developed. Thank you also to Laurel Simone who served as TCI photographer throughout the day.



Welcome

Jane Lafleur welcomed the participants and outlined the day.

Jessica Sargent, Trust for Public Land

Policy: Setting the stage

Jessica Sargent described the research conducted by The Trust for Public Land and the return on investment on public land projects. Maine holds the distinction for the highest return, predominantly from the Land for Maines Future investment in public lands. For every \$1 in conservation the return is \$11 in value. This is data similar for both Maine and New Hampshire. The range nationally is \$4-\$11 return.

All public lands were looked at in their entirety, rather than separating out forests lands from wetlands or other types of land. Participants asked about the value of lands that are taken off the tax rolls and how the tax burden might be shifted to remaining tax payers. Jessica noted that the American Farmland Trust has information on this and noted that conservation easements do not take land off the tax rolls. Participants asked if payment by a non-profit in lieu of taxes was common. She noted that it is common but does not always take place, especially if finances of a non-profit are tight. But they are common practice.

She also noted that this calculation of public benefit did not take into account the public and/or private matches that are required for some or many acquisitions. This would reduce the public benefit because the cost of acquisition would be raised. The return on investment would reduce as costs increase and the benefits remain the same. They consider the match a benefit in their consideration, rather than a cost. That is a benefit to the state that they have to pay less to conserve the land, they don't have to spend as much. The actual matching funds is considered a separate category of investment.

She noted that the American Farmland Trust has good data about tax implications about conservation and the benefits. Participants also asked about TPL's research using an analysis of public money. How would you extend that info to communities that might put aside money for park land, etc.? She noted that they did a measurement in Cuyahoga county, at the 10,000 foot view, and with data limitations of GIS, they had to imply info from literature, look at all the homes, and how close are they to park or open space. She noted the smaller geographic, town/county, they are able to look specifically at that specific system, etc.

Jane Lafleur suggested that participants review the final report from The Community Institute #5 on Community Economics and the costs and benefits of public investments and private development patterns. Other research suggests that a home located next to a pedestrian trail improves the value of home.



Overview



- Conserved lands in Maine provide a host of natural goods and services
 - Clean air
 - Clean water
 - Flood protection
 - Wildlife habitat
 - Food production
 - Carbon sequestration



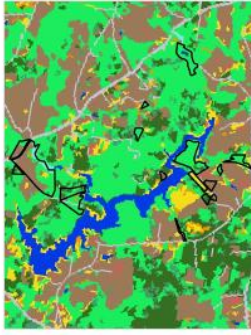
Measuring return on investment for public land conservation spending



- Identify parcels that have been protected, where they are located and how much they cost
- Determine the land cover types of protected areas (e.g., wetlands, rivers, forests)
- Analyze the economic benefits provided by each land cover type (e.g., clean air, clean water, flood control)
- Tally the benefits provided by each parcel each year and compare total benefits with total costs



Methodology



Mapped in GIS lands acquired through LMF
 Aligned the LMF spending for acquired lands
 Determined the underlying land cover type of each acre acquired
 - National Land Cover Dataset
 Consolidated into 13 categories of land cover types



LMF investment in land conservation

Acres acquired by land cover type

| Land Cover Type | Acres | Percent |
|------------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Evergreen Forest | 145,000 | 32.2% |
| Mixed Forest | 129,000 | 28.7% |
| Deciduous Forest | 62,900 | 14.0% |
| Shrub/Scrub | 54,100 | 12.0% |
| Woody Wetland | 35,600 | 7.91% |
| Grassland/ Herbaceous | 8,280 | 1.84% |
| Emergent Herbaceous Wetland | 6,370 | 1.42% |
| Open Water | 3,100 | <1% |
| Developed Open Space (Parks) | 1,950 | <1% |
| Barren Land | 1,360 | <1% |
| Pasture/Hay | 1,160 | <1% |
| Developed | 831 | <1% |
| Cultivated Crops | 255 | <1% |
| Total | 450,000 | 100% |

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Estimated annual per acre value

| Land cover type | Ecosystem service(s) | Annual value per acre |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| Evergreen, mixed, and deciduous forest | Air pollution removal; carbon sequestration; water quality protection | \$115 |
| Shrub/scrub | Air pollution removal; carbon sequestration; water quality protection | \$115 |
| Woody and emergent herbaceous wetland | All | \$57 |
| Open water | Water supply | \$22 |
| Developed open space (parks) | Air pollution removal; carbon sequestration | \$80 |
| Pasture/hay | Food production/livestock goods | \$27 |
| Cultivated crops | Food production; carbon sequestration | \$49 |
| Developed and barren land | None | N/A |

Results



- The investment of \$76.0 million (present value) in land conservation has
 - Helped acquire 450,000 acres
 - Yields \$833 million in public benefits
 - Every dollar invested in LMF returns \$11



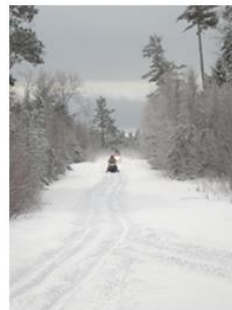
Generates jobs and revenues



- Conservation generates jobs and strengthens local economies by supporting
 - Tourism and outdoor recreation
 - Forestry
 - Agriculture
 - Commercial fishing



Tourism



- 76% of residents participate in outdoor recreation each year
- Outdoor recreation generates
 - \$5.3 billion in consumer spending
 - 65,000 direct jobs
 - \$1.5 billion in wages and salaries
 - \$382 million in state tax revenue
- Source: The Outdoor Industry Association



Agriculture



Maine Agriculture in the Classroom www.gdnr.me.gov

- Farming and its related industries add
 - \$1.7 billion in value added
 - 8,220 jobs
- Wild Blueberries
 - \$49.5 million processing value of production
- Organic Farming
 - \$36 million value added
 - 1,600 jobs
- Potatoes
 - \$540 million in sales
 - 6,100 jobs
- Agri-tourism
 - \$28.3 million in sales
 - 1,760 jobs



Forest products



- Forestry and logging
 - 2,460 jobs
 - \$94.8 million in wages
 - Source: Maine Department of Labor, 2010 Maine Employment and Wages by Industry
- Forestry related manufacturing
 - \$2 billion value added
 - 13,000 jobs
 - Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 Annual Survey of Manufactures



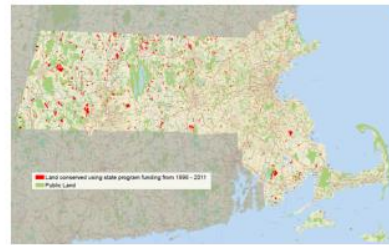
Commercial fishing

| Subsector | Sales (billions) | Income (millions) | Jobs |
|------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Commercial Harvesters | \$0.20 | \$73.8 | 19,800 |
| Seafood Processors & Dealers | \$0.09 | \$28.7 | 2,350 |
| Seafood Wholesalers & Distributors | \$0.13 | \$64.4 | 825 |
| Retail | \$0.60 | \$360 | 1,240 |
| Total | \$1.01 | \$527 | 15,400 |

Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service, Fisheries Economics of the U.S. – 2008



Comparison – Massachusetts 4:1



John Piotti, Maine Farmland Trust

John Piotti, CEO of Maine Farmland Trust presented on the Economics of Agriculture in Maine. He noted that:

- Conservation can advance farming
- Vibrancy in our downtowns is just as important as productive farm lands
- As a land trust, MFT protects farmland. In the agricultural world, conservation means something else, and that usually has to do with soil conservation.
- MFT sees land protection and land viability as interconnected
- Compared to Iowa, there are more farms in Maine where farming is the primary occupation. 60% are 55 or older. This 40% increase is 270 new farmers, leading the nation's numbers. While Maine farms are predominantly run by older farmers, younger farmers are increasing in number. Maine Farmland Trust is often working with both.



8,173 Farms in 2012
Up from 7,196 in 2002 (+13.5%)

48% of farms list farming as primary occupation
Up from 43% in 2007
Exceeds national average of 47%

29% of farmers are women
Up from 25% in 2007

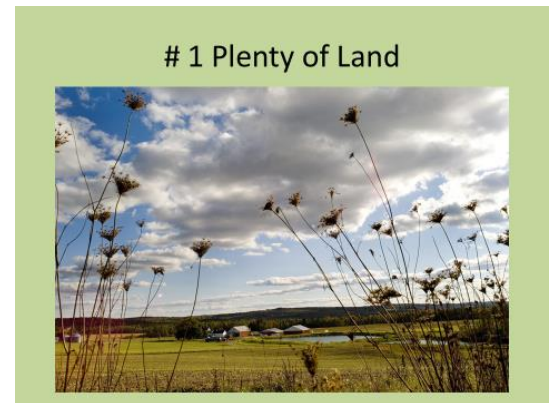
John noted that we can think about farming as having two different tracks:

- *Commodity Farming*: with the siloes and heavy equipment. They are principally selling their products to wholesalers or processors. Those are products that are being sold as commodities.
- *Local agriculture*: what's the difference? It's not the size of the farm, it's not the products that they grow; it's how they are sold in the marketplace. They are not selling products as commodities, but are selling direct or close to direct to consumers, by using farmers' markets, CSAs, small grocery stores, or restaurants. The products flow into those entities but still retains the connection to the farm. This is where the vast majority of the growth has come.
- Assumption: Commodity Farming is old, tired, the past, stable, stepping down, dead. Actually the two are closely interwoven and depend on each other to thrive.
 - o Ex: Woman who has a small heard of goats, making a nice chevre, selling at market, restaurants, the only reason the economics work for her is that she can buy grain for bulk, and the only reason she can do that is because of the dairy industry.
- The vast majority of the Ag in the state is within the commodity track.
- The challenge is how we get more of Maine's food in Maine mouths. Diversified strategy makes sense when you don't know the future. In many ways what we have right now is local Ag being relatively small scale, sponsoring scaling up workshops, we don't want them to scale up so much that their products become commodities, but we want them to scale up enough to find some efficiency.
- We're now encouraging farms to diversify their markets. Think also about doing a little wholesale. It's difficult to do a lot of things really well. What if you did 3 acres for your CSA, and 1 acre of carrots for the wholesale market?



Why in the world for a cold rocky corner of the northeast, be competitive enough to grow food?

- Maine has a lot of land! 20 million acres. According to the USDA 1 million acres are prime soils of statewide significance; one could grow any crop that the season will allow. That is enough land to grow all of the fruits and veggies for all of New England.
- Maine also has lots of pasture land, we grow grass, cool wet. We can do an awful lot with livestock.
 - o Plight of dairy farmers, dairy farms have been struggling and are in decline but it has nothing to do with our ability to make milk and bring it to market. The problem is federal policy. The price of milk, the price that is paid to the farmer. Based on a formula that defies logic.
- We have abundant water. Droughts elsewhere: a huge bulk of our Ag economy is based on a water resource which is unsustainable, and shrinking. Its what's called a fossil aquifer. In northeast we are familiar with recharge aquifers. A fossil aquifer has a finite amount, and when it is gone it is gone. This covers 10-12 states in the midwest, and is estimated to be drained in 40 years. Thirty percent (30%) of the food in the United States. We don't know exactly what will happen with climate change, but we will likely get a little wetter here.



- We have Good Growing Conditions! Both your geography and geometry. We're only half way to the North Pole! At the same latitude as France, which has very productive agriculture. It is sunlight which is determined principally by latitude, which determines what you can grow. Grain grows really well in cool climates.
 - o Elliot Fields, guru, pioneer, low input season extension strategies, 10,000 farmers around the world, and a lot in Maine. Twelve months out of the year without addition of heat. Double layers of plastic, hardy crops, they grow for about 10 ½ months and don't grow early in December, because of the sunlight.
- We have strong markets! If you look at where the local food movement has its beginning, the places where local Ag got its root has a deep sense of community. Farmers connect his business to your business when the farmer shops at the local hardware store.
 - o Food prices going up, but the return to the farmer has been flat, meaning the profit has flowed to the middle man. The real story is that we have found strategies to go around the middle man. It has relied on people and markets that have been willing to realize that there is value in me buying local even if the price may be slightly higher.
 - o We have a tourist economy which is completely aligned with the growing season.
 - o Maine has become a culinary destination, not just to see a lighthouse and eat lobster, they come here to eat really good food that has some connection to the local community.
 - o Farmers have most of the tools around them in order to be successful.



Can farming here be more than a sideshow?

- New England Food Vision: NE can grow one half to two thirds of all of its own food!!!!!!
- But Maine would need to have about 3 million acres in production, today it's about 700,000 cultivated acres!
- 3-4 million acres that could be reclaimed for ag production. Just because something can happen, doesn't mean it will happen. If you did it right, it could have significant economic and environmental benefits.
 - o Hint at a couple right ways: do reclamation in the right places, and the right way, you can grow food without completely clearing land, you can pasture cattle in the woods, you can grow under partial capacity, long time rotational plans.
 - o Farming in Maine is hindered by current economic and demographic realities. Really not a lot of additional market for local at prices that work for the farm. Part of the challenge of the next 15 years. Scaling up a bit, a lot of that is about returning the pieces of infrastructure.
- One third of Maine farmland will transition this decade.

New England Food Vision

- Studied New England's ability to feed itself
- Considered population trends, eating habits, and land availability and suitability
- Results: NE could grow 50 – 67% of ALL its food
- But Maine would need to farm 3 million acres (Maine currently farms 700,000 acres)

Critical Needs



- Protect more farmland
- Provide services to help farmers thrive
- Raise public awareness

- Critical period of transition: we're in this crazy middle position, market interventions to save those things that you will want to have in 15 years, land, infrastructure, farmers, etc. not just about the number of acres, it's about the impact on the environmental and quality of life, and economy. We still have a robust community based fishery. Depends heavily on quality water. If we reclaim a lot of farmland, by doing it well. We can serve these economic goals, and we can sequester more carbon, reducing our carbon foot print by eating local

Critical Period of Transition



- If we lose much more land to short-sighted development
- If we lose knowhow, because we aren't helping existing farmers innovate or beginning farmers get started
- Then, farming will never realize its promise

Critical needs:

- Protect more farmland, we have about 3% protected, Vermont has approximately 30%.
- Provide services to help farmers thrive. Broader infrastructure support. Public Awareness. We all think we understand farming, its multiple sectors; however the realities of dairy are so different from mixed vegetables.
- There is huge opportunity in this area. Food is fundamental. There is incredible public interest, which can be a little misguided.
- The challenge is, the truth is farming is damn hard work. The margins that farmers see are incredibly small, if you apply an accounting perspective, most farmers in Maine lose money. If their labor was valued at what it really is, if you looked at the time value of the money that they have in land, the depreciate-ability of their farms and equipment. Just doing one little thing wrong, if they do something different and fail, they are done. Yes all these great things are happening, but it is a really hard place to make things work.
- One of my fears is that we have had a lot of exciting things happening, and yet we are starting to see failures. That is not a reason to be disheartened, that is a reason to do our homework better, to do our due diligence better, and to keep on building a better system.

Questions included:

What is Vermont doing that Maine is not?? They are further ahead with land protection, because they got started before we did. Senator Leahy had millions of dollars of fed money which flowed 30 years ago, which was for transportation and they were able to leverage for land protection, by arguing if the land was protected they would spend less on infrastructure. Their state government has been rock solid promoters of that for 30 years. Without these external advantages, we are on the same page with growth of new farms.

Water: how do we protect it?? We have no comprehensive water policy in the state. I'd like to think that it doesn't require a major disaster before we address it.

Abundant water in Maine. Clarification: there is never enough water. Our water needs to be protected. False message. Excellent point, we have abundant compared to other places. That mistake leads us to not thinking properly about protecting it. John noted he will change his slides.

As we transition from old ways to new ways, are there up and coming crops for Maine?? If a lot of the future is moving away from commodity, being creative with value added and market development, there are a lot of crops that could fit into that, livestock, grain, berries.

Do you think that expanding the grain market would have issues with GMO?? We would be naïve to think that we aren't already vulnerable, but the answer would be market driven, to be able to show consumers that there is an advantage to have non GMO crops. It might be a good way to show farmers in other areas that there is potential in non GMO.

Catherine Johnson, Natural Resources Council of Maine

Open Space, Land Conservation and Parks

Land protection in Maine started in 1820, when it split from Massachusetts. About 1,000 acres were protected in each town. Any town forest probably came from that. Towns sold off this land over time. The north woods, isolated parcels were consolidated into units that now make up our public reserve lands. Public reserve lands include Bigelow, Tumbledown, Donnell Pond, Chain of Ponds, etc.

She noted that our governor wants to overharvest these lands and siphon them off for other uses. There are Constitutional limits on what he can do because it is in a public trust.

Acadia: jump ahead 100 years, established as a national monument, was made a park 3 years later. Acadia was established as a private philanthropic donation. Last year Acadia welcomed over 2.8 million visitors.

Baxter state park: Governor Baxter bought 28 parcels during his lifetime and donated them to Maine people. There were still a few small pieces, and those were purchased subsequently, made up of 31 parcels. There are 210,000 acres now.

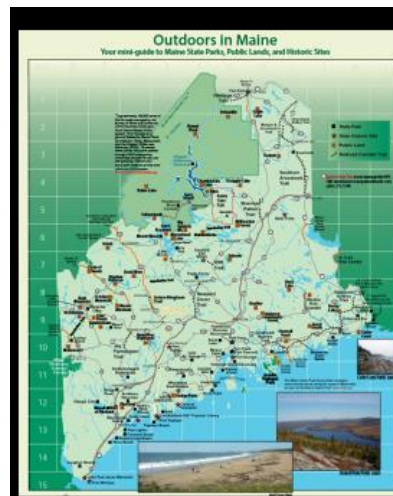
Maine State park system: Baxter is different from state park system of Bradbury Mountain, Camden Hills, Sebago Lake, etc. Baxter was previously federally owned and returned to our state system. In the 1940 & 50s, there were lots of private donations to the state of public and private lands. There was federal money combined with a couple of state bonds to buy the state park system. There have not been expansions since 1970.

Land for Maines Future – funding program to acquire lands, land bonds that were voted for by Maine people. There were six years that the state has had land bonds but during the last two (2010 and 2012) the governor was not allowing the spending of the money even though they had been voted on.

Achievements: Big Spencer Mountain, Butler Coast, Kineo, Crystal Spring Farm, Lakeside Orchards, Fuller Farm. She illustrated how conservation has changed over the last 200 years with private donations, and federal and state money, and partnerships that take place to make all of the projects that we are working on.

Development in Maine: Maine has the largest block of undeveloped land in the whole eastern United States.

Between 1994 and 2005, forest industry and paper industry sold their land, purchased by various investors, Irving only paper company that still owns land in Maine.



Public Reserve Lands

- 600,000 acres
- 30 units statewide
- Multiple use management
 - Wildlife habitat
 - Outdoor recreation
 - Sustainable timber
- Some of best managed forests in Maine
- Management paid for with logging revenues

Proposed National Park, Owners of Burts Bees want to donate 90,000 acres of land that they own and an endowment that they own, east of Baxter State Park, with spectacular views of Katadin from the east; it would be a huge attraction; it would provide a huge benefit to the communities up there. This National Park designation requires an act of congress. On the 100th anniversary of the national park service, there is a move to establish a national monument and the president can do this.

Conservation in 2016 and beyond, public support, generous donors, federal and state support. We have a 200 year legacy of land conservation and there are tons of opportunity to do more.

?? Recreation in new proposed park?? Hiking, camping, fishing, wildlife watching, park and recreation area, hunt and snowmobile in the recreation area.

?? Why it would be a national park as opposed to extension of state park?? From a community perspective, a national park is the very best attractor that would give the most economic benefit to the community; if you just added it to Baxter, it would not have the same visibility, and from a community economic development point of view, a national park is better. From a conservation point of view, there would be loop road, etc.

Maine State Park System

- 1935 – State Park Commission created
- 1938 – First state park, Aroostook State Park, created
- Currently 48 state parks
- Total about 85,000 acres



Land For Maine's Future

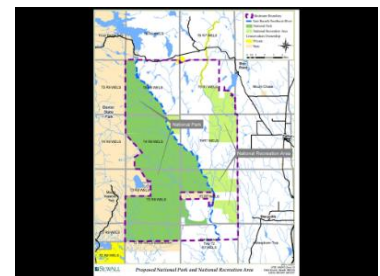
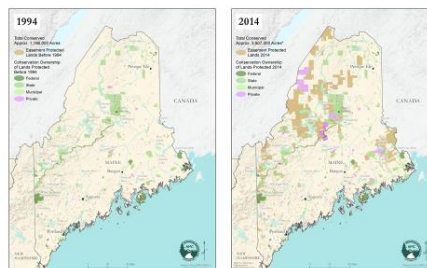
- Created in 1987
- Funded by Land Bonds approved by Maine voters
- More than 60% support
- Bonds: 1987 - \$35 million
1999 - \$50 million
2005 - \$12 million
2007 - \$20 million
2010 - \$9.25 million
2012 - \$5 million

Land For Maine's Future

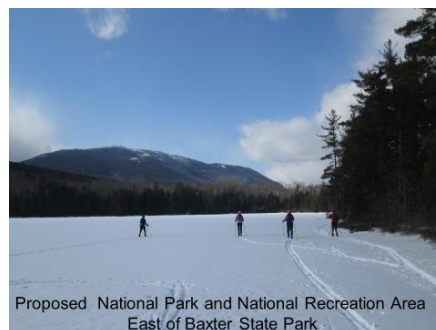
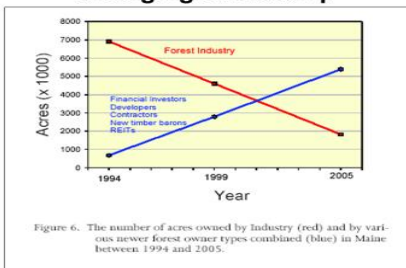
Protected 570,000 acres of conservation and recreation lands

- 54 water access sites
- 40 farms involving more than 9,700 acres
- 24 commercial working waterfront properties
- 332,000 acres of working forestlands
- 1,200 miles of shoreline and dozens of lakes and ponds

Land Conservation in Maine: 1994-2014



Changing Ownership



Bryan Wentzell, Appalachian Mountain Club

The AMC predates the Appalachian Trail by about 30 years. AMC has huts and lodges through the region, and trips that you can go on absolutely free of charge. There has been a \$300,000,000 investment with public and private funding, and a huge amount of private investment.

How can conserved lands be leveraged for econ development: Conserved land = long term stability, public access, ability to build recreational infrastructure.

You would never invest that much on a trail for land that has a year to year lease, parking lots, kiosk, etc. The Maine Woods Initiative (MWI) started 12 years ago. It is an AMC strategy for land conservation in the 100 mile woods. AMC wanted to create a new space for more wilderness walking. There are no towns or paved roads for 100 miles. There are 3 sporting camps on the property, no timber harvesting, and only non-motorized vehicles allowed.

Half of AMC property is managed for sustainable forestry, focusing on how they grow more mature, more cords per acre. It's a green endowment, with local education programs, environmental and outdoor education. Locals were skeptical at first but gradually won their support by demonstrating what they were prepared to do. They also prepared an economic analysis report of this property. They are now building a new lodge and cabins on Second Ridge pond.

A piece of this model is applicable across the state of Maine: HVNV, Maine huts and trails, Titcomb Mountain ski area, recreation destinations, these are all really important, non –profit models, creating infrastructure that has a huge benefit to the local community.

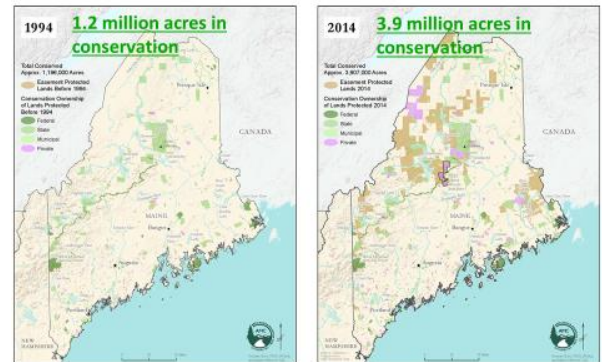
What is the AMC?

The Appalachian Mountain Club promotes the protection, enjoyment, and understanding of the mountains, forests, waters, and trails of the Appalachian region.

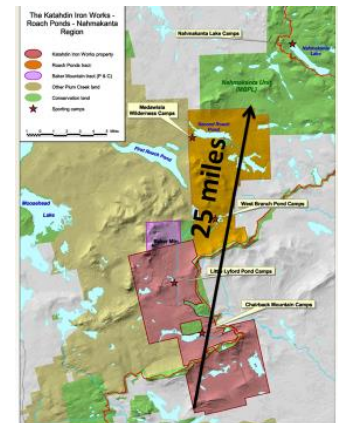
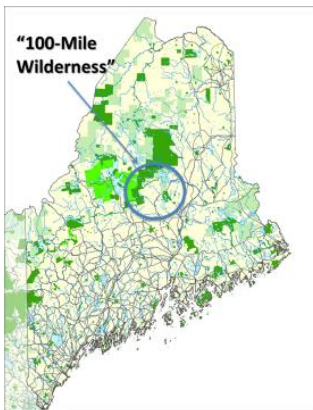
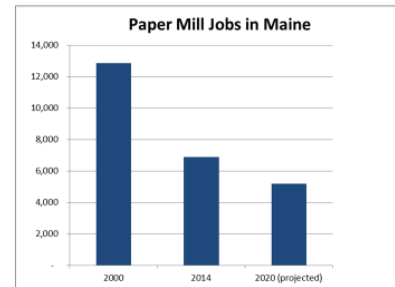
- 100,000 members, advocates
- 16,000 volunteers
- 8,000 outdoor trips
- 150,000 overnights
- 1,800 miles of trails maintained



Land Conservation in Maine: 1994-2014



Maine Woods Economic Landscape



MWI: Conservation



- 70,000 acres conserved
- 25,000 acres of ecological reserve



MWI: Backcountry Recreation



- 120 miles of trails open to the public
- 24 ponds
- 8 remote campsites



MWI: Backcountry Recreation



- 2 Wilderness Lodges
- Medawisla Wilderness Lodge renovation underway



MWI: Backcountry Recreation



- \$2 M invested to build 75 miles of new trails during 2014-2018 on AMC and Plum Creek lands



MWI: Sustainable Forestry



- 50-year forest management plan
- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification
- Goal: older, more diverse forest, bigger trees.



MWI: Community Partnerships



- 2300 local youth served in 2015 education programs
- Chamber, regional tourism development partnerships



AMC Impact in Piscataquis County

Based on a study by Retired Bowdoin College Professor of Economics David Vail

2003-2014

- \$45 million directly invested
- \$12.3 million direct impact on local economy
 - \$16 million economic activity added to Piscataquis
- \$22 million impact to Maine



AMC Impact in Piscataquis County

Annually...

- \$200,000 non-AMC spending locally by AMC guests
- +
- >\$1 M direct impact by AMC operational spending



AMC Jobs in Piscataquis County

In 2014

- 26 direct full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs
- 56 direct and indirect FTE jobs (contractors, associated jobs)
- 1.5% of county employment
- 71 jobs created in Maine



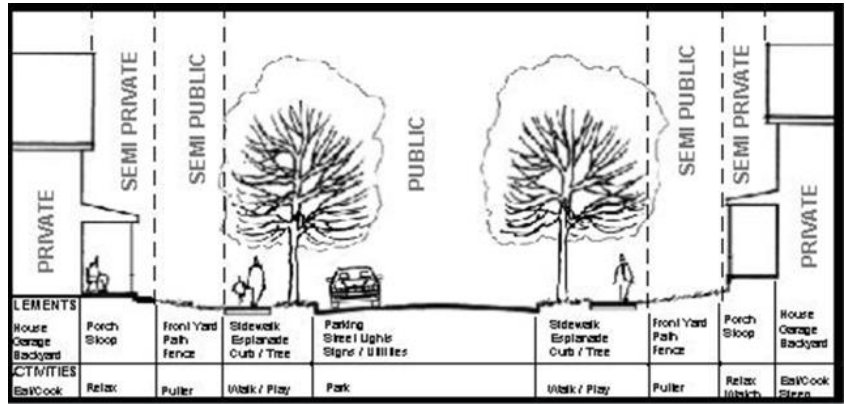
Jane Lafleur, Friends of Midcoast Maine and The Community Institute

Field Work Introduction: The Flip- Side of Rural Places

Jane Lafleur introduced the outdoor field work. She described the public and private realms of our public streets. The public spaces are the streets and sidewalks; the semi-public spaces, although privately owned are the front yards; the front porches are semi-private, and of course, our homes are private.

An interesting way to look at the street is as a room; during the field work, participants looked

at what is being done in that outdoor space, to make it pleasing, and environmentally helpful for people who want to use it. Jane introduced the work of the Project for Public Spaces and the Place Game. She noted the 4 criteria of successful places: Access and Linkages, Sociability, Uses and Activities and Comfort and Image. She introduced the Power of Ten idea of PPS. Are there 10 destinations in our regions, in those destinations are there ten places, and in those places are there 10 things to do? The group walked down to the Belfast Pedestrian Bridge and walked around the pedestrian path way along the river, back to the Arts Center, using this assessment tool.





On the Ground: Tools and Resources for Farming, Open Space and Park Land

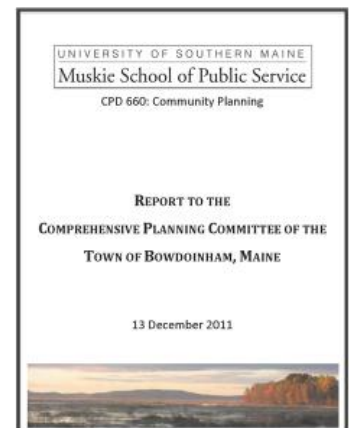
Nicole Briand, Bowdoinham

Bowdoinham is located on Merry Meeting Bay with a population under 3,000 people. In 2009, the community attempted to enact zoning with a land use ordinance but instead began with a comprehensive planning process. They have a site planning review process and all uses are allowed anywhere in town.

Bowdoinham residents wanted to keep Bowdoinham the way it is now and to grow to agricultural sector. Through the planning process they reached out to the Muskie School, had graduate class do a report which included recommendations on what the town could do, should do, and other ideas. Maine Farmland Trust played a strong role. The students did a lot of mapping as part of the process. Most of the farms were not enrolled in the farmland tax program. The town wanted to see everything mapped, including hay land.

From the report, the school created a five page survey to give to farmers. Surveys were sent to 35 farmers including hobby farmers and they received 22 surveys back. The survey they invited farmers to a meeting where they could discuss the survey results. At the meeting they brainstormed how could they achieve the goals: enhance viability of ag, promote buying local, safeguard ag resources, encourage sustainable agriculture, etc. Over 100 people came to the meeting, with lots of questions on taxes and ordinances. They came to agreement on the four Goals and decided to focus around taxes, education, and supporting what others are doing. They focused on getting two groups of farmers together, to get something together that would be manageable. They had 10 farmers come to three meetings each. Group A focused on taxes; Group B focused on scale & sustainability. One group desired no regulations, wanted to let farmers do what they wanted; the second group focused on leasing property, forming a hub, having no large scale farms and they were conscious of the impact on the community. The older farmers, after hearing the younger folks' goals, changed their tune, and supported what the younger participants wanted.

Examples of the goals and the strategies are presented below:



Goal - To enhance the viability of agriculture so that it will remain an economic strength for future generations.

- ⊙ Cooperative resource board on town website
- ⊙ support farm easement acquisitions by state, local and federal government and by private trust groups
- ⊙ enhance viability for future generations
- ⊙ flexible ordinances
- ⊙ tax breaks for farm equipment, barns, structures
- ⊙ education for all ages
- ⊙ democratize access to fresh produce: a program that matches WIC or SNAP\$ via tokens (11 existing programs at Portland market)
- ⊙ farming techniques and crops for the marine clay lands of Town
- ⊙ encourage land owners to think about leasing really good soils
- ⊙ bring back 4th of July barbeque and make it an agriculture celebration
- ⊙ treat all economic sectors/businesses equal
- ⊙ lower taxes on farm buildings/infrastructure
- ⊙ support it. Provide incentives to farmers and consumers. Protect all land, water resources. Treat it as a necessity and not a commodity.
- ⊙ root cellar workshop to keep more food in local homes
- ⊙ make taxation of farms user friendly for the farm owner/operator and make it long term/permanent to ensure that this land can be transferred with the same benefit.
- ⊙ leave the complaining people who initially love farm animals stop hindering the animal growth
- ⊙ affordable housing
- ⊙ increase markets
- ⊙ support competitive prices
- ⊙ increase production infrastructure
- ⊙ separate current use - working vs non-working
- ⊙ inventory farm land in use & availability
- ⊙ more community: farmers talk with the town" meetings
- ⊙ reduction in property taxes for working farms
- ⊙ encourage land owners with unused agricultural land to rent it to farmers
- ⊙ create revolving loan fund to assist the Maine Farmland Trust or similar organizations to save endangered farm land
- ⊙ get a deal with butcher or get a local butcher
- ⊙ incentivize preservation of farmland in subdivision ordinance
- ⊙ avoid zoning
- ⊙ explore tax options for encouraging farmland protection (there seem to be new options)
- ⊙ keep practices close to nature simple and beautiful and healthy
- ⊙ farmland overlay zones created to protect land with prime farm land soils and soils in production
- ⊙ consider purchase of development rights of land with prime soils

Goal - To promote buying local foods and enhance opportunities to obtain local foods.

- ⊙ sliding scale for healthy food
- ⊙ farm to school program
- ⊙ support Long Branch Store & School
- ⊙ help farmers keep costs down (where possible) so they can be profitable with lower prices
- ⊙ create "Bowdoinham Foods Brand"
- ⊙ promote local farm stand near entrance to Town
- ⊙ Bowdoinham food pantry
- ⊙ Food freaks
- ⊙ Create a program to help foster and manage community gardens
- ⊙ Property tax credits for purchase of Bowdoinham produced food
- ⊙ Add an element to Town website highlights local farms and food sources
- ⊙ Work with other Town to develop a regional cultural marketplace including locally produced ag products, arts, crafts, programs, etc.
- ⊙ Farm tours

- ⦿ Maple syrup Sunday
- ⦿ we need cooperative buying club opportunities
- ⦿ continued support for Bowdoinham Farmers' Market, advertising at exit 37 to remind people; market should have a "special" each week – advertise on sign board
- ⦿ connect with school lunch program
- ⦿ expand hours of farmers' market in Bowdoinham
- ⦿ utilize existing spaces/structures like Grange – use membership or use as educational space
- ⦿ help with marketing & outreach (in newsletter, post/mail flyers) for cheap
- ⦿ provide assistance with business loans
- ⦿ get long term lease agreements for people who can't purchase land
- ⦿ crop ripening schedule on Town website
- ⦿ allow all vendor at farmers market not just full time farmers, include craftspeople too
- ⦿ "Bowdoinham Farms" page to Town website
- ⦿ promote work with school as focal point for consuming
- ⦿ encourage local farmers to participate in local farmers' market
- ⦿ marketing, marketing, marketing
- ⦿ buy local foods for Town events
- ⦿ force Hannaford to sell only local products at a cost relative to the average income of local residents
- ⦿ School to farm programs: field trips- show process and where and when food is produced (not just how grown)

The major goals included supporting agri-tourism, preserving farm land for us, connecting with the local land trust to protect the land. They started open farm day, profiling farmers in their newsletter, adding arts & crafts, and a bike ride on open farm day.

Questions included: How can you protect your land and your soils without zoning? She noted the voluntary efforts and the supportive community for these goals.

What kind of government does Bowdoinham have?? Town manager, town meeting. Creating the comprehensive plan was a 4 year process, everyone supported it at town meeting. Group started a local non-profit to provide loans to farmers in the area.

John Piotti noted that Bowdoinham has done the best job protecting farms and farming through this process.



Darryl McKenney, Waldoboro Tax Assessor

Mr. McKenney presented a booklet that explains the laws and recommended guidelines for how to assess the value of land. They have just mailed the forms out on January 12; if they wait 5 years to report, sent out to them by certified mail, 120 days. The assessor has to know about all the farms. In farmland assessments, it is just what is being used for farmland that counts.

Jeffrey Kendall, Maine Revenue Services

Voluntary Municipal Farm Support Program (VMFSP)

This program was enacted in 2009. The Rules were approved in 2011. This program helps towns establish a 20-year agricultural conservation easement program. Farmers receive Farm Support Payment(s) from the Town in exchange for the 20-year agricultural conservation easement. It is totally voluntary by the town.



Protecting farmland means protecting agricultural soils from conversion to non-agricultural uses AND making farmland accessible & affordable to future generations of farmers.

Voluntary Municipal Farm Support Program (VMFSP):

RULES TO ASSIST THE MUNICIPALITIES

Establish eligibility requirements for farmland and farm buildings to qualify for its Program.

Establish 20-year Qualified Agricultural Conservation Easement

Determine the mechanism for making farm support arrangements & farm support payments

Eligibility - Farmlands & Farm Buildings

- **Farmland Type** The farmland may be Blueberry Land, Crop Land, Horticultural Land – Edible, Horticultural Land - Ornamental, Orchard Land, Pasture Land, Orchard Land, Woodland, or Wasteland.
- **Minimum Acreage** The farmland must be one (1) Tax Parcel of at least five (5) contiguous acres that is producing Agricultural Crops.
- **Farm Income Requirement** The Agricultural Crops grown on the farmland must generate a minimum, annual gross income or fair-market value of at least \$2,000 per year regardless of whether the crops are utilized on the farm, consumed by the farm household or sold off of the farm to wholesale and retail customers.
- **Farm Buildings** The Farm Buildings must be used for the propagation, production and processing of Agricultural Crops.
- **Lands & buildings associated with the farm's Agricultural Management**, but not specifically with the production of Agricultural Crops, a municipality may establish local criteria. Such designations may be made town-wide or occur on a case-by-case basis.
- **Require the landowner to demonstrate that buildings and land not involved in producing Agricultural Crops serve a principal function for the farm operation.**
- **Buildings include but are not limited to shelters for livestock equipment storage and maintenance structures and energy generation facilities.**
- **Land includes but is not limited to ponds for fresh water aquaculture, riding trails for agri-tourism, and clay and gravel mining.**

Eligibility - Farm Residential Buildings

- A municipality may exclude farm residential structures from a Farm Support Arrangement...
...unless both the municipality and the landowner agree that...
...such structures are essential to the farm's Agricultural Management and Agricultural Enterprise, and to the success of the protection effort, because...
...such structures provide affordable housing in an area that is under intense Development Pressure.

Definition for Development Pressure

Means the potential of the farm operations to be curtailed to increasing development of non-compatible land uses near the farm. This includes, but is not limited to, residential and industrial development, nuisance complaints, and loss of agricultural infrastructure in the vicinity of the farm or food business. These, and other non-compatible land uses, can create environmental, social, political, or operational constraints on the farm operation and result in, negative financial impacts to the farm business.

Adopt a Qualified Agricultural Conservation Easement

Two (2) required Conservation Purposes

- i. To provide public benefit by protecting the Protected Property's agricultural soils for the production of food, forage, seed and fiber; and preventing the conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses that would reduce or destroy the Protected Property's diversified agricultural and forest productivity; and
- ii. To allow the Protected Property to remain available for commercial agricultural and forest management, provided that such activities are consistent with conserving the agricultural soils, agricultural productivity and natural resource values of the Protected Property.

Six (6) required Recitals – "Whereas" clauses.

The Municipal Program – Farm Support & Payments

Twenty (20) year Farm Support Arrangements that obligate the municipality to make Farm Support Payments to the grantor for the Easement designated as Qualified Farmland and Farm Buildings.

1. Such Farm Support Payments may be up to one hundred percent (100%) of the annual property taxes assessed on the grantor's farmland and farm buildings provided these payments do not exceed the total fair market value of the Qualified Agricultural Conservation Easement.
 2. A municipality must establish a Mechanism for making such payments. It may assess taxes and deduct the amount of the Farm Support Payment from the property tax bill. It may collect taxes and reimburse the grantor. Or it may develop whatever other mechanism a municipality deems to be feasible.
- A municipality must monitor Easements at least every two (2) years.

The Municipal Program – Overview

- In accordance with Title 7 M.R.S., Section 60-A.
- Timeline for solicitation, review & acceptance or denial of applications.
- The municipality's VMFSP application form:
 - Description of the Program
 - Description of a Farm Support Arrangement, Farm Support Payments & easement monitoring requirements
 - Copy of the municipality's Qualified Agricultural Conservation Easement
 - An estimate of the costs a typical grantor would pay the municipality to prepare and record the Qualified Agricultural Conservation Easement at the County Registry of Deeds
 - The Farm Application Requirements, procedures & deadline
- Owner(s) prepare the Farm Application
- Owner's statement
 - Signed by all legal owners
 - Will retain or waive legal representation
 - Agree to pay recording costs
- An aerial photograph & list of farmland & farm buildings
- If mortgage, then a list of each mortgaged asset noting the loan amount, pay-off date & lender's contact information
- A Farm Income Report - IRS Income Tax Form-Schedule F or a table that lists each Agricultural Crop, the average annual yield and the fair market value of the yield based upon the price or value per unit multiplied by the number of units produced
- Two (2) Letters of Support

Stamped by Town Clerk or other authorized municipal official.

Review the Farm Application for completeness within the review period identified in the Solicitation.

- ✓ If complete – a written notice specifying the date & time that the municipality will take official action on the proposed Farm Support Arrangement.
- ✓ If incomplete - a written notification and shall guidance as to whether the applicant can resubmit.

Municipality must document its review:

- ✓ a. Notes any communications between the municipality and applicant
- ✓ b. Identifies which farmlands & farm buildings that it will recommend as "Qualified Farmland and Farm Buildings" for the municipal legislative body to consider for the proposed Farm Support Arrangement.

The Municipal Program – Authorization

The municipality's legislative body shall vote to - accept as proposed; amend and accept; or deny a Farm Application for a Farm Support Arrangement in accordance with 7 M.R.S. Chapter 2-C. A municipality may enter into an agreement with a land trust that would transfer any existing or allow any new Qualified Agricultural Conservation Easement to be held and monitored by that land trust. Tax reimbursement is renegotiated, all from voluntary municipal, it's an arrangement that you have to sell to taxpayers.

The state's role in this was simply to make it possible for the towns to do it. He noted that we don't know if farmers would feel awkward applying. This would be a municipal program that the town that would say these are priority farms that need some support; it might be for a package of multiple farms and since there is no structure from the state, it could unfold that way. The real purpose of this program is to support farmland conservation since the current use programs just don't go far enough. It is another tool for communities.

On the Ground: Tools and resources for Farming, Open Space and Park Land –

Success Stories

Karen Kleinkopf, FARMS

Ms Kleinkopf noted that she began this work as a concerned parent when she noticed that kids often start the day with chocolate milk over frosted flakes. She submitted a petition for more grain, more fiber at her kids school and got called into the principal's office. She asked how can they make changes in her school, and since then this program has been taking a strong foothold in our communities. It's all about building community and relationships. She called Vermont FEED, and was told to go and work in the kitchens, don't tell people what to do, but work with them.



She noted there were a lot of road blocks. She was called into the superintendence office twice because she was bringing up emotions in people. Of course we have commodities and we have guidelines. She has worked with Spears Farms and others, and the school ended up working with Spears. She noted that this work is the right thing to do. We all need to watch out for all of our children. She noted that when she looks at her children and how they are performing in school, she wonder are these other children getting enough nutrients?

Fund raising: They raised \$25,000, 2 years in a row, and then Karen became a farm to school coordinator for the school district. At one point that year they made it into the Wall Street Journal. She taught first grade for 10 years and noticed that the thing missing was nutrition. In 2013 Beth McPherson came to FARMS and said do you need a home? She looked at the space above Rising Tide Co-Op, wrote grants and had a kick starter campaign, raising \$200,000 through kick starter and grants. In her current job she calls schools and set up dates for them to come to the kitchen for cooking classes. This past week they were in the Lincoln County News six times, made recipes from colonial times, held a new teen class, and connected with food pantries by going to pantries and working with people there.

FARMS Mission is a hands on enrichment program that engages school age children in a lifestyle of healthier eating. They work to support the local farms to get the vegetables. Each session costs \$140 dollars, and they work to get \$100 in grants or sponsorship; the teacher must come up with \$40 to attend.

She was asked how she was able to take time out of the busy school day? She noted she tries to connect this work to the classroom. For instance, they made African recipes when they were studying Africa, they used math and science to take measurements, and they work to integrate her sessions into the curriculum.

She noted "If you learn how to cook, you will always have people around you."

Stephenie MacLagan, The Island Institute

Stephenie MacLagan presented information about the Island Institute and its Economic Development Program which came from new strategic plan. They work to sustain year round islands of Maine and remote coastal communities. One of five programs provides individual business support, and works at an earlier stage with business owners. They work to get community members up to the point where they can go into those offices and get what they need. Maine has 15 year round islands. At one point there were over 100. Islands contribute to the Maine identity; it's our boating culture, lobsters, fish, etc.

Stephenie presented case studies from a series of local island farming businesses.

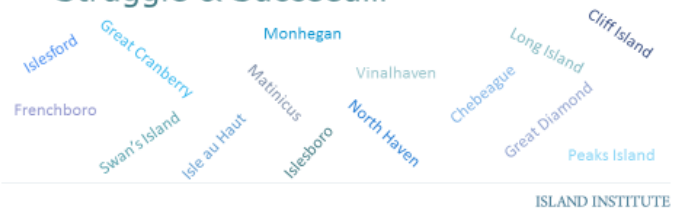
Spark Plug Farm in Vinalhaven began with a person who was non-native to the island and who ran up against the issue of land. They lease land to farm with a one to five year time frame and were often moving. They did a CSA and a few wholesale accounts, sell at farmers markets, \$315 for 16 weeks, to year round community members, extended to a fall CSA that is only \$100 for 6-8 weeks, which is similar to the price point with MOFGA at the market.

In order to get first hand feedback on their farm, in the second to last CSA they dispersed a survey. They are not leasing to own, they can invest their revenue into the business and to expand, are looking at business plan on a regular basis to evaluate that. In many ways, they are much more aligned with urban farmers than with rural farms.

Creelman Creamery is making cheese from cows at the Spark Plug farm. They use goat's milk. Aaron has been an islander since childhood, willing to be outspoken, has figured out what products are most beneficial to her, and knows to refine her business plan down to a few products that she can do really well with. She was playing around with caramels, had difficulties with containers noting it can be difficult to get high quality containers. Shipping costs are really expensive getting products off the island and 15% of gross revenue goes right into costs. She shares a UPS account with another business. UPS allows account to be shared with two businesses, and one only needs to own 50% of a business to have that account. She has tried online sales, has a co-op dream on the island, milking by hand. They are focusing on community collaborations on shipping costs, bulk buying and looking to form a co-op.

Islands

- Contribute economically & culturally
- Struggle & Succeed...



Creelman Creamery





ISLAND INSTITUTE



ISLAND INSTITUTE

Island Aquaponics is located in Casco Bay, on Long Island. There is limited land available for farming. They are growing greens and tilapia. The demand is unmet for local food, but they are struggling with local ordinances which do not allow commercial uses on certain lands etc. The owner needs to build his greenhouse and he recommends engaging neighbors early. The worked to help him with the ordinance early, addressed his neighbors fear straight off, and everyone supported him to get the ordinances changed.



ISLAND INSTITUTE

Long Island Farm Coop – This farm cooperative is the community gathering place for the island. The owner, Katherine Stewart turned her property into this. Initially everyone would pay up front, she would harvest, and then unfortunately nobody would come pick it up. Now they pay up front, but they come and harvest as they need the products throughout the growing season. It is wildly successful. All the lumber came over by lobster boat to build the raised beds for the gardens, it's a lot more work,

Little Long Island Farm Cooperative



ISLAND INSTITUTE



ISLAND INSTITUTE



ISLAND INSTITUTE

You-harvest is similar to the Long Island Community Garden. It was established in 2006 where another 22 families grow food. There is now a waiting list.

Cross-cutting themes from all of these stories are presented here:

Cross-Cutting Themes

Lessons learned:

- Business planning
- Learn from others
- CSA recipe newsletter and survey
- Connect with community members
- Start small

Wanted resources:

- Connecting with other island farmers
- Website design
- Online pricing
- Labor, volunteers & coordinators
- Compost

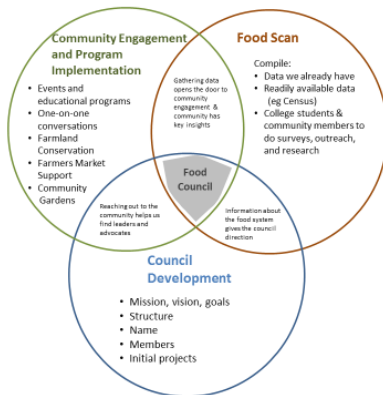
ISLAND INSTITUTE

Angela Twitchell, Merrymeeting Bay Initiative

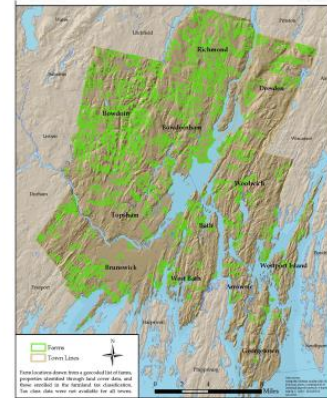
The Merrymeeting Bay Initiative is a regional partnership between the Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust and the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust. They have 4 years of activity and they work to support farmers. Their first project was a farmland project. Their largest program was Crystal Spring Farm. They run a community garden and farmers markets.

They are working towards a robust local food system that strengthens local farms, fisheries, economies and health. They work to protect the land, waters and workers that feed us. They were able to hire a farmland conservation specialist and develop a food scan/inventory of where the food system is. They established a food council!

Initial Efforts:



Service Area



Communities of Merrymeeting Bay:

- Arrowsic
- Bath
- Bowdoin
- Bowdoinham
- Brunswick
- Dresden
- Georgetown
- Richmond
- Topsham
- West Bath
- Westport Island
- Woolwich



What is the goal?

- A robust local food system that:
- Strengthens local farms, fisheries, economies, and health;
 - Is affordable and easily accessible to *everyone*;
 - Protects the land, waters and workers that feed us;
 - Will continue to feed us for generations to come.



Their emphasis is on a regional scale. “We can do more together! We’re not in this alone, we all have common goals, sharing staff and resources, the food scan helped to create those initial connections.”

Maine message: we all do great work individually, a regional approach can help create change too!

Merrymeeting Food Council

We are a collaborative network of farmers, fishermen, nonprofits, businesses, governments, institutions and individuals working together to advance a thriving, resilient food system.

www.merrymeetingfoodcouncil.org

Initial Results:

- Increased pace of regional farmland conservation
- Inventory of working farms, open fields, good agricultural soils, land in farmland tax program across the region and incorporation of this data into local conservation plans
- Farmers market support including initiating EBT programs at local markets
- Establishment of Community Garden and production of food for food pantry
- Food Scan Complete
- Establishment of Merrymeeting Food Council



Need for a Community Food Council:

- Vibrant local food scene, but no one with general leadership
- Need for more collaboration, reduction of redundancy



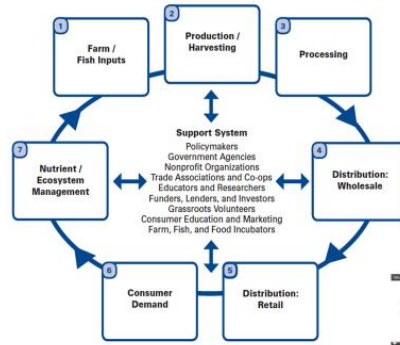
Need to engage a wide diversity of people, including:

- Anti-hunger advocates
- Emergency food providers
- Health care professionals
- Producers
- Processors
- Distributors
- Retailers
- Direct marketers
- Waste managers
- Community and economic developers
- Farm workers
- Local governments
- Faith and fraternal organizations
- Institutional buyers
- **EVERYONE WHO EATS!!**

Undertaking a *systems* approach that looks at:

- Food production
- Food processing
- Food distribution
- Food marketing (retail & direct)
- Food consumption
- Waste management

What is a "Food System"?



Community Food Councils

What is a CFC?

- A forum for sharing ideas, concerns, issues, needs, resources
- A group to help coordinate action
- Diverse group of stakeholders



What does a CFC do?

- Education
- Forum for discussing issues
- Foster coordination between sectors
- Evaluate, influence, and develop policy;
- Launch and support programs that meet local needs;
- Act as a research and resource hub

Gray Harris, Coastal Enterprises

Coastal Enterprises works on the lending side of the equation. They help farm and food systems thrive, operating under the umbrella of CEI, doing place based investing. They work with low and moderate income folks, do a lot of different things including business development and planning, technical assistance, finance, and policy initiatives that help to build sectors.



Gray works on business counselling, and has seen an exponential explosion of agricultural production, entry into farming and food production space, aggregation, distribution, retailers looking for local sources. They work to make all this happen by providing access to capital, access to financing, providing the right kind at the right time. They do their best to bring partners together, recognizing who needs to be at the table to make these things happen. She noted that partnerships are critical. They have provided \$11 mil in 87 projects, creating 600 jobs, serving 330 clients, helped to maintain acres of land in production, and helped to catalyze \$40 mil dollars in local regional food system,

The challenge is how does CEI provides the right kind of capital, over leverage some of these folks, enable them to have a cash flow and make a living, for those that can afford that kind of debt burden.

Jane Lafleur, FMM and TCI

Jane Lafleur ended the day with a discussion of tools that communities can use to assess Farm Friendliness (from Maine Farmland Trust) and for providing Agricultural and Conservation tools through EPA training tools. She also noted tools for the flip side of rural places with the Place Game tool of the Project for Public Spaces.

FOUR Assessment Tools

- Is your Town Farm Friendly?
- EPA Rural Smart Growth Audit Tool-Support Productive Agriculture
- PPS Place Audit (built environment)
- AARP Sidewalk and Street Survey (built environment)

Resources

Friends of Midcoast Maine - The Community Institute
5 Free Street, Camden, Maine 04843
www.friendsmidcoast.org
www.communityinsitute.org

Appalachian Mountain Club
ME-102, Mt Desert, ME 04660
www.outdoors.org

Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust
108 Maine Street, Brunswick, ME 04011
www.btltr.org

Coastal Enterprises, Inc.
30 Federal Street, Brunswick, ME 04011
www.cei.org

Farms Program
PO Box 421, Damariscotta, ME 04543
www.mefarms.org

Island Institute
386 Main Street, Rockland, Maine 04856
www.islandinstitute.org

Maine Farmland Trust
97 Main Street Belfast, Maine 04915
www.maineFarmlandtrust.org

Maine Revenue Services
www.maine.gov/revenue

Natural Resources Council of Maine
3 Wade St, Augusta, ME 04330
www.nrcm.org

Project for Public Spaces
www.pps.org

Trust for Public Land
30 Danforth St #106, Portland, ME 04101
www.tpl.org

Town of Bowdoinham, Maine
13 School Street, Bowdoinham, Maine, 04008

Town of Waldoboro
<http://waldoboromaine.org>

TOOLS

AARP Sidewalk and Street Survey <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/info-2014/aarp-sidewalks-and-streets-survey.html>

Is your Town Farm Friendly? <http://www.maineFarmlandtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/2014-Farm-friendly-test-FINALupdate915.pdf>

EPA Tool Kit: Support Productive Agriculture <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/smart-growth-self-assessment-rural-communities>



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The mission of the Friends of Midcoast Maine is to preserve the midcoast region's quality of life, including the natural resources, the social and economic vitality, the small-town character and the historic assets of the midcoast by promoting a regional smart growth approach to land-use and transportation planning, decision-making and resource management. We are a publicly supported, independent resource that provides expertise in support of smart growth principles.