

2002

Coastal Water Access Priority Areas for Boating and Fishing

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Coastal Water Access Priority Areas for Boating and Fishing

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Introduction

Purpose

The Maine Coastal Program/State Planning Office (SPO) and the Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) developed this report on water access needs for the Land for Maine's Future Board and state agencies with water access-related programs.

In 1999, Maine voters approved a \$50 million bond to acquire land for conservation and recreation, water access, and farmland protection. Ten percent of those funds (\$5 million) is earmarked for the Land for Maine's Future Board-administered Public Access to Maine Waters Fund, which is for the acquisition of small parcels of land that provide water access for boating and fishing. The *Strategic Plan for Providing Public Access to Maine Waters for Boating and Fishing* guides the LMF Board's decisions on acquiring land for water access. Developed by the Departments of Conservation (DOC) and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IF&W) in 1995, the *Strategic Plan* contains a comprehensive, prioritized list of freshwater lakes, ponds, and rivers in need of public access. A comparable list did not exist for coastal waters. The LMF Board requested that SPO and DMR develop a prioritized list of coastal water access needs.

In addition to the Land for Maine's Future Board, the information collected for this study will be used by DOC's Bureau of Parks and Lands in establishing boating facilities along the coast, updating (with IF&W and DMR) the *Strategic Plan*, and developing a Statewide Conservation Outdoor Recreation Plan. The Department of Transportation will use the information to determine needs for Small Harbor Improvement Program, which has assisted communities with marine infrastructure projects. The study will provide background information for the Gas Tax Equity Study and for the SPO/Maine Coastal Program coastal access program evaluation in February 2001.

Study Methods and Tools

To determine need, and to develop a prioritized list of coastal water access, DMR and SPO used the following tools:

- **Mailed Survey:** The survey gathered public opinions on water access issues and the types of access that need improvement (see page 5 for highlights and a full summary in Appendix C). It was mailed in mid-July 2000 to 400 individuals knowledgeable about public water access issues in the state, including Town Manager/First Selectman, Conservation Commission Chairs, Shellfish Commission members, Harbormasters, and Water Quality Monitors.

- **Interviews:** DMR and SPO interviewed or corresponded with individuals who have good state and regional perspectives on coastal water access for recreational boating and fishing. Their knowledge was vital in compiling the information in this report. They are as follows: Richard Skinner and Herb Hartman, Bureau of Parks and Lands, Department of Conservation; Richard Anderson and Pat Keliher, Coastal Conservation Association; Bruce Joule, Department of Marine Resources; John Boland, Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife; George Smith, Sportsman’s Alliance of Maine; Rachel Nixon, Karen Stimpson, and Sid Quarrier of the Maine Island Trail Association; and Tom Bergh of Maine Island Kayak Company.

- **Existing Studies, Reports, Committees:** A number of surveys, reports, and lists have been developed on water access over the past five years. SPO and DMR assembled and examined the documents (see Appendix A). Several were important in compiling the information in this report, particularly the State Sponsored and Assisted Boat Access Sites List, developed annually by DOC; the Maine Saltwater Angler’s Guide, developed in 1999 by DMR; and the Maine Port Facilities Inventory and Analysis, developed in 1999 for DMR and DOT by the Southern Maine Economic Development District and Eastern Maine Development Corporation. A summary of the reports and surveys and of the various water access-related State programs and committees can be found in Appendices A and B respectively.

Overview of Need

The ability of Maine residents to gain access to their coastal waters has been a persistent issue over the past two decades. This is particularly true in periods of strong economic growth (mid- to late 1980s and again from the mid-1990s to the present), when coastal land development and the loss of land for public access occur at a more rapid pace.

A 1986 report, *Public Access to the Maine Coast* prepared by the Maine State Planning Office, noted “For the past ten years, concern has been growing that not enough avenues to reach Maine’s coastal shorelands remain ... Maine’s recent efforts to purchase and develop accessways have not kept pace with the growth of year-round and summertime populations, and thus greater pressure is placed on existing accessways.” The *Strategic Plan for Providing Public Access to Maine Waters for Boating and Fishing*, developed in 1995 by the Departments of Conservation and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, notes that “Demand for public access appears to be rising as participation in boating and sport fishing grows while traditional access sites and affordable shorefront lands suitable for access diminish.”

Clearly, public access to Maine’s coastal waters is an issue that will not go away, particularly for the state’s coastal waters, which support both recreational *and* commercial users. In fact, the need to address the issue will only become more pressing.

Population and Tourism Growth

Population growth and tourism pressure are two indicators. With the exception of Washington County, Maine’s coastal counties are the fastest growing counties in Maine. For example, according to the Maine Census Data Center at SPO, the population of York County grew by 27% (142,268 to a projected 196,743) from 1980 to 2000, and is projected to grow by another 8% over the next decade. Sagadahoc County grew by 26% (29,316 to a projected 37,000) from 1980 to 2000, and is projected to grow by another 8% by 2010. The Maine coast is also the major draw for visitors. According to the Maine Office of Tourism, visitors made 9.4 million overnight trips to Maine in 1999, with 46% of these trips made to the southern Maine coast and 37% to Greater Portland/Casco Bay. While tourism growth fluctuates with national economic conditions, the Tourism Office expects visitor numbers to the coast will continue to rise steadily over time.

Paddling and Recreational Fishing

The recreational use of coastal waters is growing. According to the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey, conducted by the Maine Department of Marine Resources and the National Marine Fisheries Service, the number of saltwater anglers in Maine has risen substantially over the past five years. In 1995, there were 249,201 saltwater anglers in Maine, of which 114,060 were Maine residents. By 1999, the number increased by 45% to 361,778, of which 237,000 were Maine residents. There has also been a boom in coastal kayaking, with Maine’s long coastline and many islands a growing attraction for resident and nonresident kayak and canoe paddlers. According to the

Maine Island Trail Association (MITA), coastal paddling has boomed in Maine and in other states. In Bar Harbor, for example, there was one kayak outfitter in 1991, today there are eight outfitters. The business of Peaks Island-based Maine Island Kayak Company -- which offers customers kayak lessons and guided trips -- has grown 25 percent annually during each of the past five years. MITA's membership has increased 169% from 1,300 members in 1990 to over 3,400 in 1999 (half of the membership is composed of kayak/canoe paddlers, the other half uses other small craft).

Commercial Fishing

Commercial fishing continues to be a mainstay of the coastal economy, with total employment estimated at 26,000 people and an annual economic impact on Maine of \$770 million, according to the Department of Marine Resources. While there has been a contraction in the groundfishing sector of the industry, other sectors are growing -- such as lobsters -- or have the potential for growth, such as mussels, scallops, finfish aquaculture, and seaweed.

Boat Registrations

While the number of registered boats in Maine fluctuates each year with the economy and the weather, registrations have spiked over the past four years. Consistently, the number of registered boats has ranged from 112,000 and 119,000 between 1976 and 1995, with a spike of 132,039 registered in 1989, according to the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. From 1996 through 1999, the numbers have consistently been above 126,000 registered boats, with a peak in 1997 of 133,529. About 45% of boaters use both inland and coastal waters. (This figure includes both recreational and commercial craft.)

Recent Surveys

The need for public access is reflected in recent surveys. The Coastal Conservation Association of Maine -- a recreational saltwater anglers organization -- conducted an opinion survey of members on the topic of coastal access in 1999. Of 900 questionnaires sent, 120 were completed and returned to CCA. 80% of respondents indicated that there is a great need for more boat access to the coast. In 1998, SPO and DMR surveyed commercial fishermen on the issue of access. Of the 249 licensed commercial fishermen who responded, 39 % indicated that public access for fishermen is an important issue to address, with others noting it will likely become one in the future.

Coastal Water Access Survey

As part of assembling information and opinions for this and other reports on coastal water access, SPO and DMR mailed a survey in July 2000 to 400 people knowledgeable about coastal water access issues. The deadline for responses was September 8. An extended summary of the report is found in Appendix C. Further information -- including a breakdown of the responses of the survey participants by group and region -- is available from SPO. One-hundred and fourteen people representing 81, or 57%, of Maine's 139 coastal municipalities responded to the survey, which is a response rate of 28%.

Survey Highlights

- **Overall Need:** When asked to give an assessment of the overall need for coastal public access in their community or region, 92 people responded, with 59% indicating a High Need for coastal water access, 28% indicating a Medium Need, 13% indicating a Low Need. By region the responses to this question were as follows:
 - 56% rated access a High Need and 36% rated it a Medium Need in the Southern Coast (York, Cumberland Counties)
 - 64% rated water access a High Need and 16% a Medium Need in the Midcoast Region (Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Kennebec Counties)
 - 50% rated access a High Need and 35% a Medium Need in the Penobscot Bay/Acadia Region (Knox, Waldo, Hancock, Penobscot Counties)
 - 75% rated access a High Need and 13% a Medium need in the Downeast Region (Washington County)
- **Pressure on Existing Boat Launching Sites:** The survey asked questions about the presence of boat launching sites in municipalities. Of the communities that indicated they had one or more boat-launching facilities, 58% of the 88 respondents said their site was overcrowded and 72% said there is a need for an additional boat launching facility in their municipality or in adjacent municipalities. By region, the results are as follows:
 - 74% of the respondents in the Southern Coast Region said there was a need for an additional site
 - 59% in the Midcoast Region
 - 76% in the Penobscot Bay/Acadia Region
 - 100% in the Downeast Region
- **New Boat Launching Sites:** For those municipalities that indicated they did not have a boat launching facility, 81% said there is a need for one. By region, the response were as follows:
 - 92% in the Southern Coast Region indicated there's a need for a site
 - 62% in the Midcoast Region
 - 82% in the Penobscot Bay/Acadia Region

- 100% in the Downeast Region
- **Marine Infrastructure:** Eighty (80) percent of the survey participants noted that their municipality has a need for improvements to its public marine infrastructure, including piers, wharves, and boat launching ramps. By region the results are as follows:
 - 89% of the respondents indicated a need in the Southern Coast Region
 - 67% in the Midcoast Region
 - 79% in the Penobscot Bay/Acadia Region
 - 88% in the Downeast Region
- **Different Access Types:** Survey participants were asked to rate the need for 11 different access categories -- part-tide trailered boat launches, all-tide trailered boat launches, hand-carry boat launches, shoreline walking trails or paths, beaches, small municipal parks, large parks, accessways for clambers/wormers, access for people with disabilities, parking places adjacent to existing access sites, and public piers and wharves. The greatest needs expressed by participants are for additional capacity (parking) at existing access sites, all-tide boat launching ramps, access for people with disabilities, walking trails, and marine infrastructure improvements. Here are the percentages for these High Need areas:
 - 66% of the participants indicated a High Need for parking adjacent to public access sites,
 - 61 % indicated a High Need for all-tide trailered boat launching sites
 - 59% indicated a High Need for access for people with disabilities
 - 58% indicated a High Need for shoreline walking trails
 - 55% indicated a High Need for public piers and wharves

Type of Boat Access

Current Ownership, Management, and Level of Public Access Assurance

Visitors and residents of Maine can access the coast for boating and fishing at a variety of places. People launch their boats at private marinas, state-owned boat ramps, and municipal-owned boat ramps. Likewise, shore anglers and recreationists using hand-carry craft (canoes, kayaks) use lands owned by private individuals, land trusts, municipalities, counties, and the State and Federal governments to access salt waters for fishing and boating. The following are the different types of ownership of boat access sites, and the level of assurance that they will be open to the public in the future. The highest level of assurance exists for State Sponsored Sites, and State Assisted Sites in which the State holds an easement.

1) State-Sponsored Sites: These are boat access sites acquired, developed, and maintained by the Boating Facilities Program in the Department of Conservation's Bureau of Parks and Lands or acquired, developed, and maintained by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. *Level of Assured Access: High.*

2) State-Assisted Sites: Through a grant program, the Boating Facilities Program assists municipalities in the acquisition and development of a boat launching facility. The Municipality owns and manages the facility. In some instances, the State maintains ownership but the Municipality manages it. The State enters into one of two types of arrangements with the Municipality:

A) When DOC's Bureau of Parks and Lands helps develop a site, the municipality will sign an **agreement** at the time of funding that requires public access be provided to everyone, regardless of residence. The agreement is for the lifetime of a facility, which is generally 20 years. An agreement calling for "fair and equitable" access for Maine citizens also occurs when municipalities receive grants for water access from the Department of Transportation or the State Planning Office's Coastal Program. *Level of Assured Access: Moderate to High.*

B) When the Bureau of Parks and Lands assists a municipality with the acquisition of land for boat access, it will get an access **easement**. This ensures the public will have access in perpetuity. *Level of Assured Access: High*

3) Municipal or County Owned Sites: These boat access sites are owned and managed by a town or county. Many are open to residents and nonresidents, but the municipality or county has the right to limit or eliminate access to nonresidents if they have never used federal or state funds in their development. *Level of Assured Access: Moderate.*

4) Privately Owned Sites: These boat access sites are most often at water-based businesses, such as marinas. They can limit access to the public at any time and charge market-based fees. *Level of Assured Access: Moderate to Low.*

5) Access on Federal Lands: There are a few access sites that occur on federally owned land, in which the land is leased to the State or the County. There are two such access sites in Edmunds Township -- one Cobscook Bay, which is leased by the County, and one on Whiting Bay, which is leased to IF&W. *Level of Insured Access: Moderate to High.* Along the coast of Maine are two national wildlife refuges, whose mission is to manage and protect fish and wildlife and allow for appropriate recreation, providing it does not interfere with the core mission. At the time of this report, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was planning a small carry-in boat access site at Rachel Carson NWF. *Level of Assured Access: Moderate to Low.*

Coastal Water Access Priority Areas

Maine has a long coast that stretches some 4,568 miles when all of its bays and tidal rivers are factored, with 4,613 islands one acre or more in size and 139 cities and towns. There are many municipal and state facilities along the coast where the people can access coastal waters for fishing and boating (see Map 1). Seventy-four of these are State Sponsored and Assisted Boat Launching Sites -- those places where the public has a guaranteed right to launch a boat tomorrow if they so pleased (see Map 2). This averages out to one State Sponsored and/or Assisted Boat Launch for every 608 miles. A total of 57 coastal municipalities and one township have State Sponsored and/or Assisted Launches, due to the fact that some cities, towns, and townships have more than one of these sites.

Two Types of Need

There are regions popular with boaters and anglers that currently have no State Sponsored and Assisted Boat Access Facilities, and others that have facilities but need added capacity to keep up with demand. This is particularly true in southern Maine -- most notably York County and in Casco Bay -- where real estate pressures and user demands are greatest.

Criteria for Priority Areas

The Coastal Water Access Priority Areas found in the tables on the pages that follow were determined based on the following criteria:

- Proximity of existing public water access sites and needs for additional sites in the region;
- Location of the stretch of shoreline in relation to population centers;
- Demand for better access in a region based on saltwater angler participation and surveys of saltwater anglers, and the needs of commercial fishermen;
- Value of the region's recreational saltwater fisheries;
- Threat of conversion to other uses, particularly non-fisheries-related uses.

Other Considerations

This list expresses need and does not take into account a range of other issues the State may consider, such as availability of land, real estate costs, and the human use and natural resource carrying capacity of the waters of a particularly region of the coast. (See Supplemental Recommendations on page 17)

First Priority Areas

South Coastal - Kittery to Biddeford	
Arundel	Kennebunk River
Kittery	Lower Piscataqua River, Portsmouth Harbor, Brave Boat Harbor Area, Spruce Creek, and General Shoreline Area
York	York River and York Harbor
Ogunquit	Perkins Cove, Ogunquit River
Kennebunk	Mousam River, Kennebunk River, General Shoreline
Kennebunkport	Kennebunk River, Cape Porpoise Harbor, Goosefare Bay, General Shoreline
Wells	Webhannet River, Wells Harbor, Wells Bay

Upper Casco Bay -- Falmouth to Harpswell	
Falmouth	Presumpscot River and General Shoreline
Cumberland/Yarmouth	Broad Cove, Royal River, Cousins Island, General Shoreline
Freeport	Harraseeket River, Maquoit Bay, General Shoreline
Harpswell	Middle Bay, Harpswell Sound, Quahog Bay and General Shoreline

Midcoast Maine	
Georgetown	Lower Kennebec River, Sheepscot Bay, General Shoreline
Woolwich, Wiscasset, Edgecomb, Westport, Southport, Arrowsic, Newcastle, Alna	Sheepscot River shoreline
Boothbay Harbor	Sheepscot River, Boothbay Harbor

Second Priority Areas

South Coastal -- York and Cumberland County	
Eliot	Piscataqua River
Biddeford	Biddeford Pool, General Shoreline, Saco River
Cape Elizabeth	Casco Bay, Seal Cove Spurwink River Area
Portland	Presumpscot River

Upper Casco Bay	
Brunswick	Maquoit Bay

Midcoast Maine	
Phippsburg	Lower Kennebec River

Hancock County	
Sedgewick, Brooklin, Deer Isle, Stonington	Eggemoggin Reach and Penobscot Bay
Hancock, Sullivan, Sorrento, Gouldsboro, Winter Harbor, Franklin	Upper/Eastern Frenchman Bay

Washington County	
Gouldsboro/Steuben	West Bay, Gouldsboro Bay, Joy Bay, Dyer Bay
Jonesport, Jonesboro	Englishman Bay
Machiasport, East Machias, Whiting, Cutler	Machias Bay

Other Priority Areas

Midcoast Maine/Penobscot Bay Region

Bremen	Eddington	North Haven	Topsham
Brewer	Farmingdale	Orland	Vinalhaven
Bucksport	Friendship	Owl's Head	Warren
Camden	Lincolnton	Pittston	West Bath
Cushing	Nobleboro	Prospect	Winterport
Dresden	Northport	South Bristol	
Friendship	Cushing		

Hancock/Washington County Area

Castine	Eastport	Surry
Centerville	Isle Au Haut	Trenton
Cherryfield	Jonesboro	Trescott Twp
Columbia	Marshfield	Whitneyville
Columbia Falls	Mount Desert	
Dennysville	Pembroke	

Maps of Priority Areas

The three maps in this report attempt to illustrate graphically the types of boat access ownership and the areas with priority needs. The scale of the maps is coarse -- they show which towns have boat launch access site(s) or boat launch access needs, rather than which stretches of shoreline have sites or needs. The maps are based on information from DOC, DMR, DOT, and SPO and were created by Richard Kelly at SPO.

Map 1 shows the cities and towns with State Sponsored and Assisted Boat Access Sites (described in #1 and #2 on Page 7), which are colored in gold. Cities or towns with Municipal Boat Access Sites (described in #3 on Page 8) that welcome general public are colored in brown. These Municipal Sites have an assured rating of Medium because the town or city operates it independently and has no agreement or easement with the State.

Map 2 shows the towns and cities that have one or more of the 74 State Sponsored and Assisted Boat Access Sites. The level of Assured Access ranges from High to Medium High. They are either owned by the State, or are owned by a Municipality but the State has either an agreement with the Municipality or the State holds an access easement on the site.

Map 3 shows Priority Areas for Boating and Fishing Access, and is divided among First Priority Towns (red), Second Priority Towns (gold), and Other Priority Towns (yellow). Most municipalities listed in as a First, Second, and Other Priority do not currently have State Sponsored and Assisted Boat Access Sites, and have stretches of the coast where the need for access is great. There are a few towns listed as a First or Second Priority Areas that do have State sites; they are on the priority lists because demand exceeds supply at these sites or the municipality has a stretch of shoreline with a high need.

Map 1

Map 2

Map 3

Supplemental Recommendations

In determining where to spend funds to acquire land for coastal water access, the State should factor in the following information:

1) Balance Priorities with Availability: While there may be a high priority in a particular region or town for public water access, opportunities to acquire land for this purpose may be scarce. In some instances, no land may be available for public access. This is particularly true in southern Maine towns, where much of the coastline is developed. In addition, some areas are closed or inappropriate for boating and fishing access because they have been protected for other purposes. While the State will be looking for sites in the high priority areas, suitable sites may become available in lower priority areas. This can include towns and cities that currently have public water access facilities but have stretches of shoreline that need public access. *We recommend that these lower priority opportunities be taken advantage of and acquired with water access funds, before they disappear.*

2) Improve Capacity of Existing Sites: In some cases, water access is limited or inhibited in places where public access sites do exist. These sites may not be able to handle the demand by anglers or boaters. Most often, the problem is a shortage of parking. Some existing sites may be underused because of a shortage of parking. In other cases, a public access site may become a nuisance because of illegal parking. This emerged as a critical issue in the recent DMR/SPO water access survey and in interviews with people knowledgeable about water access. Acquiring additional land for parking will enhance public access to Maine's coastal waters. *We recommend that the State consider places for parking as an important component of acquisition proposals.*

3) Consider Appropriateness of Proposed Uses: Opportunities to acquire land in some high priority areas may be limited by existing restrictions -- such as wildlife management, scenic vistas, walking trails or swimming areas. In other cases, a high priority area may have reached its capacity for boating and fishing activity and a new public access site could create a safety hazard or put too much stress on local natural resources. *If these conditions exist, the State should seek a more suitable site for funding in or near the high priority area.*

4) Take Pro-Active Steps in Priority Areas: Because coastal lands are being developed quickly and actively in many areas, we recommend that the State take a more pro-active role in identifying potential sites and working with towns, realtors, developers and local conservation groups on public access land acquisition proposals. *The following steps are recommended:*

- *Appoint or hire a state staff person (s), or hire a contractor, to work proactively on public water access sites.*
- *Identify towns and groups that are interested in creating or improving public access sites.*
- *Determine the availability of suitable land and the most appropriate type of access (boat launch, carry-in, bank fishing) for First and Second Priority areas.*
- *Create and maintain a database of information on current State Sponsored and Assisted Boating Facilities and on First and Second Priority areas.*
- *Seek cooperating entities that will agree to become title holders and managers of public water access sites.*

5) Commercial Waterfront Access: The water access needs survey and inquiries to DMR and SPO staff from several municipalities indicate that there are a number of potential public access sites that are critically important to commercial clamming, worming, and aquaculture. Some of these sites may be at present more important for commercial fishing than recreational activities. While commercial fishing is expected to be sustained at current levels, recreational fishing, kayaking, and motor-boating are growing rapidly. *In considering coastal sites, the State should consider the future recreational potential, even if a site is being used mostly for commercial fishing at present.*

In addition, the State should be aware that there is no ongoing State program to identify or acquire public water access sites that are important to commercial fishing. During the past decade a number of wharves, piers, and boat launches where commercial fishing was traditionally allowed have been converted to private residential use or yachting marinas. This has put increasing commercial pressure on existing public water access sites. *While this issue is not the responsibility of any one agency or board, we recommend that all agencies and the LMF Board consider the needs of commercial fishermen (especially clammers, wormers and shellfish aquaculturists) as part of each coastal water access proposal.*

Appendices

Appendix A

Sources of Information on Access Studies, Surveys, Inventories

A number of studies, reports, and surveys have been completed over the past 10 years on coastal water access, some of which were used in compiling this report. Here is a summary:

State Sponsored and Assisted Boat Access Sites List Published by DOC -- February 2000

Each year, the Department of Conservation's Boating Facilities Program publishes and distributes a comprehensive list of boat access sites that it has funded in whole or in part. The list includes the following: 1) Facilities owned and managed by the state, 2) facilities owned by the state but operated and managed by a municipality under an agreement with DOC, and 3) facilities owned, operated, and managed by a municipality but the State either has an easement on the property or an agreement with the municipality that ensures public access. The list contains over 400 boating facilities, 74 of which are located on tidal waters. The list has the location of the boating facility, the surface type, and the type of access (carry-in, all tide, part tide, fresh water), whether there are fees charged, and who operates and maintains it.

SAM and CCA Sponsored Access Conference -- March 2000 Survey of Participants by Land for Maine's Future Program

On February 8, 2000, the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine and the Coastal Conservation Association held a conference in Augusta to focus attention on issues relating to public water access for recreational fishing and boating. At the time of the conference, the Land for Maine's Future Program was in the process of developing a draft of policies for LMF Board consideration that would help guide it in the management of the Public Access to Maine Waters Fund. LMF Program staff developed a short survey for the conference participants to get a sampling of opinions on water access issues. Forty-seven participants filled out the survey. When asked where public water access is most needed, 11 voted for coastal waters, 25 voted for lakes, and 11 voted for rivers. When asked what type of public water access is most needed, 9 ranked bank fishing the highest, 19 voted for carry-in access, and 12 voted for trailered boat access.

Coastal Conservation Association 1999 Angler Survey on Coastal Access in Maine

The Coastal Conservation Association, a nonprofit recreational saltwater anglers organization, conducted an opinion survey of members on the topic of coastal access in 1999. The survey focused on the coast from Rockland to Kittery -- the area of most importance to CCA members and where most recreational saltwater fishing occurs. Of 900 questionnaires sent, 120 were completed and returned to CCA. Eighty (80) % of respondents indicated that there is a great need for more boat access to the coast, while 19 % answered there is little need (1 % answered maybe). In the shore angling category, 38 % said that there was adequate opportunity to fish from shore, while 58 % felt that the opportunities were inadequate (3 % were undecided). Eighty-nine (89) % indicated that parking was a problem for shore fishers. Respondents listed 66 coastal sites where access should be acquired or where lack of parking limited the use of the fishing sites. The survey recommended that the state acquire, develop, protect, or enhance access sites along the coast -- particularly southern and mid-coast Maine (west and south of the Kennebec River).

Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS) -- October 1999 Department of Marine Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service

The MRFSS is a nationwide program implemented in 1979 by the National Marine Fisheries Service to establish a reliable database for estimating the impact of recreational fishing on marine resources. In Maine, DMR is responsible for conducting the survey. Information is collected on total number of fish caught, released, and harvested; the total weight of the harvest; total number of angler trips; and number of people participating in marine recreational fishing. The 1999 survey reveals that the number of saltwater anglers in Maine has risen substantially over the past five years. In 1995, there were 249,201 saltwater anglers in Maine, of which 114,060 were Maine residents. By 1999, the number increased to 361,778, of which 237,000 were Maine residents. The combined estimated daily personal expenses of anglers in 1999 were in excess of \$10 million.

Maine Port Facilities Inventory and Analysis Prepared by Southern Maine Economic Development District and Eastern Maine Development Corporation for DMR and DOT -- July 1999

This report contains a comprehensive inventory of about 600 marine-related facilities in Maine's coastal communities. It is based on data gathered from field interviews of facility managers, owners, and other people knowledgeable about marine infrastructure and coastal access in Maine. The project was a collaborative effort among Maine Departments of Marine Resources and Transportation, the Economic Development Administration, the Southern

Maine Economic Development District, and the Eastern Maine Development Corporation. The project provides a written analysis of changes in infrastructure since 1985. The data collected have been entered into a searchable database that can be updated. The database has the following types of information: Facility descriptions (including pictures, owner information, and contact information); characteristics of the infrastructure; available services at the facility; descriptions of the fishing fleet; descriptions of the berthing, mooring, and tie-ups available; investments in new facilities over the past five years; and future investments. The report is organized by county and municipality. The database is available on a CD and on the web site of Maine Business Works -- www.mainebusinessworks.com

Maine Saltwater Angler's Guide Published by DMR -- June 1999

In 1999, the Department of Marine Resources Marine Recreational Fisheries Program created a 40-page Maine Saltwater Angler's Guide. In preparation of the Guide, DMR staff met with municipal officials, state agency staff, harbor masters, marine patrol officers and private businesses -- from Kittery to Calais. DMR inventoried and collected information on access sites open to all the people of Maine, and published them in the Guide. The sites listed in the Guide include places for shoreline angling and boat launching/landing facilities. Tidal water boat ramps that are state sponsored or assisted were included, as well as many municipal and privately owned facilities. Since it was published, the Maine Saltwater Angler's Guide has been distributed free of charge to thousands of recreational saltwater anglers.

Public Access for Commercial Fishermen Evaluation by DMR, DOC, SPO -- April 1998

In response to the loss of coastal water access for commercial fishermen in Maine, the Maine Aquaculture Association (March 1997) requested that the State study the extent of the problem, and to develop an inventory of existing facilities and identify current funding sources for construction or refurbishment of boating facilities. Three agencies (SPO, DMR, and DOC) agreed to carry out an evaluation, which was completed in April 1998. The evaluation consisted of a survey of commercial fishermen on the topic of access to coastal waters. Of the 249 licensed commercial fishermen who responded, 14 % indicated that they knew of public access sites (landings and launches) in towns that denied access to commercial fishermen; 26 % of the respondents noted they had first-hand knowledge of landings/launch sites that charged a fee for access; 14 % indicated that there is a problem of commercial fishermen being denied access; and 39 % indicated that public access for fishermen is an important issue to address, with others noting it will likely become one in the future. The evaluation also contains a list (based on responses from survey participants) of towns and/or access sites that limit or deny access for commercial fishermen and the reasons for the limitation/denial, and a list of towns/landings that charge a fee to commercial fishermen. The

evaluation also contains a list of coastal boating facility sites with the various funds (state and federal) used to construct or maintain them, and a list of State-run sites (also based on respondents) where recreational/commercial access problems exist.

An Inventory of Municipal Public Access Project Ideas and Needs SPO's Maine Coastal Program -- May 1998

To get an indication of the types of public water access projects that exist in local communities -- and to begin to develop an up-to-date inventory -- the Maine Coastal Program/State Planning Office sent a letter to coastal municipalities in January 1998 asking for a list of proposed projects that would provide or enhance public water access. In response, SPO received 34 letters. The projects were wide-ranging, and included improvements at pocket parks, the acquisition of land, the construction of foot and bicycle trails, the creation of accessways to beaches, the construction or refurbishment of boat launching facilities, and an expansion of parking areas. The 56 projects totaled \$4 million. In the weeks subsequent to receiving the letters, SPO forwarded some of the projects to the appropriate agency, including the Boating Facilities Program at DOC, DOT's Small Harbor Improvement Program, and Land for Maine's Future Program. A couple of projects have since been completed.

Saltwater Recreational Fishing Initiative Committee Report and Recommendations -- June 1997

At the request of Governor Angus King, the Coastal Conservation Association and the Maine Department of Marine Resources established the Saltwater Recreational Fishing Initiative Committee. The Committee was composed of 13 leaders in recreational saltwater fishing in Maine, including representatives from DMR, Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Trout Unlimited, Coastal Conservation Association, Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, the Maine Professional Guides Association, and the charter boat business. The Committee's purpose was to identify areas of concern of recreational saltwater anglers. It developed four focus areas: Public Access, Stock Enhancement, Education and Promotion, and Enforcement of Laws. In the area of public water access, the committee unanimously agreed that there is a "significant lack of public access to public waters for shore and boat saltwater recreational fishermen." The Committee developed 8 specific recommendations relating to public access -- from developing inventories to greater coordination among state agencies to providing state funding specifically for public water access.

Land Acquisition Priorities Advisory Committee Final Report and Recommendations -- November 1997

In 1996, Gov. Angus King issued an executive order creating the Land Acquisition Priorities Advisory Committee. The Committee was charged with developing a comprehensive inventory of Maine's public and private conservation lands and identifying land acquisition priorities. LAPAC examined all related documents and the types of existing publicly owned lands. It held a series of meetings throughout the state in which some 400 Maine citizens expressed their opinion on which types of land the State should acquire. Based on public input and its research, LAPAC developed a list of recommendations, which included five land type areas in which the state should focus its acquisition attention. LAPAC's list of Proposed Land Acquisition Priorities would guide land acquisitions by the state for the next five years and beyond. Of the Five Focus Areas, two relate to public access to the coast: 1) Access to Water, which called for the acquisition and development of public access to waters that will provide a diversity of high-quality recreational opportunities, such as boat ramps, carry-in boat access sites, and walk-in access to remote ponds; and 2) Undeveloped Coastline, which called for the acquisition of undeveloped stretches of shore (including coastal wetlands and estuaries) that provide habitat to wildlife and offer opportunities for coastal recreation. In November, Maine citizens approved a \$50 million bond. In June 2000, the Land for Maine's Future Board adopted a process and policies, which will guide its acquisition decisions. The Board's new policies reflect LAPAC's recommendations.

Conservation Lands Inventory Maine State Planning Office, November 1997

At the request of the Land Acquisition Priorities Advisory Committee, the Maine State Planning Office developed a comprehensive inventory of conservation lands in Maine. The inventory catalogs public and private conservation lands and easements by geographic region and identifies principal uses and values of each parcel. The inventory includes boating facilities on fresh and salt waters of the state. Twenty different categories of uses, which includes boating and fishing, and values help characterize each parcel.

PARKALL Database Department of Conservation

PARKALL is a database first created in the mid-1980s to supply information for the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) conducted every five to ten years by DOC's Bureau of Parks and Lands. Data are entered into the database from a wide range of sources by DOC staff. It contains all known federal, state, county, municipal, private, and nonprofit recreation and conservation areas. PARKALL is the most comprehensive lands database for recreation and conservation in the state. It includes a list of public water access sites, from small parks to boat launching facilities. PARKALL was last updated in 1993.

The Maine Coastal Plan
Published by the Maine Coastal Program/SPO -- August 1997

The Maine Coastal Program/State Planning Office receives funding through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Every three years, the Maine Coastal Program is evaluated by NOAA. After the evaluation in 1996, the Program embarked on a process to examine the projects it funds and to develop priorities. To accomplish this, it examined relevant sections of the strategic plans from other state agencies that work on coastal issues, held a series of roundtable discussions and meetings with residents along the coast, and conducted a public opinion survey. The results were compiled and published in the Maine Coastal Plan, which identifies five priority issues -- Impacts of Development, Ocean Resources, Aquaculture, and Coastal Economic Development. It also identified Six Other Important Issues, of which Public Access to the Coast was one. The Public Access section called for the development of a public land acquisition strategy (developed by LAPAC) and for the Coastal Program to develop a list of priority coastal access sites based on an inventory and needs assessment (now under way).

Strategic Plan for Providing Public Access to Maine Waters
for Boating and Fishing,
Depts. of Conservation and Inland Fisheries & Wildlife -- March 1995

The Strategic Plan developed by the IF&W and DOC identifies goals, priorities, objectives, policies, allocation of funds, and the responsibilities and strategies that will guide two agencies in providing public recreational boating and sport fishing access in Maine waters until 2005. The Plan is detailed in scope, and includes a list of priority water bodies upon which the departments should acquire land for public access. The list is up to date and comprehensive for freshwater lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams. However, the section for coastal sites was based on an inventory/study done by the Coastal Program/State Planning Office, which is limited and now outdated. The Coastal Program and DMR have developed a list of priority coastal waters in which to acquire land for boating and fishing access.

Public Access to the Maine Coast & Coastal Public Access in Maine
Published by the Maine Coastal Program/SPO -- 1986 and 1990

The Maine Coastal Program developed comprehensive reports on the status of public access in Maine in 1986 and again in 1990. "Public Access to the Maine Coast" was published in 1986

and is a needs assessment for a range of coastal water access types. The report, "Coastal Public Access in Maine," contains an inventory of all known public access points in Maine as of 1990, examines the need for access sites within geographical regions, and explains the then-current programs that address access needs and how the approaches could be refined in the future. The reports define public water access in broad terms, and includes boat launching facilities, rights of way for beach-goers and shellfish harvesters, land for a wide-range of shoreline recreation, greenways, and pocket parks. The reports provide a good overview of access issues and needs at the time -- some of which are still relevant today.

Appendix B

Coastal Water Access Programs and Committees

A number of agencies are working on coastal water access issues. Here is a summary of them and their funding status:

Boating Facilities Program -- Department of Conservation

DOC's Boating Facilities Program acquires lands for regionally significant boat launching areas, and provides funds and technical assistance to construct boat launching sites and related facilities, such as parking sites and access roads. The program owns and manages 78 boat launching areas across the state, including 12 on coastal waters. In addition, the Program, through grants and technical assistance, has participated in the development of 230 public boat launching sites, owned and managed by municipalities, of which 62 are on coastal waters. Funds for the Boating Facilities Program come from a percentage of gas revenues attributed to recreational motorboat use.

Funding Status: About \$1.5 million is available annually to the Boating Facilities Program.

Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration -- Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

The Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program (Dingle-Johnson Act of 1950) is administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, which distributes funds to the states through state fish and wildlife agencies. In Maine, the Sport Fish Restoration Program is coordinated by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Funds for Sport Fish Restoration come from an excise tax placed on fishing equipment at the federal level, and a portion of the federal motorboat fuel tax. The Department is required by federal law to use 12.5 % of Sport Fish Restoration Funds on motorboat-related access projects. Inland Fisheries and Wildlife uses the funds for acquisition of land and the development of boating facilities. It owns and manages boat and fishing access sites throughout the state, including two on tidal waters. **Funding Status:** About \$360,000 of Sport Fish Restoration Funds are available each year for boat/angler access projects.

Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund -- MOHF Board of Directors

The Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund is a state program awarding grants that conserve Maine's special places and provide opportunities for the public to enjoy them. Funds for the program, which are derived from special lottery tickets, help pay for fisheries and wildlife conservation projects, natural resource law enforcement, endangered and threatened species management and conservation, and the acquisition of public lands for conservation, public access, and outdoor recreation sites. Public access is an important part of the mission of MOHF, which will award grants to agencies or organizations working to provide or protect public access to Maine's shoreline. **Funding Status:** MOHF awards grants twice a year.

Coastal Program/State Planning Office -- Matching Funds for Water Access

Maine Coastal Program at the State Planning Office initiated a Waterfront Action Grant Program in the mid-1980s to provide matching funds to coastal communities to help improve their waterfront facilities. Grants were used to fund boat launches, landings, pier/wharf/dock construction or reconstruction, wildlife viewing platforms and educational signage. This program was eliminated in the early 1990s; the Coastal Program currently has a small matching fund program to assist municipalities in water access planning and project implementation. The funds are also available to municipalities for appropriate projects to match LMF Public Access to Maine Waters Fund. **Funding Status:** There is \$20,000 budgeted in FY 2001 in the Coastal Program's water access matching fund.

Coastal Program/State Planning Office -- Right of Way Discovery Grant Program

The Coastal Program helps communities "rediscover" public access ways, and to keep track of existing public access. Each year, small grants of approximately \$1,000 are awarded to six to nine municipalities or local land trusts to research forgotten or overlooked rights-of-way to the shore. The research generally includes an inventory of possible access points, deed research to verify public rights, and actions to assert and safeguard these rights. The grants have resulted in several towns discovering ownership of shoreline and rights-of-way across property to the shoreline. **Funding Status:** There is \$12,000 in the Right-of-Way Discovery Grant Program budget in FY 2001.

Land and Water Conservation Fund -- Department of Conservation

The Land and Water Conservation Fund, generated from federal off-shore oil drilling leases, has provided \$32 million to the state of Maine since 1965, and has funded everything from the construction of urban ballfields to the purchase of beaches and the construction of boat access sites. Thirty-four boating/fishing facilities received Land and Water Conservation Funds

throughout its history. LWCF has not been funded since the early 1990s, but there is a bill in Congress, called the Conservation and Reinvestment Act, or CARA, that would fully fund LWCF, and funnel significant federal dollars to Maine through so-called Title 1 (Coastal Impact Assistance), which would be used for marine fisheries management and research, coastal habitat protection, and marine infrastructure. **Funding Status:** There is potential for municipal funding for water access.

Shore and Harbor Management Fund, Submerged Lands Program, Department of Conservation

As part of its expansion on the Kennebec River, Bath Iron Works purchased submerged lands from the State amounting to \$1.5 million. The State is expected to receive the funds in early 2001. The funds will be placed into an account managed by the Submerged Lands Program at DOC. Although plans have not been finalized, the Submerged Lands Program Advisory Board -- which is composed of private sector and municipal officials -- has recommended that interest generated from the funds be used as part of a competitive grant program to municipalities for harbor improvement and water access projects. **Funding Status:** Funds will probably be made available in Fiscal Year 2003.

Small Harbor Improvement Program -- Department of Transportation

In November 1995, Maine voters passed the \$58.9 million Transportation Bond issue. As part of that bond issue, \$2.5 million was set aside for the Small Harbor Improvement Program (SHIP). This Program funded 50 waterfront and harbor improvement projects in cities and towns along the coast. These projects have promoted much needed public access along the coast, economic development, and coastal infrastructure, including boat launching facilities, floats and gangways, wharfs and piers, and land acquisition. **Funding Status:** The last SHIP grant was awarded in 1999. Although there is currently no funding, DOT is evaluating whether to include it in its 2001 bond request for transportation projects.

Public and Recreational Access Committee, Department of Transportation

Created as a result of a Memorandum of Agreement signed by state natural resource agencies and the Department of Transportation in 1999, this Committee identifies, describes, and prioritizes proposed DOT bridge reconstruction or construction projects that present opportunities for angler access to fresh and salt waters. The Committee -- consisting of representatives from DOC, DOT, IF&W, DMR, SPO, and recreational angler organizations -- has evaluated 120 bridge projects and identified 32 projects with angler access potential. The projects could entail land acquisition and development of a boating facility and/or parking area. **Funding Status:** There is no funding earmarked for projects identified by the Access Committee.

Maine Department of Marine Resources

The Department of Marine Resources (DMR) has identified coastal water access as an issue of rising concern, especially in the southern part of the state. As waterfront property becomes increasingly valuable for summer homes, restaurants, marinas, and hotels, water access for commercial and recreational fishermen is harder to find. DMR doesn't currently have a formal program for acquiring, holding, and managing coastal properties. However, DMR has taken an active interest in coastal access issues and is working collaboratively with other agencies to identify areas of need and to encourage coastal property owners to apply for LMF funds. The Commissioner of Marine Resources sits on the Land for Maine's Future Board. DMR has an active saltwater recreational angler program, with staff serving on several water-access-related committees and task forces. Furthermore, DMR is active in efforts to protect working waterfronts in coastal communities. **Funding Status:** DMR currently does not have funds earmarked for water access. However, DMR staff assists other agencies in water access and marine infrastructure projects and issues.

Land for Maine's Future Program

The Land for Maine's Future Program was created in 1987 when Maine voters approved a \$35 million bond to acquire lands for conservation and recreation and farmland protection. The LMF Program received additional support in the Fall of 1999 when voters approved a \$50 million bond to acquire lands of statewide, regional, and local significance. The fund is managed by an 11-member board, of which six are private citizens, four are state agency commissioners, and one is the director of the State Planning Office. The Land for Maine's Future Program at the State Planning Office is responsible for all activities relating to acquisitions. One of the priority areas for the Board is the acquisition of land that provides water access for boating and fishing. **Funding Status:** \$50 million total, of which \$5 million is earmarked for the Public Access to Maine Waters Fund to acquire lands that provide access to Maine's lakes, rivers, and coastal waters. In addition to water access, there is \$40 million to acquire land for conservation, recreation, and farmland protection. The Board is authorized to spend up to \$10 million a year.

Appendix C

Maine Coastal Water Access Survey

To help develop a needs assessment for public access to tidal waters, SPO and DMR developed and mailed a survey containing 10 access-related questions. The survey was mailed to the following groups in 139 coastal Maine municipalities in late July, 2000: Municipal Officials (Town Manager, Town Planner, or First Selectman); Conservation Commissions; Shellfish Commissions; Harbormasters; Land Trust Directors; Water Quality Monitors. Four-hundred of the surveys were mailed in mid-July. The deadline for the Maine Coastal Program to receive the surveys is September 8, 2000. Of the 400 individuals who received the survey 28 % (114) responded.

The respondents were from the following regions:

- 34% (39) from Southern Coast (York and Cumberland Counties)
- 27% (31) from Midcoast (Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Kennebec Counties)
- 31% (38) from Penobscot Bay/Acadia National Park (Knox, Waldo, Hancock, Penobscot Counties)
- 8% (9) from Downeast (Washington County)

The respondent affiliations are as follows:

- 43% (50) Municipal Officials (Town Manager, Town Planner, or Selectman)
- 9% (10) Conservation Commission Chairs
- 25% (29) Harbormasters
- 9% (10) Water Quality Monitors
- 6% (7) Shellfish Commission members
- 8% (9) Coastal Land Trust Directors

Survey Results

Below are the survey responses. Questions 2F, 7, 8, and 10 asked for written response. Those comments are recorded in this report and appear on pages C- through C-.

Question #1-A: How many publicly owned (Municipal or State) wharves and piers are there in your community? Of the 114 respondents:

- 37% (42) answered 0
- 30% (34) answered 1
- 25% (29) answered 2
- 5% (6) answered 3
- 3% (3) answered 4

Question #1-B: How many coastal trailered launches are there in your community? Of the 111 responses:

- 24% (27) answered 0
- 38% (42) answered 1
- 24% (27) answered 2
- 9% (10) answered 3
- 5 (5) answered 4

Question 1-B: How many Hand-Carry Launches are there in your community? 110 participants responded.

- 43% (47) answered 0
- 30% (33) answered 1
- 12% (13) answered 2
- 8% (9) answered 3
- 4% (4) answered 4
- 4% (4) answered 5

Question 2A: Is your boat launch site overcrowded? 88 participants responded:

- 58% (51) answered YES; 42% (37) answered NO

Question 2B) Are there conflicts among the different user groups? 85 participants responded:

- 44% (37) answering YES; 56% (48) answered NO

Question 2C) Is there a need for an additional boat launching site in your municipality or in adjacent municipalities? 90 participants responded:

- 72% (65) answering YES; 28% (25) answered NO.

Question 2D: Is there a need for additional parking at access sites? 89 participants responded:

- 76% (68) answering YES; 24% (21) answered NO.

Question 2E: Are there any fees or permits required to use your boat access facility? 92 participants responded:

- 30% (28) answering YES; 70% (64) answered NO.

Question 2-F: If there is a tidal river, bay, or other stretch of shoreline in your municipality that needs a public access site, please note it. 51 participants responded:

- 44% noted stretches of coastal shoreline that need public access. The State Planning Office has this list on file.

Question #3: If you DO NOT have a public boat launching site for coastal waters, is there a need for one in your municipality or in nearby municipalities? 43 participants responded:

- 81% (35) answering YES; 19% (8) answered NO.

(Questions 4-A through 4-K. NOTE: These questions help determine what respondents believed the “need” was for different types of access in their communities. The “need rating” below was determined by factoring how people responded to questions of Importance and Adequacy.)

Question 4-A) What is the need for all-tide trailered boat launching sites? 98 participants responded:

- 61% (60) indicated a High Need
- 36% (36) indicated a Medium Need
- 2% (2) indicated a Low Need

Question 4-B: What is the need for part-tide trailered boat launching sites? 86 participants responded:

- 41% (35) indicated a High Need
- 58% (42) indicated a Medium Need
- 10% (9) indicated a Low Need

Question 4-C: What is the need for hand-carry boat launching sites? 98 participants responded:

- 36% (36) indicated a High Need
- 50% (48) indicated a Medium Need
- 13% (12) indicated a Low Need

Question 4-D: What is the need for shoreline walking trails. 89 participants responded:

- 58% (51) indicated a High Need
- 29% (26) indicated a Medium Need
- 12% (11) indicated a Low Need

Question 4-E: what is the need for beach access? 92 participants responded:

- 40% (36) indicated a High Need
- 49% (45) indicated a Medium Need
- 11% (10) indicated a Low Need

Question 4-F: What is the need for small municipal parks? 94 participants responded:

- 42% (39) indicated a High Need
- 50% (47) indicated a Medium Need
- 8% (8) indicated a Low Need

Question 4-G: What is the need for large parks? 84 participants responded:

- 35% (29) indicated a High Need
- 36% (39) indicated a Medium Need
- 19% (16) indicated a Low Need

Question 4-H: What is the need for access ways for clam/worm harvesting areas? 91 participants responded:

- 42% (36) indicated a High Need
- 49% (44) indicated a Medium Need
- 9 % (9) indicated a Low Need

Question 4-I: What is the need for access for people with disabilities? 97 participants responded:

- 59% (57) indicated a High Need
- 37% (36) indicated a Medium Need
- 4% (4) indicated a Low Need

Question 4-J: What is the need for parking adjacent to public access sites? 96 participants responded:

- 66% (63) indicated a High Need
- 31% (30) indicated a Medium Need
- 3% (2) indicated a Low Need

Question 4-K: What is the need for public piers and wharves? 91 participants responded:

- 55% (50) indicated a High Need
- 44% (40) indicated a Medium Need
- 1% (1) indicated a Low Need

Question #5) Are you aware of any properties in your municipality that can be purchased by the State or with assistance from the State for the creation of a coastal water access site? 110 participants responded:

- 35% (38) answered YES
- 65% (72) answered NO

If yes, what type of access would be most suitable? 25 participants responded:

- 40% (10) said boat launching site
- 36% (9) said hand-carry site
- 8% (2) said beach access
- 8% (2) said access to clam/worm harvesting areas
- 4% (1) said parking
- 4% (1) said a place for piers and wharves

Question #6: Do you know of any sites that would be suitable for the Land for Maine's Future Funds? 106 participants responded:

- 47% (50) said YES
- 53% (56) said NO

(NOTE: Some of those that responded YES noted the location of the site. The State Planning Office has a list of these responses.)

Question #7: Does your municipality have needs for improvements to its public marine infrastructure, such as piers, wharves, and boat launching ramps? 106 survey participants responded:

- 80% (85) said YES
- 20% (21) said NO

Question #8: If you have an infrastructure need, please list and/or briefly describe the project, and provide an estimate of the cost, if known. 85 participants responded to this question, of which 71 listed a specific project:

- 39 % (28) noted the need for expanded/renovated boat access sites
- 27% (19) noted the need for new or expanded piers/wharves
- 13% (9) noted the need for parking/roads
- 6% (4) noted new or expanded public landings
- 7% (5) noted the need for harbor improvements such as dredging
- 1% (1) noted the need for large project, like a marine terminal
- 3% (2) noted the need for trails/foot access
- 1% (1) noted the need for handicapped accessibility
- 3% (2) noted needs as "other."

Question # 9: Is coastal access identified as a priority in your municipality's comprehensive plan or in an open space plan? 94 participants responded:

- 76% (71) said YES
- 24% (23) said NO

Question #10: Please give us your assessment of the over-all need for coastal public access in your community or region? 92 participants responded. Their responses were categorized as High Need, Medium Need, and Low Need. The participants responded as follows:

- 59% (54) indicated a High Need
- 28% (26) indicated a Medium Need
- 13% (12) indicated a Low Need

By region the responses to the question #10 were as follows:

- Southern Coast: 56% rated it a High Need, 36% a Medium Need.
- Midcoast: 64% High Need, 16% Medium Need
- Penobscot Bay/Adacia: 50% High Need, 35% Medium Need
- Downeast: 75% High Need, 13% Medium Need

Places that Need Water Access Question # 2F Responses

If there is a tidal river, bay, or other stretch of shoreline in your municipality that needs a public access site, please note it below:

Southern Coast (York, Cumberland Counties)

Eliot: Piscataqua River

Kittery (2 responses): Spruce Creek, Piscataqua River

York: York River, York Harbor

Ogunquit (2 responses): Ogunquit Beach

Arundel: Kennebunk River

Kennebunkport (2 responses) :Kennebunk River

Kennebunk :Kennebunk River, Mousam River

Biddeford/Saco (3 responses): Saco River

Scarborough: Spurwink River, Scarborough River, Nonesuch River (near Payne Road)

Cape Elizabeth: Spurwink River

Cumberland: Mainland of Cumberland, Yarmouth, Falmouth

Falmouth: Presumpscott River

South Portland: Casco Bay

Brunswick: Need for deep water launching site with parking in middle and Maquoit Bay in either Harpswell, Brunswick, or Freeport.

Bowdoinham: Abbadagasset River at Brown's Point Road Bridge.

Midcoast (Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Kennebec Counties)

Phippsburg (3 different responses): 2 for Lower Kennebec River, 1 for Casco Bay Area

Harpswell: Long Reach

Westport: Sheepscot River

Dresden: Hand-carry access to the Eastern River.

Wiscasset (2 responses): 1 for Access to Harbor, 1 for General Area particularly in Edgecomb

Edgecomb: Sheepscot River

Georgetown: General shoreline

Woolwich: At intersection of Route 1 and George Wright Road.

Damariscotta: Great Salt Bay needs a launching area for future recreation and commercial harvesting.

Penobscot Bay/Mt. Desert Region
(Knox, Waldo, Hancock, Penobscot Counties)

Owl's Head: Place adjacent to Lighthouse Park on north shore of town, Penobscot Bay

St. George: St. George River

Thomaston: St. George River has one access, we need two or other communities in the local area need commercial access.

Rockland: Rockland Harbor

Isleboro: Hewes Point Road -- needs development, foot traffic exists now

Belfast: The west side of our harbor has very nice public access; the east side has very little (both are off Route 1)

Rockport: Clam Cove

Brooklin: Herrick Bay off Gaffney Blvd

Sedgewick: Walkers Pond

Ellsworth: Union River Harbor

Brewer: Penobscot River

Bar Harbor: Bar Harbor, Hadley Point, Town Landing Road (FR 8

Winter Harbor: Henry Cove

Downeast (Washington County)

Pembroke: Pembroke Shoreline

Lamoine: Marlboro Beach (Town owned at present)

Addison: South Addison Reion update of Pleasant River landing.

East Machias: East Machias River

Jonesport: End of Ferry Street

Eastport: Carrying Place Cove, public land area.

Marine Infrastructure Project Needs Question # 7 and #8 Responses

Does your municipality have needs for improvements to its public marine infrastructure such as piers, wharves, and boat launching ramps:

Below is a list of the towns that responded YES to Question #7. Most answered gave followup information under Question #8, which asked to briefly describe the project, and provide an estimate of cost, if known.

Southern Coast (York, Cumberland Counties)

Eliot (3 responses): More public access to river and parking. Town has access but no place to park; Parking for state park; Commercial access.

Ogunquit: Removal of architectural barriers to town beaches preventing handicapped and elderly from accessing beaches (\$100,000 approximate cost).

Kittery (2 responses): Traip Academy ramp could be lengthened to provide all-tide boat launching; Large boat ramp with parking

South Berwick: Bathroom facilities.

York (2 responses): Need more dingy tie up space; lobster off loading space; canoe/kayak launching space; Expansion of town dock (primarily used by commercial interests). Cost approximately \$25,000.

Ogunquit: Lower estuary launches for jet-skis to keep them out of the upper estuary.

Biddeford/Saco: Hand-carry access; ramp and docking for dinghies; more parking for vehicles and vehicles with trailers; dock for handicapped fishing.

Biddeford: Improvements to existing docks, ramps, and parking are immediate needs.

Kennebunk (2 responses): Help in determining public access needs and the development of a plan to meet them; Need access to the water for boats.

Kennebunkport (2 responses): Need boat launching ramp.

Old Orchard Beach: Boardwalk for ADA access to the beach.

Wells (2 responses): Reconfiguration of the jetty; dredge of the harbor; Parking, launching, wharves, trails, open space.

Saco (2 responses): Need all tide boat launching ramp. This could be done by dredging the harbor or extending the ramp; Saco: Bait house for fish pier (\$45,000 to \$50,000)

Scarborough (3 responses): Need to add floats for recreational and commercial users and to add a launch beside the existing launch to make it more usable ("Guestimate," launch \$15,000, floats, \$20,000); Dredging (estimate of cost: millions).

South Portland: Answered yes to question 7 but did not specify project.

Long Island (2 responses): We desperately need additional long-term parking for year-round and seasonal residents. Town land (or land committed to be given to the town) is available. Our needs are for funding to build suitable parking areas; Replace landing and planks; ramp work.

Cumberland (3 responses): All-tide ramp on Chebeague Island; More space for parking at boat landing areas.

Freeport: New piles under pier.

Brunswick (2 responses): Need more parking.

Midcoast Region (Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Kennebec Counties)

Wiscasset (2 responses): Wharves, piers, and launch ramps (\$600,000 plus); Short-term, MDOT should pave Railroad Avenue; long-term, provide more parking and facilities in Wiscasset Harbor.

Edgecomb: Answered yes to question 7 but did not specify project.

West Bath: Cleanup of existing sites (\$2,500 estimate)

Bath: Main floats need repair (approximate cost, \$50,000).

Bristol (2 responses): Harbor dredging; town pier in New Harbor.

Damariscotta: Additional parking for boaters -- both recreational and commercial. Need one more boat launching facility. Need better tie-up facility.

Harpwell: Repair dock at former naval pipeline terminal (\$1 million).

Isleboro: Develop wharf/landing at wharf (\$20,000); improve landing at Hewes Pt. Road (\$5,000).

Woolwich (2 responses): Tidal boat launching facility at the intersection of Route 1 and George Wright Road; Assistance in identifying and planning deep water access site.

Phippsburg (2 responses): All tide boat access

Westport: Paving existing boat launching facility; building pier and float; purchasing additional land for parking.

Georgetown: Too many projects to list

Richmond: More parking; additional docking

Bowdoinham: More docks to handle current boating traffic, also need more docks that are ADA accessible.;

Arrowsic (2 responses): Launch ramp with minimal facilities.

Gardiner: Pumpout, piers, floats (currently under study)

Penobscot Bay/Mt. Desert Region Region (Knox, Waldo, Hancock, Penobscot Counties)

Owl's Head: Need to upgrade existing water access by improving access ramps, increasing parking areas.

Searsport: Municipal Pier, \$350,000

St. George: Expansion of both public landings to accommodate both commercial and recreational (\$75,000 each)

Winterport: Winterport terminals; harbor landing equipment

Rockland: New floats/pilings at Snow Marine Park; concrete removal/installation of low freeboard floats for hand-carried ramp in Buoy Park; dingy storage flats and gangway at Snow Park..

St. George: Launch ramps need resurfacing.

Camden (2 responses): Parking

Isleboro: Develop wharf/landing at wharf (\$20,000); improve landing at Hewes Pt. Road (\$5,000).

Surry: Improve current trailer launch site (\$20,000) and complete all-tide launch site (\$45,000).
241 -- Eastport: Floats and slips; walkway bridges.

Sedgewick: Renovate town wharf (cost \$10,000 to \$20,000).

Southwest Harbor: Replace fender pile and deck on dock, 20 feet by 120 feet (estimate of cost, \$30,000).

South Thomaston: Answered yes to question 7 but did not specify project.

Belfast: Dingy tie-up facilities for mooring owners and residents; protection of mooring fields and slips and marina facilities from wave action

Rockport (2 responses): New and additional floats (\$10,000); public restrooms, harbormaster office, and walking trails along shore (\$210,000).

North Haven: Identify historic town landings; there are several that have been abandoned.

Stonington: At existing public dock, need dredging and ledge removal to make it available for all tides; need additional float space. For newly acquired property with ramp for all-tide trailered boat launch, need repair to ramp, as well as building demolition to make way for more parking.

Brewer: Waterfront trail, boat launch.

Ellsworth: Answered yes to question 7 but did not specify project.

Bar Harbor: Answered yes to question 7 but did not specify project.

Trenton: Answered yes to question 7 but did not specify project.

Winter Harbor: Public boat launch facility (cost depends on improvements)

Downeast (Washington County)

Pembroke: Need construction funds (town owns site and has \$25,000 to match)

Lamoine: Fix Boat Launch at Lamoine Beach

East Machias: All-tide boat launch ramp; ample parking; rebuilding of old pier and wharf (\$50,000 estimate).

Columbia Falls: Boat launching ramp

Addison: Wharves, large parking lots

Whiting: Answered yes to question 7 but did not specify project.

Overall Assessment of Access Question #10 Responses

Please give your overall assessment of the overall need for coastal public access in your community:

Southern Coast (York, Cumberland Counties)

Eliot (3 responses): Access needed; We have public access but it is used weekends primarily by NH people; Everyone supports the need for access but when it comes down to the line they really just want recreational access.

Kittery (2 responses): Great need due to increase in amount of boaters in Maine and New Hampshire, plus tourists; Most all public access are not marked or known due to new buyers taking over land and no one checking same.

South Berwick: Wildlife needs must be balanced with recreational needs. Human intrusion on osprey and heron feeding areas found within estuarine systems would harm many values people want access to see.

York (2 responses): Always need more moorings; need public access sites for boat launching; need dinghy tie up space; need kayak storage space; need parking space for cars and trailers; Coastal access is needed as it is presently limited.

Ogunquit (2 responses): Public access in Ogunquit is good. Regionally, more public access is needed; Need is great. Few expansion sites. Widen bridges at Beach Street and Ocean street for fishermen

Wells: An additional boat launch is needed at the harbor; access is essential to the economy of Wells.

Kennebunk (2 responses): Coastal land is developed. Bicycle access could be improved as well as places to launch canoes and kayaks; We need (access).

Kennebunkport (2 responses): There is good access for pedestrians but not for boats other than private yacht clubs; Public access is limited as there is no land available and what is available is far too expensive.

Arundel: Very important -- it cost \$40 to launch and haul a 20-foot outboard in the Kennebunks.

Biddeford (2 responses): Very important! Because of the increasing demand on existing sites. Saco River needs access; Biddeford more parking and improve ramp; more dock at low tide/Saco and Biddeford need hand carry; Not only improvements but an increase in facilities in our area because of increasing demand.

Saco: Most beach front is privately owned. However, public access is better than most areas.

Scarborough (2 responses): This community is very busy in the summer. Residents should have a priority for boat launching. Presently no one is charged; I believe we meet the needs very well for our community.

South Portland: Access to Casco Bay is limited to 2 public ramps in Greater Portland. Additional access is needed with all-tide boat ramp. Hand carry for kayaks on Long Creek and Fore River would be helpful.

Cape Elizabeth: Proactively preserve traditional accessways on private property which are used by the public without legal rights.

Long Island (3 responses): Largest problems: 1) more long-term parking at/near public wharf; 2) improvements in launch facility for all-tide barge and boat launch purposes; We are an island, the whole shoreline is very important to us; (Access is) Needed.

Cumberland (3 responses): It is needed badly, but as years go by it will become financially difficult. Yes, (access needed) but no deep water is available for suitable ramp; Very important for our coastal island.

Freeport (2 responses): Access is slowly drying up. Land is being bought up and right of ways are disappearing. Overall needs are being met. An all-tide boat launch facility would be wonderful but the land is not available.

Harpwell: Basic need for more access for clamming and other fisheries interests.

Bowdoinham: We have one launch/park at this site; 44 moorings, 30 boats trailered, 8 to 12 kayaks, and 5 to 15 people swimming on an average summer day. We need more, or access improvements.

Brunswick: Need for deep water launching site with parking in middle and Maquoit Bay in either Harpswell, Brunswick, or Freeport.

Midcoast Region (Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Kennebec Counties)

Edgecomb (2 responses): The only access to the water in Edgecomb is the Eddy Marina; We need water access in our town.

Wiscasset (2 responses): Wiscasset is a water access destination for folks who live inland and NO state sponsored access points in the area; More access is need to the Harbor.

Bristol (3 responses): With one privately owned ramp and one state owned one (Darling Center) also small private ramp at Christmas Cove -- adequate for needs; Town does an outstanding job of providing access to water; Wealthy people have bought all the shore properties and most of the docks; Bristol has good access to waters in town; parking is a problem and maintaining them is also a problem.

Phippsburg (3 responses): Marine access is very inadequate along most the the coast -- any sites that become available should be purchased; We need public access badly. 97 percent of shorefront property is owned by out of town people; Commercial fishermen in the town of Phippsburg have very little public access to the water -- we need more.

Boothbay: Public access is essential in this area. We have two parks with launching ramps almost ready for use.

St. George: Demand is increasing rapidly as our town is growing faster than we would like --- or can deal with currently.

West Bath: Need very high.

Westport: We have two places on the island for public access.

Bath: Access to coastal rivers is very important to a large population with in the Bath area. Phippsburg, Georgetown, and Woolwich are included.

Dresden: Could use hand-carry access to the Eastern River.

Damariscotta: Great Salt Bay needs a launching area for future recreation and commercial harvesting. As a coastal town, the citizens and other persons use the local river to access the ocean, dig worms, harvest shellfish, lobstering, crabs, stripers, and oyster aquaculture. Public access is limited by private land ownership.

Georgetown (2 responses): Access is in very good shape; town dock, town launch ramp; As time goes by it becomes harder to obtain land for these projects and next to impossible to get abutting landowners to cooperate.

Newcastle: Access for shore fisheries very important -- and become more limited.

Arrowsic: Badly needed. Incredibly expensive to provide.

Southport: Access is adequate.

Woolwich (2 responses): There are 26 miles of privately owned shoreline in the Town of Woolwich but there is not any public acces for boat launching. The need is there; Our local boaters/fisherman/clammers need access to all of the water around us for recreation as well as potential livelihoods. Any help would be appreciated.

Penobscot Bay/Mt. Desert Region
(Knox, Waldo, Hancock, Penobscot Counties)

Cushing: All surrounding towns have 3 to 4 access sites. The local increase in resident and part time recreational boating.

Isleboro: Access is very important.

Owl's Head: Due to lack of funds and local attention, our existing facilities have deteriorated and the demand for newer and larger water access has increased.

Winterport: There is none; more is needed.

Thomaston: St. George River has one access, we need two or other communities in the inter-local need commercial access. With the five-town expansion of clam harvesting a plan for access and parking should be implemented plus deperation diggers access.

Sedgewick: Saltwater access is very good. No public access on Walkers or Frost or Black Pond.

Lincolntonville: We have a good sized fishing community and a sizeable recreational fleet.

Rockland: Additional access is key to fully developed on the water access and reduced congestion.

Penobscot: Better access is needed -- trails too.

Camden (2 responses): Access is adequate; Camden: Need is being reasonably met.

St. George: Pretty well set for all needs.

Searsport: Parking is more of a problem than the access, which would draw those users.

Winter Harbor: The need is becoming more apparent each year, as more property changes hands and privacy demanded. Local sites (traditional) are disappearing.

Surry: Access is very important.

Southwest Harbor: We have pretty good access but not enough parking.

Brooklin: We could use another all-tide access area.

Belfast: Very important as US Route 1 brings visitors close to Belfast. The harbor is becoming an important asset to the city increasingly every year.

Rockport (2 responses): Parking is needed; High level of present need to meet increasing demand.

Ellsworth: Very important.

North Haven: If we knew the locations and status of town landings we could probably be in good shape. We could use some money to bring back some of the abandoned ramps.

Stonington: Downtown Stonington has one public dock and now one ramp for trailered launch; very limited parking and neither launch sites is adequate in summer. The development of private launch sites is growing and clearly there is increasing pressure on the two public sites; I don't know the answer/solutions to the "dilemma."

Brewer: Need for additional facilities in Bangor/Brewer area.

Downeast (Washington County)

Whiting: The one that we have needs to be fixed so people do not have to carry their boats down it - we need a ramp. Whiting has no way other than a hand-carry landing but has a lot of people that have to go to other towns to launch their boats.

Lamoine: Lamoine has fairly good access but is unable to maintain boat launch ramp facility

Pembroke: Access is critical -- highest priority.

Chelsea: Access is low priority.

Eastport: As a community that is but an island connected by a causeway, the need is critical.

Beals: Access is critical.

Appendix D

Comments on Water Access

In addition to getting verbal remarks from the Coastal Conservation Association, the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, and the Maine Island Trail Association, the three organizations provided written comments on the issue of coastal water access.

Coastal Conservation Association Maine -- Pat Keliher, Executive Director

The Coastal Conservation Association Maine (CCA Maine) is very concerned about the lack of coastal access in Maine. The Land For Maine's Future Board has a unique opportunity to ensure that new coastal access sites are acquired that will expand access for traditional recreational activities. Increasing capacity at, and the improvement of, existing facilities should be considered as well. At many sites, new or expanded parking, shore fishing areas, hand-carry boat launches, and other facilities will improve access to our coastal waters.

CCA Maine, after surveying its membership, has created a list of high priority areas that need immediate attention: 1) Southern Maine from Kittery to the Saco River; 2) Casco Bay from Falmouth north to Phippsburg; and 3) Sheepscot River area. These areas are increasingly in need of access and with the rising cost of real-estate, especially in areas 1 and 2, the State must act now or face an uncertain future. With this in mind, CCA feels that funds dedicated to access should be directed south. The State of Maine should dedicate time and resources over the next two years to work with municipalities to identify access sites, and to look at existing State-owned lands that might be appropriate for new access sites.

Sportsman's Alliance of Maine -- George Smith, Executive Director

Be opportunistic. It is good to establish priorities that demonstrate where access is most needed, but the State's water access program has always been opportunistic – going after access wherever and whenever the opportunities are presented. It must continue in this manner. The State should not forgo the opportunities as they occur – no matter where – in order to wait for opportunities in the highest priority areas. SAM does believe, however, that the State can and should be more aggressive in seeking access sites in the high priority areas.

The focus should include tidal water in Maine's rivers, where a high percentage of anglers fish and where they suffer terribly from inadequate access – especially boat access. For example,

the lower Kennebec River is a real focus for anglers, but there is no place to launch a boat below the State site on Morse Cove in Phippsburg. The State should not ignore Downeast Maine, where use may not be as great. The State can obtain a lot of access with its money there, and 50 years from now that may be critical. Maine waited too long in southern Maine and should not make the same mistake Downeast.

Obtaining access anywhere in Maine these days is a controversial issue, and the NIMBY syndrome arises with nearly every proposal. The State cannot shy away from water access proposals simply because they have generated some opposition. That is the nature of the program these days, and everyone responsible for providing public access must remember that these waters belong to all the people of Maine. Maine people deserve to be able to get onto the waters that they own, with no exceptions.

Maine Island Trail Association -- Karen Stimpson, Executive Director

With the steady increase in small boats recreating on the coast of Maine -- particularly kayaks -- has come steadily increasing pressure on coastal access points. Community owned/managed launch sites, often at full capacity with local and working waterfront usage, are not appropriate for, or accommodating to, folks from "out of town." Many of the state or federally owned launch sites do not offer overnight parking, one of the greatest needs of the trailer and cartop boating public. In addition, some of the newer public launch sites are not geographically well located for human-power boat access; for example, those that are sited on a big open bay or the weather side of a peninsula pose safety concerns for many paddlers. Lack of convenient access causes boaters to resort to trespassing on private property and parking along roadsides or in communities not set up to accommodate them.