

## H. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

This section reviews the current public facilities and services of the Town of Cooper to determine if they meet our needs today and if they have the capacity to serve our town for the next ten years. The goal of this section is to plan, finance, and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services that will accommodate the town's future needs.

As Cooper is a small town with few services the recreation and open space resources are also included in this chapter. Our open space includes farms, heaths, forestlands, wetlands, lakeshores, and river corridors, as described in the natural resources section of this plan. Much open space is not accessible to the public and as the regional population rises, development pressures on all open space will increase. Accessible open space including snowmobile trails, and surface waters are outlined in this section. The goal of the recreation section is to promote and protect the availability of recreational opportunities including access to surface waters.

### GENERAL MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION

Cooper is part of State Senate District 29, State House District 30, and U.S. Congressional District 2. The town has a selectmen/town meeting form of government with a part time (evenings and week-ends) town clerk responsible for town records maintenance. The three-member board of selectmen serves one-year terms and typically meet on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. The town's fiscal year ends on February 29<sup>th</sup> and approval for the budget is achieved a annual town meeting on the last Monday in March. The school budget is put before voters at a special town meeting in June or July.

### BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Cooper has a variety of elected and appointed positions by the Selectmen. They include:

<b>Elected</b>	<b>Membership/Term</b>	<b>Appointed</b>	<b>Membership/Term</b>
Board of Selectmen	3 members/1 year	Planning Board	5-7 members
Board of Assessors	3 members/1 year	Comprehensive Plan Committee	Ad hoc (volunteer)
Road Commissioner	one year	Animal Control Officer	One year term
School Board	3 members/3 years	Code Enforcement Officer	One year term
Town Clerk/Tax Collector/Treasurer	One year	Sextant of Cemetery	One year
Overseers of the Poor	One year	Emergency Management Director	One year term
Board of Appeals (Selectmen)	3 members/1 year	Election Officials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Election Clerk</li> <li>• Election Clerk, alt.</li> <li>• Democratic Election Clerk</li> <li>• Democratic Election Clerk, alt.</li> <li>• Republican Election Clerk</li> <li>• Republican Election Clerk, alt.</li> </ul>	Two year term
Constable	One year term	Health Officer	One year term
Registrar of Voters	Two year term	Plumbing Inspector	One year term

The planning board meets as needed. Meetings are held to review development proposals, shoreland zoning and wetland's issues for compliance with state and local regulations.

**MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS/FACILITIES**

The town of Cooper does not own any municipal building but is in negotiation with the Trustees or the Cathance Grange for its purchase. Between the years of 2008-2010 Cooper cooperated with the adjoining town of Alexander to construct a municipal records storage addition to the Alexander Municipal Building. The storage area is climate controlled and fire proof. Records from Cooper were moved into the facility in the Spring of 2010.

The town owns an acre parcel of land containing a capped landfill and the town beach (75 feet of frontage on Cathance Lake and less than an acre of land).

**MUNICIPAL SERVICES****Town Clerk**

The town clerk is responsible for administering the town's routine business and reports to the selectmen. The town clerk also currently serves as the registrar of voters. A certified code enforcement officer is contracted. There is one road commissioner. Town office hours are provided from the home of the Town Clerk on evenings and week-ends. An answering machine is checked regularly.

**Highway Department and Solid Waste Management**

Cooper contracts for winter road maintenance.

There are no landfills or waste transfer facilities within Cooper. Residents take their trash to the transfer station/recycling facility in Marion. The town has no recycling facility; recycling facilities are available in Marion.

Cooper pays ~\$6500 per year to the Marion Transfer Station based on tonnage and a per person estimate of the proportionate population from contributing towns. Costs for solid waste removal and hauling are rising. Each of Maine's municipalities has to submit an annual report of its solid waste management practices. The state's objective is for each municipality to recycle at least 50 percent of its household waste. If the quota is not attained, a fee is imposed, unless the municipality indicates good faith in attempting to improve its recycling rate. Developing a reasonable progress plan agreeable both to Maine Solid Waste Agency and the municipality does this. Many communities did not achieve the state planning office's (SPO) 1998 deadline for achieving 50 percent recycling. Recycling rate data for Cooper is included in the Marion Transfer Station region. The 2002 municipal recycling rate for this region was 15.6% with a trend rate of "variable". Recycling should be actively promoted in our community and region. The town of Cooper is investigating providing additional recycling opportunities within the town.

**Water Supply**

The town has no public water systems. All residents and businesses depend upon their own on-site dug or drilled wells, springs and lake water for all water needs. Iron levels are high in surface and groundwater in the town. These sources have adequately met our needs and are projected to continue to do so for the foreseeable future. The utmost care must be taken to

prevent pollution of these sources. Areas should be designated where public water supply of good quality could be obtained in future years, and care must be taken not to pollute these water resources. Wetlands protect our water supplies. Throughout Washington County, the natural occurrence of arsenic in bedrock necessitates regular testing of wells for this and other contaminants.

**Septic Systems**

The town does not have a municipal sewerage system. Disposal is by on-site wastewater systems (septic tanks and leach fields). Nearly all residents and business depend upon private septic systems. Because of our dependence upon wells and springs for drinking water, it is crucial to install, upgrade where necessary, and maintain adequate septic/sewage disposal systems. Referring to the town's soils suitability maps before installing any system can help prevent the possibility of pollution. The minimum standards for the installation of septic disposal systems established by the State of Maine must be observed. Lots with no public water supply or public sewage disposal systems must meet the State minimum of 20,000 square feet.

**Stormwater Management System**

Cooper's stormwater system consists of roadside ditches and culverts.

**Police Protection**

Cooper elects a constable each year. The town also receives police protection from Washington County Sheriff's Office and the Maine State Police. The Washington County Sheriffs Department provides the dispatching services for police services.

**Fire Protection**

Cooper has a Class 10 volunteer Fire Department with 6 volunteers. The town has a mutual aid agreement with the towns of Alexander, Baileyville, Calais, Wesley, Baring, Princeton, Meddybemps, and Crawford. Dispatch for Fire services is provided by the Calais Fire Department. The Maine Forest Service also responds to brush fires and any structures at risk near forest and brush fires. The Cooper Volunteer Fire Department owns the following equipment (year, make, model, pumping capacity).

- 1977 Ford F-700 engine that has 750 gallon tank and pumps 250 gallons per minute

Cooper has two dry fire hydrants one on Cathance Lake at Birch Point and the other is on North Union Road at a private pond. The hydrant at Birch Point is equipped with an 8 inch pipe and is not therefore set up for the engines in this region that mostly have 6 inch pipes. Fire Chief Dave Timpe notes that they could add an adapter but the size and length of the pipe is oversized for the engine and water fill up is very slow. Instead the trucks fill up from streams as the hose is equipped with a screen. The truck is equipped with an auger for winter but the streams are sometimes frozen to the bottom. The town could therefore use other dry hydrants in the following locations:

1. On Cathance Lake at the public boat landing (in Cathance Township, formerly TWP 14).
2. Chub Cove on Cathance
3. Dead Stream near North Union and Route 191

In the event that the town secures ownership of the Cathance Grange, a Fire Station is desired in the same location.

**Emergency Services**

Cooper receives first responder volunteer ambulance service by the Alexander Fire Department. Downeast EMS provides full ambulance transportation to area hospitals. As with Fire service dispatch is provided by the Calais Fire Department.

**Enhanced 9-1-1**

The Emergency Services Communication Bureau has assisted Cooper in the physical addressing of all properties. Cooper fully participates in the enhanced 911 program. E-911 service automatically displays a caller's address on a computer screen at a public safety answering point (PSAP) and the caller's number can automatically be redialed if the line is disconnected.

**Cemeteries**

Cemeteries are a cultural resource providing insight into the history of the community. Cooper has six cemeteries one of which is located on private property. They are all shown on Map 2. There are numerous private family plots scattered throughout the town. The public cemeteries are insufficient to meet the needs of the community. The town is examining the options for expansion including purchase of additional lands adjacent to existing cemeteries.

**MAIL DELIVERY**

There is no Post Office in Cooper; the Meddybemps Post Office serves our town. Some residents have a post office box, a central collection post office box but most of the mail is delivered through a rural carrier for home delivery.

**RECREATION**

The vast natural resources of Cooper and the surrounding region provide numerous recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike. With one large (Cathance) and one small lake (Vining), a Class A river (Dennys), and extensive forest lands, Cooper has always been a haven for hunters, fishermen and outdoor enthusiasts. The Town has limited municipal recreational facilities primarily located at the town beach on Cathance Lake.

**Recreation Programs**

Cooper does not have a Recreation Committee. Most residents now drive to larger celebrations in the region. The Cathance Grange organizes hunters' breakfast in the fall for residents and visitors, and the facility is used by the Cathance Lake Association and town committees for meetings as well as by residents for some social gatherings.

**Local Recreational Facilities**

The Maine Department of Conservation has published guidelines for the types of recreational facilities that municipalities should seek to develop and maintain. These guidelines are based upon a town's population. In the table below these guidelines and the facilities and services found locally are shown, as well as the condition and brief description of those facilities.

<b>Guidelines for Recreation and Park Services for Municipalities with Populations under 1,000</b>	<b>Located In Cooper?</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Description/Location/Capacity</b>
<u>I. Administration</u> Recreation and Park Committee or Board	No	-	
<u>II. Leadership</u> Summer Program: Swimming Instructors	No	-	Some residents patronize the swimming instruction available at the municipal pool in Calais.
<u>III. Program</u> Swimming Instruction Community-wide Special Events	No No Yes	- - -	Hunters breakfasts; snowmobile and other trail rides, Lake Association pancake breakfast
<u>IV. Facilities</u> <u>Outdoor Facilities</u> Community Recreation Area, 12-25 acres w/ball fields, tennis courts, swimming, ice skating, etc. Softball Diamond (0.75 per 1,000 pop.) Basketball Court (0.50 per 1,000 pop.) Ice Skating (5,000 s.f. per 1,000 pop.) Playgrounds (0.50 per 1,000 pop.) Picnic Areas w/tables & grills (2 tables per 1,000 pop.)	No No No Yes No Yes	- - - - - -	On frozen lakes Town Beach
<u>Indoor Facilities</u> School Facilities Available for Public Use Gym or Large Multi-Purpose Room (0.20 per 1,000 pop.) Auditorium or Assembly Hall Public Library	No No Yes No	- - D -	Cathance Grange (non-winter use only) Some limited mobile book access.
<u>V. Finance</u> (funds for operation and maintenance - not capital) Minimum \$6 per capita	Yes	-	Town Beach maintenance; donation to Calais Children's Library; state refund from snowmobile registrations goes entirely to snowmobile trail club

Condition Classification System:

Grade Classification

- A Relatively new facility, lifetime expected in excess of 20 years (with proper maintenance)
- B Facility is older and has been well cared for, lifetime expected to be in excess of 10 years
- C Older facility that may not be in the best of shape and may need minor improvements within 5 years
- D Old facility that needs considerable maintenance within 2 years and/or significant renovation
- F Very old facility that has outlived its usefulness or is in severe disrepair. This facility (or equipment) is unsafe or unusable and should be attended to very soon. Replacement may or may not be necessary (based on need assessment).

**Regional Recreation**

Recreational resources in Washington County have an impact on the local and regional economy. Tourist-related businesses that rely on the recreational opportunities are significant sources of income to many towns in the area. In Cooper, some businesses benefit in part from an influx of tourists and second home owners to the region, especially during the summer.

Regional recreation facilities accessible to Cooper's residents and to visitors include wildlife refuges, parks, golf courses, picnic areas, public access to surface waters, and hiking and snowmobile trails. Major regional recreational resources include:

1. Cobscook Bay State Park in Edmunds: 888 acres; more than 100 - campsites and shelters are on the water's edge; boating; hot showers; picnic area; hiking and groomed cross-country ski trails, hiking trails.
2. Cobscook Trails: Local network of hiking trails.
3. Cutler Coast Public Reserved Land, Bold Coast Trails: maintained by the State, contains ten miles of hiking trails and three walk-in campsites.
4. Devil's Head, Calais; hiking, overlooks of St. Croix River and St. Croix Island.
5. Downeast Sunrise Trail: multi-use recreational trail on former Calais Branch rail corridor
6. Edmunds boat landing.
7. East Plummer Island Preserve and the Mistake Island Preserve in Jonesport, both managed by the Nature Conservancy.
8. East Quoddy Lighthouse and Mulholland Lighthouse in Campobello, N.B.
9. Gleason's Cove Town Park in Perry: picnic sites, beach, fishing weirs, boat launch.
10. Great Cove Golf Course in Roque Bluffs: 9-holes, 1,700 yards long.
11. Great Wass Island Preserve in Beals: 1540 acres of boreal forest, peat bogs, and coastline managed by the Nature Conservancy.
12. Herring Cove Provincial Park, Campobello, NB: golf, campground, playground, beach, trails.
13. Jonesboro Wildlife Management Area: 726 acres.
14. Jasper Beach in Buck's Harbor, Machiasport.
15. Lubec Municipal Marina.
16. Machias Seal Island, seabird nesting site with puffin colony, boat tours from Cutler, Jonesport and New Brunswick.
17. Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge: 16,000 acres west of Calais, 6,700 acres in Edmunds. Migratory birds, big game and 50 miles of trails.
18. Patrick's Lake, Marion: picnicing, swimming, canoeing, fishing, small boating
19. Petit Manan National Wildlife Refuge in Steuben: 3,335 acres on the mainland with hiking trails, several islands, and a variety of birds
20. Quoddy Head State Park in Lubec: 532 acres, easternmost point in the U.S., high rocky cliffs with extensive walking trails and views of Canada. The park features 4.5 miles of hiking trails, extensive forests, two bogs, diverse habitat for rare plants, and the red-and-white striped lighthouse tower of West Quoddy Head Light.
21. Reversing Falls Town Park in Pembroke: 140 acres, trails and picnic area.
22. Rocky Lake unit of the Bureau of Public Lands: canoeing, camping, fishing, bike riding, trails
23. Robbinston Boat Landing and Picnic area.
24. Roque Bluffs State Park: 2300-foot beach, picnic tables, grills, trails and playground.
25. Roosevelt-Campobello International Park in Campobello, N.B. A 2,800-acre park that includes the cottage and the grounds where Franklin Roosevelt and his family vacationed, as well as a large natural area with many nature trails and look-out points. The Island also has a Provincial tourist information center.
26. Shackford Head State Park in Eastport. A 90-acre undeveloped peninsula with protected coves, a bold headland, and hiking trails.

27. St. Croix Country Club and Golf Course in Calais.
28. St. Croix Island International Historic Site at Red Beach in Calais. Overlooks St. Croix Island, site of historic French settlement in 1604.
29. Coastal, river and nature tours are available by kayak, canoe, and motor vessels in nearby towns.

### Snowmobile/ATV Trails

Cooper has 25-30 miles of snowmobile and ATV trails that are maintained by a private club, supported by the town and used actively by residents and tourists. These trails are now connected to the Downeast Sunrise Trail which will be an 88-mile route when completed connecting Cooper to downtown Machias and multiple other towns including Cherryfield, Harrington, Columbia Falls and others.

### PUBLIC ACCESS TO SURFACE WATER

Within the town there are two lakes only one of which, Cathance Lake, has public access. Cathance Lake is available for fishing, boating, swimming, and ice-skating. There are improved boat-landing facilities in neighboring Cathance Township (formerly Twp 14).

A state-owned boat launch, located in Cathance Township, provides excellent access to Cathance Lake. The town beach access to Cathance Lake in Cooper has a shallow draft that provides carry in boat access only.

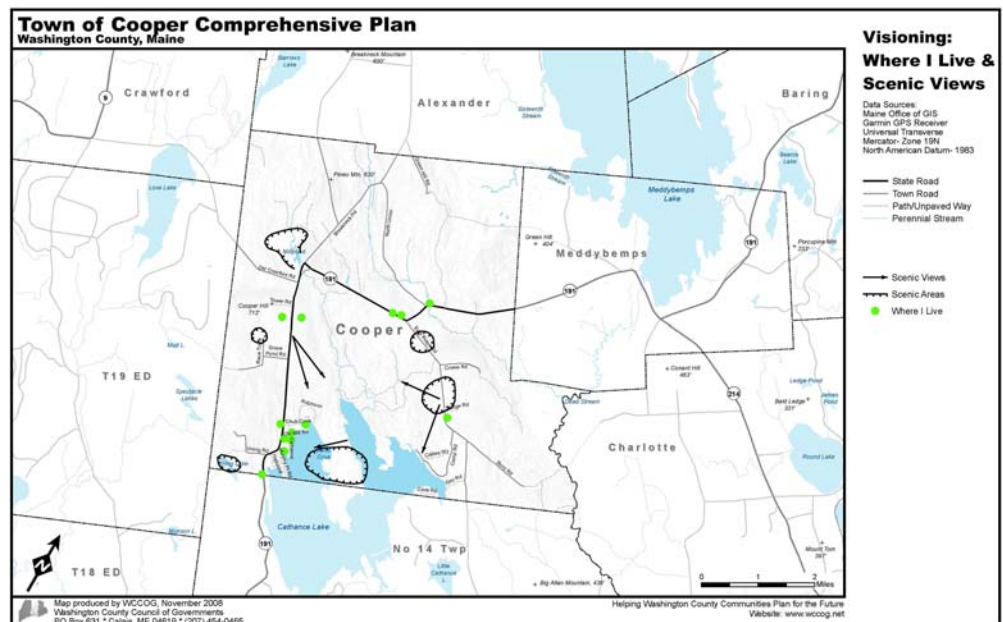
Opinions on expanding the facilities at Cathance Lake were very polarized (see Chapter – Survey Results). The strongest support exists for expanded picnic and garbage facilities.

There are limited opportunities for public access on Vining Lake. Access has occurred over Vining Road but with recent potential subdivision activity, it is in jeopardy.

### SCENIC AREAS

There are several areas of particularly scenic value to the town many of which were noted in the community visioning session and the public survey. They include:

1. Mill Pond from Route 191
2. Vining Lake
3. Cathance Lake from Route 191
4. Cathance Lake from Hogs Neck
5. Blueberry barrens, Cooper Hill and Cathance Lake from East Ridge Road
6. Open land, blueberry barrens, the west ridge, Rocky Lake at end of Race Track Road



**Land Use Options to Preserve Open Space**

Open space is an important part of recreational assets of a community. In some cases the advantage is that the land is particularly scenic, or used for recreation and access. A number of options can be used to protect open space, including government purchase of private land, donation, non-profit ownership, voluntary deed restrictions including conservation easements, or regulations like zoning and subdivision ordinances that seek to reserve open areas in new developments. In addition, the Tree Growth Tax Law program, and Farm Land and Open Space Tax Law can serve to protect open space. In 2007, Cooper had 30 parcels totaling 8,554 acres in tree growth tax status and 2 parcels totaling 607 acres enrolled in farmland and open space tax status.

There are no provisions for open space or cluster development in Cooper's regulatory framework yet incentives or requirements for preservation are found in the ordinances of other towns. Certain unimproved land is seen as a shared resource, e.g. for hunting, and though privately owned, can be used by the residents. As more and more residents restrict the use of their land, traditional use of land for hunting and other outdoor access (hiking, snowmobiling, skiing etc.) is lost along with a way of life. Many new landowners are receptive to a continuance of these forms of access as long as they are asked beforehand. The conservation easement on 9,995 acres of forestland by the Downeast Lakes Land Trust and the New England Forest Foundation (in Cooper – see Map 2, and in Alexander, Crawford) has affirmative provisions that will allow public access in these traditional ways into the future.

**EDUCATION**

The town of Cooper is a member of School Union 106 which also includes the towns of Alexander, Robbinston, Baring, and Crawford and the city of Calais. The city and each town have elected school committees that oversee school affairs.

Grades K-8 have the option to attend the Alexander Elementary School, Woodland Elementary, Rose Gaffney in Machias, or to the Elm St Elementary in East Machias. Transportation however is only provided to those attending Alexander or Woodland. High school students may attend any of the regional high schools (Calais, Shead, Washington Academy, Woodland, Machias Memorial) but bussing is provided only to Woodland.

**ALEXANDER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.** Built in 1986, with a new addition completed in 1993, the facility has a capacity of 150 students and features classrooms for Grades K through 8, speech, gifted, library, art, music, computer, offices and a cafeteria/gymnasium combination. Enrollment in 1999 was 64 and it has declined slightly to 53 in 2004.

**CALAIS HIGH SCHOOL.** Completed in 1977, the high school has a 500 student capacity, and was remodeled in 2004. The High School is a fully redesigned school with state of the art technology infrastructure, new chemistry and physics labs, a full range of classes from applied core strategies to advanced placement. The facility also has a combined cafeteria and auditorium with stage for drama and fine arts productions and a gymnasium and separate weights and wrestling area.

In 1989, the Calais Regional Vocational Center was opened in the High School building serving students from the Shead (Eastport), Woodland, and Calais high schools. The facilities are in excellent condition. The vocational center has a complete range of classrooms, shops, gymnasium, computer lab, ATM lab and wireless capability.

WASHINGTON ACADEMY. Originally constructed in 1823 Washington Academy is located in East Machias and now composed of seven buildings on a 45 acre campus. It is a private school that hosts students from the region and beyond (including international) who attend daily or as boarders living on campus. It includes many classrooms, computer labs, performing arts stage, a cafeteria, library, gym complex music classrooms, and an Industrial Technology Building that contains the Marine Trades Program, Industrial Arts, and Computer Networking and Repair.

WOODLAND JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL. Constructed in 1955, with additions in 1965 (gymnasium) and 1972 (junior high), the Woodland Junior/Senior High School has a student capacity of approximately 350 and current enrollment is 261 for grades 7-12.

The facilities are in good condition and contain a full range of classrooms, including two portables (one of which accommodates band instruction/instruments), pre-vocational shops, art room, gymnasium/cafeteria, weight room, ITV/ATM long distance learning facilities and full-service library as well as computer, chemistry and biology labs.

More information on schools, with town enrollments for the past five years, is found in the population section of this comprehensive plan.

### **Higher Education**

The Washington County Vocational Institute was established in 1969 and became the WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE in 2003. The Calais campus is situated on 400 acres of land overlooking the St. Croix River. Washington County Community College is one of seven institutions in the Maine Community College System. Thirty-six of WCCC's 38 catalog programs are located in Calais, training students for employment in several diverse occupations - from construction and mechanical trades to food service and business studies. Several of these programs articulate into degree programs at other colleges and Universities. The College has the capacity for 500 full-time students, while the Continuing Education Division serves an additional 400 part-time students at sites throughout Washington County. Enrollment in 2005 was 454 students.

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT MACHIAS (UMM). <http://www.umm.maine.edu> This 1,000 student branch of the University of Maine System is less than an hour from Cooper, and offers Bachelor and Associate degrees in a wide range of subjects including business education and administration, recreation management, biology, environmental studies, English, and history. Many of its students are "non-traditional" (older persons returning for their degrees). The University is linked to all the other branches of the system by inter-active TV. Associate degrees in Science, Business Administration, Liberal Arts, and other subjects may be earned without entering a "traditional" university classroom. ITV is funded by a grant and administered through the University of Maine in Augusta.

The University of Maine system also offers a wide range of daytime and evening classes at its Calais Center, located at the Unobskey School on Main Street downtown. Enrollment at the center varies from semester to semester. Approximately 120 students are currently enrolled at the Calais Center.

## **HEALTH CARE**

CALAIS REGIONAL HOSPITAL, <http://www.calaishospital.com>, serves a population of approximately 14,000 from Topsfield to the North, Wesley to the West and Eastport to the south. CRH is the largest employer in Calais, employing close to 250 people. Calais Regional is licensed by the State of Maine as a Critical Access Hospital and as such is licensed for 15 acute care beds and 10 swings beds and has a 24-hour *physician* staffed emergency department. Services offered at the Hospital include clinics in cardiology; ophthalmology; prosthetics-orthotics; blood pressure; and wound care. A variety of support groups are available for individuals and family members dealing with diabetes, cardiovascular disease and breast cancer. Out-patient services include laboratory procedures, physical therapy, occupational therapy, aquatic therapy, osteoporosis management and prevention, radiology, including fixed unit CT scan, mobile MRI and nuclear medicine, bone density testing, ultrasound exams and mammography, chemotherapy, day surgery, cardiac/pulmonary rehabilitation, nutritional counseling, home health care, and respiratory care procedures. A multi-specialty courtesy staff of 30 physicians and a variety of allied medical specialists compliment the 15 members of the Hospital's active medical staff. CRH will begin construction of a replacement facility in 2005 and plans to welcome its first patient into the new facility by the summer of 2006.

ATLANTIC REHAB is a privately owned, 60 bed nursing and rehabilitation facility licensed by the State of Maine, located across the street from the Calais Regional Hospital. The nursing home offers an intermediate level of long term care including medical coverage, nursing and personal care, social services, and individual activity programs. Atlantic Rehab provides a home-like atmosphere for people who require nursing care.

WASHINGTON PLACE, an assisted living facility with 30 beds, opened in 2000. It is located next door to Atlantic Rehab and is close to the Calais Regional Hospital, doctors' offices and the nursing home. Washington Place provides care givers for the residents 24 hours a day, an LPN (licensed practical nurse) is on staff at all times and there is also an activity director on staff. Washington Place is licensed by the State of Maine and under First Atlantic Health Care.

WASHINGTON COUNTY PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSOCIATES provides behavioral health services in Washington, Hancock and Penobscot Counties including crisis services, in-home counseling, outpatient counseling, geriatric assessment and consultation, children's crisis residential services and children's residential treatment services. WCPA operates the Calais Children's Project in a building owned by the city of Calais. The Calais Children's Project provides three different residential treatment environments and specialized care of children with a variety of behavioral problems.

SUNRISE OPPORTUNITIES, operates a 10-unit supervised living facility for mentally handicapped individuals. They also operate the Beckett Center, a facility that provides

employment activities for the mentally handicapped.

DOWNEAST HEALTH SERVICES is a local, non-profit agency that serves families in Hancock and Washington County. The major programs include the Women, Infants and Children nutritional program (WIC), Family Planning, the Preventive Health Program (PHP), a maternal and child health nursing home visit program (MCH), and a social service program for pregnant and parenting adolescents (SSA). Approximately 370 different clients are served in the Calais clinic each year.

The EASTERN AGENCY ON AGING (EAA) makes it possible for persons 60 and older to remain in their home longer and more comfortably. To meet that goal, the Agency provides a variety of services that are available to area residents. Through a contract with Washington/Hancock Community Agency, EAA provides transportation in Calais and the vicinity. Many senior citizens rely on this service for transportation to medical appointments.

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND COUNSELING SERVICES (CHCS) provides a variety of physical and mental health services in area communities. The Calais branch offers counseling for individuals, couples and families, and information and education to the general public about mental health issues. All counselors are legally qualified to be practicing through licensure, registration, or certification. Workshops and courses that address many topics are provided by CHCS.

SUNRISE COUNTY HOMECARE SERVICES has offices in Machias, Lubec and Calais. They provide and coordinate home care services such as visiting nurses; home health aides; physical, occupational and speech therapy; senior companions; homecare telemedicine, medical social work; and homemaker services.

The DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES administers several programs to assist low income residents in the area. Recipients of services provided by this department must meet low income guidelines to qualify for the following programs:  
AFDC, food stamps, Medicaid.

DOWNEAST COMMUNITY HOSPITAL, <http://www.dech.org> DECH, is located in Machias 25 miles to the south of Cooper. It is a 25-bed 24-hour critical access facility and has an active medical staff of 25 practitioners.

MAINE VETERANS HOME. Completed in 2005, this facility is attached to the Downeast Community Hospital and provides 30 beds for veterans, and spouses if space is available, needing assisted living facilities for dementia.

EASTERN MAINE MEDICAL CENTER, <http://www.emh.org>, is a 411 bed facility and one of only three trauma centers in the state. It is located in Bangor, ninety miles away. Their 300 physicians provide primary care hospital services, as well as specialty and intensive services. There are other medical facilities available in Bangor, including St. Joseph's Hospital.

AMBULANCE SERVICE. Emergency ambulance service is provided 24 hours a day by the regional ambulance service provided by Washington County Emergency Medical Service

Authority (WCEMSA). The operation is fully licensed and provides care at the level of EMT, intermediate and Paramedic. The full time manning and advanced level is necessary to meet the demands of the growing elderly population and the distance to hospitals. WCEMSA is a regional emergency ambulance service covering 19 communities in three counties. The service runs between 1,750 and 2,000 calls per year. The service provides both emergency and transfer services, operating out of three full-time base stations plus relationships with two volunteer operations and first response units based in Alexander and Charlotte.

Extreme trauma cases are handled in the community through a working relationship between “Life Flight of Maine”, Calais Regional Hospital, and the ambulance service.

DIALYSIS CENTER. Fresenius Medical Care opened a dialysis center in 2003 on the site of the former Gates Fiber Extrusion plant in Eastport. Formerly patients in the area had to make the trip back and forth to Bangor up to four times a week. Making this level of care available on the local level is a huge step for the dialysis patients in the region.

DISCOVERY HOUSE. Opened in 2005, Discovery House (<http://www.discoveryhouse.com>) provides an out-patient center for substance abuse on Beech Street in Calais and serves 300 clients. Its mission is to provide comprehensive services for persons affected by addiction-through community awareness, quality and holistic clinical services-in an efficient, safe and fiscally sound environment.

SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM. Run by University of Maine Cooperative Extension: Volunteer seniors provide services to home-bound seniors, i.e. home visits, transportation to doctor’s appointments, shopping, community events, visits to friends and nursing home residents.

CATHANCE LAKE ASSOCIATION. Works with biologist to monitor water quality/invasive plants and animals, conducts boat inspections at the public boat ramp during the summer (July and August) to prevent contamination of the lake by invasive species.

### **CULTURE/COMMUNITY EVENTS**

Community events take place in the Cathance Grange Hall. Library services are available through the Calais library and books by mail through the Maine State Library system.

The Cathance Lake Association which hosts an annual meeting that is open to members only with information on ways and means of protecting the water quality of the lake.

### **COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND SERVICES**

There are no churches in Cooper.

There is a Cooper Grange Association that uses the Cathance Grange building and provides support to a number of charitable causes, and scholarships as funds allow.

Other organizations include participation in the Breakneck Mountain Snowmobile Club and the Breakneck Mountain ATV Club. Most residents participate in community organizations associated with the school where their children attend classes.

**PUBLIC UTILITIES AND SERVICES**

**Electrical Service:** Eastern Maine Electric Cooperative (no three phase power available in Cooper)

**Telephone Service:** Fairpoint Communications, cellular telephone services

**Television, Cable, and Radio**

- WLBZ - Channel 2 (NBC affiliate) Bangor
- WABI - Channel 5 (CBS affiliate) Bangor
- WVII - Channel 7 (ABC affiliate) Bangor
- Maine PBS- Channel 13 (PBS affiliate) Calais
- WQDY (92.7 FM) Calais simulcast with WALZ (95.3) Machias
- WCRQ (102.9) Calais
- WMED (89.7 FM) (NPR affiliate) Calais

**Newspapers**

- Bangor Daily News (daily)
- Calais Advertiser (weekly)
- Downeast Coastal Press (weekly)
- Ellsworth American (weekly)
- Machias Valley Observer (weekly)
- Quoddy Tides (twice-monthly)
- Eastport
- Saint Croix Courier (published in St.

**Internet Providers:** There are a number of Internet service providers with local access numbers. There is minimal high-speed (broadband) service in the Cooper area. However one provider, Axiom Technologies, in Machias is installing facilities in the region for wireless service with the support of a ConnectME grant and their own financing.

**Public Survey**

In the 2009 Town Survey, a set of survey questions sought to understand how much taxpayers are prepared to spend or invest in their preservation priorities and in community services.

Respondents were asked how much they favored/disfavored investment in each item and then to choose 3 of their highest priorities. See Chapter L - Town Survey for charts of responses. In summary the two highest priorities to respondents (13 votes each) were restoration/renovation of the Cathance Grange and constructing a new town office/community building. The next highest priority for town investments (11 votes) was to discontinue winter maintenance of all unpaved town roads. The next two highest priorities (10 votes each) for town investments were hiking/walking trails and road improvement for stormwater run-off from Town roads into Cooper Lakes. Closely following (8 votes each) were scenic view protection, a study of unpaved roads for discontinuance of winter maintenance, expanding town funded school bus service to more regional schools and purchase of public access to surface waters.

Respondents were generally satisfied with town and regional/community services or had no opinion about them. Respondents are also generally satisfied with other services while many are dissatisfied with the availability of high speed (broadband) internet access. Finally, respondents are generally satisfied with summer road conditions though they are less satisfied with winter road conditions. The condition of the cemeteries was found satisfactory by most as was the recycling center/landfill/transfer station though there were some who are strongly dissatisfied

with it. Additional written comments are also included in Appendix A. Most are satisfied with the property tax level though there were many who were dissatisfied or strongly dissatisfied.

**SUMMARY**

Through proper maintenance and investment, Cooper's public facilities and services have remained in good condition overall. However Route 191 is in serious disrepair because it was never fully constructed for the truck and vehicle traffic that it receives. More discussion on this issue is provided in the Transportation chapter.

Cooper has many recreational opportunities because of the vast natural resources of the Town and the region, and a few municipal recreational facilities. Some of the Town's most important recreational resources rely on waterfront access, which we should seek to maintain and improve. Scenic view protection is particularly important to Cooper residents.

Although the town has not previously established a formal Capital Improvement Plan, reserve accounts have been used for many necessary items and a CIP is proposed in this Comprehensive Plan.