

M. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION – POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

As required by Chapter 208, Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rule, this section provides a separate section that prioritizes how implementation strategies will be carried out and identifies the responsible party and anticipated timeline for each strategy in the plan.

HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
Goal: Cooper will preserve the State's historic and archeological resources for future generations to enjoy and pass on to their children as they have been passed on to the present.			
Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Protect and preserve known archaeological and historic sites.	Promote awareness of historic structures and artifacts including the consideration of listing on the National Register of Historic Places.	Planning Board	On-going
	Work in cooperation with the State of Maine with any of the identified historical and archaeological resources within Cooper.	Planning Board; Select Board	As funding allows
	Form a Cooper Historical Society; cooperate with Alexander, Crawford, and Charlotte	Interested citizens	Short Term
Ensure that archeological and historic sites are not unknowingly destroyed.	Potential areas and artifacts of historical and archaeological significance, especially along riverbanks and lakeshores, should be professionally surveyed and documented, and historical and archaeological sites and artifacts should be monitored	Select Board; Planning Board	As funding allows
Formulate guidelines or land use controls to protect and preserve historic and archaeological resources if identified.	Require developers to provide evidence that proposed developments will not negatively impact any archeological sites.	Planning Board	Immediate
	Require that development plans include a plan showing the preservation of known historically significant areas.	Planning Board	Immediate

POPULATION			
Goal: Cooper will use complete and current information about their population when making administrative and policy decisions for the town.			
Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Cooper will actively monitor the size, characteristics and distribution of its population.	The town will seek assistance in the collection and maintenance of census data from the Washington County Council of Governments, the designated census information center for Washington County.	Town Clerk; WCCOG	On-going
	Data gathered will include population estimates, census data and other information concerning the number and characteristics of the town's population including shifts of existing seasonal housing and residents to year-round status.	Town Clerk; WCCOG	On-going
	The town will encourage full participation in the 2010 census.	Town Clerk; WCCOG	On-going

NATURAL RESOURCES			
Goal: Cooper will protect and preserve the natural resources on which its economy and quality of life depend.			
Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Water Quality and Water Resources			
Protect water quality	Update Shoreland Zoning Regulations and prepare a zoning ordinance to maintain compliance with State and Federal regulations and reflect the local needs of the community including such provisions as the following on Cooper Lakes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce buffers along lake shores • Increase zoning lot sizes • Limit commercial development on the lakes • Limit commercial development on the lakes 	Planning Board; Selectmen	2008
	Petition Maine DEP to develop phosphorous allocations for Vining Lake	Planning Board	Immediate
	Develop regulations that reduce impacts of motorized water craft: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore limiting the size/#/horsepower of boats • Explore limitations on use of jet skis on the lakes 	Planning Board; Selectmen	2008-2009
	Use land protection options (land trusts, purchase with Land for Maine's Future funds) to conserve land to protect lake watersheds.	Selectmen	On-going
	Continue to promote the use of Best Management Practices for Stormwater Management and for Erosion and Sedimentation Control through education of the Planning Board and Code Enforcement Officer.	Planning Board; Selectmen; Road Commissioner	On-going
	Develop Subdivision regulations that incorporate use of Best Management Practices for Stormwater Management and for Erosion and Sedimentation Control.	Planning Board; Selectmen	2010
Explore and refine boat regulations to address speed, nuisance and safety.	Develop regulations that reduce impacts of motorized water craft: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore limiting the size/#/horsepower of boats • Explore limitations on use of jet skis on the lakes • Develop regulations that are not too burdensome • Make regulations problem specific and lake specific • Call on the state to enforce their own rules 	Selectmen	2009-2010
Ensure that water quality is sufficient to provide for the protection and propagation of fish, and wildlife and provide for recreation in and on the water.	Expand water quality-testing programs for the town's lakes, rivers and streams. Give the highest priority to those water bodies most important for recreation and for fisheries and wildlife.	DEP Volunteer Program; Dennys and East Machias Watershed Council; Cathance	On-going

NATURAL RESOURCES			
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Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
		Watershed Association	
	Include the DEP evaluation method (technical guide referenced in footnote 3) for phosphorous allocation in the town’s lakes in new Subdivision Regulations (to be developed).	Planning Board/ Selectmen	On-going
	Adhere to recommended best practices for stream crossings on streams with “high value” wild eastern brook trout populations and associated habitats (see page D-15)	Planning Board/ Selectmen/ Maine DOT	Immediate
	Encourage the stewardship opportunities furthered by Cathance Lake Association	Selectmen	On-going
	Encourage replacement of malfunctioning septic systems. Establish a recommended replacement and pumping schedule. Educate the public about the importance of maintaining and replacing on-site systems.	Code Enforcement Officer/DEP	On-going
	Examine the technical and management needs, and costs associated with clustered septic treatment alternatives to retrofit existing problem areas.	Selectmen	Long Term
	Continue dialogue and exchange of information on watershed planning issues with neighboring communities.	Planning Board/ WCCOG/Dennys and East Machias River Watershed Councils	On-going
Protect drinking water supplies.	Make application, where eligible, to the Small Community Grant Program to upgrade any failing septic systems.	Planning Board/ Selectmen	On-going
Land Suitability			
Ensure that development is located on land that is capable of supporting on-site water and septic systems.	Require a soil evaluation test prior to the issuance of a building permit in accordance with state regulations to require that developers demonstrate that soils are adequate for the intended purpose, that their projects will not be located on wetlands, on slopes of 20 percent or greater, or on floodplains.	Planning Board/ Selectmen	On-going
	Direct development to areas with appropriate soils, slopes, and drainage conditions.	Planning Board	On-going
	Prevent/discourage development on steep slopes.	Planning Board	On-going
Ensure that new development preserves, to the greatest extent possible, the natural and cover and vegetation.	Require in the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances that developers demonstrate that their projects will be compatible with the existing topography, and will preserve land cover and natural vegetation, to the greatest extent practical.	Planning Board/ Selectmen	Short term
Floodplains			
Avoid problems	Seek support to have floodplains mapped and to	Planning	

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associated with floodplain development and use along the town's Shorelands.	participate in the Federal Flood Insurance Program	Board/ Selectmen	
	Develop a Floodplain Management Ordinance to discourage new residential, industrial, commercial and other significant development within 100 year floodplains.	Planning Board/ Selectmen	On-going
Fish and Wildlife Habitat			
Protect existing fish and waterfowl/wading bird habitats within the town mapped as Essential Habitat or Significant Habitat.	Establish protection provisions in the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations and in standards for construction and maintenance of local roads to ensure early consultation with a Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Biologist when development is proposed in or near the site of Essential or Significant Habitats.	Planning Board; Road Commissioner	Short-term (within 2 years)
	Make use of the most recent data on rare plants, animals, and natural communities and important wildlife habitats provided by the Beginning with Habitat program of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, included on maps in this document.	Planning Board	On-going
	Protect the high and moderate fisheries habitats in accordance with Shoreland Zoning regulations around these habitats. Consider increasing setback distances for large (>10 lots) new development proposals.	Planning Board	Short-term (within 2 years)
	Encourage landowners to protect and preserve wildlife habitat, and utilize conservation programs to preserve undeveloped land.	Selectmen/ Planning Board	On-going
Forest and Farmland Resources			
Support long term sustainable forest management within Cooper.	Consider tax incentives or other regulatory preferences to support value-added forest-product manufacturing and agricultural processing.	Selectmen	On-going
	Monitor transfers of large land ownerships and get a seat at the table in conservation transactions where possible to ensure traditional accesses and uses are retained.	Selectmen/ Planning Board/ Assessors	On-going
	Refer landowners to MFS district foresters and provide information about Tree Growth programs (lobby legislators to fully fund the program).	Town Clerk/ Selectmen/ Assessors	On-going
	Support timber management and agricultural activities on prime farmland and in rural areas of Cooper.	Selectmen/ Planning Board	On-going
	Promote use of best management practices for timber harvesting and agricultural production.	Planning Board	On-going
	Include in any future land use ordinance that commercial or subdivision developments	Planning Board	As needed

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	maintain areas with prime agricultural soils as open space to the greatest extent practicable.		
	Limit residential growth in areas of high timber value through subdivision regulations that encourage cluster designs, minimize forest fragmentation and limit road extensions for residential use.	Selectmen/ Planning Board Maine Forest Service	Short-term (within 2 years)
Scenic Resources			
Preserve important scenic resources.	Adopt zoning provisions that discourage development on identified ridgetops, mountains and islands.	Planning Board	Short Term
Education and Traditional Use			
Ensure that traditional use of lands and access to water are protected as development pressures increase.	Identify areas in need of additional access.	Selectmen	Immediate (within two years)
	Respect private property rights but seek to maintain traditional uses of any private roads or rights of way to the water. Negotiations with private land owners to secure these accesses will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgement/celebration of landowners who continue the centuries old practice of allowing public use of their lands; • Informal agreements allowing public use of lands; • More formal agreements allowing public use of lands until and unless problems arise from disrespectful use of private land (eg. Leaving gates open, littering, vandalism); • Providing property tax incentives to property owners who grant written, revocable rights of access across their property; • Obtaining rights of first refusal for access points or property of critical importance to the public; • Purchasing permanent easements or fee title to access points or property of critical importance to the public. 	Selectmen; Planning Board	Immediate (within 2 years)
Educate residents and visitors about important habitat and water quality values.	Develop informational signs and brochures (maps) in critical habitat and public accesses, eg. Cathance Lake public access.	Selectmen/ Watershed and Lake Associations	On-going
Utilize financial incentive programs	Encourage landowners to participate in farm, open space and tree growth programs.	Selectmen/ CEO Planning Board/ Assessors	On-going

ECONOMICS AND EMPLOYMENT			
Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being. ▪ The town will have an educated population ready to enter the work force. ▪ Enhance and support existing businesses in Cooper and promote new business that is compatible with existing rural community values and patterns of development¹. 			
Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsible Part(ies)	Timeframe
Promotion of Economic Activity			
Promote expansion and diversification of the economic base of the community.	Provide information on sources of business assistance at the Town Office, to include materials available through the Department of Tourism, Community and Economic Development, the Eastern Maine Development Corporation, the Sunrise County Economic Council and others.	Town Clerk; WCCOG; SCEC; EMDC	On-going
Support nature based tourism as an economic development strategy for Cooper.	Participate in regional economic development efforts that promote the natural assets in Cooper.	Selectmen directly, or through designee	On-going
	Support business endeavors in nature-based tourism	Selectmen directly, or through designee	On-going
Program Awareness			
The town will obtain information on programs that provide support for roads, parks, public transportation or other infrastructure and activities that materially aid the town’s economy.	As needed the town will obtain aid from higher levels of government, County, State and Federal, including such things as Community Development Block Grants, USDA Rural Development and others identified in the Capital Improvement Plan.	Selectmen	Immediate and on-going
	Work with Economic Development groups to expand high speed internet access within Cooper.	Selectmen	Immediate and on-going
The town will assist those who are eligible for assistance and help them to receive it.	Town offices will provide current information about sources of public assistance, unemployment assistance, job training, and aid to the elderly and/or handicapped.	Town Clerk	On-going
Educated Workforce			
Ensure that the educational opportunities, both academic and vocational, address the needs of Cooper residents.	Attend meetings with School Board and local/regional businesses to identify work force needs and educational foundation to support them.	Selectmen; Union 106 Directors	Long-term

¹ This goal and the implementation measures that follow from it under the heading of sustainable development recognize the multiple business interests that sustain rural families over the course of a year – from their homes, and from other locations. This recognition assumes that there is and will be a mixture of uses in all districts of our community; an independent spirit among local residents and entrepreneurs; and a general resistance to excessive regulation. It also recognizes that there are some basic “good neighbor” standards that can be developed to address the desired mixture of uses.

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Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsible Part(ies)	Timeframe
	Encourage and support efforts to provide job training and continuing education.	Selectmen	Ongoing
Sustainable Development			
The town will develop a land use ordinance to attract, enhance and support existing and future development, while minimizing negative impacts of non-compatible uses.	A future land use ordinance will identify appropriate areas for commercial and industrial development.	Planning Board; Selectmen	Immediate
	“Good neighbor” standards will be developed for home based businesses to ensure compatibility with residential neighborhoods and adjacent properties.	Planning Board	Short-term (within 2 years)
Allow and encourage existing land resource based industries to thrive in their current locations.	Provide large rural areas for agricultural and forestry uses.	Planning Board	Short-term (within 2 years)

HOUSING			
Goal: Cooper will encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for Cooper residents.			
Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Programs and Grants			
Pursue programs and grants that can assist in ensuring that at least 10% of new residential development meet the definition of affordable housing.	The town will work with regional agencies to be able to make referrals on programs and grants (CDBG housing assistance and rehabilitation programs) for the use of residents.	Town Clerk; WCCOG; WHCA	Immediate
	The town will welcome and encourage participation in programs, grants and projects for the construction of subsidized housing whether within the town or the region including grants to homeowners for improvements to energy efficiency, habitability, etc	Selectmen	Immediate
	The town will welcome and encourage participation in programs, grants and projects, within the town or the region to insure sufficient, affordable housing options for its elderly citizens	Selectmen	Immediate

HOUSING			
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Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
	The town will seek the assistance of regional and state agencies in the opportunities, technologies and permitting requirements for sewage treatment systems to address waste disposal needs within already developed areas.	Selectmen	Immediate
Codes and Regulation			
Ensure that local codes and ordinances are enforced for the public health, safety and welfare.	Work to correct all known failed or inadequate subsurface sewage disposal systems.	CEO; Planning Board	On-going
	Work with the planning board to address any need for modification to the existing land use regulations that may be appropriate.	CEO; Planning Board; Selectmen	On-going
	Ensure that the code enforcement officer (CEO) works to address reported violations of local ordinances and State laws and regulations that affect health, safety or community conditions such as the automobile graveyard provisions, removal of unsafe or deteriorated buildings, replacement of driveway culverts, etc.	Selectmen; Code Enforcement Officer	On-going
The future land use ordinance will not preclude the development of affordable housing	The town will continue to encourage affordable housing opportunities by allowing a mixture of housing types, including accessory apartments.	Selectmen; Planning Board	Short-term (within 2 years)
	Continue to allow mixed uses and mixed income housing within the residential areas of the town.	Planning Board	On-going
	Encourage senior citizen housing opportunities and provide residential areas that allow single and multi-family dwellings, as well as manufactured housing.	Planning Board	On-going

TRANSPORTATION			
Goal: Cooper will encourage, promote and develop efficient and safe transportation facilities that will accommodate the anticipated growth and economic development of the town and the region.			
Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
The town will plan for optimum use, construction, maintenance and repair of town roads.	The town has developed and will maintain a system to prioritize maintenance of town roadways.	Selectmen/Road Commissioner	On-going
	The town will pursue training from the MDOT Local Roads Center and adoption of the Road Surface Management System software to prioritize maintenance and construction of town roadways.	Selectmen/Road Commissioner	Immediate

TRANSPORTATION			
Goal: Cooper will encourage, promote and develop efficient and safe transportation facilities that will accommodate the anticipated growth and economic development of the town and the region.			
Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
	Route 191 requires reconstruction and repair; the town will request that shoulders be added to improve public safety.	Selectmen/Road Commissioner	Long Term
	The town will explore a system to phase out winter maintenance (plowing/sanding) on unpaved town roads.	Selectmen/Road Commissioner	Long Term
The town will investigate town roads that are a large expense for very few residents.	Research the cost/benefit impact of retiring town roads that serve less than five residences	Selectmen/Road Commissioner	Long Term
The town will ensure that new development does not negatively impact the capacity or safety of existing roadways.	The town will consider a local roads ordinance that harmonizes the access of driveways and entrances with the state access management regulations and make the new state regulations available at the town office for property owners.	Selectmen	Short Term
	Local access management standards will include such design requirements as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limiting total number of access points • Directing access to side and service roads • Coordinating access among adjoining properties • Combining subdivision lots onto one access road vs. multiple driveways • Funneling of traffic through one access drive 	Selectmen	Short Term
	The town will consider increasing center line setbacks on collector roads from 35 feet to 50 feet to accommodate future drainage, utility and safety concerns.	Selectmen/ Planning Board	Short Term

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES			
Goal: Cooper will plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate current and anticipated growth and economic development.			
Goal: Cooper will maintain and improve access to recreational opportunities.			
Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Local Services			
Local services will be maintained and address community needs.	The town will address future funding needs for new and replacement items through the Capital Improvement Plan, to be reviewed/updated biennially	Selectmen	On-going
	Continue to explore best alternatives for solid waste disposal	Selectmen	On-going
Promote and develop social, cultural and recreational activities in Cooper.	Create a Civic Improvement Committee to identify projects, assist with fundraising (including donations and grants) and events.	Selectmen	Short term 2-3 years
Public Access			

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES			
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Goal: Cooper will maintain and improve access to recreational opportunities.			
Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Encourage recreational opportunities and increase public access to surface water.	Fund improvements on town owned land, including landing facilities, as described in the Capital Improvement Plan.	Selectmen	Immediate
	Provide facilities on lakes within Cooper that do not duplicate facilities serving the same lakes in neighboring towns or unorganized territories.	Selectmen	On-going
Secure public access to the water.	Pursue the wide variety of available measures to secure such accesses. These could include: Landowner negotiations, Cooperation with local land trusts, Accepting donations of land or easements, Purchase of easements or land, Use of Land for Maine's Future funds	Selectmen; Planning Board	On-going and as funding allows
	The town will educate itself on the legalities of public access to the shore and stay up to date on changes in case law that could affect it over time.	Selectmen; Planning Board	On-going
Education about Services			
Local services will be visible and understood by Cooper Citizens.	The town will continue to educate its citizens on the importance of recycling through the use of fliers, informational meetings and school programs.	Town Clerk; WCCOG	On-going
	Literature on the local recycling program will be made readily available to residents at the town office.	Town Clerk	On-going
Open Space			
Encourage the preservation of open space.	Land use ordinance will include provisions that will require major new residential developments reviewed by the planning board to present recreational and open space areas in their plans	Selectmen and Planning Board	Short-term (within 2 years)

LAND USE			
Goal: Cooper will preserve and protect the character of the town that is vital to the continued stability of the local economy; Cooper will continue to be a great place to live, work and vacation			
Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Ordinances and Regulation			
Review and revise existing use regulations, consistent with the goals and guidelines of this Comprehensive Plan.	Prepare a land use ordinance consistent with the future land use designations in the Comprehensive Plan.	Planning Board	Short term (within 2 years)
	Update the existing ordinances to ensure their consistency with state and federal laws and the local needs.	Planning Board; CEO	On-going
Enforcement			
Enforce ordinances fully and fairly.	Ensure ordinances contain proper legal language and definitions.	Planning Board; Selectmen	On-going

LAND USE			
Goal: Cooper will preserve and protect the character of the town that is vital to the continued stability of the local economy; Cooper will continue to be a great place to live, work and vacation			
Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
	Management and elected officials support the code enforcement department.	Planning Board; Selectmen	On-going
	Provide the code enforcement officer with the tools, training, and support necessary to enforce land use regulations, and ensure that the Code Enforcement Officer is certified in accordance with 30-A MRSA §4451	Selectmen; CEO	On-going
	Provide adequate time for the code enforcement officer to ensure compliance.	Planning Board; Selectmen	On-going
Encouraging Growth where Services Exist			
Promote and support growth in the existing village areas of Cooper.	Locate/renovate any town office or a new community center within the village area.	Selectmen	Short-term (within 2 years)
	Upgrade and locate new recreational facilities within the village area.	Selectmen	Immediate
	Direct a minimum of 75% of new municipal growth-related capital investments into designated growth areas in the Future Land Use Plan	Selectmen	On-going
Support the locations, types, scales, and intensities of land uses the town desires as stated in its vision.	Track new development in the community by type and location.	Selectmen; Planning Board	On-going
	Periodically (at least every five years) evaluate implementation of the plan.	Selectmen; Planning Board	On-going
Encouraging Resource Based Activities in Rural Areas			
Allow and encourage existing land resource based industries to thrive in their current locations.	Provide large rural areas for agricultural and forestry uses.	Planning Board	Short-term (within 2 years)
Education about Land Use			
Educate residents about the requirements of local and state regulations.	Provide a list of all local ordinances at the town office.	Town Clerk	Immediate
Educate new and prospective residents about traditional land use issues in Cooper.	Develop educational materials describing traditional uses and practices including issues such as shore access, hunting, fishing, and community institutions.	Selectmen or their designee	Immediate
	Make these materials available at town offices, schools and local businesses.	Town Clerk	On-going

REGIONAL COORDINATION			
Public Facilities and Services			
The town will cooperate on the delivery of regional services and endeavor to achieve economies of scale where feasible.	Cooper will continue to cooperate with neighboring communities to seek funding for upgrading or replacing inadequate well and septic systems and reducing overboard discharge.	Selectmen	On-going

REGIONAL COORDINATION			
	Cooper will stay current with planning and emergency response to pandemic diseases through its regional mutual aid agreements.	Selectmen	On-going
	The town will seek out cooperative means of reducing regional administrative costs for the school district and delivery of public services.	Selectmen/School Board	On-going
Regional Development			
The town will participate in regional organizations that provide technical assistance and information about business support and regional economic development opportunities.	Membership in the St. Croix Economic Alliance and the Washington County Council of Governments and participation in the Sunrise County Economic Council.	Selectmen directly, or through appointment of others	Immediate
Coordinate the town's land use strategies with other local and regional land use planning efforts.	Meet with neighboring communities to coordinate land use designations and regulatory and non-regulatory strategies	Selectmen, Planning Board	Ongoing
Advocate for infrastructure improvements to enhance the economic competitiveness of Cooper and Washington County.	Advocate for improvements to State highways, airports, seaports, rail corridors and telecommunication facilities to enhance the regional economy.	Selectmen	Ongoing
Regional Transportation			
Cooper will cooperate in the development of regional transportation policy.	Cooper will participate actively in regional transportation meetings and policy development	Selectmen	On-going
	The town will advocate in regional and state meetings for reconstruction of Route 191 in Cooper.	Selectmen	On-going
	The town of Cooper supports use of any portion of the Calais Branch corridor for rail service, if and when it is feasible, to relieve freight truck traffic on regional roads.	Selectmen	On-going
	The town may seek legislative action to temporarily close and/or post Route 191 to truck traffic due to unsafe conditions and/or until the road is properly constructed.	Selectmen	Immediate
	The town will continue to petition the State to reclassify Route 191 from Baring Plantation to East Machias as an arterial highway, perhaps to become Route 1A, in order to reconstruct it and maintain it in a condition that functions according to the demand placed on it by movement of freight and commuters.	Selectmen	Immediate
Natural Resources			
Protect shared critical habitats.	Cooperate with neighboring towns in the designation of critical resource areas where they cross municipal boundaries.	Selectmen, Planning Board	On-going

REGIONAL COORDINATION			
Ensure that water quality is sufficient to provide for the protection and propagation of fish, and wildlife and provide for recreation in and on the water.	Expand water quality-testing programs for the town's lakes, rivers and streams. Give the highest priority to those water bodies most important for recreation and for fisheries and wildlife.	DEP Volunteer Program; Dennys and East Machias Watershed Council; Cathance Watershed Association	On-going
	Continue dialogue and exchange of information on watershed planning issues with neighboring communities.	Planning Board/WCCOG/Dennys and East Machias River Watershed Councils	On-going