

PART 4 NATURAL RESOURCES CRITICAL NATURAL RESOURCES

MAINE'S GROWTH MANAGEMENT GOAL

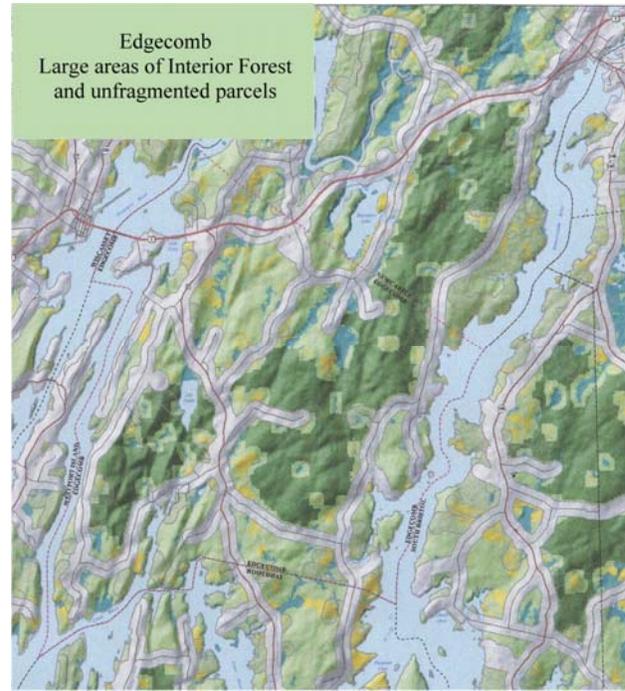
To protect the state's other critical natural resources, including without limitation, wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas.

TOWN VISION

To protect Edgecomb's critical natural resources within and surrounding Edgecomb's privately-owned undeveloped and unfragmented lands; Edgecomb's only great pond, Lily Pond; the town-owned Charles and Constance Schmid Land Preserve as well as Edgecomb's tidal frontage and its scenic vistas.

CITIZENS' VIEW (SURVEY RESPONSE)

- 58%, or 205 respondents, choose to live in Edgecomb because of its proximity to water, clear skies and starry nights.
- 54%, or 177 respondents, enjoy the respect for privacy in Edgecomb.
- 71%, or 253 respondents, defined rural as "the bulk of our land remaining undeveloped, with large tracts of backland, fields and forests."
- 28%, or 94 respondents, objected to forestry operations "in their back yard."
- 54%, or 191 respondents, felt that nature preserves are an acceptable trade-off for lost tax revenue.



Unfragmented Parcels

(Source: *Beginning with Habitat*)

CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

The topography of the upper part of the peninsula comprising the Town of Edgecomb is typical of Maine coastline peninsulas. A gently rolling landscape of rocky, clay soil, remaining from land which was heavily wooded before clearing and settlement of the 18th century, is laid over a granite skeleton. A mixture of second and third growth woodland is broken by the pattern of open fields surviving from 18th and 19th century farms when agriculture and fishing were the major sources of livelihood for inhabitants. A number of granite quarry sites also remain from this early period of industry and a few small ponds fill depressions in the bedrock. Two hills, Edgecombe (formerly called Williams Hill) at 321 feet and Mount Hunger at 280 feet, both in the northeast section of the town, break the surface of the upper peninsula. Both the eastern boundary on the Damariscotta River and the western on the Sheepscot River consist of an undulating coastline containing a number of small sheltering coves particularly along the Damariscotta River western shoreline. Davis Island, now connected to the peninsula by two causeways, lies in the Sheepscot River at the northwest corner of the peninsula.

Edgecomb is defined by major unfragmented parcels, many extending well into the neighboring towns as shown on the map above.

East of Route 27 lies the Lily Pond area encompassing over 3,000 acres, including the Lily Pond watershed, the riparian habitat along Parsons Creek, and undeveloped land west of Parsons Creek. East of Route 27, are nearly 1000 acres of the Charles & Constance Schmid Land Preserve or adjacent preserved lands, surrounded by approximately 3,000 abutting acres of undeveloped lands. These large undeveloped blocks characterize the Town of Edgecomb. According to the 2000 Management Plan of the Schmid Preserve, cattail marshes, beaver flowage, sedge meadows, and vernal pools are prevalent. An inventory of over 100 types of birds utilize Edgecomb for habitat, breeding, and migratory stop-overs, with evidence of over 50 different species of mammals and nearly 20 types of amphibians and reptiles existing. Flora includes over 75 types of native trees and shrubs, over 115 species of herbs and flowers, 20 types of ferns, 20 types of mosses and liverworts.

Much of Edgecomb's topography is largely controlled by the underlying bedrock, which is composed of metamorphic rocks such as granofels, schist, and gneiss. Ledge outcrops are abundant throughout the town. Upland soils are typically thin, somewhat excessively drained sandy loams, with smaller areas of arable land with deep soils of Boothbay or Buxton silt loams. Soils in stream valleys and associated wetlands are deep, poorly drained Scantic silt loams derived from marine clay, characterizing over a dozen brooks and wetlands that wind through the woodlands and cross the roads of Edgecomb.

The forests of Edgecomb are plentiful. According to the 2004 Maine Action Climate Plan, sustainable forestry management is capable of producing real carbon savings to reduce greenhouse gasses. The plan includes voluntary options improving silviculture to produce more and higher-quality wood as an important co-benefit. Of particular significance are those impacts on human health and the creation of jobs or products that promote an economic growth and development relying on the strengths of Edgecomb and thus promoting sustainability. See appendix for detailed lists of flora and fauna. ⁽¹⁾ (*
Embedded numbers refer to State required topic items)

Refer to Part 5: Historical, Archaeological and Scenic Resources for information on scenic roads and vistas. ⁽²⁾

ANALYSIS AND KEY ISSUES

The existing zoning map was designed to maximize protection of natural resources. However, strengthening requirements for resource-based subdivisions could provide additional protection.

Edgecomb's population depends on building and maintaining protections for critical natural resources existing throughout the town for economic and recreational purposes. The Management Plan for the Schmid Preserve lists a comprehensive inventory of wildlife and habitat existing within the preserve, which is located in an undeveloped, unfragmented block of land. ⁽¹⁾

The existing Shoreland standards were updated in 2008 to comply with the new State standards and cover all river shoreland, intermittent and four-season streams, wetlands, and Lily Pond. Edgecomb zoning districts and the corresponding land use regulations identify and provide protection for areas of import. ⁽²⁾

In addition to local monitoring by various concerned committees, there is active coordination with both state agencies and the non-profit watchdog organizations.

The Charles and Constance Schmid Land Preserve Advisory Committee oversees the maintenance and management of the Schmid Preserve in conjunction with the management plan. It monitors the recommendations of the plan, provides oversight and advice to stewardship volunteers, develops funding through grants or budget requests and makes recommendations to the Selectmen Trustees relative to the preserve management.

Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association is dedicated to conserve and restore the natural and historic heritage of the Sheepscot watershed through land protection, habitat restoration, support for compatible land use patterns, advocacy and education.^(3, 4)

The Town of Edgecomb has worked and continues to work closely with four area land trusts to build the River~Link project, a trail system which crosses the Schmid Preserve and which will eventually connect the Sheepscot and Damariscotta rivers.

The partnership of regional land trusts in preservation allows, in most cases, traditional cultural activities such as hunting and trapping on preserved lands and controlled logging overseen by the holding land trusts. Edgecomb-owned Schmid Preserve allows hunting, trapping, and similar activities, including wildlife habitat enhancement. Currently there is no commercial forestry activity in the Preserve.

Additional protection and conservation efforts are discussed in Part 2: Land Use; and Part 4: Water, Marine, and Agriculture and Forestry.⁽⁵⁾

Refer to Pages 85- 92 for Edgecomb Map series:

- 1: Elevation and Natural Features
- 2: Parcels
- 3: Undeveloped Areas
- 4: Shoreland Zoning
- 5: Soils
- 6: Slopes, Highly Erodable Soils, Shoreland Buffers and Lily Pond Watershed
- 7: Natural Communities and Habatats
- 8: Weighted Natural communities, Habitat & Features

Refer to Vol. II for additional information and appendices

- State Planning Office Data Sets
- Additional Maps
- Lists of Flora and Fauna
- Useful links

PART 4
NATURAL RESOURCES
WATER RESOURCES

MAINE’S GROWTH MANAGEMENT GOAL

To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the state's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers, and coastal areas.



TOWN VISION

To provide clean, safe drinking water throughout the town and assure that the Lily Pond and Sheepscot and Damariscotta rivers are pollution free.

CITIZENS’ VIEW (SURVEY RESPONSE)

- 55%, or 194 respondents, opposed extension of the existing public sewer and water systems and expressed concern over ownership of the systems.
- 33%, or 94 respondents, were in favor of extending sewer and water.
- 12%, or 40 respondents, were willing to pay additional taxes for the service.

CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

In the past, all Edgecomb water was supplied by private wells and sewerage processed by individual septic or overboard-discharge systems. In 2005, when the Tax Increment Financing District was established, water and sewer was brought from Wiscasset as part of the TIF agreement to serve the Sheepscot Harbour Village and Resort. It is currently being extended in the TIF district to other projects. The Water and Sewer Committee has been inactive and should be reactivated to oversee existing installations and manage future expansions. (2 see Marine Resources) (*Embedded Numbers refer to State Required topic items)

EXISTING ZONING, REGULATIONS AND PROTECTION

See page 7 for definitions of ordinances affecting water resources.

- Shoreland zoning
- Site Plan Review
- Sewer Ordinance
- State plumbing code

ANALYSIS AND KEY ISSUES

Twenty-seven overboard discharge septic systems are listed by the DEP. Permitting and discontinuation is on a case-by-case basis according to DEP regulations. Davis Island residents may have future access to sewer. ⁽¹⁾.

There are no known point sources of pollution other than road runoff and surface drainage from construction projects, and minimal impact from agricultural runoff. Shoreland pollution is regulated under the shoreland zoning provisions and by the Army Corps of Engineers. ⁽²⁾.

Potential threats to ground water are proximity to salt water and unknown effects of global warming. Possible damage to wells by blasting is under the purview of the selectmen in accordance with the Blasting Ordinance. ⁽³⁾

Public water supplies are provided by the Wiscasset Water District from Nequasset Lake in accordance with the interlocal agreement and are addressed by the Woolwich and Wiscasset Comprehensive Plans. ⁽⁴⁾.

Edgecomb cooperates with Stewards of the Sheepscot, the Damariscotta River Association and the Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association, all of which are involved in monitoring water quality. ⁽⁵⁾.

Best Management Practices are required by ordinance. Edgecomb participates in the national Flood Plain Program despite the fact that an insignificant amount of coastline is affected. ^(6,7)

REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS.

State programs
Damariscotta River Association monitoring program
Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association
Wiscasset Water District
Wiscasset Sewer District

Refer to Vol. II for additional information and appendices

State Planning Office Data Sets
Applicable Maps
Useful links

PART 4
NATURAL RESOURCES
MARINE RESOURCES

**MAINE’S GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND STATE
COASTAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES GOAL**

To protect the state’s marine resources industry, ports and harbors from incompatible development and to promote access to the shore for commercial fishermen and the public.

TOWN VISION

To protect waters and shoreline of Edgecomb’s 26.5 mile frontage on three tidal rivers: the Damariscotta, the Sheepscot, and the Cross rivers; and to curb and in time eliminate local pollution of these waters. To provide Edgecomb’s citizens with visual access, and possibly physical access in time, to these waters; and to manage private and public mooring and uses of the rivers.



CITIZENS’ VIEW (SURVEY RESPONSE)

- 62%, or 220 respondents, live in Edgecomb because of its proximity to the water, clear skies and starry nights
- 4%, or 15 respondents, generate at least \$1000 of income from marine resources in Edgecomb.
- 5%, or 19 respondents, object to fishing and related marine operations in “my back yard.”
- 2%, or 8 respondents, would pay more taxes to have access to the water.

CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

Edgecomb’s three tidal rivers, the Damariscotta River on the eastern boundary, the Sheepscot River on the western boundary, and the Cross River on the southern boundary, are the town’s prime marine resources. These coastal boundaries compromise 26.5 miles of Edgecomb’s 32.80 miles of boundaries, thus 83% of town boundaries is shoreline. This coastal shoreline is a mix of ledge and mud flats, each contributing to the integrity of the ecosystem. Ledge supports the food web for marine life, commercial and sport fishing, and roosting sites for shorebirds and reduces erosions. Mud flats support the food chain for fish, crabs, and worms; lessen coastal erosion; promote eel grass germinating; and provide roosting and staging areas of migrating shorebirds.

The Sheepscot is one of eight Maine rivers providing essential spawning grounds for the endangered native Atlantic salmon. Numerous other fish, including striped bass, the endangered short nose sturgeon, American shad and alewife, also migrate between the Gulf of Maine and the Sheepscot River. Brook trout thrive in the river, as do sticklebacks, perch, and shiners.

Portions of the Sheepscot, Damariscotta and Cross rivers bordering Edgecomb support a lucrative lobster fishery and the rivers' tidal flats support a significant bait-worm industry. Rare oysters, marine invertebrates, and rare marine plants are also found in the estuaries. Fish and invertebrates attract osprey, eagles, and other mammals that feed on the rivers' resources. The banks of the Sheepscot provide habitat for moose, white-tailed deer, fishers, otters, mink, and many smaller riparian mammals. The lower Sheepscot has been identified by the state as a Focus Area of Ecological Significance. There are significant marine and fish resources in these bordering rivers. At the present time, the clam flats on the Sheepscot River are closed due to pollution.

In the year from July 2007 to June 2008, Edgecomb licensed 206 vessels. The following licenses were sold or issued in Edgecomb during the same period; however, it should be noted that licenses issued in Edgecomb permit shell fishing in not only Edgecomb waters and shore flats, but also in Boothbay, Boothbay Harbor and Southport. Reciprocally, holders of licenses in those three communities may fish in Edgecomb waters and shore flats. Shellfish licenses sold and/or issued from June 1, 2007 to May 31, 2008: 3 resident commercial, 0 non-residential commercial, 12 resident recreational, and 4 nonresident recreational. Worming licenses issued by the state permit worming in all waters and shore flats around the state. In 2007, 867 wormers' licenses were issued statewide.^(1,2)
(*Embedded Numbers refer to State Required topic items)

Edgecomb has no "port" and only a few areas along the Sheepscot and Damariscotta rivers that, depending on the wind direction, could be classified as a harbor. On the Sheepscot River southeast of Fort Edgecomb lies Eddy Yacht Sales and Marina with 30 moorings in approximately 25 to 70 feet of water. The mooring area is well protected except in the instance of incoming tide coupled with strong southeast winds. The town has established two mooring areas on the Edgecomb side of the Sheepscot in the vicinity of the Davey Bridge, one on the north side and one on the south side. Also, there is a federally-designated anchorage area inside nun #28 off Davis Island.

There are no marinas on the Edgecomb shore of the Damariscotta River. There are three areas which could loosely be classified as "harbors" i.e., 1) Dodge Lower Cove, located just south of the Newcastle/Edgecomb town line - mud bottom and relatively shallow water; 2) Salt Marsh Cove, located 1/4 mile south of Merry Island - mud bottom and shallow water; 3) Pooles Landing, located 1/4 mile south of Salt Marsh Cove - hard bottom but small area.⁽³⁾

The town provides no public wharves, pump-out stations or marine services on any of its tidal water rivers.⁽⁴⁾

In 2004, the town enacted a Coastal Waters Ordinance to regulate marine activities within the tidal waters of Edgecomb, including harbormaster's responsibilities, moorings and environmental and safety concerns. This ordinance also established a Waterfront Committee to oversee changes in the Ordinance. Edgecomb approved a Shellfish Conservation Ordinance at the June 1989 town meeting requiring licensing of all shellfish digging in the shores and flats of Edgecomb. The number of licenses issued varies each year depending on an estimate of the available resource. License fees are: Resident Commercial - \$100.00; Non Resident Commercial - \$150.00; Resident Recreational - Free. All licenses expire on the 31st day of May following date of issue.

With no port, no public access and limited harbor areas, Edgecomb residents, except for a modest number of fishermen, derive relatively little benefit other than visual from its coastal waters. Waterfront property owners do have piers, private moorings and water access. Wormers aggressively work several areas in town: mudflats in the Eddy off lower Cod Cove, mudflats in cove just west of High Head, and the guzzle at low tide off Quarry Point. Locations are accessed from land and by boat. The clamming areas of Lower Dodge Cove and Salt Marsh Cove are heavily used by clammers from surrounding towns and are an important resource to the region. An oyster farm is located on the Damariscotta River. A number of higher valuation homes are located in areas having water views, and the related property tax dollars are about the only direct economic benefit Edgecomb receives from the rivers. Building in the shoreland surrounding the clamming areas has been minimal. The town requires strict enforcement of shoreland and other zoning laws.

A tourism and real estate development project, Sheepscot Harbour Village and Resort, built in 2005/2006, on Davis Island capitalizes on the beauty of waterfront property on the Sheepscot River and is in proximity to two new mooring fields on either side of Davey Bridge. This project, built with Tax Increment Financing (TIF), was responsible for bringing public water and sewer across the river from Wiscasset, thus eliminating a large overboard discharge system. At this time, tax income from this project does not directly affect the town budget being available for financing infrastructure within the district.

There is only a slight possibility of water-dependent use businesses emerging in areas which the state has designated as desirable for such business. In 2005, a yacht outfitting company was located on the Sheepscot River to service large private boats on a one at a time basis for renovation and maintenance.

Edgecomb has no public access to the Sheepscot, the Cross or the Damariscotta rivers. However, neighboring towns on all sides have good access and freely share their facilities with Edgecomb residents. This example of regionally shared facilities provides Edgecomb residents with convenient water access.

The Woodend Fund, established some time ago for the express purpose of assisting in the acquisition of waterfront property for the town, has a current balance of just over \$100,000. Over the past ten plus years, committees in town have met to research and to find such water access property; these committees have been unsuccessful in their efforts. Findings from some of these committees show 1) no land at a reasonable price was available, 2) maintaining an access site would be costly, 3) providing waterfront access is not a priority use of public funds at the time, and 4) good access is available in nearby towns. In 2008, a private citizen spearheaded an effort to have the town purchase a divided parcel of land with one piece of the parcel having limited access to the Sheepscot River. Citizens for Public Access, a private initiative had been formed to further such effort.^(4c)

ANALYSIS AND KEY ISSUES

In a recent survey, proximity to the sea was listed as one of the main reasons residents live in Edgecomb, thus preservation of these three rivers is vital. Public access to these waters has long been a dream for the town, but a combination of unavailable land due to town's topography replete with ledge and high bluff coast line, the high cost of funding

such a purchase if land were available, the expense of maintaining such a site, and the fact that access is readily available at nearby towns - all make obtaining a site for public access out of reach and hardly necessary at this time. All of this notwithstanding, survey responses indicate an interest in the town's acquiring public access. A point of view also has been expressed by some that public access would make Edgecomb's waters and marine animal life, such as worms, clams and fish, more available to nonresidents, who could deplete stocks in Edgecomb's waters.

Because of Edgecomb's location near the sea and downstream on a more than 58-mile river/watershed, its estuarine waters are affected by many other communities. Pollutants come from bacteria seeping out of failing septic systems and/or overboard discharge systems and from toxins found in organic chemicals, heavy paints, pesticides, solvents, fertilizers and other products. Decreasing these pollution sources needs to be a two-pronged effort: 1) eliminating overboard discharge systems in the town and 2) working with upstream communities to eliminate the sources of toxins pouring into the rivers. Only a regional approach will be effective in preserving Edgecomb's waters and coastline for fishing, worming, clamming, and recreational use and for preserving marine wildlife and vegetation.

With the arrival of public water and sewer to a limited population on Davis Island and the possibility of extending that service, development could come to that part of town with little, if any, pollution impact of the Sheepscot.

The Shellfish Conservation Ordinance is the only local management tool affecting fishery resources in Edgecomb's waters. ⁽²⁾

Water-dependent land use is confined to a few lobster fishermen having their homes and/or operations on the shore. This usage is minimal but desirable. However, this could be threatened by residential development and desire for second home building on prime waterfront real estate. ⁽³⁾

Access to most of the recreational use of Edgecomb's waters is gained from either a private home or inn or is of a pass-through nature, e.g., boats passing from one town in the area to another town. In short, the town enjoys being surrounded by water, but the townspeople have no town accessibility to use or be on the water.

As previously mentioned, the town has no harbor and no public access for either commercial or recreational use. At this time, there is no plan to acquire such access. The Harbormaster and Waterfront Committee manage the water's use in the area. ⁽⁴⁾

Refer to Vol. II for additional information and appendices

State Planning Office Data Sets
Maine Department of Fisheries and Wildlife
Applicable Maps
Useful links

PART 4
NATURAL RESOURCES
RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

MAINE’S GROWTH MANAGEMENT GOAL

To promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters.



TOWN VISION

Edgecomb, with more than a square mile of undeveloped and accessible land in its center, is a town with an abundance of land for recreational use. This land--the Schmid Preserve--in addition to other land trusts in town and on adjacent land in neighboring communities, puts Edgecomb in direct alignment with the state goal.

CITIZENS’ VIEW (SURVEY RESPONSE)

- 54%, or 197 respondents, value the availability of recreational land and believe the benefits of land trusts outweigh the lost tax revenue.
- 21%, or 77 respondents, believe property-tax-free land should be capped at 15%.

CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

With over 10% of Edgecomb’s area protected in publicly accessible land, the town itself serves as a passive nature preserve for the adjacent towns. With growing interest in land preservation/conservation through public acquisition and private trusts, this trend is expected to continue into the future. Access for recreational boating is through private property. (See Part 4 -Marine Resources.)

Edgecomb’s large, unfragmented forested parcels provide ample opportunity for hunting, hiking, bird watching, picnicking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling and ATV trails. Organized outdoor and indoor recreational opportunities are provided by the surrounding towns. ⁽¹⁾ (* Embedded numbers refer to State required topic items)

Table 1: recreational resources of the town:

Public Preserves

Schmid Preserve-- 853 acres; available parking; 6+ miles of trails; hiking, hunting, trapping, snowmobiling, skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, picnicking, birding.

Private Preserves

Singing Meadow: 16 acres, Boothbay Region Land Trust.

Colby Preserve: 12 acres, Boothbay Region Land Trust

Zak Preserve: 209 acres in Edgecomb and Boothbay, Boothbay Region Land

Trust

Regional Conservation Associations and River~Link

River~Link is a regional conservation project involving the Boothbay Region Land Trust, Damariscotta River Association, Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association, the Town of Edgecomb, and Maine Coast Heritage Trust. Fourteen hundred acres from Boothbay to Whitefield and from the Damariscotta River to the Sheepscot River will be protected.

State

Fort Edgecomb State Park

Other

Eddy School--playground and indoor gym
Fort Edgecomb
Land Under Easement-Resource Development Subdivisions, CMP Line

Salt Water (no public access)

Sailing, motor boats, canoes, kayaks, fishing, shell fishing

Fresh Water (no public access)

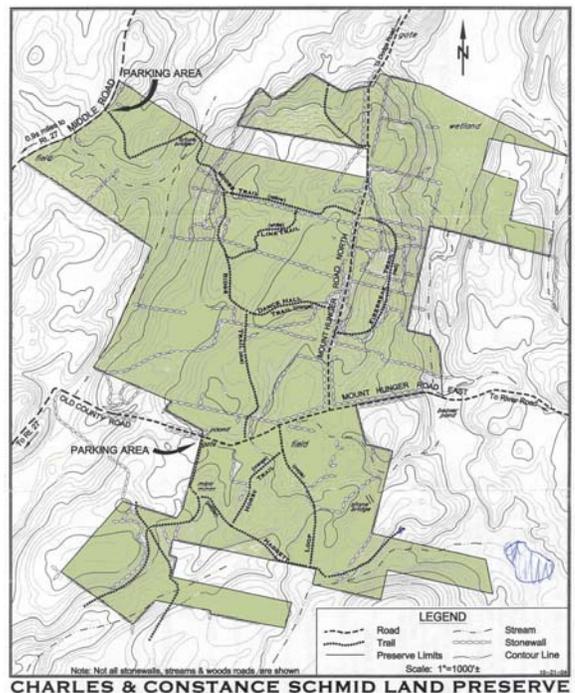
Table 2 land trusts:

Boothbay Region Land Trust
Damariscotta River Association
Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association
Maine Coast Heritage Trust

One unmet state goal is public access to water, both salt and fresh. Given the nature of the shorelines of the rivers bounding Edgecomb, access to the water is not easily achieved. Moreover, if a piece of shore property did become available, the cost of such land would be prohibitive. Most residents use the access points available in neighboring towns. The land surrounding Edgecomb's one fresh water pond, the Lily Pond, is privately held and no access is permitted.

EXISTING ZONING, REGULATIONS AND PROTECTION

The Schmid Preserve Committee regulates use of the preserve under the oversight of the Board of Selectmen. The Colby, Zak, and Singing Meadow preserves are under the jurisdiction of the Boothbay Region Land Trust. River~Link is a regional plan for publicly accessible trails and a wildlife corridor stretching from Boothbay to Newcastle and from the Sheepscot River to the Damariscotta River. The trail stretches across privately held Edgecomb lands whose owners have given informal permission to cut and continue the trail system as part of the



River~Link project. With the assistance of Boothbay Region Land Trust, two significant properties in Edgecomb, totaling approximately 300 acres, have been annexed to the Schmid Preserve or are in the process of being annexed to the preserve since 2005.

Existing zoning enacted in 2003 and the passage of the Resource-based Subdivision Ordinance strengthens protections of Edgecomb’s recreational and cultural resources by clearly describing a vision and justification for the differing densities throughout the town and the alternate method of subdivision development that mandates preservation of undeveloped acreage within the subdivision.

ANALYSIS AND KEY ISSUES

The passive nature of Edgecomb’s recreational facilities will easily accommodate an ageing population and projected growth, while facilities at the Eddy school are projected to serve the needs of the community for many years. ^(1, 2). (*Embedded Numbers refer to State Required topic items)

The Woodend fund was established to help finance a public boat landing and has provided loans for the purchase of additional land for the Schmid Preserve. Edgecomb residents privately and through municipal committees have been actively involved with all of the area land trusts. ⁽⁴⁾.

The search for suitable salt water access has been ongoing since the establishment of the Woodend fund in the late 60s. Edgecomb’s steep, rocky shoreline interspersed with tidal flats presents one difficulty in providing functional access. In addition, the preponderance of privately-owned shoreland with ever-increasing prices and isolated, difficult-to-police service areas makes salt water access virtually impossible. The fresh water Lily Pond is privately owned and no public access seems possible at this time. ⁽⁵⁾.

The Schmid preserve trails are well maintained by volunteers supervised by the Schmid Preserve Committee. The Boothbay Land Trust maintains its trails. ATVs and other wheeled, motorized vehicles are prohibited in the Schmid Preserve; trails and bridges have been narrowed to discourage these vehicles. ⁽⁶⁾.

Traditionally, most privately-owned land has been available to the public for hiking and hunting. Other than some posted areas, this trend is expected to continue. ⁽⁷⁾.

REGIONAL ISSUES AND PARTNERSHIPS

While Edgecomb residents appreciate the rural amenities of the town, they also enjoy its central location within fifteen minutes of a rich palette of recreational and cultural attractions that are generously supported by the town’s citizens.

Table 3: Recreational and Cultural Organizations

- Indoor Recreation
 - Boothbay YMCA
 - Damariscotta YMCA
 - Wiscasset Community Center
- Outdoor facilities
 - Frisbee Golf

Wiscasset Raceway
 Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens
 Boothbay Golf course
 Chewonki
 Boothbay Railway Village

Art Galleries and Museums
 Maine Art Gallery, Wiscasset
 River Arts, Damariscotta
 Wiscasset Old Jail
 Pownalboro Court House
 Boothbay Railroad Village

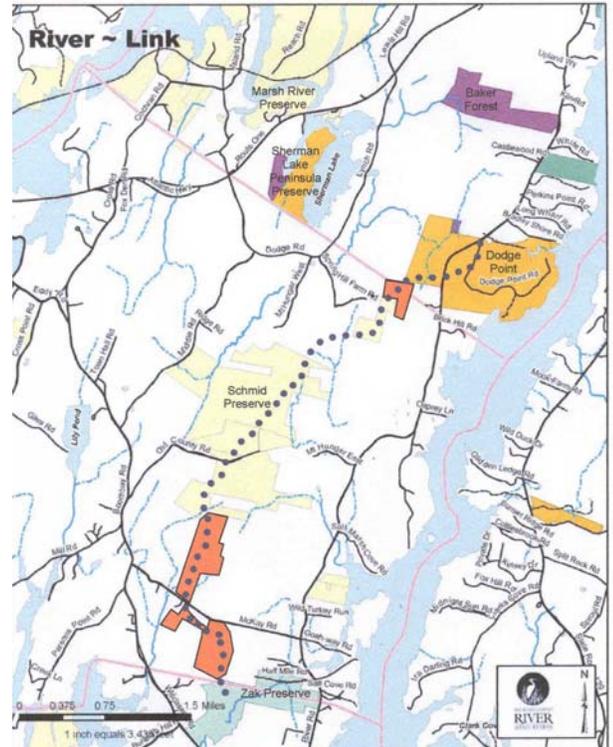
Libraries
 Wiscasset Library
 Skidompha Library
 Boothbay Library

Theaters
 Heartwood Regional Theater
 Lincoln Theater
 Waldo Theater
 River Company
 Theater of the Spirit
 Boothbay Opera house
 Harbor Cinema

Music
 Tapestry Singers
 Sheepscot Chorus
 Castlebay
 DaPonte String Quartet
 St. Cecilia Chamber Choir

Refer to Vol. II for additional information and appendices

State Planning Office Data Sets
 Trail Maps
 Useful links



River- Link Map
 (Source:Damariscotta River Association)

PART 4
NATURAL RESOURCES
AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES

MAINE’S GROWTH MANAGEMENT GOAL

To safeguard the state’s agricultural and forest resources from development that threatens those resources.

TOWN VISION

To maintain, protect and promote small-scale private agriculture, managed forests and woodlots and to increase sustainable conservation areas for public use.



CITIZENS’ VIEW (SURVEY RESPONSE)

- 37%, or 134 respondents, felt that nature preserves bring benefits that are an acceptable trade-off for lost tax revenue.
- 26%, or 95 respondents, objected to forestry operations “in my back yard.”
- 7%, or 25 respondents, objected to farming operations “in my back yard.”
- 82%, or 301 respondents, felt that maintaining Edgecomb’s historic character was important.
- 3%, or 11 respondents, reported making over \$1,000.00 per year from agricultural activities.

CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

A hundred years ago, Edgecomb’s forests were nearly depleted, first cleared for agriculture and pasturage and, as the population grew, for increased demand for fuel and building construction material and household goods.

In the census of 1870, 142 men listed their occupation as farmer. With the gradual abandonment of agriculture and conversion to fossil fuels, young pioneer forests began to reclaim the fallow fields. Today, there are a few contiguous tracts of former open fields, pastures and farmland that remain scattered in small plots throughout the town. There is only one registered farm in Edgecomb although, there are additional small specialty farming operations.

There is no town-wide program protecting prime farmland; farmers may register in Maine’s Farm and Open Space program. There is also no town-wide program protecting prime forestland, although forestland may be registered in Maine’s Tree Growth program.⁽³⁾

Edgecomb’s lands are still widely undeveloped, and thus are productive, viable forest and agriculture lands currently and in the future. Correspondingly, wildlife habitat and corridors are currently healthy; scenic landscapes are prevalent; historic and cultural outdoor opportunities abound.

Clearing to make room for new construction promises to be the trend in the future with little clearing for agricultural purposes. Woodlands and some meadowland will continue to be conserved through the efforts of land trusts and Edgecomb’s role in the River~Link

project. Additionally, with the increased focus on wood as a form of energy, small woodlots also may grow and thrive, whether participating in Maine’s Tree Farm program or sustaining economic viability on their own, producing a wide variety of forestry and non-forestry products.

EXISTING ZONING, REGULATIONS AND PROTECTION

Both agricultural and forestry operations are permitted in all land use zones in Edgecomb subject only to conditions of the zoning ordinance.

The Rural District was designed to encourage renewable working uses of the land, which may employ equipment and/or livestock for small-scale operations such as tree farms, farming, animal husbandry, and extractive uses such as gravel mining.

The Schmid Preserve Committee regulates use of the preserve under the oversight of the Board of Selectmen. The Colby, Zak, and Singing Meadow preserves are under the jurisdiction of the Boothbay Region Land Trust.

The 2003 passage of the resource-based subdivision ordinance strengthens protections of Edgecomb’s current and future forestry and agricultural resources by offering an alternative method of subdivision development that allows clustering of houses and requires preservation or rural use of undeveloped acreage within the subdivision.

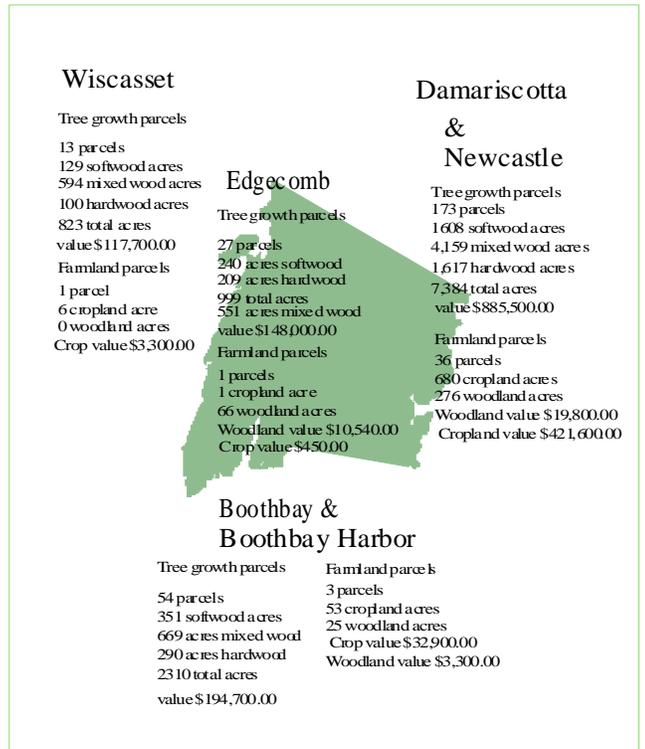
ANALYSIS AND KEY ISSUES

The bulk of forested land is privately owned “backland” with approximately 1,000 acres conserved by public and private trusts. Nine hundred and fifty acres (27 parcels) are managed under the Tree Farm Program regulated by the Maine Department of Revenue. Of the forty-one registered farms in Lincoln County, there is only one registered farm in Edgecomb (Wishing Well Acres) and two bordering Edgecomb, (Straw Farm and Morning Dew farm, both on the Newcastle line). Non-commercial specialty or niche farming, several horse stables and animal husbandry are scattered throughout the town. (1, 5, 9, 11)

Although the land use map of the 2003 Zoning Ordinance was designed to encourage traditional patterns, leaving only a one thousand-foot strip on either side of Route 1 in the Gateway and Thoroughfare districts and one thousand feet to the north and two thousand feet to the south of Route 1 in the Growth district as a growth areas, development on Davis Island and contiguous to the Route 1 growth area has contributed to the loss of woodland. This trend will probably continue as smaller scale commercial developments and residential subdivisions continue to appear. (2)

The following programs are being utilized by Edgecomb taxpayers:

- The Tree Farm Program
- Partnering with programs sponsored by Boothbay Land Trust: Singing Meadows and The Colby Preserve



- Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association
- Damariscotta River Association
- River~Link
- Town of Edgecomb Schmid Preserve

The perception that open and wooded land is important for non-economic reasons is sustained by the land use statistics. ⁽³⁾

There is no program protecting prime farmland, especially on the main roads except by the intent of the owners.

At this time, new home development has had minimal impact on existing farming and woodlot operations. ^(4, 6)

The area of Davis Island designated as prime farmland on the State Map has been lost to the development of the Sheepscot Harbour Village and Resort. No active agricultural or forestry operations have been impacted. Even small-scale clear cutting for development is of concern to Edgecomb residents. ^(*7 8)

REGIONAL ISSUES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Edgecomb residents support the farmers' markets in Boothbay Harbor and Damariscotta as well as the regional agricultural fairs.

Refer to Vol. II for additional Information

State Planning Office Data Sets
 Applicable Maps
 Useful links

