



CONSERVATION ALMANAC
Tracking Investments in Protected Lands



State Highlights in Conservation: Maine

Profile of State Program(s)

Land for Maine's Future: Land for Maine's Future (LMF) was created in 1987 in response to concerns over the loss of critical natural area, wildlife habitat, and farmland along with traditional access to undeveloped lands for hunting fishing and outdoor recreation. The Land for Maine's Future Program is the state's primary funding vehicle for conserving land. LMF has helped to preserve over 560,000 acres of conservation and recreation lands. Special protected places include 52 water access sites, 37 working farms comprising of over 8,900 acres, 20 commercial working waterfront properties, 1,200 miles of shore lands, and 158 miles of former railroad corridors for recreational trails.

Between 1987 and 2012, Maine voters approved six Land for Maine's Future bond referendums. The 1987 referendum established the program with \$35 million to fund the purchase of lands and conservation easements of statewide importance. Maine voters subsequently approved additional referendums in 1999 for \$50 million, in 2005 for \$12 million, in 2007 for \$35.5 million (\$17 million for LMF), in 2010 for \$9.75 million, and in 2012 for \$5 million.

In May 2015, Governor Paul LePage declared that he would not release \$11.47 million in LMF bonds (approved by voters in 2010 and 2012), nor approve any projects in the program's pipeline until legislation he proposed to increase timber harvesting on state-owned lands was sent to his desk. In response, State Senator Roger Katz (R-Augusta) and a bipartisan group of co-sponsors submitted legislation that would compel the issuance of these voter-approved bonds without the Governor's approval. The bill (L.D. 1378) passed through the Senate and

House but was vetoed by the Governor. While the Senate voted to override the veto, the bill failed in the House. Meanwhile, nearly \$6.5 million in bond funds approved in 2010 are set to expire this year, but the state only issues bonds once per year in June. Efforts are still underway to release the bond funds. L.D. 1454 aims to extend the issuance of these bonds until June 30, 2016. Currently, 30 conservation projects have been awarded LMF grants but have not received funding.

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry: Created in 1973 as the Department of Conservation, the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry (DACF) is a natural resource agency whose bureaus oversee forestland, unorganized territory, parks and historic sites, and public reserved land. Funding for land acquisition outside of LMF and MOHF is provided through appropriations from the state legislature, Department of Transportation, as well as other internal funds.

If the DACF sells land for any reason, the Maine constitution provides that the revenues must be used for conservation land acquisitions. Funding is also made available through escrow payments or donations from regulatory processes that involve the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission or wind power processes.

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife - Endangered and Nongame Wildlife Fund: Maine's Endangered and Nongame Wildlife Fund was created by the legislature in 1983. Contributions are made through a "chickadee check-off" on the state income tax form and through the sale of a conservation

license plate that features the loon. All donations are deposited into a special interest-bearing account.

Maine Natural Resource Conservation

Program: The Maine Natural Resource Conservation Program (MNRCP) awards grants to projects that restore and protect high priority aquatic resources across the state. The program was created to manage the allocation of funds collected through Maine's In Lieu Fee Compensation Program, which provides flexibility for regulators, businesses, and agencies in meeting regulatory permit requirements by providing a fee in lieu option instead of more time-intensive traditional mitigation options. It is administered by The Nature Conservancy on behalf of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The program was started in 2008 and has awarded over \$8 million to non-profit groups, municipalities, and public agencies. Grants are made for fee and easement acquisition, dam removal, culvert replacement, shoreline re-vegetation and stabilization, and fishway construction, among other project types. The Conservation Almanac includes grants that have been awarded to land acquisition projects only; it does not include restoration activities.

Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund: The Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund is supported by 26 percent of the total proceeds from "scratch-off" lottery tickets. Funds are allocated to habitat conservation, land acquisition, and endangered species projects. Grants are awarded twice each year by a seven-member board that is appointed by the Governor. Grants are awarded based on a point system. Local governments or municipalities receive a higher score if there is a cash or in-kind match of 1/3 or higher from non-governmental sources.

Substantial State Investment

Maine has a long history of supporting bonds for land acquisition. In 1987, the authorization of a \$35 million bond created funding for the Land for Maine's Future (LMF) program. In 1998, the state legislature made an additional appropriation of \$3 million when funding was exhausted. Subsequent bonds were passed in 1999, 2005, 2007, creating \$50 million, \$12

million, and \$17 million for LMF, respectively. Voters also supported the LMF program in 2010 and 2012, approving \$9.75 million and \$5 million, respectively.

State Incentive for Local Conservation Funding

A seven-member Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund Board awards grants to projects in four categories that promote recreation as well as land conservation. A monetary match is required and must consist of funds raised specifically for the project proposed and does not include salary costs of natural resource agency staff. A cash or in-kind match of one third or more of the total project cost is required from nongovernmental sources.

Public-Private Partnerships

The Land for Maine's Future program requires a one-to-one match. The LMF Program has successfully leveraged funds from other sources, including private and federal dollars. Key funding partners have included nonprofit organizations, foundations, cooperating landowners, and federal agencies.

Local Financing Enabled

In Maine, state law limits local government funding options for land conservation to a few key sources, primarily general obligation bonds. Local governments are precluded by the state from levying a real estate transfer tax, sales tax, or income tax for open space land acquisition. Other smaller revenue sources exist, such as impact fees, donations, bequests, excise tax surcharges, and user fees. There have been a number of local conservation ballot measures, primarily general obligation bonds.

Local Programs Included

No county-level conservation finance measures have been approved by voters in Maine. For more information on municipal measures in the state, visit www.landvote.org.

Federal Partnerships

Federal agencies and programs that have conserved land in Maine include:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Migratory Bird Conservation Fund
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Section 6 Grant
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Forest Service – Forest Legacy Program (FLP)
- U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP)
- U.S. National Park Service
- U.S. National Park Service – LWCF Stateside
- U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service – Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)
- U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service – Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)



The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come.

The Conservation Almanac

A comprehensive database of land conservation and public conservation funding in America, the Conservation Almanac provides a context for assessing impacts of conservation and the growing conservation finance movement. The Almanac offers information on public dollars spent and acres conserved, details on local, state, and federal conservation programs, and geospatial mapping of conserved land.

Almanac data collection efforts focus on land conserved using public dollars; contributions funded by private and non-governmental organizations are not tracked comprehensively. Federal data is complete from 1998-2017. State and local data is complete from 1998-2013. In the tables and charts below, acres are allocated to each program proportionate to the size of the contributions to each acquisition. For example, if an acquisition had two contributions, and each program contributed equal dollar amounts, each program receives 50% of the acres. If you have questions or want to provide updated information, please contact Jessica Welch at jessica.welch@tpl.org.

www.tpl.org

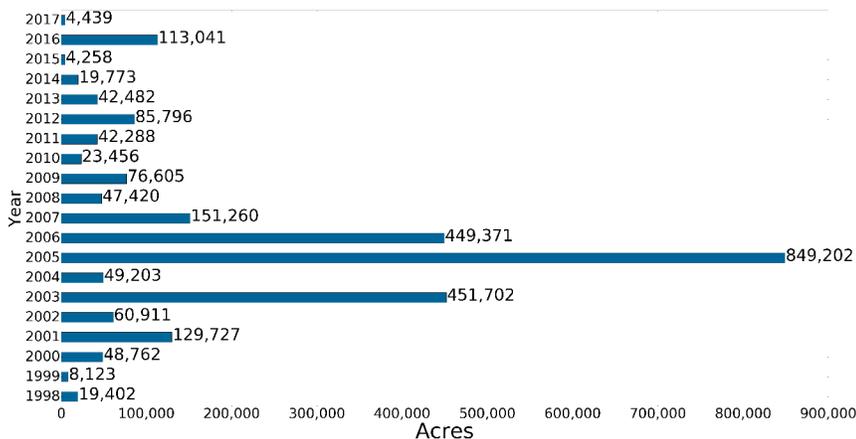
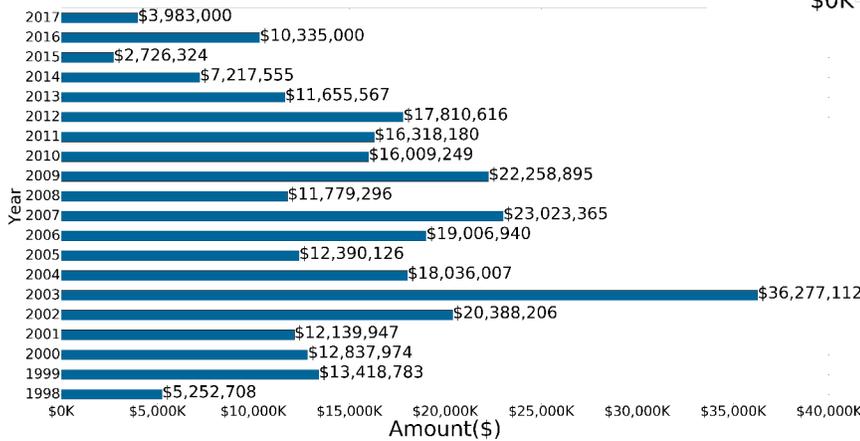
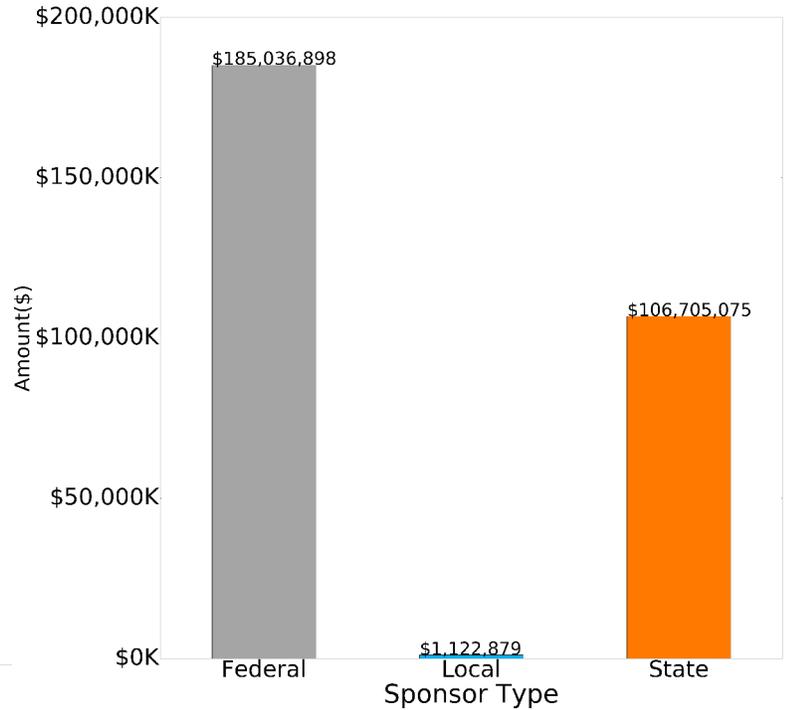
www.conservationalmanac.org

State Conservation Report Maine



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The data in the Conservation Almanac track the impacts of public spending on land conservation. Created by The Trust for Public Land, the Conservation Almanac brings those data together along with state policy profiles, current conservation finance news, and an interactive map, to provide a powerful online tool.