

# TOWN OF MONSON 2024

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## **A. Acknowledgements**

This Comprehensive Plan is the result of the efforts of the Planning Board of the Town of Monson as well as residents and Town Officials. The purpose of this plan is to provide the background data and policy framework for future planning and decision making in the Town of Monson. This plan will supersede the previously adopted Comprehensive Plan of 1996.

### **Plan Development**

#### **Planning Board Members**

Cynthia Turner

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**A special thank you goes to the community residents, groups and committees who provided public input during the plan development process.**

## **B. Background**

The Town of Monson recognized the importance of planning with the adoption of the 1996 Comprehensive Plan. Subsequently, the adoption of the 2001 Monson Land Use Ordinance established various land use districts within the community, providing not only guidance on the community's development, standards for that development, and importantly the tools necessary to protect investment and property values.

With the expiration of the 1996 Comprehensive Plan, the town began the process of developing this Comprehensive Plan with the goal of consistency determination with the newly established Growth Management Rules. This new plan offers an opportunity to fine tune current land use districts and regulations to better meet the needs of Monson residents.

## **C. Goals/Implementation**

This Comprehensive Plan serves as an inventory of current conditions and a guide for future development. It is an official document that must be adopted by the governing body of Monson and approved by the State of Maine. The plan does not enact ordinances or regulations. The plan provides a basis for land use policy and direction. A locally adopted Comprehensive Plan is important for three principal reasons:

### **Zoning Ordinance Adoption**

In accordance with the State Statute under Maine's Growth Management Act, a town must have a consistent comprehensive plan to substantiate a zoning ordinance beyond the State minimum regulations under the Shoreland Zoning Act; creation and adoption of an Impact Fee Ordinance; or to create and adopt a Rate of Growth Building Cap. Whereas Monson has chosen to adopt a zoning and land use ordinance, a consistent adopted comprehensive plan is necessary to legally support these regulations.

### **Federal and State Funding**

A comprehensive plan is necessary to be eligible and qualify for many State and Federal Grant programs and resources.

### **Responsible Growth**

A comprehensive plan will guide Monson's development over the next decade.

## **Plan Implementation**

A Comprehensive Plan is not a static document. A plan should be reviewed every 5 years to insure it meets the needs of Monson residents.

# Chapter 1: Vision for the Community

## Vision Statement:

Monson's vision for its future: To preserve and protect the character of Monson as a bedroom community, promoting economic and social growth, public health, safety, and welfare, and protect its natural resources.

## Specific Visions for the Community:

- Facilitate growth that is sustainable with respect to the economy, environment, and community.
- Promote the health, safety, and welfare of Monson citizens in a way that is equitable for the public and individual citizens.
- Preserve Monson's small-town character, both in appearance and development design.
- Facilitate a diversity of land uses including residential, commercial, industrial, and open space.
- Maintain an efficient transportation system.
- Encourage both active and passive recreational opportunities.
- Capitalize on Monson's recreational, culinary, and artisan resources to promote tourism.

# **Chapter 2: Public Participation Summary**

## **Analyses, Conditions and Trends**

This 2024 Comprehensive Plan is based on the successfully adopted, consistent and administered 1996 Comprehensive Plan. Although this plan closely resembles the 1996 Comprehensive Plan as it has similar growth and rural areas, non-conformity has been minimized and adapted to be more accommodating to the unique characteristics of specific areas. Monson anticipates this plan will serve the community well over the next decade.

The Town of Monson appointed the Planning Board to draft a new Comprehensive Plan. At the Annual Town Meeting it was budgeted to hire a consultant to help the Planning Board draft a plan following the new state guidelines.

The planning board met in person gathering information until Covid 19 restrictions prohibited our meeting together. The Planning Board Chair then corresponded via email with Dean Bennett, our consultant. Information was obtained from previous Comprehensive Plan drafts, information from the Town Manager, and state resources.

In April 2021, the Planning Board met in person at the Tenney House, where we could social distance. We went over the whole document with our Consultant.

In May 2021, we met and, after going over all questions, we voted in favor of sending the draft to the Selectboard after the Town Manager put his information in the Economic and Fiscal Sections.

Due to several personnel changes in the Town Manager position, the draft was overlooked for some time. In the Spring of 2024 it was decided by the Selectboard to submit the draft in its then current state. This was done and the comments made by state officials on that submission have been addressed by a small volunteer group.

## **Compliance with Title 30-A §4324**

Municipal Officers designated Planning Board as Planning Committee

Planning Board held 5 meetings over August 14, 2019 through May 22, 2021

Citizen input encouraged through open public meetings and discussion

Public Hearing held on plan (After 30-day public notice)

## **Policies**

Policy input and recommendations will be sought every 5 years in an effort to assess and implement strategies and recommendations of the plan as they evolve. All citizens will be given an opportunity to comment on the Comprehensive Plan and its effectiveness at every Planning Board Meeting.

## **Strategies**

Adoption of a consistent Comprehensive Plan will allow the Town of Monson to enforce Land Use Ordinance and Regulations and provide a basis for necessary amendments to reflect the desire of the citizenry regarding Monson's future.

# **Chapter 3: Historic and Archaeological Resources**

## **State Goal**

To preserve the State's Historical and Archaeological Resources.

## **Town Goal**

To comply with the State's goal and increase public awareness of Monson's Historic Resources.

## **Analysis**

### **Evidence of Historical Patterns of Settlement**

There are remnants of sawmills and grist mills in Monson. Mining and quarrying of slate beginning in the 1870's is evidenced in many parts of town. Monson's residential development has been slow and consistent over the decades, and like other towns, the school populations have diminished, and the elderly populations have grown. The three buildings on the National Register are in reasonably good condition. Monson, as it was, as it is, remains a small rural residential community in Piscataquis County, Maine.

### **Protective Measures in Place**

The Monson Land Use Ordinance requires that any submitted proposal shall not negatively impact prehistoric and archaeological resources nor present any threat to those resources. It shall be the burden of the applicant to satisfy the reviewing authority that such threat does not exist as requested and when applicable.

In addition, the Subdivision regulations require the identification of all known historic, prehistoric, and archaeological sites within the proposed land to be developed.

## Conditions and Trends

### Maine Historic Preservation's Identified Resources

#### MAINE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

##### Historic Buildings/Structures/Objects

- Resource:    \_\_\_ Prehistoric Archaeological Sites: Arthur Spiess  
              \_\_\_ Historic Archaeological Sites: Leith Smith  
              X Historic Buildings/Structures/Objects: Kirk Mohny

Municipality: Monson

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Inventory data as of September 2024:

The following properties are currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places:

Swedish Lutheran Church, Wilkins and Hebron streets  
(Former) Monson Engine House, 6 Tenney Hill Road  
Monson Community Church, Greenville Road

Based on preliminary survey data, the following properties may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

Robert T. Moore Ranch, Elliotsville Road  
Vinton School, Steward Road

Historic Archaeological Sites

Resource:    \_\_ Prehistoric Archaeological Sites: Arthur Spiess  
              X Historic Archaeological Sites: Leith Smith  
              \_\_\_ Historic Buildings/Structures/Objects: Kirk Mohney

Municipality: Monson

Inventory data as of October 2024:

To date, no historic archaeological sites have been documented for the town.

Prehistoric Archaeological Sites

Resource:    X Prehistoric Archaeological Sites: Arthur Spiess  
              \_\_\_ Historic Archaeological Sites: Leon Cranmer  
              \_\_\_ Historic Buildings/Structures/Objects: Kirk Mohney

Municipality: MONSON.

Inventory data as of October 30, 2018:

One site is known (87.1), on the banks of the Piscataquis River. No systematic professional archaeological survey has been done in Monson.

The map dated 2012 of prehistoric sites in Monson is still current.

Needs for further survey, inventory, and analysis:

The Piscataquis River valley, and the shores of Spectacle Ponds, Monson Pond, and Lake Hebron, and a few other locations need archaeological survey.

## **Historic Outline of the Community**

Originally known as “Cademy”, prior to 1820, Monson was a Province of Massachusetts. “Cademy was incorporated by an act of the State Legislature on February 8, 1822 and renamed Monson. Thereafter, the County of Piscataquis was incorporated in March of 1838.

Monson has had a Selectmen/Manager form of government since 1943. It continues to this day.

Slate became the main source of livelihood for Monson beginning in 1870. Originally home to ten (10) quarries, the number was reduced to three (3) by 1922. Currently, there is one slate product company in Monson, Sheldon Slate Products.

Rail was used to haul slate from the various quarries to Monson Junction. The Monson Railroad carried not only freight but also passengers and mail.

Historic local properties are prevalent throughout Monson. The earliest of which was Mathews Place, also known as Mathews Farm, established by Captain Jonathan Mathew. The current use of the property is a tree farm.

Monson’s first schoolhouse was built near the center of Town in 1823. Over the years, Monson has supported several small schools. Today, Monson is part of School Administrative District #68. The district includes the towns of Dover Foxcroft, Charleston, and Sebec. The Monson Elementary School closed in 2009 and became the Monson Community Center. Monson Academy was founded in 1847. In 1860, the Academy was destroyed and then rebuilt. That Academy building was torn down in 1984.

Churches of many denominations have existed in Monson. The Congregational Church in 1831; Baptist Church in 1845; Swedish Mission (Lutheran) Church in 1890; and in 1892 the Swedish Methodist Church.

For the last 100 years, Monson has continued to be a quaint residential community, unique in its location and role in the region. The Town of Monson is conscious that the charm derived from the town’s history can attract tourists to a community. Monson’s location along the Appalachian Trail has long attracted visitors to Monson. Recent investments in restoration of buildings and artisan culture made by the Libra Foundation will protect Monson’s character for years to come. In 2020, the Town of Monson was selected to receive a Community Entrepreneurship Grant from the Maine Community Foundation. Today, Monson is restoring itself to the community it once was with the assistance and benefit of outside investment combined with community pride.

## **Community Identified Resources**

Historic, pre-historic and archaeological resources in Monson have been identified above.

## **Monson Historical Committee**

The Monson Historical Society was established in 1973. The Society continues today as an active proponent of the protection and preservation of Monson's history.

## **Threats to Local and State Resources**

There are no known threats to historical resources. Historic structures are in good repair and the prehistoric and archaeological resources are offered protection due to the nature of their locations within the community.

## **Policies**

Protect to the greatest extent practicable the historic and significant archaeological resources in the community.

## **Strategies**

1. The Town of Monson will actively pursue the necessary appointments to fill any vacancies on the town's Historical Committee to insure a functioning and proactive organization.

Responsible Party: Administrative Authority

Timeline: Ongoing

2. The Town of Monson will assign responsibility for the collection and display of historic artifacts and the inventory and monitoring of historic landmarks.

Responsible Party: Administrative Authority

Timeline: Ongoing

3. For known historic and archeological sites and areas sensitive to prehistoric archaeology, through local land use ordinances continue to require subdivision or non-residential developers to take appropriate measures to protect those resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed site design, construction timing and/or extent of excavation.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

4. Continue to require the Planning Board, or other designated review authority to incorporate maps and information provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission into their review process.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

5. Work with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to assess the need for and if necessary, plan for, a comprehensive community survey of the community's historic and archaeological resources.

Responsible Party: Monson Historical Society

Timeline: Short Term (1-2 Years)

# Chapter 4: Water Resources

## State 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 Goal

To comply with the State's goal and provide safe drinking water and ground water for its citizens.

## Analysis

At the present time, there are no known point sources of pollution in Monson. There are also no known nonpoint sources of pollution in Monson. Water and air quality in Monson meets or exceeds all state and federal standards. Public works employees and contractors use best practices to protect water resources in their daily operations.

## Protection of Ground Water, Surface Water and Recharge Areas

Despite the numerous brooks, streams and ponds in Monson there are no identified threats to these resources. According to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, there are no significant aquifers in Monson.

There are wells in Monson that are owned by the Monson Utilities District. There are two wells on the North Guilford Road, and another set of wells on Homer Hill. These locations have reservoirs. To ensure clean quality water to the 119 users, the Town of Monson has recently developed a wellhead protection plan. The plan has been submitted to the Department of Human Services for approval. If approved it will be incorporated into a municipal ordinance.

## Threats to local and State resources

Monson has a current Shoreland Zoning Ordinance and Land Use Ordinance. These Ordinances contain provisions to protect the ground waters of Monson. Consequently, there are no current threats nor likely to be threats to the town's ground water supply.

While there currently are no known nonpoint sources of pollution, this is recognized as a potential threat to surface water resources. Stormwater runoff from developed lands (roads, buildings, agricultural fields, lands in active forestry) all have the potential to pollute surface water bodies. The very nature of nonpoint source pollution is that it is difficult to identify

because it originates from diffuse sources across the landscape and that in general the amount of pollution that each site contributes is very small. It is the cumulative effects of many small sources that create large issues in surface waters.

## Conditions and Trends

### State Identified Water Resources

The Town of Monson has a multitude of water bodies:

Bell Pond	Lake Hebron (GP)	South Pond	Bunker Pond
Lily Pond	Spectacle Pond (GP)	Doe Pond (GP)	Meadow Pond
Squankin Pond	Doughty Pond	Monson Pond (GP)	Towne Pond
Eighteen Pond	Moores Pond		

There are brooks, streams, and one segment of a major river:

Davis Brook	Ladd Brook	Peppermint Brook	Eighteen Brook
Ledge Hill Brook	Piscataquis River	Goodell Brook	Leeman Brook
Phillips Brook	Gully Brook	Monson Stream	Pond Brook
Jackson Brook	North Brook	Prescot Brook	Hammond Brook
Witham Brook			

### Resource Protection

Water resources are not threatened or endangered. Monson has no known point pollution sources and is aggressively taking the steps necessary to protect the two public well sites.

Monson has two point discharges as part of of the two subsurface wastewater systems. These systems are licensed and approved.

## **Policies**

To protect current and potential drinking water sources.

To protect significant surface water resources from pollution and improve water quality where needed.

To protect water resources in growth areas while promoting more intensive development in those areas.

To minimize pollution discharges through the upgrade of existing public sewer systems and wastewater treatment facilities.

To cooperate with neighboring communities and regional/local advocacy groups to protect water resources.

## **Strategies**

1. Adopt or amend local land use ordinances as applicable to incorporate stormwater runoff performance standards consistent with:

    Maine Stormwater Management Law and Maine Stormwater Regulations

    Maine Department of Environmental Protection's allocations for allowable levels of phosphorus in lake/pond watersheds.

    Maine Pollution Discharge Elimination System Stormwater Program

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

2. Consider amending local land use ordinances, as applicable, to incorporate low impact development standards.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Short Term (1-2 Years)

3. Where applicable, develop and urban impaired stream watershed management or mitigation plan that will promote continued development or redevelopment without further stream degradation.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Short Term (1-2 Years)

4. Maintain, enact, or amend public wellhead and aquifer recharge area protection mechanisms, as necessary.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

5. Encourage landowners to protect water quality. Provide local contact information at the municipal office for water quality best management practices from resources such as the Natural Resource Conservation Service, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Soil and Water Conservation District, Maine Forest Service, and/or small woodlot association of Maine.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

6. Adopt water quality protection measures and standards for construction and maintenance of public and private roads and public properties and require their implementation by contractors, owners, and community officials and employees.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Short Term (1-2 Years)

7. Participate in local and regional efforts to monitor, protect and where warranted, improve water quality.

Responsible: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

8. Provide education materials at appropriate locations regarding aquatic and invasive species.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

9. Encourage Public Works Employees to participate in training and obtain certification from the Nonpoint Source Training Center (<https://www.maine.gov/dep/land/training/>).

Responsible Party: Town Manager

Timeline: Ongoing

# **Chapter 5: Natural Resources**

## **State 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 Goal**

To comply with the State's goal of protection natural resources.

## **Analysis**

### **Threats and Protective Measures**

Monson has updated and enforced its Shoreland Zoning Ordinance in accordance with the State Minimum Guidelines and will continue to do so. The Code Enforcement Officer is knowledgeable of state laws such as the Natural Resources Protection Act and works collaboratively with the Department of Environmental Protection, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and the Maine Natural Areas Program to insure the protection of natural resources.

### **Current Initiatives Local or Regional on Natural Resource Protection**

There are no ongoing initiatives regarding regional protection of natural resources. Monson is supportive and participatory in the regional approach to the protection of Maine's natural resources. At this time there are no known threats to critical natural resources. Both the Planning Board and the Code Enforcement Officer are aware of the need for such protection.

## **Conditions and Trends**

### **State Identified Natural Resources**

The following natural resources have been identified by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Maine Natural Areas Program within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry in Monson. (maps in appendix)

## Rare, Threatened or Endangered Plants

Orono Sedge: *Carex oronensis*

State Status Threatened

State Rank S3

## Rare, Threatened and Endangered Animals

None Noted

## Rare and Exemplary Natural Communities Ecosystems

Upper Floodplain Hardwood Forest

## Significant, Essential and Other Animal Habitats

None Noted

## Scenic Views

There are no identified scenic views in Monson.

## Policies

To conserve critical Natural Resources in the community.

To coordinate with neighboring communities and regional and State resource agencies to protect shared critical natural resources.

## Strategies

1. Ensure that land use ordinances are consistent with applicable state law regarding critical natural resources.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

2. Designate critical natural resources as Critical Resource Areas in the future land use map.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Short Term (1-2 Years)

3. Through local land use ordinances, require the Planning Board (or other designated review authority) to include as part of the review process, consideration of pertinent BwH maps and information regarding critical natural resources. MDIFW and MNAP should be consulted prior to permitting.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

4. Initiate and/or participate in interlocal and/or regional planning efforts around shared critical or important natural resources.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

5. Consider pursuing public/private partnerships to protect critical and important natural resources such as purchase of land or easements from willing sellers.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

6. Distribute and make available information to those living in or near critical important natural resources about current use tax programs and applicable local, state and federal regulations.

Responsible Party: Planning Board/Assessors

Timeline: Ongoing

# Chapter 6: Agricultural and Forest Resources

## State Goal

To safeguard the State’s agricultural and forest resources from development which threatens those resources.

## Local Goal

To comply with the State’s goal of safeguarding agricultural and forest resources.

## Analysis

Agriculture plays a minor role in the Monson economy. However, these lands are a nonrenewable resource.

Forestry is an important aspect in the Monson economy. Monson has 17,370 acres registered in the Tree Growth Tax Law. Approximately fifty (50%) percent of the acreage is commercially owned, and the remainder is under private ownership. Fortunately, current operations do not pose a threat to residential development and vice-versa.

There are currently no regulatory and/or non-regulatory measures in place to protect productive farming and forestry lands. No local or regional land trusts actively working to protect farms or forest lands are known. At this time there is no anticipated development of tracts of agricultural or industrial forest land. No public woodlands exist in Monson.

There is one active Community Supported Agriculture program in Monson. Several small farms have seasonal produce stands selling locally grown and produced items. A community garden has been discussed but space for a garden me has yet to be identified.

## Conditions and Trends

### State Identified Agricultural and Forest Resources

There are currently 4 parcels enrolled in the Farm and Open Space Taxation Program for the purposes of wildlife preservation and conservation of resources. Prime farmland soils are located along Route 6/15. Enrollment for the past 10 years is shown below.

Tax Year	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
# of Parcels	4	4	4	4	4	0	0	0	0	4

There are 142 parcels currently enrolled in the Tree Growth Tax Law Program. Enrollment over the past 10 years is shown below.

Tax Year	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
# of Parcels	143	138	137	137	132	131	127	127	129	125

### **Community Farming and Forestry Activities**

Although forestry operations are ongoing, there is no present threat to areas identified as potential for growth designation. Fortunately, Monson is not experiencing the pressure of conflicting uses as natural resources vs development.

### **Policies**

To safeguard lands identified as prime farmland or capable of supporting commercial forestry.

To support farming and forestry and encourage their economic vitality.

### **Strategies**

1. Consult with a Maine Forest Service district forester when developing any land use regulations pertaining to forest management practices as required by 12 M.R.S.A. §8869.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

2. Consult with Soil and Water Conservation District when developing any land use regulations pertaining to agricultural management practices.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

3. Amend land use ordinance to require commercial and subdivision developments in critical rural areas, to maintain areas with prime farmland soils as open space to the greatest practical extent.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

4. Limit non-residential development in critical rural areas (if the town designates critical rural areas) to natural resource-based businesses and services, nature tourism/outdoor recreation businesses, farmers-markets and home occupations.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

5. Encourage owners of productive farm and forest land to enroll in the current use taxation programs.

Responsible Party: Administration

Timeline: Ongoing

6. Permit land use activities that support productive agriculture and forestry operations, such as roadside stands, greenhouses, firewood operations, sawmills, log buying yards, and pick your own operations. Include agriculture, commercial forestry operations, and land conservation that supports them in local and regional economic development plans.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

# Chapter 7: Marine Resources

## State Goal

The Goal is not applicable to the town of Monson for there are no Marine Resources within the community.

## Local Goal

There are no Marine Resource related local goals developed within the Monson Comprehensive Plan.

## Analysis

<b>Monitoring of coastal waters.</b>	Not Applicable	
<b>Plan for Identifying or Eliminating Marine Related Pollution Sources</b>		Not Applicable
<b>Shellfish Industry and Closures</b>	Not Applicable	
<b>Status of Deep-Water Dependent Uses</b>	Not Applicable	
<b>Balance Between Water Dependent and Other Uses</b>		Not Applicable
<b>Local Ordinances</b>	Not Applicable	
<b>Local Harbor Ordinances</b>	Not Applicable	
<b>Waterfront Access Points</b>	Not Applicable	
<b>Scenic Resources</b>	Not Applicable	
<b>Access to Coastal Waters</b>	Not Applicable	

## Conditions and Trends

**State Data** Not Applicable

### **Shoreland Development Regulations**

Monson is in full compliance with the most recent minimum guidelines developed by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection.

### **Policies**

The Marine Resources policies are not applicable to the town of Monson.

### **Strategies**

The Marine Resources strategies are not applicable to the town of Monson.

# Chapter 8: Population and Demographics

## State Goal

None Required

## Local Goal

None Required

## Analysis

### Expected Rates of Populations Change and Implications

The 2020 Census shows a decrease of 77 residents since 2010. However, as of 2024 it is estimated by the Maine Home Town Locator that there are currently 703 residents in town, an increase of 94 residents in four years. Current population estimates by the Census show a 4.1% increase in the population of Piscataquis County of over the same period, nearing 2010 levels.

### Potential Demand on Housing and Municipal and School Services

An increase in housing demands, municipal, and school services is expected over the life of this plan. With modest population growth in both State and County, Monson does not anticipate any negative impacts related to population growth or density.

### Seasonal Population and Visitors

Monson experiences a moderate growth in seasonal population change as the majority of the visitors are transient and/or passing through along the transportation corridors. The Appalachian Trail is a recreational attraction with approximately 2,700 hikers registered as of 2023; many more hikers come through without registering. A large percentage of hikers spend one or more nights in Monson. There are numerous snowmobile trails throughout Monson as well as All-Terrain Vehicle Trails; many riders stop in Monson with some staying overnight.

There are many seasonal residences in Monson with most occupied during part or all of the warmer months.

## Conditions and Trends

### Population Trends

<b>Historical Population Town of Monson</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
<b>2020</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>-12%</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>+3%</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>666</b>	<b>-11.4%</b>
<b>1990</b>	<b>752</b>	<b>-6.4%</b>
<b>1980</b>	<b>804</b>	<b>+20.2%</b>
<b>1970</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>-21.5%</b>
<b>1960</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>-0.4%</b>

### Distribution of Populations by Age

<b>Age Distribution Town of Monson</b>			
	<b>2010 % of Population</b>	<b>2020 % of Population</b>	<b>Percentage Change</b>
<b>Under 5</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>+118.4</b>
<b>5-17 Yrs</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>-22.7</b>
<b>18-64</b>	<b>61.2</b>	<b>43.7</b>	<b>-28.6</b>
<b>65-Over</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>+75.1</b>
<b>Median Age</b>	<b>50.4</b>	<b>57.9</b>	<b>+14.8</b>

### **Distribution of Households by Household Incomes**

According to U.S. Census Bureau estimates as of 2022, Monson has approximately 50.3% of its households, and 36.7% of its families, in the \$15,000 to \$49,999 bracket. Piscataquis County has approximately 47% of its households and 35% of its families in the \$15,000 to \$49,000 income bracket. The \$15,000 to \$49,000 income bracket includes just more than half of Monson's households and less than half of Piscataquis County's households and families.

### **Changes in Household Size**

Household size has been declining in Monson since 1970. The same trend has been experienced in Piscataquis County and the State of Maine. On the other hand, there has been an increase in number of households in Monson. Demographic changes were resulting in smaller households. There were fewer people living in more housing units. This is the result of young adults leaving home and setting up one-person and two-person households: a high rate of divorce that splits households in two; and more elderly people living longer on their own.

It is likely that Monson's population will not change significantly in the next ten years. The low birth rate trend has lessened recently but may continue for the next ten years. This is due in part to delayed marriage, delayed childbirth, and a childless generation. Monson's 18-64 age cohort represents 44% of the Town's population. This group is in their more productive years. People in this age group are generally well established in their employment. Special services or accommodation may be required to address anticipated needs for this group as they age. During the time period of this Plan, it is likely that the elderly population, 65 and above, will continue to increase. The Town should prepare to meet the needs of a projected growing elderly population.

### **Policies**

None Required

### **Strategies**

None Required

# Chapter 9: Economy

## State Goal

Promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being.

## Town Goal

Promote job opportunities and economic well-being.

## Analysis

### Changes in Local Economy

Since the previous comprehensive plan was written the entire economy of Monson has changed and adapted to new businesses and opportunities. Moosehead Manufacturing closed its doors in 2008, which was the last major manufacturer in Monson. From 2009 to 2015/2016 the future for Monson was uncertain. Beginning in 2015 and completed in 2016 the Libra Foundation purchased the former Monson school building that was being used as a community center. This started a 3-year process in which most of the downtown buildings and lots were purchased by the Libra Foundation. Many old buildings were torn down, and many new buildings were built. Along with the physical changes to Monson's downtown Libra also started the Monson Arts program, which brings artists and writers from around the world to Monson for fellowships, classes, and retreats. Monson has benefited from increases in travel to Moosehead Lake to the north. With the global exposure and newly rebuilt downtown, this has spurred an economic boom not seen in Monson for a few decades.

Libra Foundation's 2020 investment program in Monson was focused primarily in two areas: (1) completion and startup of a multidisciplinary Health Center at the former school building and (2) continued development of the already highly regarded Monson Arts residency programming. The Health Center began welcoming the community in the fall to its new clinic, dentistry and eye care facilities, operated by CA Dean Hospital/Northern Light Health, Community Dental (replaced in 2024 by Saving Smiles of Maine), and Eye Care of Maine respectively. And although the pandemic postponed several planned artist and writer residencies, smaller and more socially distanced cohorts of artists began coming back to Monson toward the end of 2020. The residencies have received tremendous acclaim from participants, many of whom find the extraordinary natural surroundings of Piscataquis County to inspire their creativity and interest in the area.

## **Economic Priorities for the Community**

Through various community meetings and discussions, the overall thought is that the town does not want to lose the momentum that has started from the Libra Foundation investment. Another priority is to give residents the opportunity to work in Monson, rather than needing to travel for work.

## **Tourism and the Local Economy**

Tourism and the Monson area is something that goes hand and hand. Monson is a part of the Moosehead Lake region, which relies heavily on four season tourism. Monson is also designated as a AT trail town by the nonprofit group that oversees the Appalachian trail system. A visitor center for AT hikers and anyone else is operated in the center of Monson which sees an average of more than 2,000 visitors a year, most of whom are hiking the trail. Monson benefits from being the closest town to Borestone Mountain, a popular day hike for people from around the state and beyond. Recognizing the importance of tourism, the select board in Monson has opened main town roads in Monson to ATV traffic, which helps the business in downtown Monson as tourists are more likely to drive their ATV or UTV vehicles to local businesses. During the winter months tourism does slow but thanks to being centrally located on the snowmobile trails and having our downtown accessible via frozen lake we still see tourists coming from Greenville and elsewhere.

Several local businesses offer amenities to tourists and residents alike. A Fierce Chase on the Elliotsville Road has an extensive system of trails for mountain biking and hiking during the warmer months and groomed cross-country ski trails in the winter. Rest Day Sauna on Pleasant Street offers year-round private sauna on Lake Hebron.

As Monson returns to its arts roots, there is a resurgence of art tourists as well. People are coming to Monson to see our galleries or buy a piece of art made by a local Monson artist.

## **Home Occupations**

Home occupations are allowed by permit in all residential districts in Monson. There are a number of these small businesses in town at this time.

## **Commercial and Industrial Development**

Monson does have an industrial zone, as part of the land use ordinance. That zone is still in effect, however, there has not been a long-term business since the closing of Moosehead Manufacturing. The building and land with that industrial site has recently sold and there is hope that in the coming years there will be activity again in the industrial zone of town.

### **Need for Additional Infrastructure Investment**

The existing infrastructure is sufficient to meet the projected needs. However, if necessary, increasing capacity is possible.

The town worked with Premium Choice to bring fiber internet to all areas of Monson.

### **Use of Development Incentives**

Monson does not have a long history of using development incentives and for the most part there are not a lot available in the Monson area.

The town did complete a TIF district in 2007 for the Moosehead Manufacturing property, for the purpose of putting money aside for improvement of town buildings and the downtown.

In 2019 a group of residents came together to apply for a pilot program being offered by the Maine Downtown Center and Monson was one of three town awarded a \$70,000 grant for the development of a plan and action items for improving the downtown area of Monson.

A new group to manage these funds, the Monson Collaborative, was formed. Funds have been expended to create a co-working space in the back of the town office, to purchase an Artisan Cottage available for rent, and to redesign the town website. The mission of the Monson Collaborative is to bring together and promote Monson businesses and organizations in support of outdoor recreation, the arts and food tourism.

With the help of the Maine Downtown Center grant and a renewed sense of optimism, Monson looking for more development incentives in the coming months and years to continue the growth we have seen.

## **Conditions and Trends**

### **State Economic Data**

### **Brief History of Local and Regional Economy**

Monson began as a slate producing town. The slate mines were similar economically to present day forestry operations. Monson began to grow artistry early on eventually expanding to furniture manufacturing. With the end of the furniture manufacturing, the town's economic vitality diminished. Present day Monson has a renewed sense of growth and inspiration in large part due to the Libra Foundation, which inspired renewed energy and initiative in Monson citizens.

### **Occupations of Monson Residents**

The current labor force in Monson could be fairly described as skilled labor. A number of Monson residents practice these acquired skills in the fields of hardwood products, medical products, and artisan trades. Monson's retirees are active in the community both recreationally and as self-employed individuals.

### **Monson's Workforce and Employers**

Monson's leading employers are A.E Robinson, fuel supplier and convenience store; Lakeshore House Lodge; Pineland Farms General Store and Gallery Store; Monson Arts; the Quarry (fine dining); Turning Page Farm & Brewery; Shaw's Hiker Hostel; Sheldon Slate Company; Northern Light Health Care; along with the artisan community.

### **Local Economic Development Incentive Programs**

Monson has utilized Tax Increment Financing and successfully obtained competitive economic development and infrastructure grants. Monson desires to increase economic development programs to include façade grants and revolving loan funds, all subject to financial procurement.

## **Policies**

To support the type of economic activity the community desires, reflecting on the community's role in the region.

To make a financial commitment, if necessary, to support desired economic development, including needed public improvements.

To coordinate with regional development corporations and surrounding towns as necessary to support desired economic development.

## Strategies

1. If appropriate, assign responsibility and provide economic support for economic development to the proper entity.

Responsible Party: Town Manager and Selectboard

Timeline: Ongoing

2. Enact or amend local ordinances to reflect the desired scale, design, intensity, and location of future economic development.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

3. If public investments are foreseen to support economic development, identify the mechanisms to be considered to finance them.

Responsible Party: Town Manager and Selectboard

Timeline: Ongoing

4. Participate in any economic development planning efforts.

Responsible Party: Town Manager and Selectboard

Timeline: Ongoing

# **Chapter 10: Housing**

## **State Goal**

To encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all Maine citizens.

## **Town Goal**

To comply with the State's goal.

## **Analysis**

### **Housing Needs for Projected Growth and Demographic Changes**

Population in Monson has increased modestly since 2020. There has been an increase in the elderly population and a slight increase in public school enrollment.

Affordable housing has become a challenge as real estate values have been driven up recently. This issue needs to be addressed along with workforce and senior housing availability.

Amendments have been made in 2024 to the Land Use Ordinance to comply with LD2003 to allow accessory dwelling units. This change is expected to make more affordable housing available.

Current land use regulations permit duplexes in the Village District and three-plus family dwellings in the Mixed Residential District. There are parcels in these districts on which workforce housing and affordable housing could be constructed; current construction costs are prohibitive, however. A plan to address this issue is needed.

At this time, more local senior housing is not needed. While assisted living housing is not currently available locally there are a number of regional options in Abbot, Dover-Foxcroft, Guilford, and Greenville.

Continued promotion of increased energy efficiency should be a focus in the coming years.

## Housing Affordability

According to the Maine Hometown Locator Statistics for 2024, the following estimates are available:

INCOME	
Median Household Income	\$52,176
Average Household Income	\$66,749
% of Income for Mortgage	33%
Per Capita Income	\$32,283
Wealth Index	63
HOUSING	
Total HU (Housing Units)	706 (100%)
Owner Occupied HU	292 (41.4%)
Renter Occupied HU	48 (6.8%)
Vacant Housing Units (Seasonal properties)	366 (51.8%)
Median Home Value	\$276,786
Average Home Value	\$309,247
Housing Affordability Index	73
HOUSEHOLDS	
Total Households	340
Average Household Size	2.07
Family Households	208
Average Family Size	3

## Affordability Index

The Housing Affordability Index base is 73 and represents a balance point where a resident with a median household income can normally qualify to purchase a median price home. Values above 100 indicate increased affordability, while values below 100 indicate decreased affordability.

## Conversion of Homes from Year-Round to Seasonal and Vice-Verse

Residential conversion is not currently an issue in Monson.

## Condition of Current Housing Stock

Twenty two percent (22%) of Monson's housing stock was built prior to 1939. Twenty four percent (24%) of Piscataquis County's and twenty four percent (24%) of the State's housing stock was built prior to 1939 as well. Thus, Monson's housing stock is of a similar age to that of the County and State. Older housing is more likely to be inadequately insulated and in greater need of repair and maintenance. Monson's older, larger homes which historically housed one family are not being divided into two or more units. Monson has made available information on grants, and programs from environmental incentives such as those offered by Efficiency Maine to encourage updates in housing stock and improved efficiencies. It is anticipated that in the coming years Monson will initiate opportunity for citizen access to funds for energy efficiency, with the passage of a PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) Ordinance.

## Conditions and Trends

### Housing Units (Owner Occupied, Renter Occupied)

	Town of Monson		Piscataquis County		State of Maine	
	<u>2020</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>2010</u>
Owner Occupied	167		247	5,529	6,262	397,417 370,905
	74.9%		80.2%	77.0%	77.9%	71.3% 71.6%
Renter Occupied	56		61	1,651	1,775	159,802 147,295
	25.1%		19.8%	23.0%	22.1%	28.7% 28.4%
Total	223		308	7,180	8,037	582,437 557,219

## All Housing Units by Owner Occupied/Renter Occupied/Seasonal or Vacant

	Town of Monson			
	<u>2020</u>		<u>2010</u>	
Housing Units	601		595	
Owner Occupied	167	27.8%	247	41.5%
Renter Occupied	56	9.3%	61	10.3%
Seasonal or Vacant	378	62.9%	287	46.2%

Monson has recently approved amendments to the Land Use Ordinance to comply with LD2003 which will allow accessory dwelling units in any area where residential uses are permitted. This change will allow for affordable/workforce housing if property owners wish to add accessory dwelling units as permitted under the ordinance.

There are no known affordable housing/workforce housing coalitions in this area. Such a group may be created as part of the overall plan to address housing needs.

### Policies

To encourage and promote adequate workforce housing to support the community's and region's economic development.

To ensure that land use controls encourage the development of workforce/Affordable housing, including rental housing.

To encourage and support the efforts of regional housing coalitions in addressing affordable and workforce housing needs.

### Strategies

1. Maintain, enact or amend growth area land use regulations to increase density, decrease lot size, setbacks, and road widths, or provide incentives such as density bonuses, to encourage the development of affordable and workforce housing.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

2. Maintain, enact or amend ordinances to allow the addition of at least one accessory apartment per dwelling unit in growth areas, subject to site suitability.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

3. Create or continue to support a community affordable/workforce housing committee and/or regional affordable housing coalition.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

4. Designate a location in growth areas where mobile home parks are allowed pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. §4358 (3) (M) and where manufactured housing is allowed pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. §4358 (2).

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

5. Support the efforts of local and regional housing coalitions in addressing affordable and workforce housing needs.

Responsible Party: Selectpersons/Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

6. Seek to achieve a level of at least 10% of new residential development built or placed during the next decade will be affordable.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

7. Consider the creation of minimum apartment standards in specific land use districts within the community to protect community character.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

8. Explore strategies and/or incentives for the revitalization of housing stock.

Responsible Party: Selectpersons/Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

# **Chapter 11: Recreation**

## **State Goal**

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

## **Town Goal**

To promote outdoor recreation opportunities and water access.

## **Analysis**

### **Recreation to Accommodate Projected Demographic Growth Changes**

Current recreational offerings are continually being reviewed and evaluated to best serve the Monson citizens. Demographic projections do not identify any drastic need for program initiatives at this time.

### **Need for Upgrades to Current Recreational Facilities**

The tennis courts and basketball courts are in need of maintenance. Baseball fields need restoration and gym floors will need refinishing in the coming years. The Gym roof is in urgent need of replacement and a fundraising program is underway now to finance that expense. Upgrades to the facilities are not necessary.

### **Permanently Conserved or Publicly Owned Recreation Areas**

Monson owns the town beach (Cove Beach) on the Blanchard Road; picnic area behind the town office; playground on Water Street; and the field complex at the Monson gym. The town also owns other properties that may be viable in the future for recreational offerings.

### **Regulatory Approach to Conservation**

The town has yet to establish a resource for recreational acquisition.

### **Access to Significant Water Bodies**

Access to Significant Water Bodies There is no public boat landing on Monson Pond; the public has to ask landowners for permission. Lake Hebron is accessible to the public from the Boat Launch on Hebron St. and Cove Beach. Doe Pond has a state-maintained boat launch.

### **Maintenance of Trails and Conflicts**

The Power Line is an ATV trail in the summer and a snowmobile trail (ITS 85) after snow comes; after snow comes, ATV's are not allowed. The snow trails are maintained by the Narrow Gauge Snowmobile Club. While it is an ATV trail, its maintained by surrounding ATV Clubs.

### **Restriction of Traditional Access to Private Lands**

Monson works diligently to maintain access to recreational lands and opportunities.

## **Conditions and Trends**

### **State Identified Recreational Resources**

A portion of the Appalachian Trail is in Monson. Borestone Mountain and Gulf Hagas are nearby to Monson; access to these areas requires travel through Monson.

### **Public and Private Active Recreational Programs**

There are established municipal programs through the Monson Recreation Committee.

### **Water Recreation Area**

Lake Hebron, accessible from the public boat launch on Hebron Street and from Cove Beach, along with Doe Pond offer water recreation opportunities.

### **Local and Regional Trail Systems**

Snowmobile and ATV trails throughout town are maintained by local clubs.

A Fierce Chase on the Elliotsville Road offers year-round trails for cross country skiing, snow shoeing, mountain biking, and hiking.

In nearby Elliotsville, mountain bike trails have been established by Elliotsville Inc. in the Little Wilson Falls area of Elliotsville. There are plans for future expansion of this trail network. Travel to access this area is through Monson.

There is the opportunity for the establishment of a trail system on Libra and Town of Monson property as well as on other privately owned land.

## **Policies**

To maintain/upgrade existing recreation facilities as necessary to meet current and future needs.

To preserve open space and recreational use as appropriate.

To seek to achieve or continue to maintain at least one major point of public access to major waterbodies for boating, fishing, and swimming, and work with nearby property owners to address concerns.

## **Strategies**

1. Create a list of recreational needs or develop a recreation plan to meet current and future needs. Assign a committee or community official to explore funding sources and way of addressing identified needs and/or implementing the policies and strategies outlined in the plan.

Responsible Party: Town Manager/Recreation Committee

Timeline: Short-Term (1-2 Years)

2. Work with public and private partners to extend and maintain a network of trails for motorized and non-motorized uses. Connect with regional trail systems where possible.

Responsible Party: ATV and Snowmobile Clubs

Timeline: Ongoing

3. Work with existing local land trusts, conservation organizations and property owners to pursue opportunities to protect important open space or recreation land.

Responsible Party: Town Manager

Timeline: Ongoing

4. Provide education materials about the benefits and protections for landowners allowing public recreational access to their properties. At a minimum this will include information on Maine's Landowner Liability Law regarding recreational and harvesting use, Title 14, M.R.S.A. §159-A.

Responsible Party: Administration

Timeline: Ongoing

# Chapter 12: Transportation

## State Goal

To plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.

## Town Goal

To develop and maintain an efficient system of public facilities

## Analysis

### Local and Regional Transportation Concerns

The Town of Monson has established a road committee to aid in planning road maintenance needs in the coming years. Correcting drainage deficiencies on roads adversely affected by heavy rains in the last few years is currently the priority. Determining financial needs for road maintenance in the coming years is the responsibility of this committee.

Since early 2023 the town has been working with the Maine DOT and Gorrill Palmer to redesign Route 15 to increase driver awareness of the village district. This work is in conjunction with the Maine DOT plan to resurface/rebuild Route 15. The speed limit of 25 MPH is usually disregarded by through traffic making the area hazardous to pedestrians, bicyclists, and other vehicles. The current plan calls for increased signage, narrowing travel lanes to force speed reductions, pedestrian crosswalks in three to four locations, and other traffic calming devices. Federal and state funding will be needed to finance these changes, along with funds from the Town of Monson.

Current road systems are adequate to support future land use. One recently built small subdivision dead-ends.

The town does not have an ordinance addressing local access management or traffic permitting measures.

### **Conflicts with Road Uses**

Route 15 is a major State highway that passes directly through downtown Monson. Seasonal traffic can be cumbersome and dangerous due to speed and the transient nature of the traffic. The North Guilford Road is a town road that is often used as a through-road by trucks and other non-local traffic seeking to avoid the more congested Route 15, thereby posing a potential danger to Monson citizens. In an effort to slow traffic, seasonal speed bumps were installed on the North Guilford Road in 2024.

### **Pedestrian Infrastructure**

Sidewalks in downtown Monson are maintained to insure passage of pedestrian traffic to and from residential areas to downtown. Crosswalks have been paved over and not repainted, making it challenging for pedestrians during period of heavy traffic.

### **Local Roads Maintenance Budget**

Road maintenance and repair typically consumes 20% of the municipal budget. In the future an increased appropriation may be necessary to implement road plans.

### **Parking**

Parking is a challenge in downtown Monson due to the renewed interest in Monson as an artisan community, more frequent stopping of seasonal traffic, and indications that Monson is becoming more of a destination than the traditional flow through traffic. Currently roadside parking on Route 15 is in the breakdown lanes of the roadway.

### **Public Transit Services**

Monson has no scheduled public transit, nor is there a regional public transportation system.

### **Road Construction Standards**

Road construction standards are incorporated in the Town of Monson Subdivision Ordinance. These standards meet the minimum guidelines as established by the Maine State Subdivision Legislation.

## EV Charging Station

There is an EV charging station in the parking lot of the Monson Gym/Community Center.

## Conditions and Trends

### State and Local Transportation Systems

Monson has the following roads and road lengths:

Barrows Falls Road	2.14 Miles	Indian Point Loop	0.80 Miles
Bjork Road	0.04 Miles	Moosehorn Road	0.11 Miles
Blanchard Road	3.50 Miles	North Guilford Road	4.54 Miles
Center Street	0.17 Miles	Pleasant Street	1.88 Miles
Chapin Avenue	0.56 Miles	Spring Road	0.32 Miles
Degerstrom Road	1.03 Miles	Stanton Alley	0.04 Miles
Elliotsville Road	4.91 Miles	Steward Road	1.99 Miles
Forest Avenue	0.15 Miles	Water Street	0.51 Miles
Garage Street	0.06 Miles	Wilkins Street	0.06 Miles
Hebron Street	0.12 Miles	Willimantic Road	3.17 Miles
Homer Hill Road	0.31 Miles		
<b>Total Local Roads:</b>			<b>26.41 Miles</b>

The overall condition of the roads above is fair to good. The recently established road committee has been very active and has prioritized the roads and bridges most in need of attention.

There is a sidewalk on a portion of the North Guilford Road which is in good repair. The sidewalks along Route 15 are in fair condition but are expected to be improved as part of the work underway with Maine DOT and Gorrill Palmer. That plan currently includes bicycle access in the more congested areas.

Current sidewalks and roadways provide connections for neighborhoods, the downtown lake access, the town office, and the town library and gym/community center. As part of the Maine DOT and Gorrill Palmer proposal a sidewalk along Blanchard Road to connect the town beach is planned.

The road committee adheres to the Town of Monson Subdivision Ordinance standards for construction and maintenance of public roads. At this time there are no standards for private roads.

## **Regional Transportation Infrastructure**

### **Bus Service**

There is no scheduled bus service in Monson.

### **Taxi Service**

Greenville or Guilford have the nearest taxi services.

### **Penquis Community Action Program**

Penquis Transportation coordinates transportation for Monson residents by reservation three days in advance for those who cannot drive or do not have a reliable vehicle.

## **Policies**

To prioritize community and regional needs associated with safe, efficient, and optimal use of transportation systems.

To safely and efficiently preserve or improve the transportation system.

To protect public health, protect natural and cultural resources, and enhance livability by managing land use in ways that maximize the efficiency of the transportation system and minimize increases in vehicle miles traveled.

To meet the diverse transportation needs of residents and through travelers by providing a safe, efficient and adequate transportation network for all types of users.

To promote fiscal prudence by maximizing the efficiency of the state or state-aid highway network.

## **Strategies**

1. Develop or continue to update a prioritized improvement, maintenance and repair plan for the community's transportation network.

Responsible Party: Town Manager

Timeline: Ongoing

2. Initiate or actively participate in regional and state transportation efforts.

Responsible Party: Town Manager

Timeline: Ongoing

3. Maintain, enact or amend local ordinances as appropriate to address or avoid conflicts with:

Policy objectives of the Sensible Transportation Act.

State Access Management Regulations

State Traffic Permitting Regulations for large developments

Responsible Party: Town Manager

Timeline: Ongoing

4. Maintain, amend or enact ordinance standards for subdivisions and for public and private roads as appropriate to foster transportation-efficient growth patterns and provide for future street and transit connections.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeline: Ongoing

# Chapter 13: Public Facilities and Services

## State Goal

To plan for, finance, and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.

## Town Goal

Ensure public facilities and services meet the needs of Monson citizens.

## Analysis

### **Adequacy of Municipal Services to meet projected changes in population and demographics**

The current level of municipal services is adequate to meet the current and anticipated future demands in Monson. (See Status of Public Water and/or Sewer Systems below.)

### **Community Partnerships to Share Municipal Services**

Monson serves as the primary fire responding entity for Willimantic, Blanchard Township and Elliottsville Township. The town of Willimantic and Piscataquis County pay Monson for this service.

In addition, there is a County Mutual Aid Agreement which includes all towns and townships within Piscataquis County. This is a mutual aid agreement without costs.

Monson has utilized the Greenville Recreation Director for program implementation in Monson.

Monson serves as the Solid Waste and Recycling Center for Blanchard and Elliottsville Townships. Trash from these townships can be dropped off at the Monson facility.

### **Status of Public Water and/or Sewer Systems**

Monson is home to the Monson Utilities District (MUD), which provides downtown Monson with municipal public sewer and water service. No expansion of either the public sewer or water systems are anticipated at this time.

### **Storm Drainage Systems**

Route 15 is a State road and all drainage associated with this corridor is maintained by the State of Maine.

### **Emergency Response System**

The Monson Fire Department provides regional first responder service for fire and medical services. In addition, Mayo and CA Dean Ambulance Service provide response and emergency transportation. The system is adequate at this time.

### **Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling**

Monson Transfer Station accommodates the region's solid waste disposal and very limited recycling disposal. The market for recyclables does not support a more active recycling program at this time.

### **Telecommunications and Energy Infrastructure**

**Solar:** There is currently a small community solar farm in Monson on the North Guilford Road. A solar installation at the town Transfer Station provides much of the electricity needed for municipal buildings in Monson. A Solar Ordinance addressing future installations in town was approved by Special Town Meeting on October 17, 2024.

**Fiber Optics:** The Libra Foundation has funded the implementation of fiber optic services in select areas of the downtown. In addition, the town, through appropriation, has supplemented Premium Choice's investment in broadband expansion. All addresses in town have access to fiber optic service.

**Open Networks Downtown WIFI:** A grant was obtained from the Maine Community Foundation for the establishment of free WIFI in the immediate downtown of Monson.

**Cellular Service:** In October 2024 the Monson Planning Board approved an application submitted by Vertex Towers in partnership with T-Mobile for the erection of a cell tower on Tenney Hill road with a completion goal of Spring 2025.

## **Local and Regional Healthcare Facilities**

The Monson Medical Center is affiliated with Northern Light Healthcare and is located at the former Monson School on Greenville Road. Dental and eye care service is also available in the building.

## **Investments in Municipal Facilities in Growth Areas**

The Community Center was recently remodeled, making it wheelchair accessible with 2 new restrooms and an updated kitchen area. The Libra Foundation investment/initiative has reinforced the focus of investment in the growth area.

## **Conditions and Trends**

### **Location and condition of facilities and service areas**

The town of Monson facilities include a town office with attached fire station and public works garage. In addition, the town owns a gymnasium/community center with a kitchen as well as a transfer station. All of these facilities are in varying states of repair.

**Town Office:** The building houses three departments (municipal offices, fire department and public works department). The Town office building has housed these departments since the 1960's. Over the years, as municipal services have grown to meet the demands of the public, the departments have outgrown their available space.

**Gymnasium/Community Center:** The roof of the gymnasium building is in need of replacement. A committee was formed in late 2024, to raise funds from private sources to repair the roof.

### **Capacity of Services during Planning Period**

To maintain the current level of services of municipal departments, space restrictions will need to be addressed during this planning period.

### **Capital Maintenance Costs**

An updated Capital Improvement Plan to identify long term capital needs and prioritize same to prepare for related expenditures is expected to be drafted in the current fiscal year.

### **Water and Sewer Supplies**

The Monson Utility District currently serves 118 water users and 43 sewer users. This represents approximately 30% of the households in Monson.

### **Solid Waste Disposal**

The transfer station accepts all solid waste, recyclables, universal, and demo debris, etc. The waste stream has remained consistent in type with increase in demand.

### **Power, Telecommunications and Data Service Availability**

Three phase power is available where needed, and fiberoptic internet availability is in place for all addresses.

### **Emergency Response Systems**

Fire and Rescue Services meet the needs of the Town due to various mutual aid agreements and the cooperative nature of rural Piscataquis communities.

### **Police/Sheriff's Department**

Police protection is provided by the State Police and Sheriff's Department.

### **Education**

The town of Monson is part of the RSU #68 which includes the towns of Sebec, Dover-Foxcroft, and Charleston, which includes K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. High School Students are tuitioned at the school of their choice.

### **School Enrollment**

Enrollment as of October 1, 2024 reported by RSU #68 is as follows:

SeDoMoCha (RSU 68 Elementary/Middle School)	31 Students
Foxcroft Academy	19 Students
Homeschooled	12 Students
Superintendent Agreements (Greenville/Guilford)	5 Students
Equivalent Instruction (Christian School)	12 Students

## **Healthcare**

The town of Monson provides some funds annually to Community Health and Counseling, Pine Tree Hospice, the American Red Cross, and Lifeflight.

## **Municipal Government Facilities**

The administrative offices of the town of Monson include:

5 Municipal Staff (Town Manager, Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, CEO, and LPI)

1 Public Works Full Time/ 2-Seasonal

1 Part-time Transfer Station Attendant

18 Volunteer Firefighters (15 regular and 3 reserve)

## **Street Tree Program**

Monson does not participate in the Street Tree Program.

## **Policies**

To efficiently meet identified public facility and service needs.

To provide public facilities and services in a manner that promotes and supports growth and development in identified areas.

## **Strategies**

1. Identify capital improvements needed to maintain and upgrade public services to accommodate the community's anticipated growth and changing demographics.

Responsible Party: Town Manager and Selectboard

Timeline: Ongoing

2. Locate new public facilities comprising at least 70% of new municipal growth-related capital investments in designated growth areas.

Responsible Party: Town Manager and Selectboard

Timeline: Ongoing

3. Encourage local sewer and water districts to coordinate planned service extensions with the Future Land Use Plan.

Responsible Party: Town Manager and Selectboard

Timeline: Monson Utility District Administrator

4. If public water supply expansion is anticipated, identify and protect suitable sources.

Responsible Party: Town Manager

Timeline: Monson Utility District Administrator

5. Explore options for regional delivery of local services.

Responsible Party: Town Manager

Timeline: Ongoing

# **Chapter 14: Fiscal Capacity and Capital Investment Plan**

## **State Goal:**

To plan for, finance, and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.

## **Town Goal:**

Ensure public facilities and services meet the needs of Monson citizens.

## **Analysis:**

### **Funding of Future Capital Investments**

An updated Capital Improvement Plan is to be developed during the current fiscal year. Future capital investments will be paid for by tax revenues (including reserve funding), grants, bonds, bank financing, and private fundraising.

### **Borrowing Capacity of Community**

By state statute non-school borrowing is capped at 7.5% of total valuation. As of 2022 Monson's valuation was \$77,140,727 so total debt could not exceed \$5,785,555. At December 31, 2022 Monson's debt was \$1,458,671 with additional borrowing capacity of \$4,326,884.

### **Participation with Neighboring Communities to Share Capital Investments**

The town has attempted to obtain grant funding with neighboring communities to improve infrastructure for climate resilience. To date these efforts have not been successful but will continue.

## Conditions and Trends

<b>Community Revenues and Expenditures</b>			
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<b>Municipal Budget</b>			
	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
Administration	104,188.99	157,116.47	195,045.00
Bond	590,505.46		
Assessing	11,000.00	13,608.26	18,000.00
ACO	1,962.00	1,393.00	2,500.00
Cemetery	250.00	7,500.00	15,500.00
CEO	600.00	3,750.00	3,500.00
Debt Service	190,545.44	240,181.27	249,291.00
Fire	68,399.89	112,249.05	110,690.00
Contingency	-	-	1,000.00
RSU #68	521,270.93	499,477.36	583,709.00
General Assistance	1,279.00	2,533.91	1,500.00
County Tax	121,888.00	124,144.00	154,350.00
GYM	6,819.00	10,729.83	10,100.00
Public Works	285,277.11	289,836.47	337,527.00
Overlay	24,680.79	26,618.09	-
Insurance	37,430.42	45,842.24	61,428.00
Municipal Bldg	16,283.68	23,576.56	20,760.00
A/P Correct			
Reserve Tran	207,391.00	144,000.00	70,000.00
Planning	-	-	1,250.00
Recreation	2,915.12	1,084.75	10,500.00
Snowmobile	3,394.82	3,361.72	-
Streetlight	524.45	390.33	1,000.00
3 <sup>rd</sup> Party	15,375.00	19,553.00	25,153.00
Solid Waste	1,690,640.01	1,820,840.06	1,955,704.00
Capital Spending		9,250.00	
Grants	28,971.00	15,000.00	
	3,931,592.11	3,572,036.37	3,828,507.00

## Municipal Debt Compared to Municipal Bond Bank Recommended Limits

We understand this limit to be 7.5% of total valuation, or \$5,785,555 based on 2022 valuation.

## Local Valuations and Mill Rates

Year	Commitment	Tax Rate	Total Municipal Valuation	Taxable Land Valuation	Taxable Buildings Valuation	Total Taxable Land & Building Valuation
2022	1,323,620	0.01695	78,089,679	43,208,000	33,932,727	77,140,727
2021	1,282,793	0.01665	77,044,615	42,881,875	33,671,960	76,553,835
2020	1,329,186	0.01750	75,953,500	44,588,060	30,690,510	75,278,570
2019	1,493,158	0.02460	60,697,470	35,948,980	24,308,990	60,257,970
2018	1,034,078	0.01720	60,120,840	36,065,240	23,701,670	59,766,910

## Policies

To finance existing and future facilities and services in a cost-effective manner.

To explore grants available to assist in the funding of capital investments within the community.

To reduce Maine's Tax Burden by staying within LD1 spending limits.

## Strategies

1. Explore opportunities to work with neighboring communities.

Responsible Party: Town Manager/Selectboard

Timeline: Ongoing

## CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN

The data below is two years old. This plan will be updated in the coming months.

<u>Department</u>		<u>Project</u>			<u>Funding Source</u>
Administration		Update IT Infrastructure			Taxation
FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
\$ 12,000					
<hr/>					
Cemeteries		Civil War Cemetery Headstones			Taxation
FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
\$ 5,000					
<hr/>					
Fire		Build Storage or Station on Garage St. Property			Unknown
FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
		\$ 500,000			
<hr/>					
Fire		Fire Equipment Reserve			Taxation
FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
\$ 17,000	\$ 17,000	\$ 17,000	\$ 17,000	\$ 17,000	\$ 17,000
<hr/>					
Fire		1990 Engine Replacement			Reserve/Loan
FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
		\$ 450,000			
<hr/>					

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<b>Gym</b>		<b>Replace or Refurnish Basketball Court</b>			<b>Reserve</b>
<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY25</b>	<b>FY26</b>	<b>FY27</b>
			<b>\$ 100,000</b>		

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<b>Gym</b>		<b>Replace or Rebuild Baseball Field and Area</b>			<b>Grants</b>
<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY25</b>	<b>FY26</b>	<b>FY27</b>
	<b>\$ 25,000</b>				

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<b>Gym</b>		<b>Resurface Outside Basketball/Tennis Courts</b>			<b>Grants</b>
<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY25</b>	<b>FY26</b>	<b>FY27</b>
	<b>\$ 25,000</b>				

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<b>Gym</b>		<b>Update/Rehab Bandstand</b>			<b>Taxation</b>
<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY25</b>	<b>FY26</b>	<b>FY27</b>
	<b>\$ 10,000</b>				

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<b>Gym</b>		<b>Reserve</b>			<b>Taxation</b>
<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY25</b>	<b>FY26</b>	<b>FY27</b>
<b>\$ 5,000</b>					

---

<b>Public Works</b>		<b>Replace Loader</b>			<b>Reserve/Loan</b>
<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY25</b>	<b>FY26</b>	<b>FY27</b>
<b>\$ 100,000.00</b>					

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Public Works		Replace F350			Reserve/Loan
FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
		\$ 50,000.00			

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Public Works		Paving Reserve			Taxation
FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000

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Public Works		Equipment Reserve			Taxation
FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000

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Municipal Building		Exhaust System			Taxation
FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27

---

Municipal Building		Municipal Building Reserve			Taxation
FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000

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Streetlights		Start-up Reserve			Taxation
FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
	\$ 5,000				

---

Transfer Station		Replace Compactor			Loan
FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
		\$ 25,000			

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Transfer Station		Update/Repair Attendant Shed			Taxation
FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
			\$ 5,000		

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Transfer Station		New Recycling Trailer			Taxation
FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
				\$ 6,000	

# Chapter 15: Existing Land Use

**State Goal:** None Required

## Analysis

Over the past few decades, Monson has experienced slow growth, with predominately single-family residential development and occasional commercial ventures. The Libra Foundation's investment in rebuilding existing dwellings and restoring landmarks has proven to be a very valuable effort in helping Monson restore its character and historic imagery. Most recently, Monson has seen the development of a Redemption Center.

To encourage additional commercial development beyond home occupations, the Planning Board has revised the Industrial District to serve as an Industrial/Commercial District with appropriate additions to the Schedule of Uses.

Investment has been made in both the growth and rural areas of the community. The few small subdivisions in recent years have been in the rural areas containing 5-7 lots. It is expected that Monson will continue its very slow yet steady growth over the course of this planning period.

There are no known floodplains in Monson. The town has not yet filed paperwork to update flood maps.

## Capacity of Local Administration to Manage Land Use Regulations

Staffing levels are limited as is typical in small communities like Monson. Seasonal demands are however experienced such as boat registration, snowmobile registration, and considerable uptick in work levels are experienced at tax collection time. The use of contractual public works employees may be worthy of a revisit in the future. The question of public works contract vs. employee should be evaluated for efficiencies that may be gained in response to especially seasonal demands.

## Conditions and Trends

### Existing Land Use Conditions

Monson’s designated growth areas have historically served the community and it is anticipated they will continue to do so. Incentives for additional commercial growth are always considered along with strategic revisits to uses within the growth districts. The current Land Use Ordinance, District Designations and performance standards have proven successful since the last Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Board is active and responsive to trends and land use demands of the community.

### Existing Land Use Ordinances

#### Current Land Use Districts

The Town of Monson is currently divided into 5 Land Use Districts. One of these established Districts is known as a “floating Industrial Zone”, which has not been physically established. This District was created to comply with the original Growth Management Rules and Regulations.

In addition to the District above, Monson has established 4 Land Use Districts. Three (3) of these Districts are designated Growth Areas and one (1) is a Rural area.

#### Growth Districts:

Village District:	The purpose of the Village District is to maintain and improve the vitality of the village area by preserving its character and encouraging future commercial development.
Mixed Residential District:	The purpose of the Mixed Residential District is to provide a growth area for additional housing units anticipated in the next 10-year period and provides for an expansion of commercial uses.
Industrial District:	The purpose of the Industrial District is to recognize existing industrial activities, as well as reserve land for expansion of existing activities and location of new industries and heavy commercial activities.
Rural District:	The purpose of the Rural District is to allow for conservation of natural resources and open space land, and to encourage agricultural, forestry, resources extraction and recreational activities.

**Current Land Use District Specifications:**

District Name	Lot Size	Road Frontage
Village District	20,000 Sq. Ft.	100 Feet
Mixed Residential District	30,000 Sq. Ft.	150 Feet
	40,000 Sq. Ft.	200 Feet
Industrial District	2 Acres	250 Feet
Rural District	4 Acres	200 Feet

**Lots Created in the Last 10 Years**

Single lot development, an occasional home occupation and small lot subdivisions have been the extent of Monson’s development over the past decades. With acknowledgements of the investments made by the Libra Foundation, Monson has held its historic character quite well. Overall Monson is well positioned for future development over the course of its next planning period.

**Land Needed to Accommodate Anticipated Growth**

Monson anticipates no greater demand for additional land over the next planning period. The focus currently, is business and retail attraction into the existing growth districts. Anticipated residential investment has been provided for with current zoning strategy.

## Land Use Regulations Description

**Land Use Ordinance:** The current Land Use Ordinance of the Town of Monson contains the following performance standards:

1. Accessory Uses
2. Access Requirements
3. Agricultural Management Activities
4. Air Pollution
5. Buffers
  - A. Buffers
  - B. Building Standards
  - C. Building Standards for All Districts
6. Conformance with Comprehensive Plan
7. Construction of Flood Hazard Areas
8. Conversions
9. Density Bonus Provisions
10. Dust, Fumes, Vapors, Gases, Odors, Glare, and Explosive Material
11. Erosion and Sedimentation Controls
12. Home Occupations
13. Industrial Performance Standards
14. Junkyards
15. Landscaping
16. Lighting Design Standards
17. Lot Size, Setback and Coverage Requirements
18. Manufactured Housing
19. Mineral Extraction
20. Mobile Home Park Standards
21. Off Street Parking
22. Off Street Loading
23. Oil and Chemical Storage
24. Pesticide Application
25. Prehistoric and Archaeological Resources
26. Refuse Disposal
27. Sewage Disposal
28. Signs
29. Site Conditions
30. Soils
31. Temporary Storage

32. Topsoil and Vegetation Removal
33. Transient Accommodations “Bed and Breakfast”
34. Transient Accommodations “Rental Cabins and Cottages”
35. Transient Accommodations “Inns and Hostels”
36. Camper Trailers and Recreational Vehicles
37. Transmission Towers/Telecommunications Facility
38. Wind Energy Facilities/Systems

### **Shoreland Zoning Ordinance**

Monson’s Shoreland Zoning Ordinance is consistent with the most recently adopted “State Minimum Guidelines”.

### **Subdivision Ordinance**

Monson’s Subdivision Ordinance is consistent with the State of Maine Subdivision Regulations.

### **Floodplain Management Ordinance**

Monson’s Floodplain Management Ordinance is consistent with the latest model as provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

## **Policies**

None Required

## **Strategies**

None Required

# Chapter 16: Regional Coordination Plan

**State Goal:** A regional coordination program must be pursued with other communities to manage shared resources and facilities, including but not limited to, lakes, rivers, aquifers, and transportation facilities. The plan must identify any shared resources and facilities, describe any conflicts with neighboring communities' policies and strategies pertaining to shared resources and facilities and describe what approaches the community will take to coordinate management of shared resources and facilities.

**Town Goal:** To comply with the State's goals.

## Analysis/Conditions/Trends

There are no known conflicts with neighboring communities' policies and strategies pertaining to shared resources and facilities. As noted below, there are a number of areas in which there is ongoing regional coordination.

## Shared Resources and Facilities

### Education

Monson is part of RSU #68, which includes the towns of Sebec, Dover-Foxcroft, and Charleston and covers K through 8th grade. High school students are tuitioned at the school of their choice.

### Solid Waste

Monson is the Solid Waste and Recycling Center for Blanchard and Elliotsville Townships.

## **Emergency Services**

Monson is the primary fire responding entity for Willimantic, Blanchard Township, and Elliotsville Township. Willimantic pays Monson for this service and Piscataquis County pays to cover Blanchard and Elliotsville.

There is a no cost mutual aid agreement which includes all towns and townships within Piscataquis County.

The Monson Fire Department provides regional first responder service for fire and medical services in Monson as well as the townships of Elliotsville and Blanchard. In addition, Mayo (Dover-Foxcroft) and CA Dean (Greenville) Ambulance Services provide response and emergency transportation. The system is adequate.

## **Water Resources**

At this time there are no formal regional protection plans.

## **Natural Resources**

At this time there are no formal regional protection plans.

## **Agriculture and Forest Resources**

At this time there are no formal regional protection plans.

## **Economy**

Monson is part of the Moosehead Lake region and relies on four season tourism. Monson businesses are featured on the Moosehead regional map.

For the last several years Monson has been a featured community for Maine Crafts Weekend which highlights communities across Maine.

**Housing**

At this time there is no regional housing plan.

**Recreation**

As a designated AT trail town by the non-profit group overseeing the Appalachian Trail System, Monson supports a visitor center for AT hikers and others interested in hiking opportunities elsewhere in the region.

Monson has utilized the Greenville Recreation Director for program implementation in Monson.

The local snowmobile and ATV organizations maintain trails and make available maps for regional users.

**Transportation**

There is no regional public transportation system.

**Public Facilities and Services**

At this time there are no regional plans.

# Chapter 17: Future Land Use Plan

## State Goal:

To encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services, and preventing development sprawl.

## Town Goal:

To comply with the State's goal.

## Future Land Use Plan Overview

### Town of Monson Land Use Ordinance

The current Land Use Ordinance will be amended, as necessary and appropriate, to support the following purposes:

- To implement the policies and recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan;
- To encourage growth in the identified growth areas and to limit growth in the rural areas;
- To promote the health, safety and general welfare of the residents of the community;
- To encourage the more appropriate use of land throughout the community;
- To promote traffic safety;
- To provide safety from fire and other elements;
- To provide an allotment of land area in new developments sufficient for adequate enjoyment of community life;
- To conserve natural resources.

Monson’s Land Use Ordinance will consist of three (3) Growth Districts and one (1) Rural District. These Districts are proposed to continue both in purpose and function as in the current Land Use Ordinance. It is the consensus of the town that these Districts have served the town well over the past decades. The “Floating Industrial District” may be eliminated in the future amendments of the current Land Use Ordinance. The Town of Monson will also continue to include Density Bonuses, Open Space Conservation and Planning Unit Development opportunities within the future Land Use Ordinance.

Monson’s Land Use Districts will continue as follows:

**Growth Areas:**

Village District: The purpose of the Village District is to maintain and improve the vitality of the village area by preserving its character and encouraging future commercial development.

Mixed Residential District: The purpose of the Mixed Residential District is to provide a growth area for additional housing units anticipated in the next 10-year period and provides for an expansion of commercial uses.

Industrial/Commercial District: The purpose of the Industrial/Commercial District is to recognize existing industrial activities, as well as reserve land for expansion of existing activities and location of new industries and heavy commercial activities.

**Rural Areas:**

Rural District: The purpose of the Rural Residential District is to allow for conservation of natural resources and open space land, and to encourage agricultural, forestry, resources extraction and recreational activities.

### **Critical and Important Natural Resources and Shoreland Areas**

Critical and Important Natural Resources and Shoreland Areas have been identified and the appropriate mapping resources will be utilized by the Planning Board when reviewing development proposals and subdivisions.

Beyond the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, which has been deemed consistent with the State Minimum Guidelines; knowledge and awareness of the Natural Resource Protection Act; and identification of historic and archaeological resources in Monson, the town has large parcels of open space and contiguous parcels of land for wildlife preservation.

### **Land Use Ordinance Site Plan/Performance Standards**

Monson's Site Plan Review criteria/performance standards are extensive and encompassing. New development proposals are subject to the applicable ordinance standards that are designed to protect the public's safety, health and welfare as well as provide protection to property values and encourages the preservation and protection of natural resources. The current Performance Standards as listed in the Chapter 15: Existing Land Use will be incorporated into any update of the Land Use Ordinance that may be deemed necessary.

### **Analysis**

Monson's Land Use Plan is consistent with the community's vision of preserving and protecting the rural community of Monson yet provides opportunity for development in appropriate areas within the community. Although Monson is somewhat limited in the availability of infrastructure found in larger communities, the Growth areas as established, support community development within these established central areas of development. Monson's slow growth has allowed the community the benefit of responsibly responding to that growth. The Libra Foundation has made substantial investment in Monson, specifically targeting that investment in the established growth areas of the community.

The Rural District represents a large tract of land and a large percentage of Monson's overall land area. The historic designation of this rural land as a Rural District has served the Town well over the past decades and it is anticipated the District as designated and managed will continue to do so into the future.

## Policies

To coordinate the community's land use strategies with other local and regional land use planning efforts.

To support the location, type, scales and intensities of land uses the community desires as stated in its vision.

To support the level of financial commitment necessary to provide needed infrastructure in growth areas.

To establish efficient permitting procedures, especially in growth areas.

To protect critical rural and critical waterfront areas from the impacts of development.

## Strategies

1. Assign responsibility for implementing the Future Land Use Plan to the appropriate committee, board or municipal official.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeframe: Ongoing

2. Using the descriptions provided in the Future Land Use Plan narrative, maintain enact or amend local ordinances as appropriate to:
  - a. Clearly define the desired scale, intensity, and location of future development;
  - b. Establish or maintain fair and efficient permitting procedures, and explore streamlining permitting procedures in growth areas; and
  - c. Clearly define protective measures for critical natural resources and, where applicable, important natural resources.
  - d. Clearly define protective measures for any proposed critical rural areas and /or critical waterfront areas, if proposed.

Responsible Party: Planning Board

Timeframe: Ongoing

3. Include in the Capital Investment Plan anticipated municipal capital investments needed to support proposed land uses.

Responsible Party:                      Manager/Selectpersons

Timeframe:                                Ongoing

4. Meet with neighboring communities to coordinate land use designations and regulatory and non-regulatory strategies.

Responsible Party:                      Planning Board

Timeframe:                                Ongoing

5. 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 M.R.S. §4451.

Responsible Party:                      Manager/Selectpersons

Timeframe:                                Ongoing

6. Track new development in the community by type and location.

Responsible Party:                      Planning Board

Timeframe:                                Ongoing

7. Direct a minimum of 75% of new municipal growth-related capital investments into designated growth areas identified in the Future Land Use Plan.

Responsible Party:                      Manager/Selectpersons

Timeframe:                                Ongoing

8. Periodically (at least every five years) evaluate implementation of the plan in accordance with Section 2.7.

Responsible Party: Planning Board/Code Enforcement Officer

Timeframe: Ongoing

# Appendices

## Maps and Resources

### Historic and Archaeological Resources

- Monson
- Archaeological Sites and Areas Sensitive for Prehistoric Archaeology

### Water Resources

- Watershed Map
- Sand and Gravel Aquifer Map

### Natural Resources

- Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Wetland Characterization Map
- Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Undeveloped Habitat Blocks & Connectors/Conserved Lands Map
- Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Water Resources and Riparian Habitat Map
- Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife High Value Plant and Animal Habitat Map
- Natural Resources Co-occurrence Map

### Agriculture and Forest Resources

- Monson Agricultural Resources Map

### Transportation

- Monson Infrastructure Map

### Existing Land Use

- Development Constraints Map
- Shoreland Zoning Map
- Zoning Map

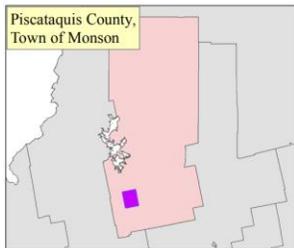
### Future Land Use

- Future Land Use Map

# Monson



0 1 2 Miles



## Monson Air Photo

Aerial Photo: NAIP 2015  
Source Data: USDA, MEGIS, Maine DACF  
Projection: UTM, NAD83, Zone 19, Meters  
Produced by: Municipal Planning  
Assistance Program, DACF  
October 2018

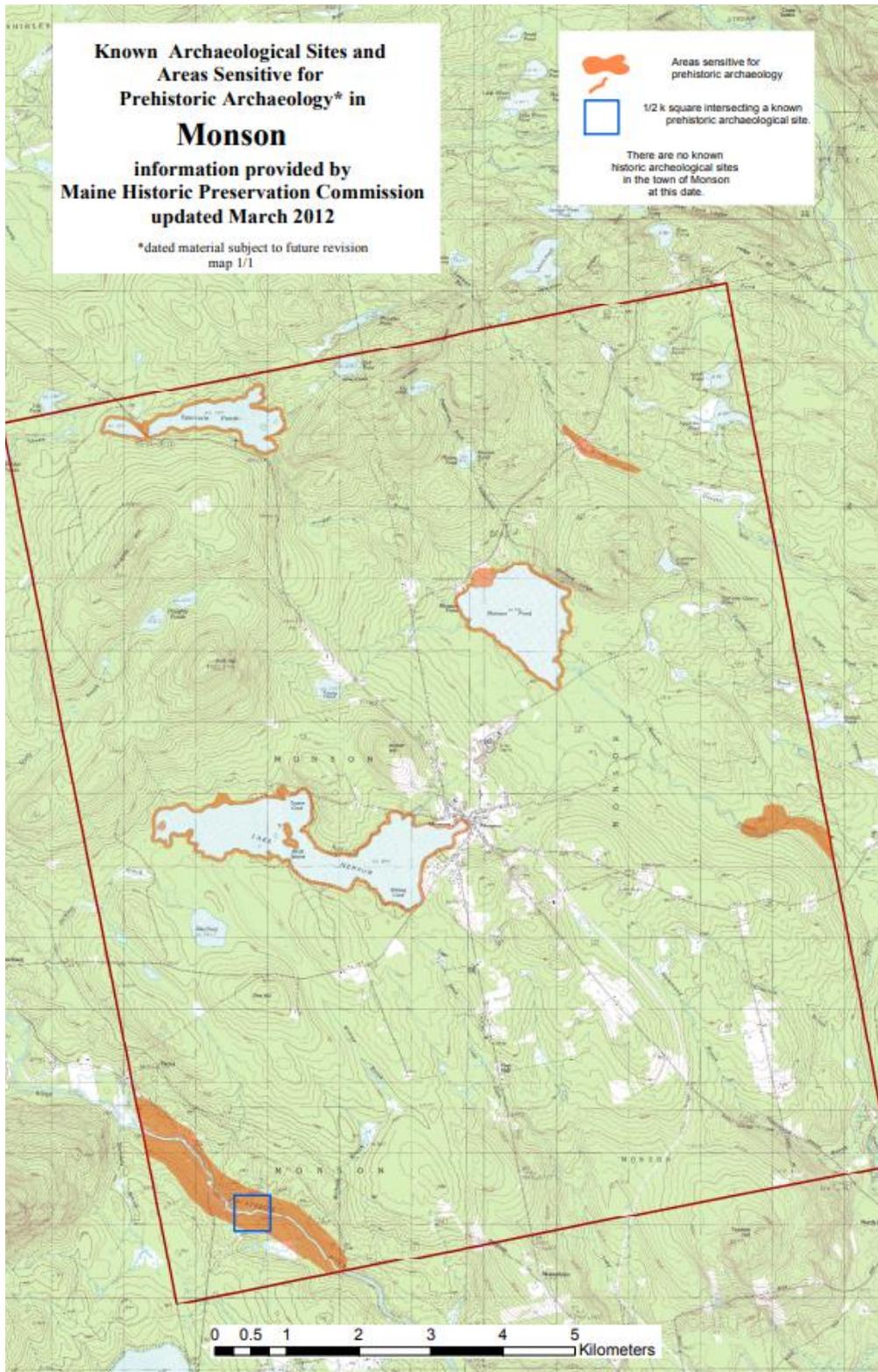


**Legend**

— Municipal border

# Historic and Archaeological Resources

## Archaeological Sites and Areas Sensitive for Prehistoric Archaeology



# Water Resources

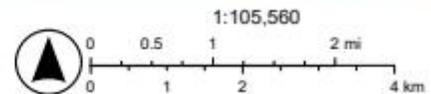
## Watershed Map

### Maine Water Resources Comprehensive Plan Data



10/2/2024, 11:01:13 AM

-  Wastewater Outfalls
- Significant Aquifers
  -  10-50 GPM
  -  Watershed Boundaries
  -  NPS Priority Threatened Watersheds
  -  Town Boundaries



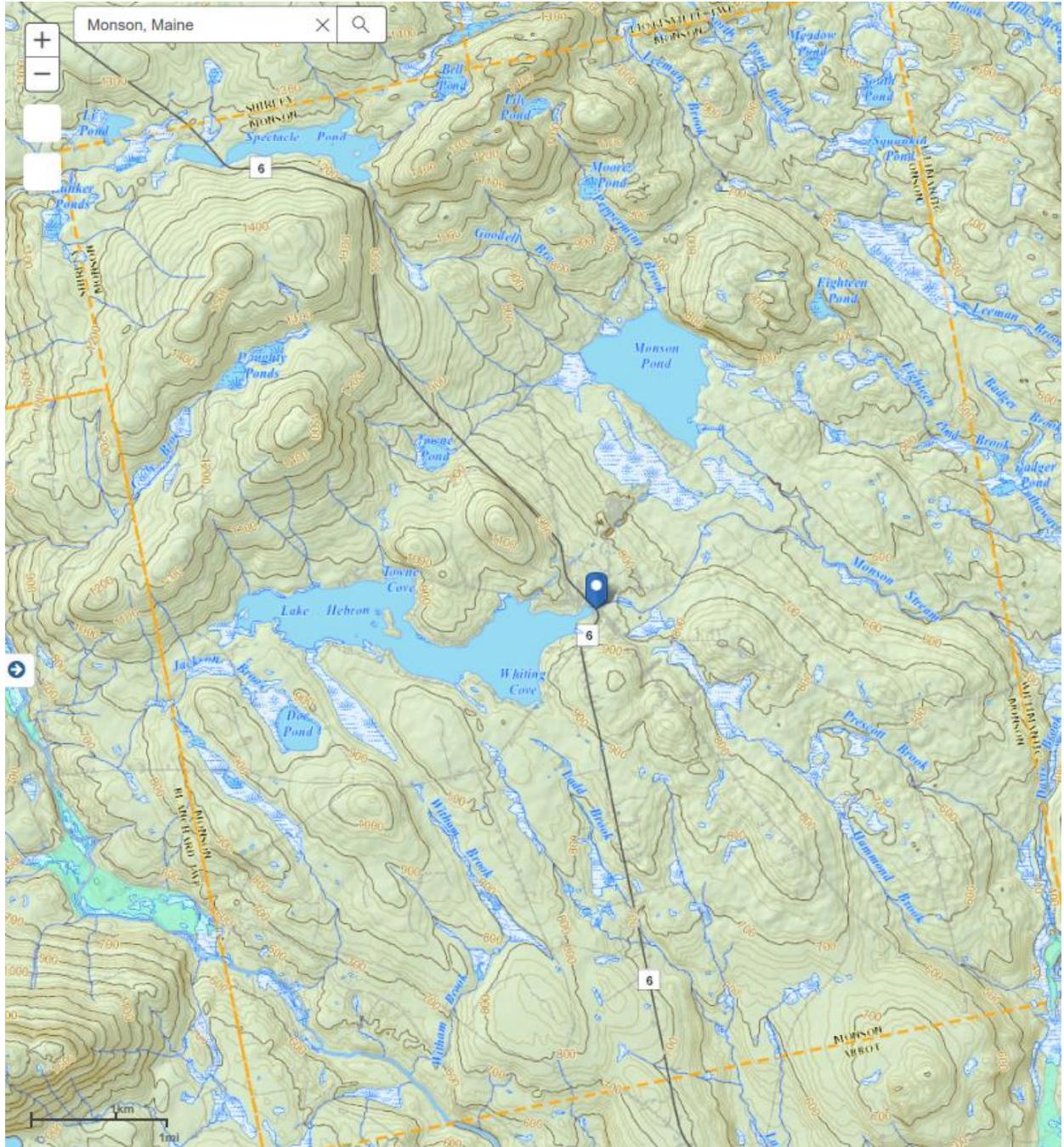
Earthstar Geographics, Earth Canada, Earth TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA, USFWS, NRCan, Parks Canada, Maine DEP



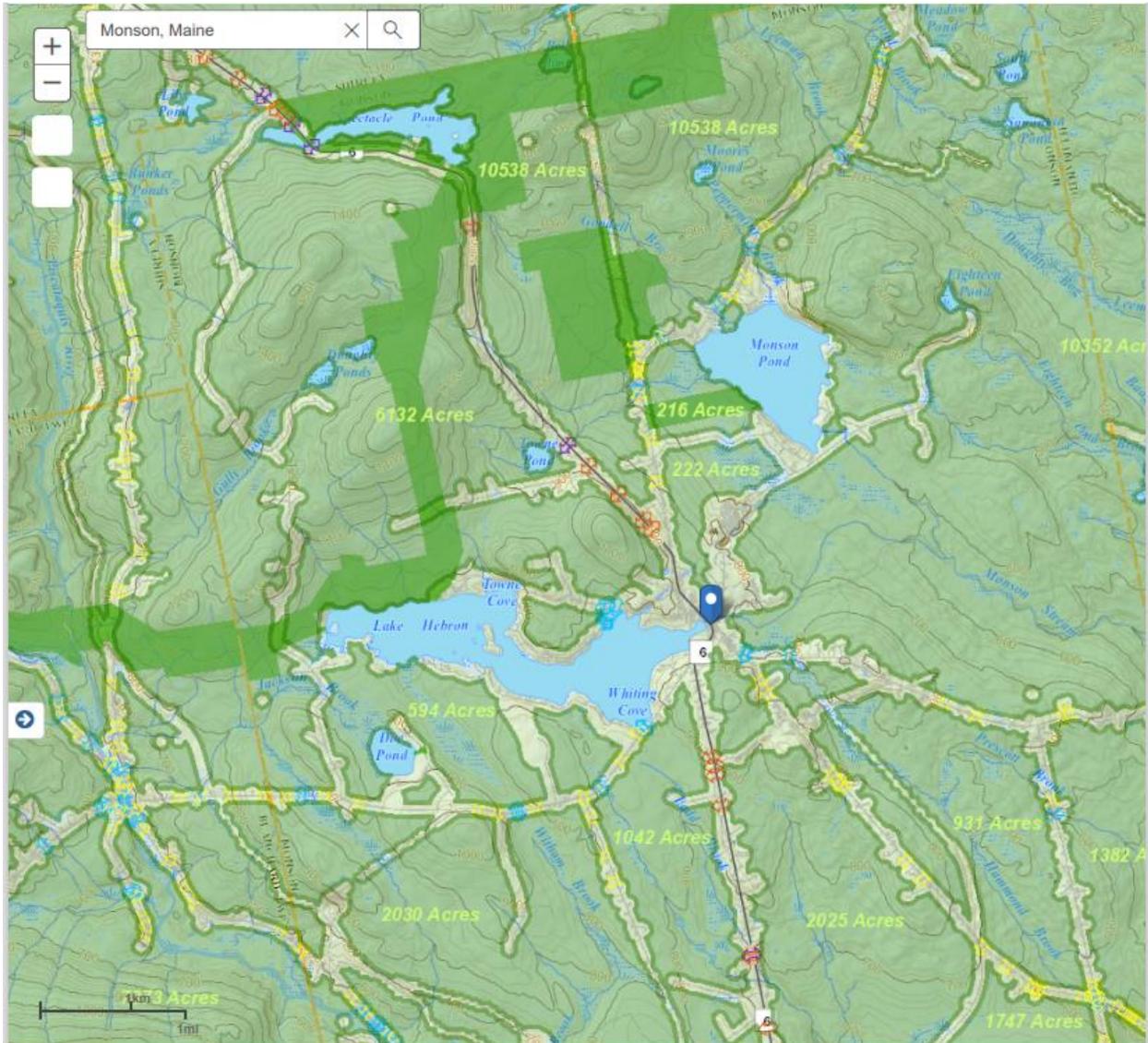


# Natural Resources

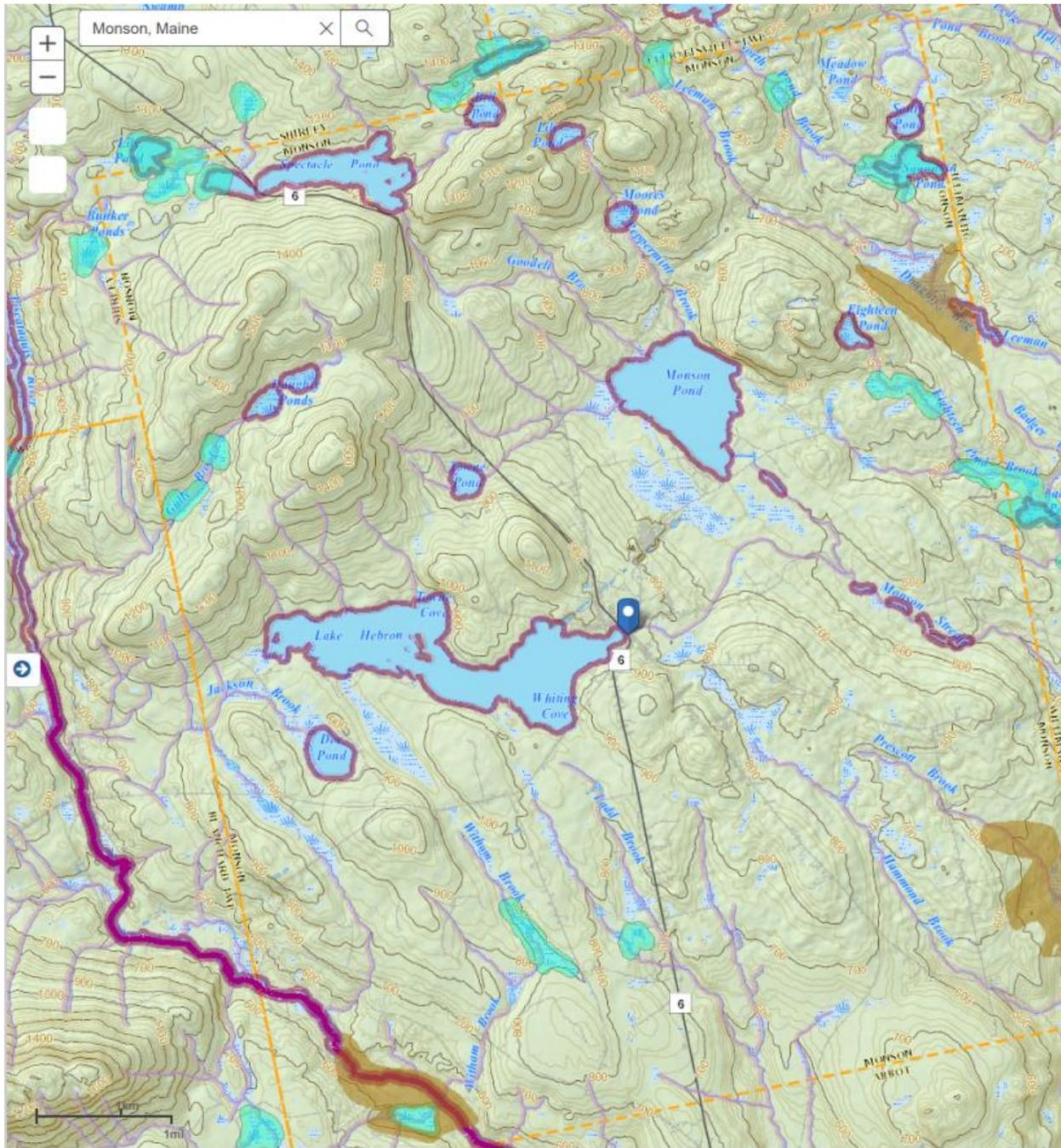
## Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Wetland Characterization Map



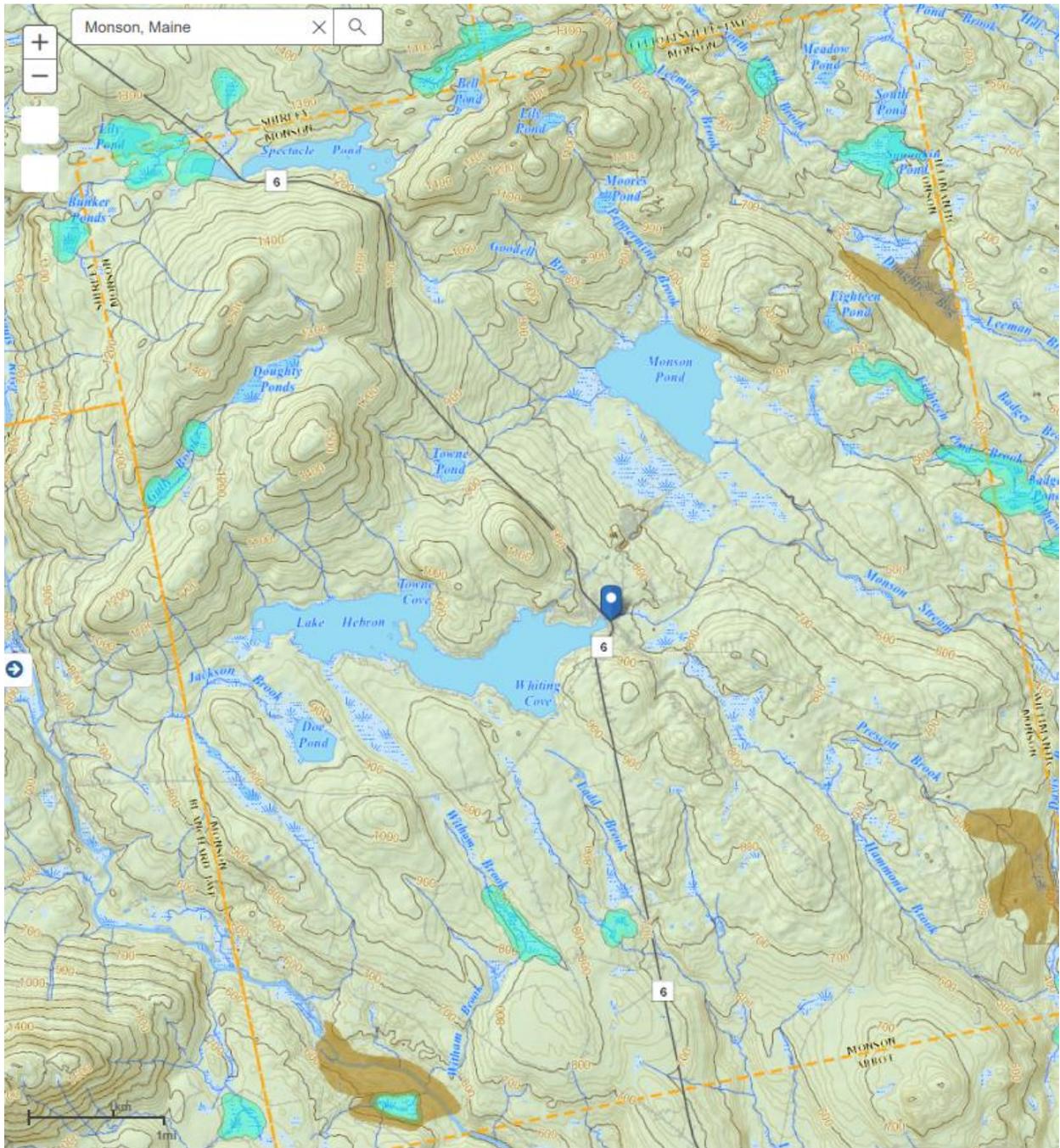
Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Undeveloped Habitat Blocks  
& Connectors/Conserved Lands Map



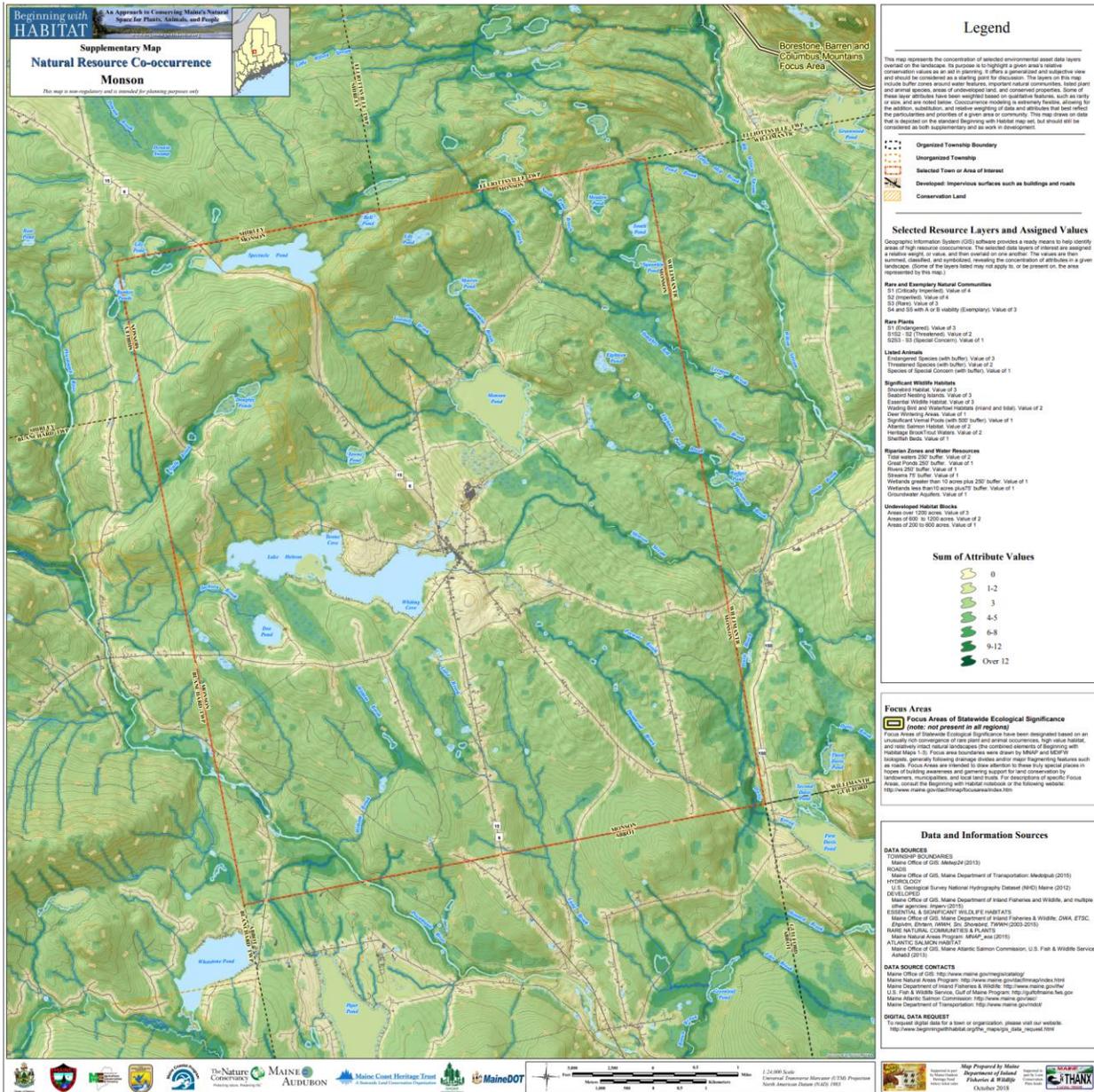
Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Water Resources and Riparian Habitat Map



Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife High Value Plant and Animal Habitat Map



# Natural Resources Co-occurrence Map

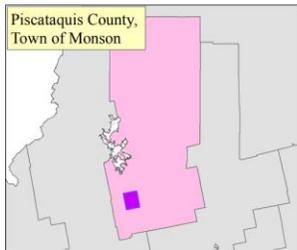
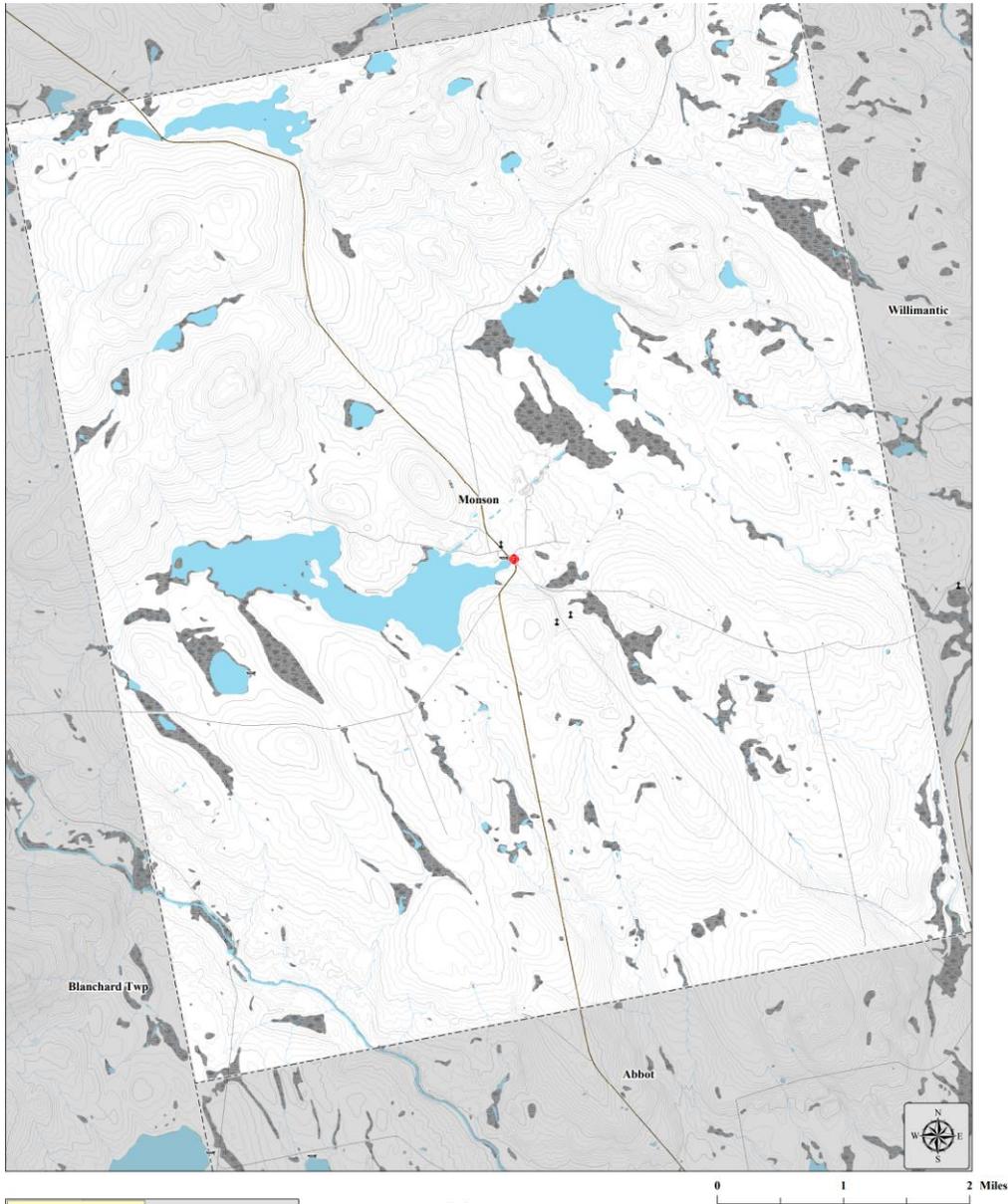


## **Agriculture and Forest Resources**

- Monson Agricultural Resources Map

# Transportation

## Monson Infrastructure Map



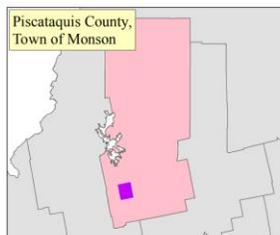
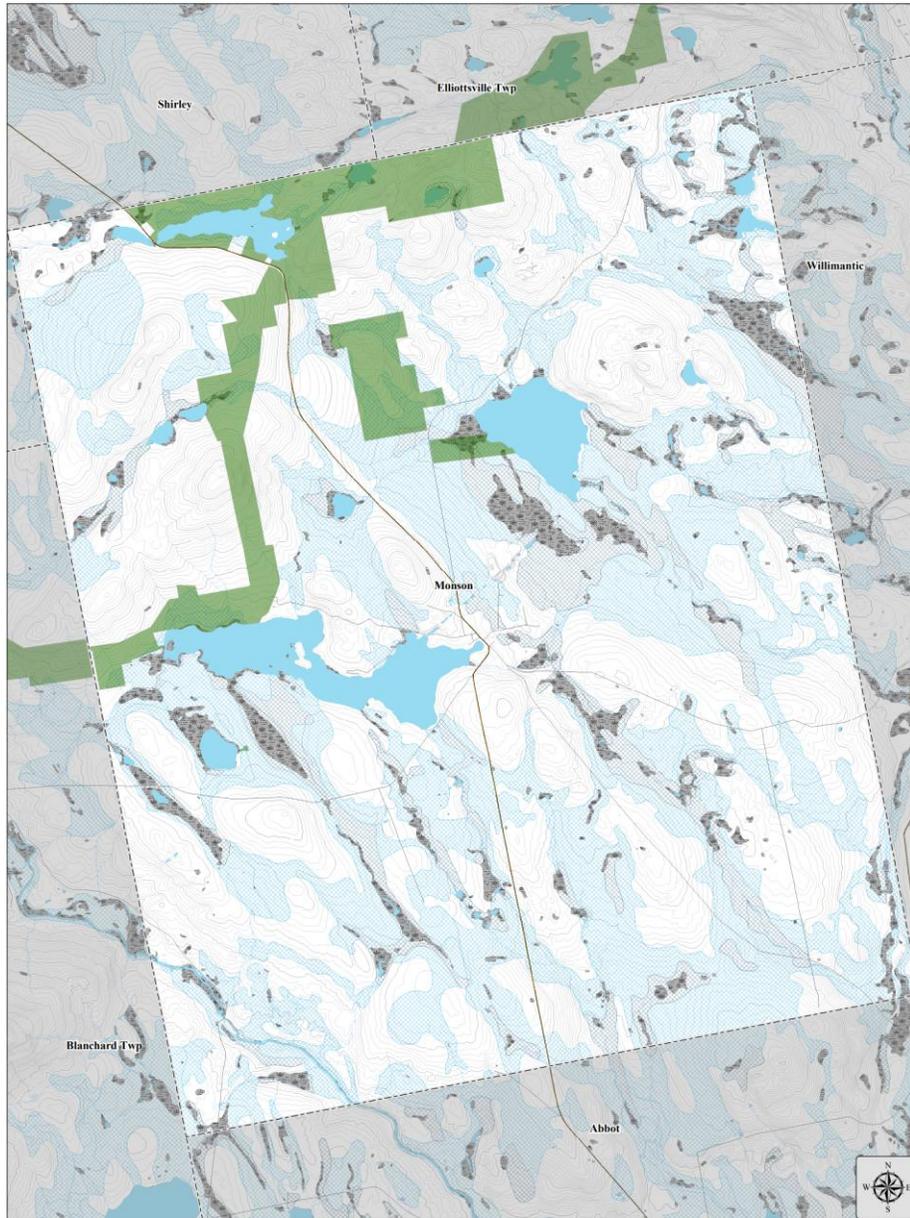
### Monson Infrastructure

Source Data: USDA, MEGIS, Maine DACF  
Projection: UTM, NAD83, Zone 19, Meters  
Produced by: Municipal Planning  
Assistance Program, DACF  
October 2018



# Existing Land Use

## Development Constraints Map



### Monson Development Constraints

Source Data: USDA, MEGIS, Maine DACF  
 Projection: UTM, NAD83, Zone 19, Meters  
 Produced by: Municipal Planning  
 Assistance Program, DACF  
 October 2018

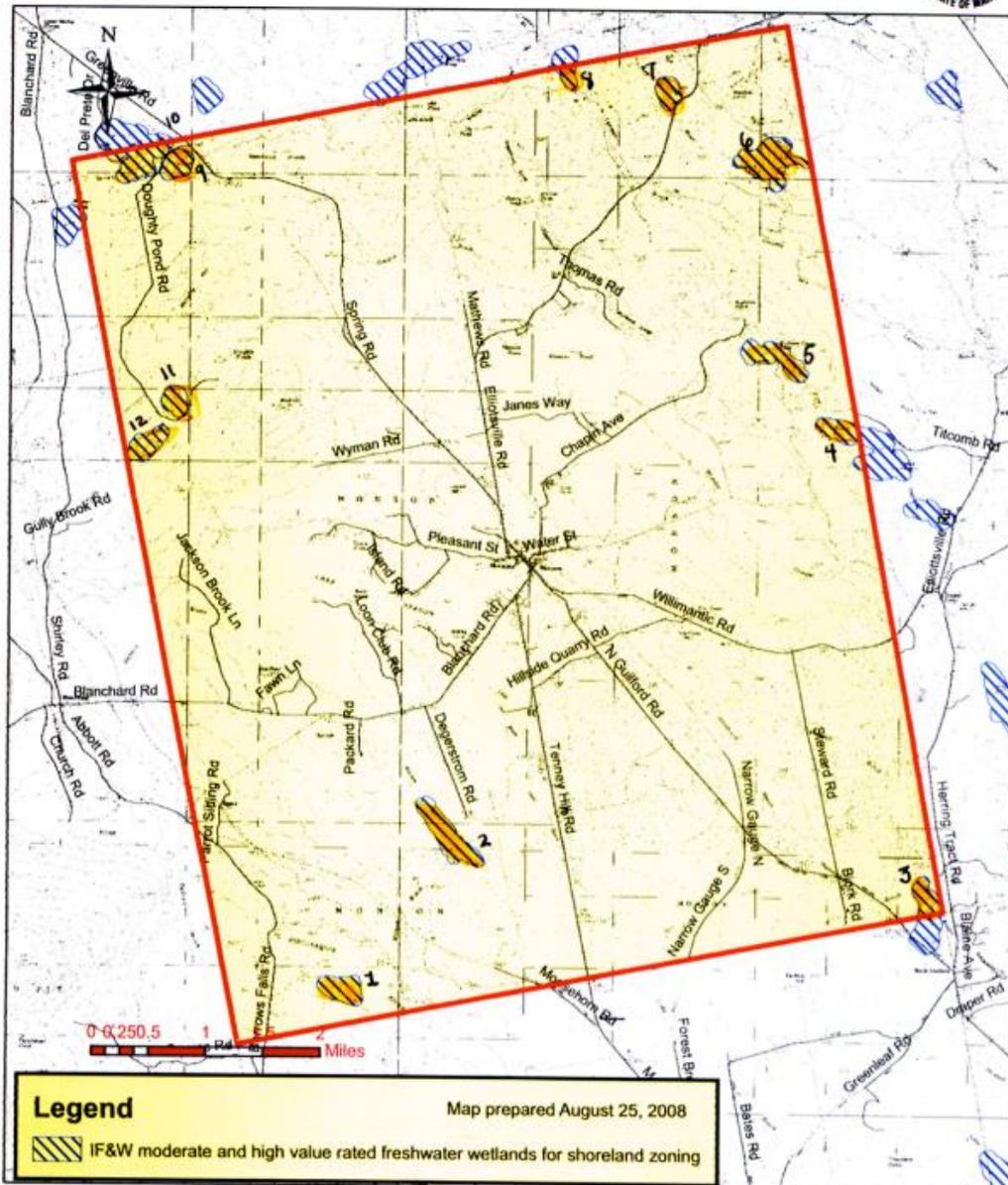


Legend	
Municipal border	Hydric soils
Conserved Lands	Partially hydric soils
State Routes	Waterbody
Rivers/Streams	Wetlands
100 year flood zone	

# Shoreland Zoning Map

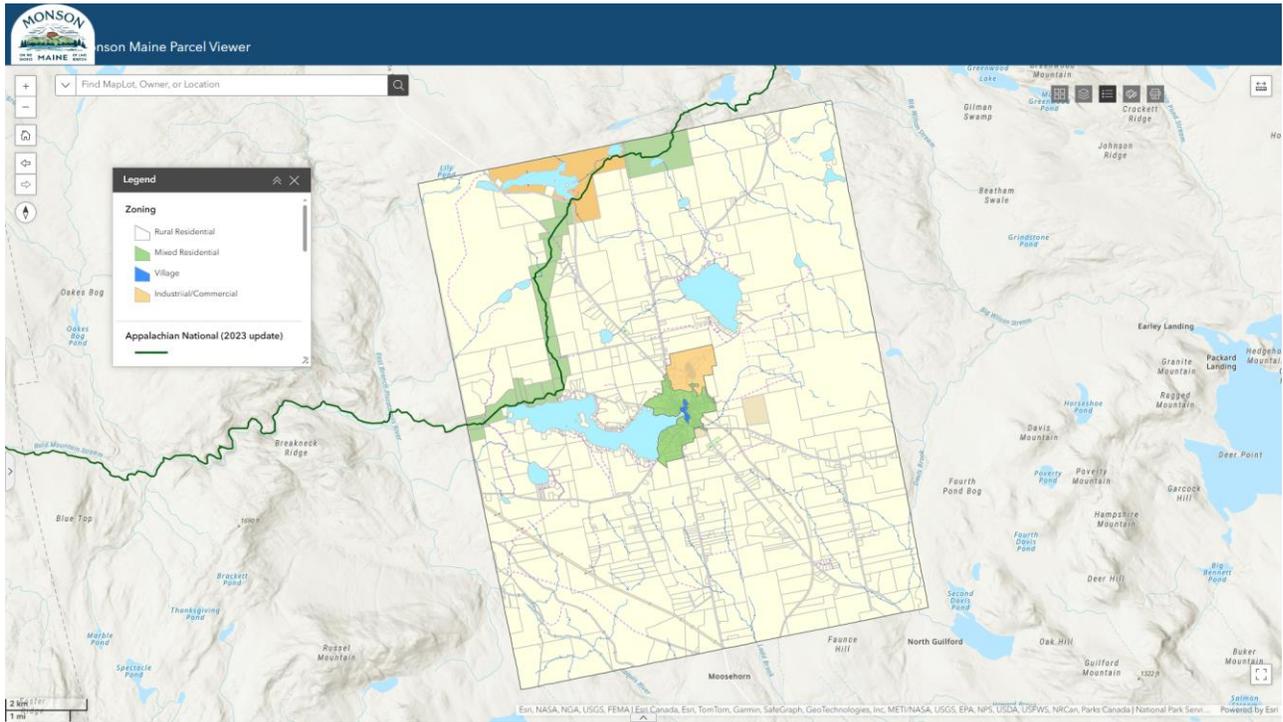
## Shoreland Zoning Ordinance for the Municipality of Monson, Maine

### Town of Monson Moderate & High Value Freshwater Wetlands- Revised



This map shows only moderate and high value rated freshwater wetlands. Please note that low value and non-rated freshwater wetlands are still required to be zoned, as they have been since 1989.

# Zoning Map



# Future Land Use

## Future Land Use Map

