

F. RECREATION

1. Purpose

A town's recreational facilities are an essential contributor to the quality of life that the town enjoys. This section will:

- A. provide an inventory of the current recreational resources available to the Town of Castine whether they be from municipal, state, or private sources;
- B. provide a listing of the programs and services provided by the Recreation Committee;
- C. assess the current and future adequacy of Castine's recreational resources;
- D. assess threats to the recreation resources.

2. Key Findings and Issues Taken Verbatim From the 1995 Plan

Castine has a wide range of recreational facilities and programs. The town facilities are complemented by those of the Academy, most of which are available to residents for a reasonable fee when MMA is in session. There is a need for a ball field of adequate size and a skating rink. There are several conservation areas used for recreational purposes.

3. Key Findings and Issues

The Town facilities, along with those of MMA, the Conservation Properties, and the Recreation Committee activities, meet minimum state standards. The Committee relies on funding from the town budget, user fees, and private donations.

There are two issues pertaining to recreation facilities. Owing to scheduling and vacation periods, there is a lack of student workers needed to serve as lifeguards and attendants for Adams School children and the community. There are no showers, laundry nor is there a marine waste pump-out station for the numerous boats of residents and visitors.

4. Recreation Sites and Programs

Castine has a mixture of public (municipal and state), private, and conservation recreational facilities. These are summarized in Table F.1. The municipal recreational activities are coordinated by the Recreation Committee, whose seven

members are appointed by the Selectmen. The committee organizes various activities throughout the year and financially supports groups and institutions offering recreational activities.

Facility Name	Owner	Water Body	Acres	Pool		Ball Fields	Basketball Ct.	Tennis Ct	Pkng capacity	Other
Adams School Playground	Municipal	n/a	.85	-	1	-	-	-	-	Grade sch.
Castine Yacht Club	Private	Bagaduce River	0.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	dock, sail boats
Castine Golf Club	Private	n/a	28.0	-	-	-	-	4	25	Golf
Castine Municipal Dock	Municipal	Bagaduce River	1.0	-	-	-	-	-	53	ramp, dock
Eaton's Boat Yard	Private	Bagaduce River	1.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	Moorings, dock, fuel, showers, rest rooms
Emerson Hall	Municipal	n/a	.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	Meeting facilities, theater
Fort George	State	n/a	7.0	-	-	-	-	-	16	Picnic
Fort Griffith	Municipal	n/a	1.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Fort Madison	Municipal	Bagaduce River	7.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	picnic, hist ctr
Hatch Cove Preserve	BCPCT	n/a	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	Trails,
Maine Maritime Academy	State	Bagaduce River	12.0	1	-	4	1	5	8	Field house, gym, pool, weights, aerobics, library
Rene Henderson Natural	BCPCT	n/a	90.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	includes Ice Pond skating area
Town Beach and Tidal Pond	Municipal	Wadsworth Cove	2.0	-	-	-	-	-	25	Picnic
Town Common	Municipal	n/a	1.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	Green
Witherle Woods	MCHT*	n/a	180.0	-	-	-	-	-	6	Trails

***NOTE:** MCHT = Maine Coast Heritage Trust; BCPCT = Brooksville, Castine and Penobscot Preservation Trust. See Chapter I (Natural Resources) and L (Land Use) for additional conservation lands.
Source: State of Maine, Dept. of Conservation, Bureau of Parks; Castine Comprehensive. Planning Committee

A. Public Facilities

The largest area is Fort George (7 acres) located at the top of the hill on Battle Avenue. This historic site has a playing field large enough for softball and Little League baseball. The site is also used for social events and entertainment. It is owned by the state and maintained by the town and is in fair condition.

Fort Madison (3.75 acres) overlooks the Bagaduce River and the entrance to Penobscot Bay. Located on Perkins Street, it has magnificent views of the Brooksville shore, Islesboro, and even North Haven. It is used for picnics, weddings and outings. The remaining earthworks make an excellent play area for children, and the sea breezes provide good winds for kite flying. The site is well maintained.

There are several other forts cared for by the Town listed in Chapter K: Historical and Archaeological Resources.

The Adams School playground (0.85 acres) is in the center of town on Court Street. Swings and other play modules including a climbing gym are available year-round. It is kept in good condition.

The Town Common (1.6 acres) is located on Court Street in front of the Adams School. It is used as an extension of the school playground and provides a site for town celebrations such as the Independence Day parade and concert. It is also the site of several historical markers and monuments. It is well maintained.

The Town Beach, located at the Backshore on Wadsworth Cove Road, includes an area of about two acres. The beach itself has 605 feet of water frontage with a breadth averaging 35 feet at high tide. In addition to being used for swimming, it is a good place from which to launch small boats, kayaks, canoes, wind surfers, and other small craft. People often gather here for cook-outs in the evening. Across Wadsworth Cove Road from the Town Beach is the tidal pond, which provides an additional recreation.

Both the beach and the pond are “swim at your own risk” facilities. The town expects users of both facilities to pick up after themselves.

Emerson Hall is the only town-owned indoor facility. Although used primarily for town government functions, it is available for special events such as Halloween parties, theater productions, concerts and the like. It is also used for aerobic exercise sessions, and as an extension of Adams school facilities.

The Municipal Dock is a one-acre site that provides facilities for kayaks, small boats, schooners, and small cruise ships visiting the Town. Restroom facilities, a public boat ramp, and 53 parking spaces are available for boaters and visitors to the Town. However, there is no sanitary pumping station available in Castine at any of the facilities.

MMA makes all of its indoor athletic facilities open to the public for a modest fee during most of the year. These include a 25-yard competition-size swimming pool, three indoor tennis courts, three basketball courts (convertible to four tennis courts and one basketball court), three racketball courts, and one squash court. There are also two well-equipped weight training rooms, and one aerobics room. They are regularly used by the Adams School Physical Education program. During the winter, citizens use the racketball and tennis courts, as well as weight-training equipment. Swimming lessons, aerobic exercise classes, along with other activities are often offered to the public upon request and the availability of instructors.

Academy facilities are often not available during Academy vacation periods due to a lack of students who work as life guards and facility attendants. Since many of these facilities are regularly used by the Adams School athletic program, this can be an inconvenience.

Maine Maritime Academy's waterfront is involved with both recreational and competitive sailing in conjunction with the Castine Yacht Club. The Academy hosts twice-weekly races during the summer.

Maine Maritime Academy's Delano Auditorium, as well as the lecture room in Leavitt Hall are available for lectures, movies, and shows at no charge on a space available basis.

B. Private Recreational Facilities

The Castine Golf Club, located on 28 acres of land, is privately-owned but open to the public. It has a nine-hole golf course and four clay tennis courts. Associated with the golf club, is the Castine Yacht Club, situated on Water Street at the foot of Dyer Lane. Use of this facility is limited to members, guests, or visiting yachtsmen. For a small fee, the latter may use the shower, mooring, and overnight docking facilities.

In the summer the Castine Yacht Club provides a week of free sailing lessons to the children of local residents. A similar arrangement is made to provide golf and tennis instruction to children at the golf club. Non-members may rent both club houses for social events.

Eaton's Boatyard has boat repairs, boat storage, fuel, and docking and mooring facilities for residents and visitors.

C. Conservation Areas

There are two areas that come under the Maine Coast Heritage Trust: the Hatch Cove Natural Area, which covers 32 acres of grassland just off-neck, and a portion of the Witherle Woods, which adds an additional 132 acres of wooded land accessible by numerous trails and carriage paths. Both areas are rich in natural vegetation and local wildlife for tourists and residents to enjoy on a year-round basis.

The Rene Henderson Natural Area consists of 90 acres owned by the Brooksville, Castine, and Penobscot Conservation Trust, providing numerous trails for year-round use as well as a skating pond for the winter.

D. Recreational Programs and Activities

Organizations in town include the Castine Arts Association, the Castine Town Band, the Castine Women's Club, the Men's Club, the Historical Society, the Garden Club, the Embroiderers Guild, the Grange, the Mary Cushman Circle, and the Masons. There also are several informally organized groups such as bridge groups, the Quilting Group, and the Happy Hookers (hooked rugs being their specific interest). The four churches also have many social activities.

All of the traditional outdoor summer recreational activities of golf, tennis, boating, swimming, and nature walks are available to the public. Sledding and cross country skiing are common winter activities. The Merchant's Association has developed and funded a self-guided tour of the village.

5. **Recreational Programs and Services Provided by the Recreation Committee**

A seven-member Recreation Committee, appointed by the Board of Selectmen, sponsors or coordinates several activities. Limits on public funding require the committee to charge user fees for some of the following activities.

- Pee Wee Basketball
- Pee Wee Soccer
- Little League
- Co-sponsor of free week of sailing
- Christmas Tree Festivities
- Special ski events
- Easter Festivities
- July 4th Festivities
- Halloween Activities

6. Current and Future Adequacy of Castine's Recreational Resources

The available facilities and programs are compared to recommended state standards for communities of comparable size in Table F.2. Castine meets many but not all of these standards. In some cases there are alternatives. For example, the Town does not offer formal programs for swimming, but it does offer programs for tennis and sailing through the golf club and yacht club for which scholarship aid is available. The Town still lacks a baseball field, nor are there facilities for ice skating.

Table F.2: State Guidelines for Recreation and Park Services/Facilities			
Population Criteria	Castine	1500-2000	2000-2500
I. Administration			
A. Recreation and Park Committee or Board	X	X	x
II. Leadership			
A. Summer Program			
1. Swimming Instructors		X	x
2. Summer Recreation Director		X	x
B. Winter Program			
1. One Skating Rink Supervisor for each area		X	x
III. Program			
A. Swimming Instruction		X	x
B. Supervised Playground		X	x
C. Senior Citizen Club		X	x
D. Teen Program			x
E. Skiing Instruction		X	x
F. Ice Skating		X	x
G. Community-wide Special Events	X	X	x
H. Arts and Crafts	X	X	x
I. Evening Adult Education		X	x
J. Organized Dance Group			x
IV. Facilities (to include School Area)			
A. Outdoor Facilities			
1. Neighborhood Playground, 2-10 acres: Playground, basketball court, playfield, etc.*	X	X	x
2. Community Recreation Area, 12-25 acres: ball fields, tennis courts, swimming facility, ice skating		X	x
3. Softball and/or Little League Diamond (.75 per	X	X	x

1000 population)			
4. Basketball Court (.50 per 1000 population)	X	X	x
5. Tennis Court (.67 per 1000 population)	X	X	x
6. Multi-purpose field: football, soccer, field hockey (.50 per 1000 population)	X	X	x
7. Swimming Area to serve 3% of town Population (15 sq. ft. per user)	X	X	x
8. Ice Skating (5,000 sq. ft. per 1000 population)		X	x
9. Playgrounds (.50 per 1000 population)	X	X	x
10. Horseshoe Courts		X	x
11. Shuffleboard Courts		X	x
12. Picnic Areas with tables and grills (2 tables per 1000 population)	X	X	x
13. Outdoor Education or Nature Center	X	X	x
B. Indoor Facilities			
1. School Facilities Available for Public Use	X	X	x
2. Gym or Large Multi-purpose room (.20 per 1000 population)	X	X	x
3. Auditorium or Assembly Hall	X	X	x
4. Arts and Crafts Shop			x
5. Teen Center			x
6. Senior Citizen Center			x
7. Game Rooms			x
8. Public Library	X	X	x
Source: <u>Recreation and Open Space Planning Workbook</u> , Community Parks and Recreation Division, Office of Comprehensive Planning, May, 1991.			

7. Assessment of Threats to Recreation Facilities

As with all publicly-funded programs, there will be close scrutiny applied to the Town's recreation activities in the future. On-going maintenance is nonetheless essential if the present level of activity is to continue to meet the existing minimum state standards.

For many of the recreational facilities, the Town relies on the facilities at MMA. Although these facilities are first and foremost for the benefit of the enrolled students, there has been a tradition of making these facilities available for both the year-round and seasonal residents of Castine. A continued partnership between the Town and the Academy will serve to optimize the availability of these resources.

8 December 2008

TO DO

Salt water pond

Guided tour \$\$\$

See Fiscal capacity chapter

Adequate facilities for kids re desire to live here

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