



Town of Casco
Open Space Commission Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, January 14, 2026, 6:00 PM
Casco Community Center



1. Review and approval of the meeting agenda
2. Review and Approval of the Notes from 12-15-25
3. **Resilience Planning** Next Steps
 - a. Supplemental Agenda, Steve and Team to join
 - b. *Beginning with Habitat* Letter
4. Berry Property Stakeholder's Group
 - a. Discuss Visions of the Commissioners
 - b. Developing our recommendation
5. Update to **Maine Community Foundation 2026 Grant**
6. 2026 Calendar: Saturday May 31, 9 to 1
 - a. Community Engagement Events
 - i. Volunteer Trail Improvement Work & Fundraiser
 - ii. Beginning With Habitat to Present
 - iii. Liaise with ATV and CRSC
7. Continuing Focus
 - a. Dog Park in Casco
8. Public Participation for non-Agenda items
9. Comments from the Commissioners
10. Next Open Space Meeting: Monday, February 9 (rescheduled due to President's Day Holiday)
11. Adjournment



JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF
INLAND FISHERIES & WILDLIFE
353 WATER STREET
41 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA ME 04333-0041



JUDITH CAMUSO
COMMISSIONER

Item 4.#

To the Comprehensive Plan Committee of Casco;

Congratulations on embarking on the comprehensive planning process for Casco. A few months ago, the Municipal Planning Assistance Program at the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry provided your town with resources from several state programs, including Beginning with Habitat. The Beginning with Habitat program is available to provide your community with presentations and technical assistance on natural resources and wildlife in your town.

Completing a municipal comprehensive plan calls for a significant community effort. State agencies and partner Regional Councils are available to help. Our program – Beginning with Habitat, a voluntary conservation technical assistance program housed within the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife – offers strategies to help you meet the natural resource goals of your town and the minimum state requirements of the Natural Resource sections of your comprehensive plan. Increasing demand for this assistance has resulted in the creation of these letters for your convenience.

Please note that there are required strategies included in the [Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rule](#). Several of these that relate to the Beginning with Habitat program are identified in the *Required Elements* section in the following pages.

This letter offers two additional voluntary categories of natural resource conservation strategies – *broad* and *focused*. *Broad* strategies focus on actions that affect the town as a whole, such as documents to consider producing or administrative methods. These are strategies that Maine towns use to support their local land-use planning goals. *Focused* strategies are site-specific actions that the town might take for local natural resource challenges. If you feel these strategies do not highlight relevant/important natural resource issues and would like assistance in strategizing, please contact us.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions – we look forward to assisting you in your planning process!

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<https://www.maine.gov/ifw/fish-wildlife/wildlife/beginning-with-habitat>



Natural Resources Strategies Casco

Natural Resources Analysis

Casco is a developing town in Cumberland County covering about 31 square miles with approximately 3600 residents. The last comprehensive plan was in 2024, and the town has a conservation commission, open space plan, and is enrolled in the Community Resilience Partnership.

Habitat loss is the top contributor to wildlife population declines both in Maine and around the globe. Frequently, habitat is lost as land is converted to human developments, though not all development patterns are equal in terms of their impact. Disperse development destroys proportionally more habitat than concentrated development, and concentrated areas simultaneously reduce strain on municipal services (less distance to deliver utilities, emergency services, etc.) and creates more economic opportunity. Town centers are formed/forming in Casco, though development is relatively diffuse through much of the town. Limiting this sprawl and concentrating development will be an important strategy in coming decades. Many of the habitat blocks are still over 500 acres in size and capable of maintaining a variety of wildlife species. The largest block at least partially within Casco is over 8200 acres in size.

While the quantity of natural areas is important, the connections between them are at least as valuable. Wildlife needs to move between habitat blocks to meet life history needs; to find new forage patches, to find mates, expand to new territories, and to respond to change. If connections between habitats are interrupted, this can result in both challenges for wildlife and people. Frequently, disruptions to habitat connectivity come in the form of roads, culverts, dams, and developments.

Roadways are a major disruptor of habitat connectivity, where animals may be deterred from crossing roads or may be hit by vehicles. Collisions with vehicles also represent an economic and public safety concern, where Maine spends an estimated \$300 million per year on wildlife-vehicle collisions (WVCs) due to damages to vehicles, injuries, and fatalities. Casco has recorded 363 WVCs that have resulted in insurance claims since 2003 (see [Maine DOT Public Crash Query Tool](#)). Accordingly, this data does not include species that are too small to result in damage/injury, such as reptiles, amphibians, birds, invertebrates, and small mammals. Unfortunately, these species can be hit at such high rates that local declines or extirpations can occur, and many drivers are unaware of the impacts they may be having. Poland Spring Road, Meadow Road, and Roosevelt Trail all have high concentrations of WVCs.

The most effective means at reducing collisions comes in the form of wildlife crossing structures (usually underneath roadways) that incorporate guide fencing to funnel wildlife to the crossing. Altering habitat to remove attractants (e.g. salt pools that may attract ungulates, nesting habitat, forage locations) and reducing driver speed (narrow roadways, speedbumps, reduced speedlimits, etc.) are also effective for reducing collision probability. Signage is generally considered ineffective, though reactive signage (e.g., flashing lights during high-probability times or placing signs for only parts of the year) may boost effectiveness.



Aquatic connectivity also carries great importance for wildlife and people. Species like brook trout require connected waterways to respond to changing conditions (temperature changes, drought) and find mates. Indeed, Casco has many priority brook trout conservation streams. Frequently, these connections are interrupted by culverts that are too small, perched too high, transporting water at too high a velocity, or are crushed. Upgrading these culverts to [Stream Smart](#) designs can restore connectivity for aquatic species. Additionally, Stream Smart culverts are substantially more resilient to flooding; winter storms of 2023-2024 highlighted the need to incorporate these structures to protect infrastructure and communities and washouts have not yet been recorded with structures that meet Stream Smart standards. Funding for such projects can be found [here](#). Thirty-three public culverts have been identified in Casco, with thirteen forming a barrier, eighteen forming a potential barrier, and two forming no barrier. Three impassable dams are also present. This information and more can be accessed through the [Maine Stream Habitat Viewer](#).

Sebago Lake is a critical resource for the state and for the region. As Maine's deepest lake with cool and clean water, multiple coldwater fisheries persist here, including brook trout, landlocked salmon, and lake trout. Given its proximity to southern Maine, size, and fishery, the recreational use of Sebago Lake is high and measures to protect the lake will not only protect its wildlife but have major economic benefits. Pleasant Lake and Thomas Lake also both provide coldwater fisheries, and protecting their water quality is also important.

A variety of rare species and critical habitats exist in Casco. Great Blue Heron (State Special Concern) are well-known to most Mainers, but this species is unfortunately declining in part due to its sensitivity of nesting locations. A nesting colony is known in a wetland in central Casco, and minimizing disturbance around this area will help keep populations secure. The Scarlet Bluet (State Special Concern) and New England Bluet (State Special Concern) are two species of damselfly (dragonfly relatives) that live in wetland habitats and have been recorded in Owl Pond. These species are highly sensitive to water quality as most of their lives are spent as aquatic nymphs. Upon metamorphosis into adults, they require emergent freshwater vegetation to climb out of the water and begin foraging/looking for mates during their one season as adults. The Pygmy Snaketail (State Special Concern), a species of dragonfly, is found along the Crooked River. Similarly, this species requires clean water and intact upland habitats for foraging and breeding. All of these species benefit from enhanced riparian buffers that help maintain habitat and preserve its quality, reducing impacts from pollution and other disturbance.

Two types of Significant Wildlife Habitat (SWH) are known in Casco. SWHs are critical wildlife habitats that are regulated under the Natural Resources Protection Act and administered by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. In Casco, this includes Inland Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat (IWWH) and Significant Vernal Pools (SVP). IWWHs are wetlands that provide important habitat for species like ducks, herons, and many other wildlife species as most wildlife needs to access water at some point in their lives. Since quality of the wetland can be impacted by activities in the surrounding uplands, activities within 250 feet of the wetland are regulated. Eight IWWHs are present in Casco.



Vernal pools are small, temporary bodies of water that fill with water in the spring and are dry by the end of summer. The temporary nature of these pools makes it difficult for many aquatic obligates such as fish to survive in these pools, but some specially adapted species can thrive in these habitats. Species like Wood Frogs, Spotted Salamanders, Blue-spotted Salamanders, and Fairy Shrimp depend on these habitats for their persistence. In some cases, a vernal pool may meet criteria to receive designation as significant. Note that not every vernal pool can become significant; only 1/5th of surveyed pools receives significant designation based on various hydrologic and biologic data. SVPs are wetlands that also regulate activities within 250 feet of the pool, but a 100-foot no-build buffer will also be included beginning in 2026. Seven SVPs have been recorded in Casco. Because SVPs are difficult to detect, it is possible more are present.

Deer Wintering Areas (DWAs) are another important wildlife habitat that is identified in Casco. During harsh winters, white-tailed deer require access to locations that provide forage, reduced snow depth, and shelter. Patches of coniferous forest, especially with cedar and hemlock, can provide such conditions and increase winter survival rates. These habitats are considered “candidate” significant wildlife habitats, as DWAs have been proposed for inclusion but have not finalized rulemaking. Four DWAs have been identified throughout Casco.

Five rare plants and two rare/exemplary natural communities have been identified in Casco. Four of these (Dry Land Sedge, State Special Concern; Summer Grape, State Threatened; Purple Clematis, State Special Concern; Fern-leaved False Foxglove, State Special Concern) are found on Rattlesnake Mountain. The extensive dry, rocky habitat creates conditions that are relatively uncommon in Maine, resulting in unique species compositions. Indeed, the area also includes two rare/exemplary natural communities; an Enriched Northern Hardwoods Forest and an Oak-Pine Woodland. Like the rare plants, slopes create the conditions that make these communities possible Hollow Joe-pye Weed (State Special Concern) occurs along Mayberry Hill Road in Casco.

Occasionally, concentrations of rare species and critical habitats can occur in such a congregation that they are important on a statewide scale. These areas, known as Focus Areas of Statewide Ecological Significance, are delineated spaces defined on biological criteria rather than political ones (e.g., town line, parcels, etc.). As a result, their boundaries frequently overlap with other municipalities and create opportunities for cooperative and regional conservation efforts. A portion of the Jugtown Plains Focus Area enters Casco, and includes Harrison, Otisfield, and Naples.

Required Elements

The strategies below are some of those that relate to the Beginning with Habitat Program, though are not a complete list of required comprehensive plan elements. The complete list can be found here: [Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rule](#).



- *Involve all relevant people.* Everyone is impacted by your local comprehensive plan and every effort should be made to include as many voices as possible. Regional Councils can help with engagement and outreach techniques.
- *Integrate your inventory.* How can you protect your natural resources if you don't know what you have or where it exists? Beginning with Habitat offers tools and data to help you learn where your important and critical natural resources are, from aquifers to rare plants and animals. These data can be provided in a digital or print format and are also available online in map viewers. [This is where most towns encounter the greatest challenges.](#)
- *Future Land Use.* One of the most significant elements of a comprehensive plan is a future land use plan and map, where districts are identified for limited or future growth. The Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) and Map provide the foundation for a zoning ordinance if the town chooses to develop one. The FLUP can include overlay districts to protect certain features, support energy production, or promote more housing. The FLUP can also expand upon or fine-tune the minimum requirements (see [mandatory state subdivision regulations](#)) of a municipal subdivision ordinance. For instance, a subdivision ordinance could provide density bonuses for more open space reserved, smaller minimum lot sizes, or connectivity among open spaces on adjoining properties.

Broad Voluntary Strategies

- *Collaborate with Beginning with Habitat.* Beginning with Habitat is a free service available to towns to assist in conservation planning projects, including open space planning, inventorying, site visits, presentations, mapping, and other projects.
- *Work with a local land trust.* Land Trusts acquire fee and easement conservation lands that are important for wildlife and for people. Loon Echo Land Trust and the Forest Society of Maine's service areas include Casco.

Focused Voluntary Strategies

- Attempt to maintain a) large patches of habitat and b) keep them connected to support a variety of wildlife. Help private landowners access incentives to invest in long-term stewardship of their property. Beginning with Habitat's private landowner biologist is available to help with these measures and provide tools for management.
- Incorporate [living shoreline](#) practices for shoreline stabilization projects. These projects reduce deflection of wave action to neighboring properties, create habitat rather than destroy it, and can effectively protect property from erosion.
- Consider measures that will improve aquatic connectivity and public safety, like replacing culverts with Stream Smart crossings when the time for replacement comes.
- Concentrate development to areas where development exists through zoning and volunteer strategies (see below). Reducing the spread of development reduces the strain of municipal services, creates more viable economic centers, and reduces impacts to habitat.
- Incorporate creative strategies to protect natural area and concentrate housing to growth areas. Methods like transfer development fees (developers pay an extra fee to increase



density in growth areas; the fee is used to purchase conservation land in rural zones) and conservation and limited development projects (where rural land is subdivided and sales of the subdivisions are used to fund acquisition and protection of the larger undeveloped parcels, frequently done in conjunction with land trusts) are effective for improving housing stock while protecting large amounts of land.

- Coordinate with Beginning with Habitat and other agencies/partners for site visits to survey lands and determine what resources may be present.
- Consider revising the town's shoreland zoning ordinance to enhance protections for wetlands and riparian areas. Possibilities to consider include incorporating buffers for small streams and wetlands in shoreland zoning, increasing forested buffers to maintain water quality and provide movement corridors for wildlife, and more. See [Maine Audubon's guide on shoreland habitats](#) or reach out to Beginning with Habitat staff for more information.
- Incentivize landowners to keep their land as open space through tree growth or open space current use tax programs.
- Collaborate with Otisfield, Naples, and Harrison to conserve the Jugtown Plains Focus Area.

For more information and ideas, contact us or visit our municipality page:

<https://www.maine.gov/ifw/fish-wildlife/wildlife/beginning-with-habitat/municipalities>



Casco Open Space Plan

Draft List of Actions

Guiding principle:

During all potential land acquisitions and management decisions, the Town of Casco will work to balance public access and rural character with the protection of wildlife habitat.

1. Conserve and Protect Casco's Unique Landscapes and Water Resources

- a. Prioritize land conservation efforts that safeguard historical, wild, working, and water-rich landscapes, with a strong emphasis on protecting water quality in lakes, ponds, rivers, and wetlands. (Existing Conditions Report)
- b. Prevent development sprawl by coordinating an interconnected open space network that radiates from our villages and expands access to trails and waterbodies. (Existing Conditions Report)
- c. Keep large, in-tact forested blocks available and uninterrupted for wildlife passage and ecological health. Areas for consideration include Jugtown Forest, Hacker's Hill Preserve, Rattlesnake Mountain, Pine Hill Wilderness, Hancock lumber lands, and the undeveloped areas between Routes 11, 121 and 302. (Outreach report)
- d. Conserve wetlands and marsh systems that support biodiversity, water filtration, flood storage, and sustain habitat. Areas for consideration include wetlands near The Heath, areas across from Webbs Mills, and wetlands behind the Hancock Mill on Route 11. (Outreach report)
- e. Establish regular check-ins with water-quality monitoring organizations for updates on water quality within Casco's waterbodies including: (Existing Conditions Report)
 - i. Thompson Lake Environmental Association (TLEA) (Thompson Pond)
 - ii. Oxford County Soil & Water Conservation District (Thompson Pond, Pleasant Lake)
 - iii. Pleasant Land and Parker Pond Association (Pleasant Lake and Parker Pond)
 - iv. Thomas Pond Improvement Association (Thomas Pond)
 - v. Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District (Thomas Pond, Parker Pond, Coffee Pond, Dumpling Pond)

- vi. Crescent Lake Watershed Association (Crescent Lake)
- f. Inquire if stewardship and water-quality monitoring organizations would consider adding additional waterbodies in Casco to their monitoring program. (Existing Conditions Report)
- g. Protect moderately developed shorelines, private shoreline buffers, and conserved forestland along waterbodies to preserve the clarity, habitat quality, and scenic character of Casco's "blue spaces". (Existing Conditions Report)
- h. Formally conserve the group of town-owned properties classified as "Conserve & Enhance" properties by the Casco Open Space Commission. These properties include: (Open Space Inventory)
 - i. State Park Road Property
 - 1. Map-lot 001A-0002 & 0003-0036
 - 2. Inventory map #15
 - ii. Libby Road
 - 1. Map-lot 0004-0019-A
 - 2. Inventory map #19
 - iii. Lilly Brook Property
 - 1. Map-lot 0042-0022-B
 - 2. Inventory map #27
 - iv. 70-Acre Wood
 - 1. Map-lot 0002-0003
 - 2. Inventory map #29
- i. Expand and connect, through direct land acquisition or easement, the existing network of conserved lands in areas such as Owl Pond, Rattlesnake Mountain, Pine Hill, and lands between major roadways. (Outreach report)
 - i. Collaborate with Loon Echo Land Trust to work with private landowners to make these expansions/connections and protect lakefront areas. (Outreach report). The Casco Open Space Commission is aware of many individuals that are open to conversations regarding easements and/or public access, and the relationships should be fostered delicately. (Existing Conditions Report)
- j. Deepen the relationship with any camps or former camp landowners that have expressed an interest in working with the Town to expand the existing open space and recreation network. (Existing Conditions Report)

- k. Using the climate resilience map, identify and secure proactive land acquisitions to combat climate change (i.e., lands adjacent to waterbodies or high elevation areas). (Meeting notes)
 - i. Acquire and manage land to address erosion concerns in problem areas using the climate resilience map and any other relevant maps as a guide. (Outreach report)
- l. Identify and secure land acquisitions or enhancements designed for youth-friendly gathering spaces such as parks or waterfront hangouts and areas where teens and others feel safe, are well-maintained, and are easy to reach from schools and other public places. (Outreach report)
- m. Convene an annual or bi-annual summit of surrounding communities including but not limited to Raymond, Naples, Otisfield, and Poland to collaborate on conservation and recreation efforts in the region. (Existing Conditions Report)
- n. Identify and secure, through acquisition or easement, conservation corridors essential for wildlife continuity and long-term ecosystem resilience including connecting major open spaces including links between Rolfe Hill and Rattlesnake Mountain, between Pleasant Lake and Thompson Lake, and from Sebago Lake State Park toward village areas. (Outreach report)
- o. Inventory and map all properties in current use to understand the pattern of working lands in Casco, and the potential for future land conservation. This would need to be revised regularly as current use land continually changes. (Meeting notes)

2. Enhance Connectivity and Expand Access for People and Wildlife

- a. Develop a refined trail network with safe on- and off-road connections linking villages, waterways, conserved lands, and other destinations. (Existing Conditions Report)
- b. Expand open space infrastructure—including parking, wayfinding, trails, and both trail and water access points—to support recreation and improved access. (Existing Conditions Report)
- c. Advocate for formal public access on private conservation easements (i.e., LELE). (Existing Conditions Report)
- d. Identify process and protocols for the development of multi-use trails and connections that can serve walkers, bikers, skiers, and motorized uses while

- promoting safe, shared access. Ensure the Safe Streets Committee is involved in any multi-use trail discussions. (Outreach report)
- e. Work to increase conserved and publicly accessible lands in northern and eastern parts of town to balance the distribution of the existing network. (Existing Conditions Report)
 - f. Work to formalize any informal entry points – boat launches, beaches, swimming spots – to Casco’s blue spaces (lakes, ponds, rivers). (Existing Conditions Report)
 - g. Work to formalize the recreational and scenic benefits of the island within Parker Pond, which is vulnerable to restricted access, to ensure community use in the future. (Existing Conditions Report)
 - h. Work to formalize public access throughout the recreational trail network. Many trails in Casco are informal and/or unmarked, which means it is vulnerable to access restrictions. Creating landowner agreements or using regional initiatives such as the 2020 Traction on the Trails and the Maine Trails Bond provide frameworks for Casco to formalize trail access and play a stronger role in regional recreation planning. (Existing Conditions Report)
 - i. Expand non-motorized (hiking and mountain biking) and universally accessible trail options as much of the existing network is intended primarily for snowmobile and ATV use. (Existing Conditions Report)
 - j. Improve signage throughout Casco’s trail network and consider a cohesive branding program. (Existing Conditions Report)
 - k. Work with trail user groups to develop a cohesive and collaborative trail maintenance program that is agreed upon and adhered to. (Meeting notes)
 - l. Align land acquisition and/or trail development/maintenance with the Safe Streets Committee to ensure collaboration and shared goals. (Meeting notes)
 - i. Identify areas where residents and visitors may feel unsafe due to traffic, lack of lighting, or poor visibility such as Route 11 and Route 302. (Outreach report)
 - ii. Add sidewalks, bike-friendly routes, and after-school shuttles between villages and to specific destinations to increase safety and accessibility. (Outreach report)
 - iii. Align these efforts with the vehicle crash data provided by Maine Inland Fisheries & Wildlife. (Meeting notes)

- m. Improve parking at access points, including Owl Pond, and implement clearer trailhead markings, additional trail maps and signage about land ownership, permitted uses, and wildlife habitat. (Outreach report)
- n. Expand the trail network between Pike’s Corner and Casco Village, Parker Pond, Berry Property, Jugtown Forest, Pine Hill, Webbs Mills, Rolfe Hill, Rattlesnake Mountain, and other destinations, including loops around Parker Pond. (Outreach report)
 - i. Ensure maintenance of any expanded trails is understood and planned before construction. (Outreach report)
- o. Refine and build on the specific list of identified wildlife crossing locations outlined in the Outreach Report and work to reduce/limit fragmentation effects. (Outreach report)
 - i. Mayberry Hill Road and Heath Road, between the Mayberry Hill Preserve and the protected parcel on Heath Road. (Outreach report)
 - ii. Leach Hill Road and Route 11, where a crossing would link Jugtown Forest with adjacent Hancock Lumber parcels. (Outreach report)
 - iii. Leach Hill Road and West Fountain Hill Road, indicating movement between forest and open space on each side. (Outreach report)
 - iv. Route 121 at Parker Pond, with a note suggesting seasonal turtle-nesting warning signs. (Outreach report)
 - v. Mayberry Hill Road near Pleasant Lake, where respondents noted frequent wildlife crossing activity. (Outreach report)
- p. Refine and build on the specific list of identified trail corridors and recreation enhancements outlined in the Outreach Report. (Outreach report)
 - i. Migis Lodge Area: There is public interest in exploring the potential for public trail access from Manning Field to the lakefront at Migis Lodge if the existing or future owners are open to this idea. (Outreach report)
 - ii. 70-Acre Wood: Loon Echo Land Trust circled this property, noting they were unaware it was town-owned conserved land and are interested in helping the Town develop signage, formal access, mapped trails, and potentially funding support. (Outreach report)
 - iii. Pine Hill Wilderness: Notes highlighted the need to maintain older trails, restore forgotten routes, and add additional trails. (Outreach report)
 - iv. Rattlesnake Mountain Wilderness: Identified as an area needing trail development and long-term protection. (Outreach report)

- v. Route 302 to Rolfe Hill Forest: A desired trail was drawn connecting Route 302 to Rolfe Hill Forest, then extending toward the Rattlesnake Mountain Wilderness and ultimately to Webbs Mills Village. (Outreach report)
 - vi. Old Johnson Hill Road: Marked as an important location for potential landowner conversations to support trail development. (Outreach report)
 - vii. Between Sebago Haven Road and Ring Landing: Circled as an area with “great bones” for walking trails, trailheads, and better-defined access. (Outreach report)
 - viii. Large Town-Wide Loop Concept: Participants illustrated interest in a long-distance loop trail connecting major waterbodies and destinations—such as Crescent Lake, Coffee Pond, Thomas Pond, Sebago Lake, Pleasant Lake, Parker Pond, Thompson Lake, and back to Crescent Lake. (Outreach report)
 - ix. Crooked River (near the Naples town line): Marked for improved public access to the river for recreation, viewing, and low-impact use. (Outreach report)
 - x. Berry Property: Highlighted as a priority location for improved recreation amenities, including parking, signage, and trail access consistent with previous feedback. (Outreach report)
 - xi. Hancock Lumber Parcel (northern Casco near Heath Road/Heath Island): Interest in expanded public access, recreational trail opportunities, and potential collaboration with the landowner. (Outreach report)
 - xii. ATV Trail Connection (Pike’s Corner to Hancock parcel via Stone Road): Marked to improve connectivity, maintenance, and clarified routing along this identified ATV corridor. (Outreach report)
 - xiii. Pleasant Lake Beach: Interest indicated a need to enhance infrastructure such as parking, signage, or shoreline access to support recreational use. (Outreach report)
- q. Refine and build on the specific list of identified transportation barriers and needed improvements identified in the Outreach Report. (Outreach report)
- i. Bike Lanes and Multi-Use Paths: Desired connections between Webbs Mills, Pike’s Corner, and Casco Village using Poland Spring Road, Route 121, and Mayberry Hill Road into Otisfield. (Outreach report)
 - ii. Sidewalk Gaps: Marked needs for sidewalks along:
 - 1. Route 121 in Casco Village near Pleasant Lake
 - 2. Pike’s Corner
 - 3. Webbs Mills Village

4. From Mayberry Hill Road at the Otisfield town line through Casco Village to Pike's Corner
- iii. Road Safety Concerns: Coffee Pond Road and Poland Spring Road near the northern point of Coffee Pond were identified as dangerous for cyclists. (Outreach report)
- iv. Route 121 Maintenance: Notes highlighted roadway maintenance needs between the Raymond town line and Pike's Corner, including improving shoulders and repairing pavement. (Outreach report)
- v. Park-and-Ride Need: A location near the Raymond town line on Route 121 was circled, suggesting a small park-and-ride for people traveling north toward Otisfield, Hanson, and Oxford. (Outreach report)
- vi. Trail Access Issues: (Outreach report)
 1. Parking and signage improvements are needed at Owl Pond.
 2. ATV trails near northwest Pike's Corner were marked as needing maintenance.
 3. Trails between Pike's Corner and Cooks Mills were noted for maintenance needs and improved mapping.

3. Lead as a Resilient, Strategic, and Well-Resourced Community

- a. Consider proactive land acquisitions to combat climate change by referencing the climate resilience map as a starting point (i.e., lands adjacent to waterbodies or high elevation areas). (Meeting notes)
- b. Strengthen Casco's implementation capacity by partnering with regional organizations, major landowners, and the community to advance land use and open space priorities. (Existing Conditions Report)
- c. Refine and build on the specific list of identified climate resilience concerns outlined in the Outreach Report. (Outreach report)
 - i. Consider lakefronts, ponds, streams, and wetlands as top priorities for their stormwater management benefits and ability to aid in erosion control. (Outreach report)
 - ii. Emphasize the importance of the Crooked River watershed for its climate resilience benefits and highlight vulnerable areas where erosion, flood events, nearby development, and road crossings may be impacted. Specific climate resilience concerns should be explored around the elementary school and South Casco. (Outreach report)
 - iii. Address areas at risk of erosion from steep slopes including but not limited to Mayberry Hill Road, Leach Hill Road, Quaker Ridge,

- powerline/Leach Hill areas, Sonny Maines Road, and roadside slopes near Pine Hill. Stabilization and vegetative cover could help reduce erosion in these areas. (Outreach report)
- iv. High-risk watershed connections and village areas: Areas around Route 121-302 corridor, Webb's Mills village (runoff issues from Pine Hill), Casco Village, and areas where stormwater flows toward Pleasant Lake or Parker Pond. (Outreach report)
 - v. Town beach and waterfront access points: Pleasant Lake/Casco Town Beach and public waterfront areas were identified for shoreline protection, stormwater controls, and erosion management. (Outreach report)
 - vi. Rolfe Hill Forest (southeast and northwest portions): Areas where slopes, runoff patterns, and erosion concerns were frequently noted. (Outreach report)
 - vii. Quaker Ridge Road near Hancock Family Farm: Identified for stormwater issues and hill-slope runoff during heavy rain events. (Outreach report)
 - viii. Meadow Road (Route 121) near Parker Pond: Marked as an area with roadway washouts, drainage challenges, and shoreline impacts. (Outreach report)
 - ix. Intersection of Webbs Mills Road (Route 85) and Route 11: Highlighted for frequent flooding and poor drainage during major storms. (Outreach report)
 - x. Upper Shore Drive near Thompson Pond: Identified for shoreline flooding, erosion, and stormwater runoff concerns. (Outreach report)
- d. Review Casco's Ordinances to identify ways to increase environmental protections including but not limited to shoreline buffer distances for development along waterbodies. The resulting revisions should be aligned with state and regional recommendations. (Existing Conditions Report)
 - e. Participate in regional conservation efforts such as through the protection of key habitat blocks in the Crooked River watershed ensures local conservation goals contribute to broader watershed and biodiversity outcomes. Regional efforts include the 2011 Lake Region Greenprint, the 2025-2035 State Wildlife Action Plan, and the work of Sebago Clean Waters that offer technical tools, funding pathways, and science-based strategies municipalities can use to help guide local decisions. (Existing Conditions Report)
 - f. Align local recreation planning with statewide priorities that link outdoor access, conservation, and economic development. The State of Maine's 10-Year Outdoor

Recreation Economy Roadmap provides a framework for achieving this. (Existing Conditions Report)

- i. By aligning Casco's recreational and open space planning with the State's Roadmap, the Town could pursue state-supported funding opportunities, grants, and partnerships associated with Maine's outdoor recreation economy initiatives. (Existing Conditions Report)
- g. Seek creative funding sources including the Maine Trails Bond that funds trail development, trail maintenance, and land acquisition for trail development. (Meeting notes)
- h. Consider adding a young adult representative to the Casco Open Space Commission. (Outreach report)

4. **Strengthen Community Identity and Economic Vitality Through Education and Stewardship**

- a. Create materials and programs that (1) highlight Casco's open space and recreational networks and (2) help communicate with and educate residents and visitors about land use, development, conservation, water quality protection, and recreation initiatives and opportunities. (Meeting notes)
 - i. Increase outdoor learning opportunities and facilities including playgrounds that remain open throughout the year. (Outreach report)
- b. Attract families and outdoor enthusiasts by enhancing Casco's reputation as a connected, water-rich, and recreation-oriented community that stands apart from others in the region. (Existing Conditions Report)
- c. Work to strengthen the relationship between Casco's open space and recreational network and the villages within town. (Meeting notes)
- d. Recognize the importance of the Crooked River as a large and defining community resource along with Sebago Lake and the other waterbodies. (Existing Conditions Report)
- e. Determine the status of the ongoing feasibility study for the town-owned Berry Property, located on the southwestern shore of Parker Pond behind the Public Safety complex, that was referenced in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan. (Existing Conditions Report)
 - i. Develop long-term plan for the Berry Property that meets the needs of the community while also strengthening linkages between Casco Village and the Town's open space network. (Existing Conditions Report)

- f. Establish a committee to determine the ultimate use and management of many town-owned properties. As part of this process, the committee could convene a series of localized, neighborhood-scale forums to get feedback on the future direction of each particular property. The list of properties in need of future direction includes, but may not be limited to: (Open Space Inventory)
- i. Manning Field
 - 1. Map-lot 16-5-COMM
 - 2. Inventory map #11
 - ii. State Park Road Property
 - 1. Map-lot 001A-0002 & 0003-0036
 - 2. Inventory map #15
 - 3. The Casco Open Space Commission determined this property should be classified as a “Conserve & Enhance” property to never be sold. However, the future direction of the property still needs to be determined.
 - iii. Berry Property
 - 1. Map-lot 0038-0032, 0038-0032-0001, 0038-0019
 - 2. Inventory map #17
 - iv. Libby Road
 - 1. Map-lot 0004-0019-A
 - 2. Inventory map #19
 - 3. The Casco Open Space Commission determined this property should be classified as a “Conserve & Enhance” property to never be sold. However, the future direction of the property still needs to be determined.
 - v. Lake Shore Drive
 - 1. Map-lot 0020-0070-A
 - 2. Inventory map #23
 - vi. Varney Road
 - 1. Map-lot 0027-0005
 - 2. Inventory map #24
 - vii. 15 Varney Road
 - 1. Map-lot 0027-0006
 - 2. Inventory map #25
 - viii. 3 Dadmun Drive
 - 1. Map-lot 0031-0010-A
 - 2. Inventory map #26
 - ix. Lilly Brook Property

1. Map-lot 0042-0022-B
 2. Inventory map #27
 3. The Casco Open Space Commission determined this property should be classified as a “Conserve & Enhance” property to never be sold. However, the future direction of the property still needs to be determined.
- x. Point Sebago Road
1. Map-lot 0001-0008-0001
 2. Inventory map #28
- xi. 70-Acre Wood
1. Map-lot 0002-0003
 2. Inventory map #29
 3. The Casco Open Space Commission determined this property should be classified as a “Conserve & Enhance” property to never be sold. However, the future direction of the property still needs to be determined.
- g. Create a centralized and easy-to-share source of information about local recreation and open space options such as a website, map, or educational resource that summarizes trails, open spaces, and parking locations. If distributed to the business community, it would allow the tourism industry to confidently direct guests to appropriate public areas. (Outreach report)
- i. Partner and connect with regional outdoor-based organizations to promote Casco’s – and the regions – outdoor recreational economy. Use the existing relationships with Loon Echo Land Trust and others to explore this option. (Outreach report)
- h. Strengthen Casco’s economic vitality by encouraging access and visitation to waterbodies, waterways, and conserved and open space lands. (Existing Conditions Report)
- i. Consider land acquisitions or enhancements to develop dog parks and dog-friendly trails where dogs are safe to run and dog owners can congregate and build community. (Outreach report)