

6. RECREATION and CULTURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes current recreational and cultural resources in Bucksport and assesses the current and future adequacy of these resources. It also assesses the availability of open space areas for public recreation and how public access could be threatened by future growth and development.

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

OVERVIEW

The Bucksport Parks and Recreation Department offers a large variety of indoor and outdoor programs for all age groups. The community is also served by several other organizations in the recreational and cultural spheres. The town has developed various walking trails for exercise and refreshment in the urban and rural environments, including the ever popular waterfront walkway and two parcels adjacent to Silver Lake.

Recreational facilities and programs are generally considered adequate while there are always more that could be added. For example, there are no town-owned freshwater swimming facilities apart from the municipal pool. More outdoor or indoor options for swimmers may be considered. The town's new fiscal capacity since the mill's closure will surely play a role in any decision-making process going forward. As the population ages, the town may want to offer more recreational services for the elderly. RSU 25, the Public Library, Northeast Historic Film and the Bucksport Cultural Arts Society (BACAS) also contribute to the recreational/cultural environment. Initiatives from others add to a rich tapestry of opportunity to learn and enjoy arts, sports and recreation in Bucksport.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ A 600-seat cultural arts facility opened at the new middle school 2003.
- ★ The Youth Programs Coordinator has expanded Rec Department offerings.
- ★ A meals program was begun at the new Bucksport Square Senior Center.
- ★ The Chamber of Commerce began sponsoring an Arts Festival in 2015.
- ★ A regional committee is researching potential for a branch YMCA in Bucksport.
- ★ The waterfront walkway, trails and parks were expanded since the last Plan.
- ★ The public trail systems are better publicized through flyers, maps and signage.
- ★ "Wednesdays on Main" weekly summer cultural events began in 2015.

CONDITIONS AND TRENDS ANALYSIS

Public recreational programs in Bucksport are coordinated by the Parks and Recreation Department. Staff consists of a director and a youth program coordinator. The department offers recreational programs for various age groups. These include team sports for boys and girls from pre-school through high school. There are also programs for senior citizens, including, a low-impact, strength-training exercise program. No deficiencies in programs have been noted by the recreation department.

Parks and Recreation Department management consists of a Recreation Director and a Board of Parks and Recreation. The Director organizes and runs all of the programs offered by the Department. The Board (which is to meet three times yearly) advises the Director and determines the activities that are offered and establishes general policies. The Department is responsible for maintaining various facilities around town.

The major facilities available to town residents are described in Table 6.1. One potential need is a teen center. Winter recreational activities would be enhanced by an indoor swimming pool. It is not clear how construction of this facility would be funded. One proposal involves a new YMCA, which is being analyzed by a regional committee.

Will existing recreational facilities and programs in the community and region accommodate projected growth or changes in age groups in your community? Is there a need for certain types of services or facilities or to upgrade or enlarge present facilities to either add capacity or make them more usable?

With the projected aging of the population, it may become more challenging to sustain the current level of programs aimed at youth. With fewer individuals in younger age groups, there may not be enough participants for some activities. Conversely, there may be more demand for programs for senior citizens. Apart from regular maintenance, no other needs have been identified.

The Jewett School Community Center hosts many of the indoor programs. It is also the site of the Bucksport Fitness Center, which features exercise equipment and free weights. Much more on Parks and Recreation Department programming may be found at bucksportmaine.gov.

Another major recreational facility is the 500-seat Bucksport Performing Arts Center. It is located in an annex to the Middle School. It hosts a variety of school-sponsored and community events



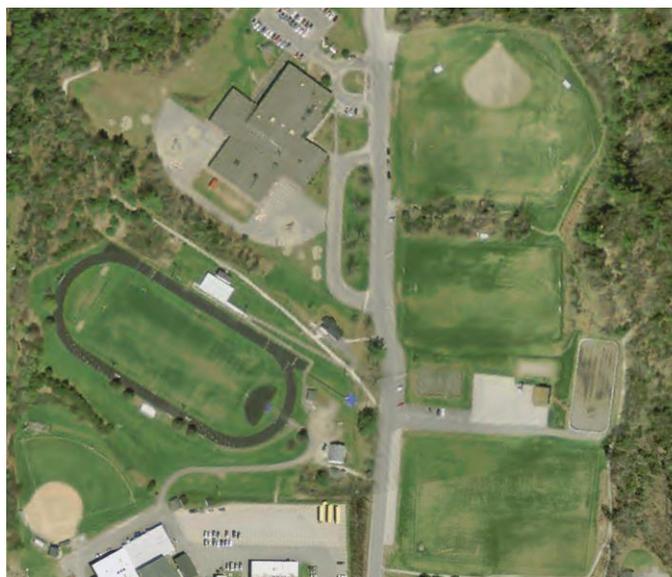
The Parks and Recreation offices, conference room, gym and exercise facilities are in the Jewett School on Bridge St.

**Table 6.1
INVENTORY OF MAJOR PARKS AND OPEN SPACE AREAS IN BUCKSPORT.**

Location and Description	Size	Ownership
Bridge Street Outdoor Swimming Pool & Building at Broadway	1 acre	Town
Bridge Street Jewett School Playground at Broadway	1/2 acre	RSU # 25
Central Street Knights of Columbus Little League Baseball Field	3.5 acres	K of C
Elm Street Recreational Facility - Old Junior High Baseball Field	3 acres	Town
Elm Street Recreational Facility - Ian's Playground and parking	1 acre	Town
High School Softball Field w/ lights, dugouts	1 acre	Town
High School Football/Track Complex w/ lights, stands, concessions	7 acres	Town
High School Outdoor Track	1/4 mile	Town
High School Tennis Courts with Lights	1/2 acre	Town
Miles Lane BMS Athletic Field Complex (baseball, soccer, softball)	4 acres	RSU # 25
Miles Lane School Playgrounds (2)	1 acre	RSU # 25
Miles Lane # 1 Field (Football practice field)	3 acres	Town
Miles Lane # 2 Field (Soccer)	2 acres	Town
Miles Lane # 3 Field (Soccer, Baseball and Softball)	3.5 acres	Town
Miles Lane Outdoor Basketball Court with Lights, parking	1/2 acre	Town
Miles Lane Outdoor Volleyball Court with Lights	1/4 acre	Town
Miles Lane Outdoor Full Size Hockey Rink w/ lights & warming building	3/4 acre	Town
Miles Lane Walking/Nature Trails = 3 miles for walking, biking, skiing	73 acres	Town
Silver Lake East - 2.5 mi. hiking trails, arboretum, primitive campgrnd.	64 acres	Town
Silver Lake West - Canoe and Kayak Landing, future hiking, picnicking	89 acres	Town
Silver Lake Boat Landing and Parking (w, 2,000' narrow lake front lot)	5 acres	Town
Spofford Ave. Reggie Ginn Field – Little League Baseball and parking	4 acres	Town
Waterfront Walkway: 1 mile on town-owned lands and rights-of-way	5 acres+/-	Town
Waterfront Rufas Googins Park (walkway connects to Main Street)	1 acre	Town
SOURCE: Bucksport Parks and Recreation Department		

Many of the town and RSU's sport facilities are accessed from Miles Lane, including:

- Softball Fields
- Baseball Fields
- Track & Field facilities
- Soccer Fields
- Basketball Courts
- Ice Skating/Hockey Rink
- Beach Volleyball Court
- Multi-use trails
- Playground
- Tennis Courts (at BHS)



More information on Parks and Recreation can be found at www.bucksportmaine.gov

Other Recreational & Cultural Resources

Besides the public recreation facilities summarized above, there are other opportunities provided by various local organizations and individuals.

The Bucksport Area Cultural Arts Society (BACAS) sponsors many events. The society is an organization dedicated to support and promote life-long learning experiences in the cultural and performing arts in Bucksport and surrounding communities and schools. BACAS events are described more fully at: www.bacasmaine.org.

A description of important public and private active recreation programs, land and water recreation areas (including hunting and fishing areas), and facilities in the community and region, including regional recreational opportunities as appropriate, and identification of unmet needs.

The Bucksport Area Senior Citizens Center at 125 Broadway provides a location and calendar of events for those over 55, including meals, games, music and quilting.

The Bucksport Bay Area Chamber of Commerce organizes its Annual Bucksport Arts Festival in August. Every week in summer, "Wednesdays on Main" features a live event on Bucksport's Main Street from 5-7 pm on the street under a tent or at The Alamo Theatre! Some events are free or have modest admission charge. The Chamber also sponsors other events and helps promote local artists, businesses, lodging and etc.

The Bucksport Garden Club plants and maintains town window boxes and The Buck Memorial Library garden. The club also sponsors community and youth programs including meetings with guest speakers

The Bucksport Golf Club is a 95-acre privately owned nine-hole golf course and events center is situated between State Route 46 and the Narramissic River with mountain views. At 3,348 yards, the fully irrigated par 37 design achieves a course rating of 72.5 and could be considered a "championship" course. The golfing facility also boasts a pro shop, snack bar, driving range & 2-chipping greens.

Bucks Mills Rod & Gun Club located at 370 Bucks Mills Road holds monthly meetings to promote an interest in conservation in order to ensure good hunting and fishing for future generations. The family oriented group also provides facilities to help youth develop an interest learn safety afield and on the water. see <http://www.bucksmills.ws>.

The Family Snowmobile Club promotes safety & ethics and oversees construction, maintenance and grooming on more than 60 miles of trails in Bucksport and Orland. The Club's website at <http://www.familysnowmobileclub.com/> and its Facebook page supply basic trail information and trail condition updates.

Northeast Historic Film (NHF) is another cultural resource. It is a nonprofit archive dedicated to collecting, preserving and sharing northern New England's moving image heritage. The facility includes a three-story vault holding over 10 million feet of film, a public study center, and the historic 140-seat Alamo Theater that regularly provides live entertainment and movies to the public.



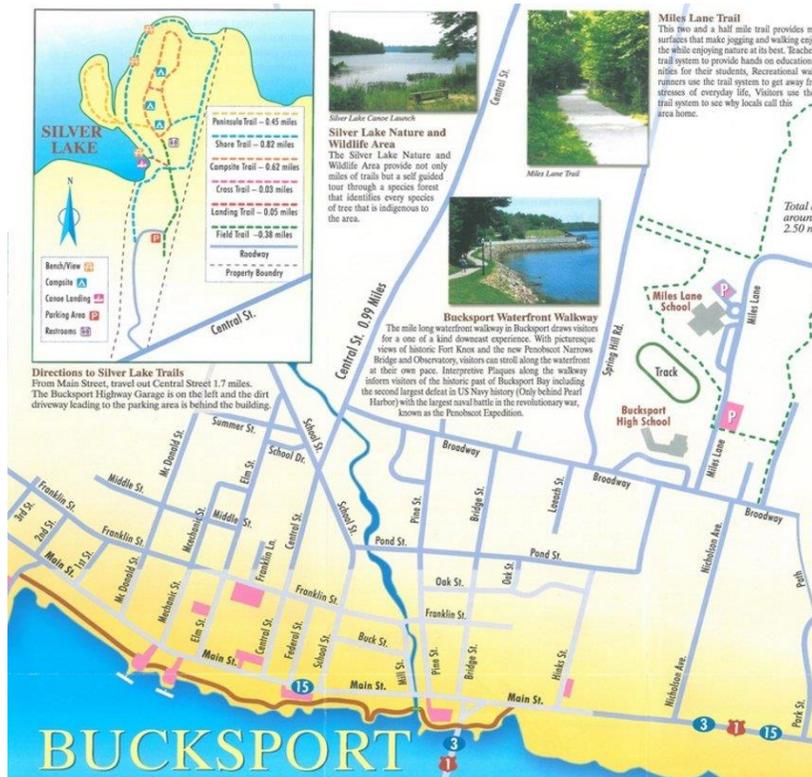
The Alamo got a new digital marquee in 2015.

More recreational & cultural resources of note:

- American Legion, Bucksport Post 39.
- Buck Memorial Library (more in Chapter 5)
- Bucksport Historical Society (more in Ch. 11)
- Churches and other faith-based groups
- Cub Scouts Pack 26
- Duck Cove Community Club (more in Ch. 11)
- Friends of Fort Knox (and the State Park!)
- Girl Scouts
- Great Pond Mt. Cons. Trust (more in Ch. 5)
- Knights of Columbus (Council 5756).
- The Orland Community Center licensed commercial kitchen.



Alderbrook Farm on Route 1 and CBC Stables, Inc. in Millvale are recreational horseback riding facilities that offer horse training and riding lessons for all ages.



The Bucksport Bay Area Chamber of Commerce website hosts some very nice maps of the walking trails in town. View them at: <http://www.bucksportbaychamber.com/take-a-hikehere.html>

Access to Natural Areas.

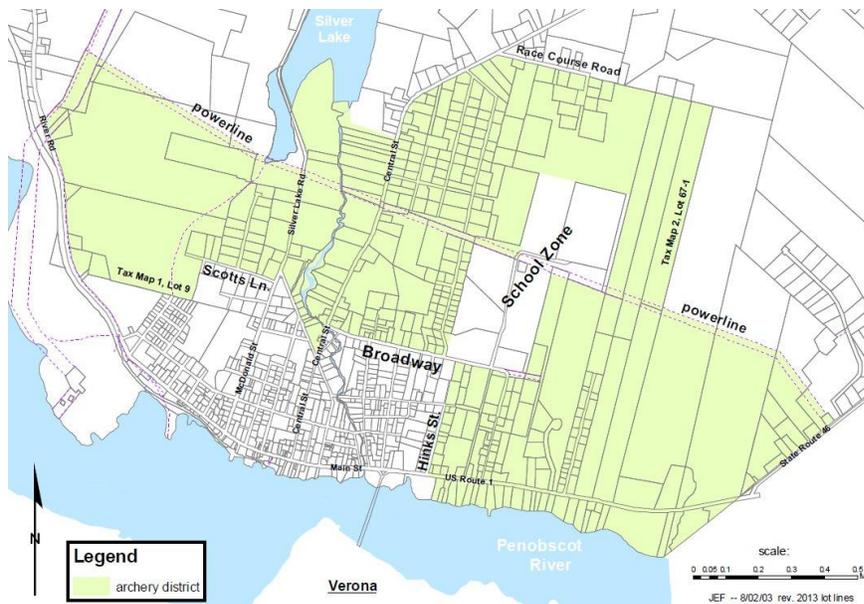
The Miles Lane and Silver Lake walking trail areas are on town-owned land and may become permanently conserved. Bucksport conservation areas are described in Chapter 9 Natural Resources. Many more acres of land are available for outdoor recreation in nearby town including those managed by Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust, State Parks and Acadia National Park.

Are important tracts of open space commonly used for recreation publicly-owned or otherwise permanently conserved? Does the community have a mechanism, such as an open space fund or partnership with a land trust, to acquire important open spaces and access sites, either outright or through conservation easements? Is traditional access to private lands being restricted?

More public access land in the Bucksport area is a welcomed trend, even with Maine’s unique “open land” tradition. A large majority of the town’s rural area remains in private hands, where individuals looking to gain access must observe postings from the ownership. The amount of private land available for others to hunt, fish and hike fluctuates with changes in ownership and attitude. There is no tracking of these happenings. A recent Maine court case defined ocean shore access on private property as limited to those who are engaged in “fishing, fowling, and navigation”.



Public trails off Central Street overlook Silver Lake



ARCHERY HUNTING

Bucksport has established a special archery hunting district in the village area. This area and all parcels to the south also comprise the “No Firearms Discharge Area”. Detailed descriptions and maps are available at bucksportmaine.gov.

Public Waterbody Access.

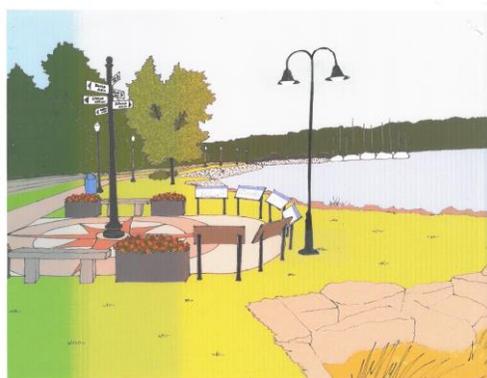
Boat access to Silver Lake, Jacob Bucks Pond and the Bucksport Harbor area are clearly marked for the public. Since Silver Lake is the source of the municipal water supply, swimming has been prohibited. The State-owned public boat launch at Jacob Bucks Pond was designed for motorboat and canoe access. No provisions for swimming have been made at the site. Table 6.2 shows the status of public access on waterbodies in town. See Chapter 8 Water Resources and Chapter 7 Marine Resources for more information on these waterbodies.

Does the public have access to each of the community's significant water bodies?



The Silver Lake boat launch - upgraded in 2014.

Table 6.2 Public Access to Waterbodies in Bucksport		
Name	Acres	Comments
Brewer Lake	958	Public boat access and swimming at north end in Orrington.
Hancock Pond	62	Informal hand launch and swimming site from Mast Hill Road.
Jacob Buck Pond	182	State-owned Public access for fishing and boating.
Long Pond	160	The town owns a lot on the north end with undeveloped access.
Moosehorn Stream	---	Informal canoe/kayak launch at Route 46 and at Bald Mt. Road.
Moulton Pond	49	Private access only. Permission needed from landowner.
Mud Pond	35	Private access only. Permission needed from landowner.
Narramissic River	---	Public access below Alamoosook Lake dam & in Orland Village.
Penobscot River	---	Town and State-owned Public access for fishing and boating.
Silver Lake	682	Town-owned Public access for fishing and boating.
Thurston Pond	129	Private access only. Permission needed from landowner.
Williams Pond	79	Private access only. Permission needed from landowner.



The "Center of the Known Universe" portion of the waterfront walkway park was nearly completed in 2015 with some alterations from the design sketch at left.