

REGIONAL COORDINATION

The Town of Poland realizes that coordination and/or joint action is necessary to address a number of interlocal planning issues. Based upon the results of the inventory and analysis element of the Comprehensive Plan and the various policies contained in the plan, the following interlocal issues have been included in the Regional Coordination Program.

Lake/Pond Watersheds and Water Quality

Studies over the past decade indicate phosphorus, which acts as a fertilizer to algae and other plant life in the lake, is a major threat to lake water quality. While shoreland zoning has provided some protection, the studies indicate phosphorus can be contributed in significant quantities from the entire watershed. The quality of water in a lake depends on the condition of the land in its watershed. Poland shares seven lake or pond watersheds with adjacent towns.

Surrounding municipalities have adopted land use code standards to manage phosphorus export from the entire watersheds of lakes and ponds to maintain water quality.

The Oxford Dam, also known as the Thompson Lake or Robinson Dam holds the water in Thompson Lake. The Dam is wholly owned and located in Oxford. However, should the Dam fail there could be a significant impact to the tax base of all adjoining municipalities and Thompson Lake could suffer serious damage. A joint effort by Select Boards from abutting municipalities to determine the appropriate way forward is ongoing.

Sand and Gravel Aquifers

Sand and gravel aquifers are generally large, continuous, sand and gravel deposits that extend along a river valley. The sand and gravel deposits fill the valley between the hills on either side to create a fairly flat valley floor. The Maine Geological Survey has mapped the location of significant sand and gravel aquifers in Poland. Both low yield (less than 50 gpm) and high yield (greater than 50 gpm) sand and gravel aquifers are found in Poland. These sand and gravel aquifers are shared with Auburn, Mechanic Falls, New Gloucester and Oxford.

Surrounding communities that share sand and gravel aquifers have adopted measures to protect this water resource.

Economic Development

Poland is part of a large regional economy. Close to the Cities of Auburn and Lewiston, many residents are dependent on these cities for employment and services. With improved transportation systems the Greater Portland area is closer than ever. While there are actions that Poland can take by itself to expand economic development, regional actions can have great value as well.

Poland participates in joint regional economic development efforts through the Lewiston / Auburn and Oxford Chamber's of Commerce. In addition, Mechanic Falls has been approached to discuss the viability of a joint sewer project that would have significant regional economic benefit.

Joint Municipal Services

Regional considerations are taken into account in the delivery of some types of public services. Poland Fire Rescue provides ambulance service to Mechanic Falls for 12 hours a day. Poland Recreation Department provides programs in the tri-town area for all ages. RSU 16 bus maintenance is performed at the Poland Public Works Garage by RSU 16 mechanics. RSU 16 serves Minot, Mechanic Falls, and Poland. In addition,

Poland Fire Rescue is part of a regional mutual aid system that responds to and supports emergencies beyond the capacity of any one municipality. In the future expanded and additional shared municipal services may be beneficial.

Transportation System

An efficient well maintained regional transportation system, including air, highway and rail, is critical to Poland and the region. Poland is an active participant in a regional effort to expand passenger rail service to the Lewiston / Auburn area with an eventual expansion of service to Canada. Poland also sponsors a park and ride for regional employees of Bath Iron Works at its municipal complex.

Goal: To develop and participate in regional programs to achieve common desires.