

DCN Convergence 2018 economic breakout groups – West of Blue Hill Bay

New things to study

Report needs to anticipate the future. Tourism is today. Report should focus on healthy communities in the long run.

Should add metric related to health care. Does conservation land reduce health care costs—clean air, clean water, quality of life?

Hard to quantify all the economic impacts of conservation in the region. This was a good first step.

Need to figure benefit vs loss of tax revenue for communities—net benefit, not gross benefit.

What are the economic benefits to the local communities, especially year-round communities? Gets at difference between year-round residents and seasonal business owners.

Regional differences in impacts of conservation to local land values

Non-market values of conservation—clean air, clean water, etc.

Working waterfront values, access and protection of intertidal

Preserving migrating shorelines as a result of sea level rise

More information about impacts on jobs—probably largely tourism

Links between conservation lands and school systems—outdoor classrooms, environmental science, citizen science, etc.

Impacts of conservation lands on development of residential areas and businesses and impacts on taxes and economies

Data

Have good data on use of state and national parks. Have much less data for use on private conserved lands. Would be worth trying to collect those data.

Other considerations

Maine doesn't have a lot of development pressures at the moment. How do we work planning for far future development (2050-2075) into the process?

Economic impact of conservation impact skewed by Acadia National Park; not clear

- Acadia National Park collects entrance fees. Does the money leave Acadia?

Need to go to select board meetings, need to have data. Discussions about taxes are happening in all communities, and we need to be involved.

How do towns feel about conserved land that is still used—e.g., for forestry—compared to lands that are used just for recreation or no public use?

How do towns value lands? What do they want their communities to look like in the future?

People from away have different perspectives—many have seen loss of open spaces like here in Downeast Maine

Value of study

GIS data that local towns and organizations can use and overlay their own data and information

Establish shared language and data across region

Next actions

Get community feedback and dialogue about values that conservation lands give. Are they the right values?

Lobby legislature about diversifying revenues to towns—e.g., reimbursing for tree growth and open space lands, homestead

Identify areas that are appropriate for development

Talk with tourism companies to plan future tourism development and uses of conservation lands

Inform public about

- Values of conservation lands
- Actual taxes for each parcel—some don't impact tax rolls much if any
- Need to plan for the future