

Land for Maine's Future Program

Proposal Workbook **Board Adopted Policy & Guidelines**



December 2013

www.maine.gov/dacf/lmf

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
207-287-7576

Land for Maine's Future Workbook

This report was printed with funds provided by LMF's General Fund Account

010-01A-Q401-09-4929

Land for Maine's Future Workbook

About This Workbook

This is the ninth edition of the Proposal Workbook since the Land for Maine's Future Board initiated its grants program in 1988. The Workbook reflects the previous work, experience and public input since the program began in 1987. This Workbook has been revised, with the goal of streamlining to make it easier for applicants preparing proposals. The principal changes are outlined on pages 3-6 and pages 74-75.

This workbook contains four sections plus appendices.

Section I contains vital information on a wide range of Land for Maine's Future topics. Applicants should read this section first; it provides information on the Board's policies, process and the Program's background.

Section II is for projects appropriate for the "Conservation and Recreation Land" category, which includes lands of statewide, regional, and local significance. This is the category under which most proposals will fall.

Section III is for "Water Access" projects appropriate for the Public Access to Maine Waters Fund. Managed by the Board, this Fund is generally earmarked for smaller parcels that provide water access for boating, fishing and swimming.

Section IV is for projects designed to protect farms and farmland. If a proposal's primary purpose is to protect a working farm, then the project falls under the farmland category.

Appendices include important background information for projects.

The Proposal Workbook is available in Portable Document Format (PDF). It can be downloaded from the Land for Maine's Future website (www.maine.gov/dacf/lmf). For paper copies of this Proposal Workbook, please contact the Land for Maine's Future Program, (207)287-7576.

PROPOSAL DUE DATE:

All proposals must be complete and received by LMF no later than March 28, 2014.

SUBMIT PROPOSALS TO:

**Land for Maine's Future
22 SHS / 18 Elkins Ln. / Harlow Building
Augusta, ME 04333-0022**

This address is different from our regular mailing address and is to be used only for the submission of proposals.

Acknowledgments

The Land for Maine's Future Board wishes to acknowledge key individuals and organizations that assisted in the development and production of this edition of the *Land for Maine's Future Program Proposal Workbook*.

Special thanks go to all of the Board members, especially those private citizen members who give so generously of their time and knowledge to make the Land for Maine's Future Program an enormous success. Their tireless work and attendance at many meetings are reflected in the outstanding public lands funded through the Program.

In addition to Board members, hundreds of Maine citizens and organizations provided essential input to the earlier versions of the Proposal Workbook as well as Board policies and goals that provide the foundation of this edition.

State agencies also provided input. The staff of the Departments of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF), Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW), and Marine Resources (DMR) contributed significantly.

Thanks also to the staff of the Land for Maine's Future Program and other DACF personnel who researched, coordinated, wrote and published this new edition of the Proposal Workbook.

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Section I

The Land for Maine's Future Board & Program

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Sam Morris, Senior Planner
R. Collin Therrien, Senior Planner
Tom Miragliuolo, Senior Planner

Legislative & Policy Objectives

The Land for Maine's Future Fund is managed by a 9 member board, of which six are private citizens and three are state agency commissioners. The program is responsible for providing support for Board activities relating to acquisitions.

The deadline for proposals is March 28, 2014.

1. Workbook and criteria changes effective for this round of proposals:

Minor changes to wording and format are not included in this summary.

Section I: LMF Board and Program

- Page 8 & 14: Appraisal valuation date must be within 1 year of the AOC review.
- Page 9: New language regarding Board Allocation of Project Funding.
- Page 9: New explanation of Project Adjustments.
- Page 9: Clarification of responsibilities under "Reserved rights and title issues."
- Page 11: Clarification of requirements for Pre-acquired properties.
- Page 12: Easements must be in final form before the appraisal is conducted.
- The Threshold Criteria for Conservation & Recreation land, Water Access, and Farmland were combined into a single section. These are listed only once in the Workbook instead of in each section. These criteria pertain to all proposals.
- Page 15: New wording for required notice to sponsoring agency.
- Page 15: Clarification of Stewardship accounts requirements.
- All Proposals must include copy of recorded deed(s) of the proposed property.

Section II: Conservation and Recreation Land

- Page 21: Clarification that the real estate interest for "statewide significant" projects must be held by the state.
- Page 24-27: Clarification of how LAPAC multiplier works.
- Page 29: Increased Economic Benefit scoring to 10 points and created tiered score.
- Page 30: Added scoring criteria for Deer Wintering Areas, valued up to 23 points.
- Page 41: Update of Economic Benefit in proposal format section.
- Page 41: Added Deer Wintering Area to proposal format section.

Section III: Water Access - No substantial changes

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Section IV: Farmland Protection

The scoring system for farmland projects has not changed. The process used by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry to determine which proposals it will sponsor has been revised. The wording of Section IV was updated to include the following changes:

- Page 58: Clarified 'How does a farmer apply?' Provides a more detailed description of the Bureau of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources' proposal process and clarifies requirements for sponsorship of proposals.
- Page 58: Clarified the Bureau's role in subsection 'Proposal Process';
- Page 60: Corrected technical language regarding USDA classifications of agricultural soils for Scoring Criteria 1 – "Productive Farm Assets;" and
- Page 65 & 66: Clarified the wording of descriptions in subsections "Other Criteria" and "Farmland Proposal Format and Instructions."

Appendices: Summary of changes to Appendices appears on page 83

2. **\$5,000,000 in new funding for LMF projects** was approved by voters in November, 2012.

In this bond, unlike with previous bonds, funds were not earmarked for specific purposes, rather all the purposes for the funds were listed together in the legislation and in the ballot question. These include the following:

Acquisition of land and interest in land for conservation; water access; wildlife or fish habitat including deer wintering areas; outdoor recreation, including hunting and fishing; and working farmland preservation and working waterfront preservation.

The statute authorizing these funds (Ch. 696, Public Laws of 2011) specifies that projects that protect deer wintering areas (DWA) are considered to have special value and must receive preferential consideration during scoring of applications.

Priority DWA are of "at least 500 acres or contiguous with existing conservation land so that the combined acreage constitutes at least 500 acres, have been historically used by deer at some point since 1950 and are capable of providing shelter for deer on the effective date of the Act or within 20 years."

See Appendix K for a copy of Chapter 696, outlining these requirements.

Chapter 696 also requires that state land acquired with those funds be managed by DACF subject to a protocol approved by MDIFW.

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3. **The scoring system for Conservation and Recreation projects has been modified to reflect the DWA preference.** A Work Group consisting of Land for Maine's Future Board members, Dept. of MDIFW staff, DACF and LMF staff and public members developed the criteria for scoring DWA. A new criterion (#8) was added to the existing criteria, providing up to 23 points, based upon the significance of the DWA. See page 22 of the Workbook.
4. **Appraisal procedures.** The Board convened a discussion group in 2013 to review recommendations from the board, staff and public regarding LMF's appraisal procedures. This had been the subject of discussion since 2011.

The following changes were made:

- Name of board committee was changed to the Appraisal Oversight Committee, from the Appraisal Review Committee
 - A "tiered" approach to appraisal requirements has been added. This is based on degree of complexity of the appraisal assignment. For example, smaller parcels with simpler appraisal considerations may not need as detailed an appraisal report as larger, more complex appraisals, such as for conservation easements or working waterfront properties. The tiered approach is described in Appendix F.
 - The Workbook clarifies the time period for how long the board will accept an appraisal. Appraisals are now considered valid if brought before the Appraisal Oversight Committee within one year of the date of the appraisal.
5. **Public Input.** Opportunities for public input were provided for all of the above changes.

Contact any of the LMF staff with questions regarding the above changes.

Over the years, the Legislature has enacted several requirements that affect the LMF program and project proposals.

These and other program requirements include:

- In 2012 the Land for Maine's Future program transferred to the Department of Conservation, which was then consolidated into the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF).
- In 2011 and 2012, the Board had discussion regarding scoring criteria and the review process for proposals. These discussions, and public input, led to updates and revisions to this Workbook and the procedures to be used in this Call for Proposals.
- In 2010, following a year of study, the Board adopted new scoring criteria for conservation projects that encourages applicants to more explicitly consider potential economic benefits to the communities within which the proposed projects are located. The board hopes to cultivate and support closer working relationships between the land conservation, business community, and local units of government.

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- The 2010 Bond increased LMF's match requirements. At least \$1 of matching value is now required for every dollar of LMF funds.
- In 2005, a new pilot program was established in legislation for the protection of lands supporting working commercial waterfronts along Maine's coast. The program is implemented by the Maine Department of Marine Resources with LMF support. A separate proposal workbook has been developed and the program is not discussed further in this workbook.¹
- The Legislature has directed the LMF Board to give preference "to acquisitions ... that achieve benefits for multiple towns and that address regional conservation needs including public recreational access, wildlife, open space or farmland." Since 1999 sites of local and regional significance may be considered and payments may be made directly to cooperating entities (private nonprofit organizations, municipal conservation commissions, local governments, or federal agencies). For regional and local projects title is held by the cooperating entities, subject to terms in a project agreement that is enforceable by the State to ensure the lands are used for the purposes for which they were acquired.
- The LMF Board is authorized to consider conservation projects that include "significant, undeveloped archeological sites" (PL 2007, c. 64) and "public water supply protection when that purpose is consistent and does not conflict with the natural resource conservation and recreation purposes" of the LMF program (PL 2007, c. 353).

¹ For further information contact Deirdre Gilbert, Department of Marine Resources, (207) 624-6576, deirdre.gilbert@maine.gov.

Needs Assessment

The Board conducted its original needs assessment in 1988, which consisted of public participation meetings and the establishment of priority land categories, including the legislatively mandated land types found in the LMF statute. This list created the foundation of the Land for Maine's Future Program's detailed land classification types:

- Recreational Lands
- Water Access Lands
- Lands Supporting Vital Ecological or Conservation Functions and Values
- Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Natural Communities, Plants, or Wildlife Habitat
- Areas of Scenic Interest and Prime Physical Features
- Farmland and Open Space

In 1996, Governor King established the Land Acquisition Priorities Advisory Committee (LAPAC). This committee performed a new needs assessment and its recommendations form the basis for some of the scoring process, most notably the "LAPAC Multiplier" found in the Conservation and Recreation Lands Scoring System on page 27 of this workbook.

Since then, the program has updated its criteria to keep current with emerging needs, public input and legislative action.

Policy & Guidelines

The Land for Maine's Future Board follows well-established policies and guidelines as it conducts its business. The following is a brief summary of the most important of these. Please contact LMF staff with any questions.

Primary Purpose of the Program - The primary purposes of the LMF Program is to conserve land in its undeveloped state, public recreational water access, working waterfront protection, and productive farms and farmlands.

Willing sellers only - The Board requires proposals to include a signed consent from the owner(s) of land being proposed for consideration.

Matching Funds - A proposal is expected to have a match greater than or equal to 50% of the total eligible project costs. This means that for every \$1 of LMF funds expended, there must be at least \$1 of match funds. The Board considers the level of matching funds in evaluating projects and in making funding allocations. (Descriptions of match guidelines are in Section 1 of this workbook under Policy, Guidelines and Threshold Criteria.)

Matching funds may include non-LMF funds of up to 20% of the appraised value of the acquired land put into the stewardship account of the state agency or cooperating entity holding title to the land. Use of stewardship funds as match requires the recipient of LMF funds to make a firm commitment of these funds in a form acceptable to the Board.

Purchase Price Determined by Appraised Value - Board policy is to determine fair market value of a property or a conservation easement through a qualified independent appraisal and to base acquisition price on appraised value. Appraisals should follow the Appraisal Standards found in Appendix F.

The Board will typically require appraisals with a valuation date no more than a year old at the time of the Appraisal Oversight Committee's review unless an executed purchase and sales agreement is in place with a value based on the appraisal.

Purchases Above Appraised Value Strongly Discouraged - The Board's basic rule is that it will not participate in a transaction where the purchase price exceeds fair market value based on an independent appraisal that is approved by the Appraisal Oversight Committee and accepted by the Board.

However, it is recognized that the market will, on rare occasion, offer opportunities that may require exceptions to the basic rule. **Applicants should be aware that this exception is seldom**

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invoked and consult with program staff prior to making any commitments that would require an exception.

Board Allocation of Project Funding - The Board's allocation is considered preliminary until the actual value is determined by an LMF Board approved appraisal. The value determined by this appraisal, and other project costs, will guide the amount of funds LMF contributes to the project. Project may also change in scope or size, in these cases the Board's approval of funding may differ from the original allocation. Funding awards are at the approval of the LMF Board. Awards are subject to the availability of funds and subject to state budget and finance procedures.

Project Adjustments - The Director and Project Manager must be notified if, at any point prior to closing, a proposal selected as a project finalist has adjustments to its scope and size from what was accepted for funding by the LMF Board. Staff will review and determine what adjustments are appropriate or if the changes require the project to return to the LMF Board: for approval to continue with the project as adjusted; or for a possible change in funding or allocation.

Project funding may be reduced from the original allocation amount based upon the impact of the project change to the attributes of the original project.

Proposals must return to the LMF Board for reconsideration when:

1. Reductions in size

- Reductions in land are more than 10% of the original total project land area. This includes instances in multi parcel projects
- A parcel is removed from a multi-parcel project.

2. Reductions in scope

If changes in project scope substantially affect public access, recreational opportunities, uses of the land, ecological or conservation attributes.

3. Substitute parcels must be reviewed by the Scoring Committee and require Board approval.

Reserved rights and title issues - All changes encountered during due diligence and closing process must be reviewed by the Director, including changes to conservation easements, mineral ownership, etc. to determine if the changes could materially affect the investment of public funds.

Providing Public Recreational Access - Public recreational access is a core purpose of the Land for Maine's Future Program. All lands acquired through the LMF are open to the public. Exceptions include farms and commercial working waterfronts, where public access may not be feasible or desirable. LMF may make grants of up to 5% of the appraised value of land acquired to develop public access facilities, including trails, boat launching sites, parking, camping and picnicking facilities.

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Business Plan Development for Farmland Projects - When development rights on a farm are purchased, LMF may make grants of up to 5% for business plan development and implementation.

Hunting, Fishing & Trapping – Pursuant to the terms of the respective 2010 and 2012 bonds, hunting, fishing, trapping and public access may not be prohibited on conservation and recreation lands acquired with bond proceeds, except to the extent of applicable state, local and federal laws and regulations. Exceptions include farms and commercial working waterfront properties, or for protection of critical natural resources.

Public Notice of Intent to Purchase - The Board publishes a notice of a vote to acquire property 10 days in advance of the meeting. Notices are placed in a general circulation newspaper and a local newspaper describing the property to be voted on and inviting all members of the public to submit comments in writing or to appear before the Board with comments about the proposed acquisition.

Public Participation Welcome at All Meetings - All Board meetings are open to the public and include opportunity for public input. Meetings are publicly announced well in advance in applicable newspapers and on the LMF website.

Municipal and County Approval - Municipal approval is required for LMF funding when property interests representing more than 1% of a municipality's state valuation are considered for acquisition. Board policy is to encourage applicants to seek municipal input on all acquisitions. Within unorganized territories, approval of the appropriate county commissioners is required if the land value of a proposed project constitutes more than 1% of the state valuation within that county.

No Fee Acquisition of lands for Timber Production Lands - By statute, LMF is prohibited from funding the fee acquisition of land for which the primary use value has been or will be commercially harvested or harvestable forest land. This does not prohibit the acquisition of conservation easements in which the rights to harvest timber are retained by the land owner.

Addressing Land and Easement Management Costs - The Board now requires all applicants to address stewardship and management costs as part of a proposal. LMF statute requires that applicants provide estimates of the management costs associated with the project over the first 10 years of ownership.

Press releases - All press releases or media advisories announcing any phase of an acquisition with LMF funds must be coordinated with the LMF staff. Media coverage is encouraged.

LMF signage - Applicants are responsible to ensure appropriate signage acknowledging LMF support is located and maintained on all conserved properties.

Project Ownership - As part of the proposal, the applicant must specify how the project's ownership will be held. Ownership by a party other than a state agency is possible for local and regional projects. The LMF statute requires that all projects of statewide significance be held by an agency of the state.

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Where a project involves an easement that is to be held by a local entity (a “cooperating entity” in the words of the LMF statute, and includes land trusts and municipalities), language should typically be added to the easement ~~giving must give~~ the State of Maine third party enforcement rights on the terms of the easement. If this is not done ~~In addition~~, a Project Agreement between the cooperating entity and the State of Maine will define the terms of the project and be recorded with the easement (see Appendix H). Because all projects have differences, the description of project goals and management expectations may change from project to project. (Edits made by Board on March, 17, 2015.)

Similarly, where a project is owned in fee by a cooperating entity, a Project Agreement is signed between the entity and the State of Maine to define the terms of the project and recorded with the deed. The deed must also include reference to the fact that the parcel has been acquired as part of an LMF funded project.

Pre-acquired properties - Lands or interest in lands acquired within 2 years of the date of the project proposal may be considered for reimbursement when the pre-acquisition was conducted on behalf of the sponsoring agency **or** the sponsoring agency was aware of and supported the pre-acquisition. LMF contribution will be no more than the Board approved amount, not to exceed the actual purchase price or appraised value whichever is less. Any appraised value approved by the LMF Board in excess of the purchase price may be used as match.

Process used in reviewing conservation and farmland proposals - The Board establishes the deadline by which proposals must be received. A potential applicant must be in contact with the appropriate sponsoring state agency no less than eight weeks in advance of this deadline. A copy of the proposal must be sent to the sponsoring agency.

The process of proposal review includes the following:

- Staff review to determine that proposals are complete and identify problems.
- Board Scoring Committee review and final scoring.
- Board Nominations Committee review of all proposals, identification of issues for full Board discussion, and recommended project finalists with funding allocations.
- Full Board reviews all proposals, selects finalists and makes funding allocations.

Project Requirements

Completion Requirements for Approved Projects - Once the Board selects finalists, a series of due diligence steps must be completed to the satisfaction of the Board and to comply with legal requirements. In addition to these steps, the Board may place specific conditions which must be addressed before Land for Maine's Future funds are made available. Committees of the Board oversee this process, make recommendations to the Board, and determine if any new developments or information require additional full Board review.

Applicants are responsible for the following:

- Appraisal to determine fair market value. All appraisals for acquisition of fee or easement must be reviewed and accepted by the Appraisal Oversight Committee and its recommendation must be approved by the full Board. See appraisal standards in Appendix F.
- If acquisition involves easement purchase, easement is drafted in a form consistent with the Model Easement (prior to appraisal). See Appendix I Guidance for Working Forest Easements and Appendix J Guidance for Agricultural Conservation Easements.
- Determine legal interest to be held by the State e.g. fee, conservation easement, project agreement.
- Applicant prepares draft Purchase and Sales Contract with all appurtenant conditions, to be reviewed and approved by LMF staff.
- Elected officials approve (organized townships) if project represents more than 1% of state valuation or County Commissioners approve (unorganized townships) if more than 1% of county valuation.
- LMF will publish public notice of intent to purchase and schedule Board vote, for the purpose of receiving public comment.
- Complete title work, including title insurance. The property may not be encumbered by any lien, mortgage or other obligation that in the Board's exclusive judgment could interfere with the conservation purposes of the project. This includes outstanding mineral rights.
- Applicant conducts Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA). The ESA should be scheduled so that it is no more than 1 year old at the time of release of LMF funds. ESA reports older than one year will need an update.
- Complete an acceptable boundary survey and provide GIS-compatible electronic version of survey (so called "Shape" or ".SHP" files).
- Documentation of matching funds provided by applicant as presented in the proposal (NOTE: if a stewardship endowment has been included as match, this documentation must include a letter from the applicant's governing body that this commitment has been fulfilled);
- Evidence of Corporate Authority to accept LMF funds (if other than state agency).
- Certificate of good Corporate Standing (if non-governmental entity).

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- Vendor Form to facilitate payment to recipient of LMF funds.
- Joint Ownership Release (if needed)
- Close on project.
- Typically after closing, ecological and archeological surveys are undertaken to assess any features of the property that may require special management.

Threshold Criteria

The Land for Maine's Future Board follows established policies and guidelines when it makes decisions on which projects to fund. These "threshold criteria" supplement policies and guidelines that are found in Section I on page 8. Threshold refers to the Board's expectation that all proposals meet the following minimum requirements. In rare cases, a proposal that does not meet these criteria will be considered.

Willing Seller: The owner(s) has agreed in writing to allow the sponsoring agency or cooperating entity to consider the purchase of his/her property.

Adequate Title: Clear title is required. If clear title is not available at the time of application then the applicant is required to obtain clear title prior to closing.

Appraised Value: The owner is willing to accept an offer at or below fair market value based on an appraisal that conforms to Land for Maine's Future appraisal standards (see Appendix F). The appraisal valuation date should be less than a year old at the time of the Appraisal Oversight Committee review, unless an executed purchase and sales agreement is in place with a value based on the appraisal.

Match: A proposal is expected to have matching funds greater than or equal to 50% of the total eligible project costs. This means that for every \$1 of LMF funds, there must be \$1 of match value. Of the total match amount, the ratios of match type must be the following:

- no more than 30% of the match can be the value of services customarily associated with land acquisition (e.g. appraisal, survey, title work, legal work, ecological and archeological inventory)²; and
- 70% must be in the form of land, cash or other tangible assets. It is the responsibility of the applicant to document the value to be used as match via appraisal. For a match parcel to qualify as match the sponsoring state agency must hold the real estate interest or, if the interest is held by a cooperating entity, the interest must be covered by a project agreement with the sponsoring state agency.

For example, if a proposed property has an estimated total project cost of \$200,000 (including land and all other eligible costs), it would be eligible for up to \$100,000 in LMF funds, and there would have to be a match of at least \$100,000. Of this \$100,000 match, up to 30% or \$30,000 could be

² Services conducted by applicant staff and members, whether paid or volunteer, are not eligible to be included within match calculations.

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services needed for the land acquisition, and at least 70% or \$70,000 would have to be in donated land value, cash, or other tangible asset.

The value of lands or interest in lands acquired within 2 years of the date of project proposal may be used as tangible match when the property interests have a direct relationship to the project.

Contributions to a dedicated stewardship/management endowment of the state agency or cooperating entity that will hold title (or easement) may be considered as tangible match. Match requirements allow use of these contributions with a statutorily cap of 20% of the appraised value of the land to be acquired. Access improvements may be considered as tangible assets for match purposes with a cap at 5% of appraised land value. Engineering, permitting, and wetland delineation can also be considered as match under the 5% access improvement allowance. To qualify as match, stewardship commitments to the endowment of a cooperating entity must be documented by applicant in a manner acceptable to the Board.

With the exception of the caps on the stewardship endowment and access improvement, all other match percentages are calculated based on total project costs, which are the combined land or easement cost, plus all other costs customarily associated with the acquisition of land or interest in land.

Ownership & Sponsorship: An applicant is required to have sponsorship of a State agency (Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, or the Department of Marine Resources). For projects of regional or local significance applicants must have an agreement with the sponsor regarding ownership and management. To accomplish this, applicants must contact the appropriate sponsoring state agency **no less than eight weeks in advance** of submitting a proposal.

Applicant's Capacity: An applicant must demonstrate the capacity to undertake the project with a reasonable prospect of bringing it to a successful conclusion. Non-profit applicants must submit their most recent financial audit if one exists and the most recent financial statement³ that represents the organization's current financial condition. The Board may consider all relevant factors including without limitation: organizational debt, fund raising ability, past land conservation activity and transactions, track record with LMF projects, organizational history, scope of conservation vision, and evidence of success in building and sustaining land protection campaigns.

In addition, the Board will consider whether or not the proposed title or easement holder has the ability, experience, and resources to manage the property appropriately.

³ This material should be accompanied by a statement from the organization's treasurer that affirms that the material accurately represents the organization's current financial condition.

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Relationship to local comprehensive planning efforts: For locally significant projects, the project must be consistent with an adopted comprehensive plan (if one exists) meeting the standards of the Growth Management Act (30-A MRSA sections 4301-4349) with evidence that the municipality had adopted strategies to implement the plan. For strongest Board consideration, a project should be an explicit component of a larger integrated effort by the applicant and municipality to achieve the conservation, recreation, and other goals of the comprehensive plan.

A project proposed within a locally designated growth area must be able to demonstrate that the project doesn't diminish the intent of the designation.

Other criteria to be weighed by the LMF Board:

- Availability and price of the property.
- Suitability of alternate protection techniques.
- Threats to the property's conservation values.
- Intensity and expense of management activities needed to maintain the property's conservation attributes.
- In the case of conservation easements, sufficient matching funds are needed to monitor and enforce the easement. The Board will evaluate whether the proposal includes an adequate contribution, as identified by the sponsoring state agency, to the State's conservation stewardship or easement monitoring endowment fund.
- Status of fund-raising efforts for match funds.
- To indicate the level of commitment to the completion of a proposed project the LMF Board considers how many due diligence items are completed at the time the proposal is submitted.

These items include:

- Current appraisal (acceptable for Board review)
- Final easement or fee acquisition conditions completed
- Cost Share commitment established
- Signed option or purchase and sales agreement
- Pre-acquired and held by a third party in coordination with the sponsoring state agency.

Readiness scale.

- Level 1 - 4 items completed
- Level 2 - 3 items completed
- Level 3 - 2 items completed
- Level 4 - 1 item completed
- Level 5 - 0 items completed

List of Contacts/Cooperating Entities

As an applicant begins to develop a proposal, he/she may seek information sources, conservation partners, and the required sponsorship from State agencies associated with the acquisition and management of public lands. The organizations listed below will assist you in this effort. If you need any further guidance, contact the Land for Maine's Future Program at (207) 287-7576.

Dept. of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Land for Maine's Future staff

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Farmland

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Conservation & Recreation Lands

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Land for Maine's Future Workbook

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Land Trusts and Non-Profit Organizations

For the name of the land trust nearest your property, please contact the Maine Land Trust Network (www.mltn.org) or the Land for Maine's Future Program.