



Photo by Linda Woods

Protect the Adjacency Principle's "One-Mile Rule"

For more than 40 years, the Land Use Planning Commission's "one-mile rule" has guided responsible development in Maine's North Woods by requiring all new development to take place within a mile of existing development of a similar type, use, and scale. In doing so, this policy has prevented habitat fragmentation, protected Maine's forests, discouraged sprawling and unsightly strip development, and supported existing communities.

Now, LUPC has proposed eliminating the adjacency principle's "one-mile-rule" and replacing it with a new, untested policy that would let development stretch ten miles from boundaries of "rural hubs" and two miles from public roads. **Nearly two million acres** of land in Maine's Unorganized Territories would become vulnerable to development.

How Does this Proposal Affect Maine?

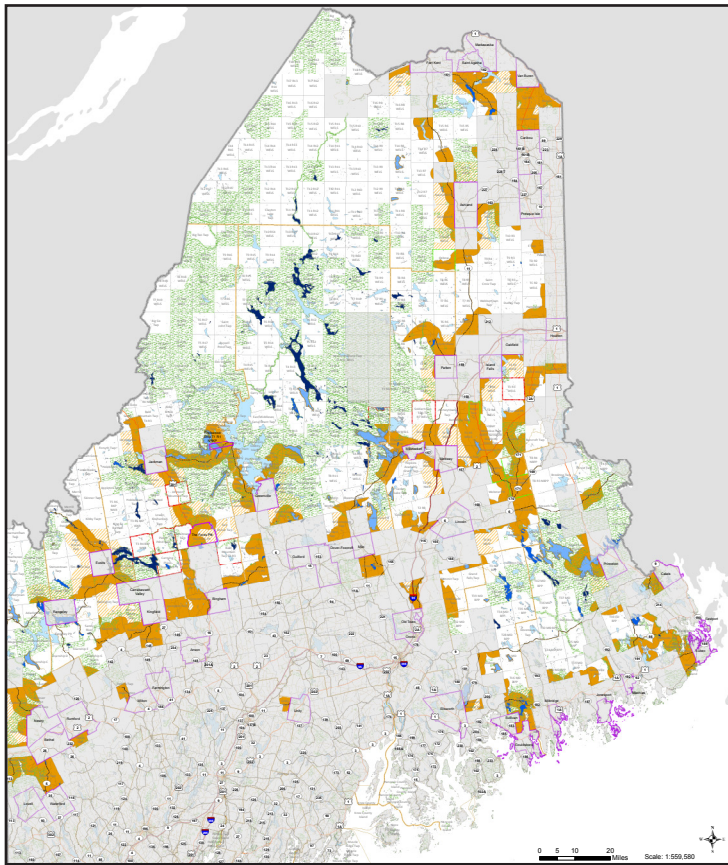
- **Fuels Development Sprawl that Detracts from Vibrant Downtowns**—If development is encouraged outside the boundaries of communities designated as "rural hubs," these towns would not receive any tax revenue but would likely shoulder the costs of providing emergency and fire services. Development should support existing downtowns, not undercut them.
- **Encourages Strip Development along Scenic Byways**—Many of Maine's Scenic Byways, including the Katahdin Woods and Waters Scenic Byway and Old Canada Road between Bingham and Jackman, have been identified by LUPC as areas suitable for development. Beloved scenic drives could turn into miles of strip development.
- **Puts Lakes at Risk**—LUPC has a complicated set of criteria to determine whether more than one thousand Maine lakes would be eligible for development under this proposal. Even LUPC staff doesn't know how many lakes—or which ones—would be affected.
- **Allows Commercial Development Near Remote Trails**—Retail and commercial development located near places like the Appalachian Trail and the Allagash Wilderness Waterway not only threatens nearby natural resources, it could also weaken Maine's nature-based tourism economy.
- **Fragments Forests and Threatens Wildlife Habitat**—This proposal would let "large-lot subdivisions" fragment the North Woods. In 2001, Maine's Legislature banned large-lot subdivisions in the North Woods, recognizing that they damage Maine's natural resources.
- **Jeopardizes the Remote Character of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument**—The Monument is nationally recognized for offering a remote, beautiful experience of Maine's North Woods, but LUPC's proposal would open up land to be developed both west and east of the East Branch of the Penobscot—immediately next to the Monument.

What You Can Do: Speak Out about the Proposal

You can submit comments about the adjacency proposal by sending them to LUPC at benjamin.godsoe@maine.gov. Here are some key messages to share with the Commission:

- Development should be kept away from remote natural places that attract visitors.
- We should protect our natural resources, trails, and remote lakes from residential and commercial development. This proposal could harm our natural resources and weaken existing tourism businesses.
- We must protect unfragmented blocks of forests in the North Woods in order to protect wildlife habitat.
- Strip development along Maine's Scenic Byways would harm their scenic character and beauty.
- Sprawl would harm existing downtowns.
- Sprawl is expensive, and towns would likely shoulder the costs of providing emergency and fire services for new development located far away from service providers.

Location of Development: Primary and Secondary Locations



Legend

- Areas served by LUPC
- Municipalities
- Retail Hubs
- County Lines
- Interstate
- U.S. Routes
- State Routes
- Other Public Roads

Lake management classifications:

- MC1, MC2, & MC6 Lakes
- MC3 Lakes
- MC4 & MC5 Lakes
- MC7 Lakes

Conserved Lands

- Statewide Conserved Lands
Includes all areas depicted in statewide conserved lands layer (publicly available through the Maine Office of GIS)
- Primary Locations:
< 2 miles from a public road, and <10 miles from a retail hub
< 2 miles from a public road in towns and plantations
< 700 feet from the normal highwater mark of MC3 lakes
- Secondary locations:
< 5 miles from a public road, and in a minor civil division that shares a boundary with a retail hub
- Minor Civil Divisions added
- Minor Civil Divisions removed

Map Notes:

This map is an approximate representation of materials described in the document "Land Use Planning Commission Application of the Adjacency Principle Staff Proposal - Part One of Two." For more specific information, please see the proposal.

The measurements from public roads are "as the crow flies" except that the measurement is not carried over a waterbody or the interstate highway, unless the area is contiguous to another primary or secondary location. This is intended to account for situations where development on one side of a waterbody would be effectively separated from a town on the other side of the waterbody because it is such a long way around.

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Chapter 10 Land Use Districts and Standards list a management classification for each lake in the Commission's service area. Management classifications indicate suitability for development of each lake, with the goal of maintaining a diversity of lake experiences (e.g., MC3 Lakes are potentially suitable for development).

Concerns

Primary Development Zones (orange areas):

- Would allow strip development along roads, including seven different scenic byways, up to 10 miles from "rural hubs"
- Would automatically green light development within 700 feet and all the way around all lakes now currently classified as "potentially suitable for development" (Class 3) (e.g. Caribou Lake next to Chesuncook Lake)
- Would open up approximately 2 million acres for residential development

Secondary Development Zones (orange striped areas):

- Would allow large-lot subdivisions which eat up large parcels of land and put them off limits to dispersed recreation (such as hunting)

The majority of the unorganized townships (white areas)

- Would attract subdivision development to inappropriate high-value recreation locations including:
 - Permanent Trails (e.g. the Appalachian Trail, Tumbledown, Mt. Abram, Big Spencer Mountain, the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, etc.)
 - An unknown number of the more than 1145 Class 7 lakes, many of which are identified as having outstanding or significant values
- Would allow commercial development 1/4 mile from remote ponds

To view the proposal, please visit <http://www.maine.gov/dacf/lupc/projects/adjacency/adjacency.html>



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