

## **SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION**

### **OVERVIEW**

Sagadahoc County is located in the mid coast region of Maine. As Maine's smallest county, it is made up of ten municipalities totaling 250 square miles, with a population of 35,194. The County is home to Maine's largest employer, Bath Iron Works, Inc. and is a close neighbor to the former Brunswick Naval Air Station facility and Bowdoin College. It is a popular area for tourists, offering a phenomenal coastline, a rich maritime heritage, quaint towns, antique shops and more. The County sits in the lower regions of the Androscoggin and Kennebec Rivers. Its weather, landscape, and climate are dominated by maritime influences.

Originally part of Lincoln County, Sagadahoc became a separate county in 1854. It was the site of one of the first attempted permanent colonies in the New World, Popham's Colony, established and then abandoned in 1608. However, even after the failure of Popham's Colony, the English continued voyages to the region for fur-trade and fishing.

Sagadahoc County has a long tradition of maritime industries, as evidenced by the presence of Bath Iron Works, first established as an iron foundry in 1826. The company was incorporated as Bath Iron Works in 1884, and expanded into shipbuilding with the acquisition of the Goss Marine Iron Works in 1888. The first BIW-built vessel was a coastal passenger ship named Cottage City built for the Maine Steamship Company in 1890. Since that time, BIW has been awarded more than 425 shipbuilding contracts, including 245 military ships (mostly destroyers and frigates for the US Navy) and over 160 private yachts and commercial vessels. BIW became a wholly owned subsidiary of General Dynamics in September 1995. While maritime industries continue to play a strong role within the County's economy, tourism has also become a major force.

The county's topography is typified by a remarkable number of streams, bays, coves, and tidal features. The surface of the county, though considerably broken, has no high hills, and the general altitude is such that the fresh water streams and salt inlets are not productive of deep ravines.

Sagadahoc County's political and cultural environment can best be described as "small-town". The most populous municipality, the Town of Topsham, has a population of just under 9,000, while Arrowsic, its smallest incorporated town, has a population of 445. While Bath, Topsham, and Richmond maintain full time police departments, the rest of the county is served by the Sagadahoc County Sheriff's Department. Only Bath maintains a paid municipal fire department with full-time paid shift firefighters while Topsham maintains a fire department with a full-time fire chief and on-call firefighters. The remaining municipalities rely on either paid on-call volunteers or unpaid volunteers.

The County has a strong tradition of self-sufficiency and independence, typified by strong local governments. However, there is also a sense of shared interdependence, which is exhibited, in the regional approach to this multi-jurisdictional plan. This hazard mitigation plan is recognized by the municipalities as a starting point for collaborative efforts, to be built upon in successive years through monitoring and review of the plan implementation.

### **Municipal Population**

According to the 2010 census, Sagadahoc County had a population of 35,293, which is less than a small city (the city of Lewiston, Maine has 36,592 people). Between 2000 and 2010, the County's population increased by just 79 people, or 0.2%. Between 2010 and 2013, the population declined by 99 persons and is anticipated to remain relatively stable. The following table, which contains population

Sagadahoc County Hazard Mitigation Plan – 2016 Update

totals from the 2010 Census, and the 2013 Census Estimate shows that Sagadahoc County is composed of 10 small municipalities, the largest of which, Topsham, is home to just 8,750 people. Approximately 10% of the homes in Sagadahoc County are for seasonal or recreational use.

Population of Sagadahoc County Municipalities								
Town/City	2010 Year Round Population	2000 Year Round Population	2010 Median Age	2010 Square Miles	2010 Density/ Square Mile	2010 Total Homes	2010 Year Round Homes	2010 Average Household Size
Arrowsic	427	477	55.0	8.9	48	251	213	2.09
Bath	8,514	9,266	41.0	9.8	869	4,437	4,352	2.14
Bowdoin	3,061	2,727	40.4	39.2	78	1,202	1,193	2.67
Bowdoinham	2,889	2,612	43.7	36.9	78	1,279	1,237	2.45
Georgetown	1,042	1,020	49.6	19.0	55	1,044	518	2.22
Phippsburg	2,216	2,106	49.8	31.0	71	1,748	1,062	2.30
Richmond	3,411	3,298	42.1	30.8	111	1,629	1,546	2.39
Topsham	8,784	9,100	45.2	33.2	265	4,167	4,106	2.32
West Bath	1,877	1,798	47.7	12.3	153	1,116	898	2.29
Woolwich	3,072	2,810	44.6	37.6	82	1,415	1,334	2.48
<b>Sagadahoc Co.</b>	<b>35,293</b>	<b>35,214</b>	<b>44.1</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>18,288</b>	<b>16,459</b>	<b>2.32</b>

Source: U.S. Census

Population of Sagadahoc County Municipalities: American Factfinder 2013					
Town/City	2013 Year Round Population	2013 Median Age	2013 Total Homes	2013 Year Round Homes	2013 Average Household Size
Arrowsic	445	55.2	242	216	2.09
Bath	8,324	41	4,498	4,002	2.14
Bowdoin	3,066	40.8	1,204	1,151	2.67
Bowdoinham	2,880	40	1,207	1,140	2.45
Georgetown	998	50.8	1,025	435	2.22
Phippsburg	2,153	53	1,744	961	2.30
Richmond	3,393	43.4	1,777	1,436	2.39
Topsham	8,750	45.3	4,206	3,681	2.32
West Bath	1,978	46.3	1,062	781	2.29
Woolwich	3,065	45.3	1,336	1,219	2.48
<b>Sagadahoc Co.</b>	<b>35,194</b>	<b>44.5</b>	<b>18,303</b>	<b>15,022</b>	<b>2.32</b>

Sagadahoc County is structured the same as county governments throughout of the state. There are 3 county commissioners who oversee the operations of the county government including the Courts, Sheriff, Corrections, Registry of Deeds, Registry of Probate, Communications, and Emergency Management.

## Sagadahoc County Hazard Mitigation Plan – 2016 Update

There are several different kinds of government in Sagadahoc County. The following summary is based in part on the Maine Municipal Association's report "Local Government in Maine."

**Cities:** There is one city in Sagadahoc County (Bath, the County Seat). All cities in Maine have local charters granted by the Maine Legislature that provide for a representative form of government - meaning they have a city council that serves as the legislative body. The city council is elected by and answerable to the citizens. The office of mayor varies considerably from city to city, with only a few acting as chief executive officer. Some mayors are elected by the vote of the people, while others are elected by a vote of their fellow councilors.

**Towns:** There are nine incorporated towns in Sagadahoc County. Towns remain the cornerstone of local government. A Maine community becomes a town when it is incorporated by a special act of the legislature. At that time, it is given certain privileges and responsibilities. Under Home Rule, towns may take any action or change their form of government in any way not denied or precluded by state or federal law. The voters of the town constitute its legislative body. Day-to-day governance of towns has expanded from the original board of selectmen to include town managers, town councils, budget committees, municipal departments and various professional managers. In a small number of mostly larger towns, the council exerts legislative control without a town meeting. In others, a ballot vote is used to approve the budget rather than the open town meeting.

**Townships/Unorganized Territory:** Maine is unique among eastern states in having half its land mass, or more than 10 million acres, in an Unorganized Territory. Most of it is in the northern and easternmost counties. There is no local, incorporated municipal government. Collectively, the Unorganized Territory has a population of 9,000 residents, which is 0.68 percent of the State's population.

Provision of services and property tax administration for the Unorganized Territory is shared among various State, County and local agencies. Law enforcement and public road maintenance is the County's responsibility. Taxes are paid to the State Property Tax division. The State's Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC) establishes basic rules. Perkins Township is the only township in Sagadahoc County's portion of the Unorganized Territory. In the year 2010, there were no year-round residents living in Perkins Township, and the same is true for year 2013.

The table below, from the U.S. Census, shows population fluctuations through the last century.

Sagadahoc County Hazard Mitigation Plan – 2016 Update

Population of Sagadahoc County and Maine, 1900 –2013		
Year	Sagadahoc County	Maine
1900	20,330	694,466
1910	18,574	742,371
1920	23,021	768,014
1930	16,927	797,423
1940	19,123	847,226
1950	20,911	914,950
1960	22,793	970,689
1970	23,452	992,048
1980	28,795	1,124,660
1990	33,535	1,227,928
2000	35,214	1,274,923
2010	35,293	1,328,361
2013	35,194	1,328,320
1970-80 change	23%	13%
1980-90 change	16.5%	9%
1990-00 change	5%	4%
2000-10 change	0.2%	4.2%
2000-13 change	(-0.28%)	(-.003%)

Source: U.S. Census and American Fact-Finder 2013

Seasonal Population of Sagadahoc Municipalities					
Town	Seasonal Housing	Estimated Seasonal Population	Town	Seasonal Housing	Estimated Seasonal Population
Arrowsic	38	106	Phippsburg	686	1,921
Bath	85	238	Topsham	61	171
Bowdoin	9	25	Richmond	83	232
Bowdoinham	42	118	Woolwich	81	227
Georgetown	526	1,473	West Bath	218	610

Source: 2010 U.S Census

Note: Estimated seasonal population is based upon an average household size of 2.8 persons.

Sagadahoc County contains 1,829 seasonal housing units with an estimated seasonal population of 5,121 based upon seasonal housing occupancy. Most of the seasonal housing is located in the towns of Phippsburg and Georgetown which are peninsula communities.

Other factors which affect seasonal population include:

- Traffic activity on Route One which is a major corridor along the coast and to other eastern tourist sites such as Bar Harbor and Acadia National Park.
- Occupancy at the numerous motels, bed & breakfast, inns and campgrounds

Considering all the factors which affect seasonal population during the summer months, the population can increase by over 10,000 persons at certain times during the summer season. This is an important factor which affects planning and dealing with a severe summer storm event.