



Technical Proposal

Open Space Plan

5.8.2025

Prepared by:
Ben Meader
Haley Ward, Inc.

Prepared for:
Tony Ward
Town of Casco



HALEY WARD

CONTACT:

Ben Meader
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m: (207) 350-5626
Project Manager
Damariscotta, ME



Table of Contents

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| SECTION 1: FIRM DESCRIPTION | <u>p. 4</u> |
| SECTION 2: PROJECT TEAM | <u>p. 6</u> |
| SECTION 3: PROJECT UNDERSTANDING | <u>p. 8</u> |
| SECTION 4: COMPARABLE PROJECTS | <u>p. 12</u> |
| SECTION 5: COST ESTIMATE | <u>p. 14</u> |



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Table of Contents

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| SECTION 2: PROJECT TEAM | <u>p. 6</u> |
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| SECTION 4: COMPARABLE PROJECTS | <u>p. 12</u> |
| SECTION 5: COST ESTIMATE | <u>p. 14</u> |



HALEY WARD

Cover Letter

Dear Mr. Ward,

Thank you for taking the time to consider partnering with Haley Ward for your requested planning services—to develop an Open Space Plan for the Town of Casco.

For many residents, business owners, visitors, and workers, open space is what gives a place its true character. Each community member experiences their private life primarily inside various buildings and indoor structures: home, work, school, places to shop, eat, and socialize. It is in the spaces between these—the woods, waters, parks, streets, and shorelines—that a town's public and recreational life will either flourish or flounder. We believe that an Open Space Plan should be more than an effort to connect existing assets; a good plan should provide the town with an aspirational picture of its external identity and what it hopes to become.

In your Comprehensive Plan, adopted in January of 2024, the very first “big idea” identifies the ethos behind these values: “Protect Woods, Waters, & Open Space.” We understand that at the crux of this goal is the tension between competing needs. Some areas need to be better developed to serve their users, while others may be in danger of overuse and damaging critical habitat. There is the need to increase safety and accessibility for expanded bikes and pedestrian capacity, while still providing space for the traffic fluctuations that come with a seasonal/recreational economy.

Our consultants and planners use a proven set of engagement, analysis, and design workflows that will provide industry-leading perspectives to environmental design, recreational land use planning, and addressing human impact. We also bring innovative approaches to assessing and designing accessibility that will prove invaluable in designing concepts for Casco's future.

Ben Meader will be your Project Manager, responsible for administration, communication, and organizing production. He regularly communicates across disciplines and will execute all parts of the scope of work with each contributor. **Sarah Turner** will act as the project's Lead Consultant. She brings not only a deep knowledge of the work involved, but a history and track record of successful work in Casco that will set our team apart.

Good outcomes are developed, not discovered. Substantive community engagement should pair with the most robust science, design, and communication methods possible. We see the final product as a culmination of a process, not the work of our team alone.

We hope you'll give us the opportunity to design solutions alongside you and the Casco community. Please feel free to contact me at bmeader@haleyward.com or (207) 945-5108 at your earliest convenience.

Kind regards,

Benjamin T. Meader, Project Manager
bmeader@haleyward.com

Section 1

Firm Description



Local experience with wide-ranging expertise.

Background and History

Haley Ward is a 100% employee-owned technical consulting firm offering a wide range of engineering, planning, architectural, environmental, and surveying services focused upon delivering client-based solutions. Founded as CES, Inc. of Brewer, Maine in 1978, our company evolved into Haley Ward in 2020 to better represent our increasing size, reach, and service portfolio. While our name has changed, our commitment to our clients has not. By listening attentively to clients' needs and working collaboratively, Haley Ward delivers optimal solutions built on value, quality, promptness, and teamwork.

At Haley Ward, we value striving for excellence, providing accountability, and fostering a spirit of collaboration; we are committed to building teams and relationships that reflect these values. We believe that teams that share similar work ethics are more likely to be driven to provide each client with quality service that meets, and hopefully exceeds, their expectations. Each project should become a new reason for clients to return to us for future work.

Haley Ward is headquartered in Bangor, Maine, with branch offices located in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Florida. ***The Project Manager for this team, Ben Meader, is based in a remote office out of Damariscotta, Maine.*** The majority of the team proposed here are based in Portland and Bangor. ***Haley Ward is able to provide the required services for this project and will be a single source provider.***

Vision

The success of our firm has been built over decades primarily through the relationships we have been able to develop, and the on-going business we obtain from our repeat clients. Many of our clients have been with us since the late 1970s, which we feel is a testament to the importance we place on relationships.

We believe that work that involves knowledge-building, planning, engineering, and design should be characterized by several tenants:

1. project decisions should be arrived at transparently by client and consultant consensus,
2. effort should be anchored in the best existing research and science,
3. results should be defensible and communicable to well-informed non-experts,
4. methods should be resilient to scrutiny and replicable, and
5. deliverables should be examples of excellence and readily actionable.

Haley Ward has grown to a ***firm size of nearly 300 professionals*** supporting clients in a variety of sectors including governmental, municipal, private, industrial, and commercial. And although our Haley Ward staff work on 800 to 900 projects in any given year, we approach each project with singular focus. Our first aim is always to develop interpersonal trust, and then through demonstrated integrity we hope to follow up by fostering long-term, lasting relationships.

Services & QA/QC

Haley Ward is a full-service firm and recognized as one of the northeast's leading consultancies. Our teams cover a lot of subject areas, from sewer pump stations to interior design. The technical diversity of our firm allows us to provide in-house solutions that might otherwise be subcontracted by other consulting firms. We pride ourselves in working in a collaborative, interdisciplinary way. If you discover the need for additional skills or services, let the Project Manager know of your interests so we can match you with the resource that best fits your needs.

Civil Engineering

- Land Use Permitting & Development
- Recreational Trails
- Roads & Parking Lots
- Transportation & Traffic
- Water/Wastewater Treatment & Conveyance
- Water Works
- Geospatial Coordination

Structural/MEP Engineering

- Architectural Design
- Building Services
- Building Evaluations
- Capital Needs Assessments & Services
- Electrical System Design
- Mechanical System Design
- Municipal Infrastructure
- Structural Design & Analysis

Environmental Engineering

- Remediation Services
- Solid Waste
- Revetment Design
- Erosion Control

Spatial Data Modeling

- Building Information Modeling (BIM)
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Cartography & Geovisualization
- Digital Twin Models
- Web Hosting & Interactive Maps
- Data Creation & Management

A large part of being recognized as a leading firm is achieving quality results and providing a quality deliverable. We have created a **Quality Assurance/Quality Control Policy** that will be followed for project deliverables to provide the quality of work our clients deserve. This policy should be referred to by Haley Ward staff during the preparation of project deliverables and/or milestones, as well as when initiating document review and revision phases. Documents prepared must be based on accurate technical information, easy to read, well written, and well organized.

Major consulting areas are listed below:

Environmental Sciences

- Geology/Hydrogeology
- Geophysics
- PFAS Sampling & Analysis
- Solid Waste

Environmental Compliance

- Air Emissions
- Drinking Water Operations
- Environmental Monitoring
- Petroleum, Haz. Materials, Haz. Waste
- Stormwater Compliance
- Wastewater Operations & Compliance

Environmental Investigation

- Brownfields Redevelopment
- Environmental Site Assessments

Natural Resources

- Permitting & Licensing
- Wetland Habitat Mapping

Industrial Hygiene

- Indoor Air Quality Assessments
- Asbestos, Lead, & PCB Management Service

Surveying

- Surveying Services
- Drone Services

Planning & Design

- Community Engagement
- Comprehensive Planning
- Zoning Code Audit
- Masterplanning

Section 2

Project Team

Planners, designers, and subject specialists.



Ben Meader, GISP

Project Manager/
Geospatial Coordinator

Municipal Infrastructure
Damariscotta, ME

Ben has led and collaborated on geographic projects in planning, environmental, and social sciences for over thirteen years. His extensive knowledge of GIS and human-environment systems has landed him a diverse client list throughout his career. Ben brings a novel approach to project management. Process diagrams and workflow structures are examined at each milestone and adapted to emerging needs.



Sarah Turner

Lead Consultant/
Associate Planner

Planning & Design
Portland, ME

Sarah Turner is a geospatial analyst and planner with extensive experience in planning, land use projects. She has worked with towns and regional organizations across New England to analyze zoning codes, automate workflows, and communicate findings through maps and visuals. She combines technical skills with a deep understanding of community development, making her especially effective at turning complex data into actionable insights for local governments.



Kaj Overturf

GIS Specialist/
Env. Scientist

Environmental
Bangor, ME

Kaj Overturf joined Haley Ward following the completion of his master's degree at Auburn University. Kaj has a wide-ranging background in geographical information systems (GIS) and natural resources, having worked on field projects ranging from deer-forest relationships to bird territory mapping. Kaj has utilized GIS extensively for data analysis and visualization in the fields of ecology and natural resources and has experience with both tax parcel and cemetery data mapping and management.



Vanessa Farr, CNU-A

Regional Manager
of Planning and Design

Planning & Design
Portland, ME

Vanessa L. Farr has 25 years of professional planning and development experience. Although trained as a generalist, Vanessa has developed specialization in comprehensive plans, urban design, place-based economic development, and outcome-driven zoning policy. Vanessa founded Maine Design Workshop in 2015, is the Co-Founder of Build Maine, previously served on the New England Board of the Congress for the New Urbanism, and was the recipient of the 2014 Maine Association of Planners Professional Planner of the Year award.

Full resumes for our team members can be provided by request.

Level of Involvement

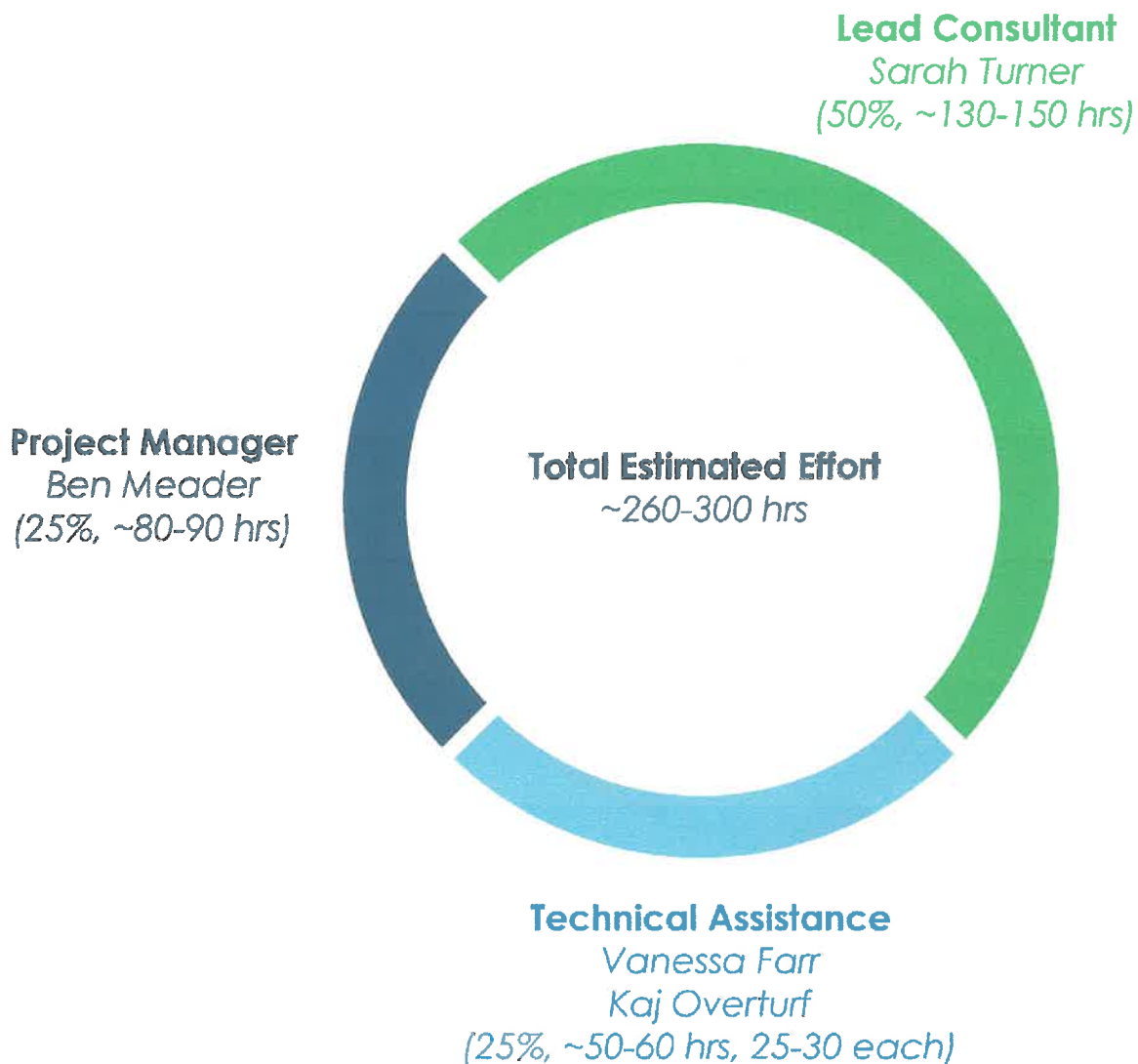
Although our team is comprised of nearly 300 personnel with a wide array of experience, we've listed the four that will be most involved with this effort.

Ben will act the **Project Manager**, he will organize and approve of all major tasks/decisions throughout the duration of the project, lead administration, and document the project. His experience in a broad array of geographic and environmental planning projects will enable him to manage the team effectively.

Sarah will act as the project's **Lead Consultant**, she will execute the majority of the work—leading analysis, production, visuals, deliverables, etc.

Vanessa will act as the project's **Planning & Design Manager**, she will advise the project at key decisions and junctures to ensure that the best deliverables and quality of work are achieved.

Kaj will act as the primary **Technical Assistant**, he will support project efforts in data management, environmental science, fieldwork, and GIS tasks.



Section 3

Project Understanding

Plans should be clear, actionable, and inspirational.

Strategy Statement

Halley Ward is uniquely positioned to support the Town of Casco in developing its Open Space Plan. Our team brings not only the technical skills required to deliver a robust plan, but also a strong working relationship with the community, an understanding of local priorities, and a commitment to helping Casco protect the resources that define its rural character and quality of life.

Ben Meader, Project Manager, will support the team with climate resilience and trail network planning. Ben has led multiple regional mapping and planning efforts, including a recent partnership with five land trusts (one of which was Loon Echo Land Trust) to develop a regional strategy for prioritizing land conservation and ecological value.

Sarah Turner will serve as the lead project consultant and primary point-of-contact. Sarah has extensive experience working with the town of Casco, as she was also involved in the development of Casco's Comprehensive Plan and currently works as a contract planner with the town supporting both the Safe Streets Committee and Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC). This ongoing work has provided her with an in-depth understanding of the town's existing trail network, connectivity priorities, and commitment to sustainability and accessibility.

Vanessa Farr, Planning Manager, has worked with the Town of Casco for several years on a range of land use and policy efforts, which began with leading the effort to update Casco's Comprehensive Plan in 2022. She brings extensive experience in rural planning, natural resource strategies, and community facilitation.



Newton, Massachusetts. Photo by Principle Group. Vanessa runs engagement for a workshop regarding the Washington Street corridor.

Kaj Overturf, GIS Specialist, will lead mapping and spatial analysis. Kaj and the GIS team will create a geodatabase of all existing conserved land, trail alignments, water access points, and critical habitat areas, while identifying opportunity areas for expanded connectivity or preservation. GIS staff will digitize all community input and provide final deliverables in both static and GIS-ready formats. A public-facing web map can be developed as an optional add-on, pending the town's decision to secure an ArcGIS Online subscription.

Approach - Our Philosophy

Our approach to Casco's Open Space Plan is guided by a few core principles: keep it useful, keep it clear, and build it together. We understand that Casco needs a dynamic plan to inspire and guide decision-making more than a predefined page count with template language. What the Town needs, and what we'll deliver, is a well-organized, community-informed plan that reflects local knowledge, maps what matters, and lays out practical next steps to conserve land, connect people to open space, and manage the outdoors for generations to come.

With Vanessa Farr and Sarah Turner already working with the Planning Board, Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee, and Safe Streets Committees, this means that we have a head start on tailoring our work to fit Casco's capacity and priorities. We'll work directly with Town staff and the Open Space Commission to make sure this plan supports the implementation of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan and reflects real on-the-ground opportunities.

With Ben Meader at the helm, this isn't just a mapping exercise, it's a balanced and well-choreographed process where data and people come together. We believe the best open space plans are co-authored by the people who live there. That means working closely with the Open Space

Commission and other partners such as Loon Echo Land Trust, the lakes associations, and local trail groups who already know where the bottlenecks, gaps, and opportunities are.

We plan to meet with the Open Space Commission at key decision points along the way: kickoff, pre- and post-engagement, and draft review. We will also check in between those touchpoints as needed.

We'll begin by building a solid base. This includes a complete GIS inventory of trails, conserved lands, water access points, and key habitat. Next, we will identify the gaps, both spatial and structural. That might mean identifying a missing trail segment, a shoreline with no public access, or a place where formalizing existing trail access could unlock long-term public value. From there, we will bring the community into the process using hands-on mapping workshops and a clear set of questions: What places matter most to you? Where can we connect what we already have? What's missing? We will visualize that feedback to create a shared town-wide strategy. This strategy will recognize where there is alignment between landowners, conservation partners, and public interests, and it will identify where new conversations need to start.

We'll make sure the final plan is concise, visual, and functional. It will include a prioritization framework that the Town can refer to regularly to apply for grants, pursue conservation easements, or simply clarify which next steps are most likely to succeed. We will also ensure that any data we collect (GIS files, maps, community comments) stays organized and usable by staff and volunteers moving forward.

At its core, this plan is about weaving together the great work already happening and setting forth a strategy for the future to protect what matters most. We're excited to help Casco take this exciting next step!

Section 3

Project Understanding

300 hours, 7 months, final draft by December 31.

Work Plan

Task 1: Project Meetings

Purpose:

Coordinate with Town staff, the Open Space Commission, and the Selectboard to guide the project, share progress, and gather feedback at key milestones.

Timeline: June–Dec 2025

Meetings:

- Kickoff Meeting (June 2025) in-person with the Open Space Commission to review scope, data needs, and confirm engagement structure.
- Ongoing Check-Ins (monthly at Open Space Commission Meetings) via video or phone throughout summer and fall for coordination and updates, meeting in-person on an as-needed basis.
- Public Engagement Workshop and Outreach (August–September 2025).
- Draft Plan Review Meeting (October 2025) in-person to gather feedback before final draft.
- Final Presentation (December 2025) in-person to the Selectboard for review and adoption.

Deliverables:

- Meeting agendas and summary notes for each formal meeting, to be coordinated with Open Space Commission Chair and Secretary.
- PowerPoint presentations as needed.

Task 2: Existing Plans & Conditions

Purpose:

Review prior planning work, compile existing open space data, and identify spatial gaps and opportunities.

Timeline: June–July 2025 (Discovery Phase)

Tasks:

- Review the 2006 Open Space Plan, Comprehensive Plan, Open Space Playbook, and any other related reports.
- Inventory conserved lands, trails, water access, natural habitats, and other relevant open space assets.
- Perform a spatial gap analysis to identify:
 - Underserved areas for public access
 - Potential trail extensions or formalization
 - Barriers to habitat connectivity
- Create a comprehensive map atlas for public engagement.
- Prepare draft base maps for community and committee use.

Deliverables:

- GIS inventory and map series of existing open space assets and potential opportunity areas.
- Map printouts and/or digital files for use during engagement.

Task 3: Public Participation

Purpose:

Gather community and stakeholder input to shape priorities and define shared goals for conservation, access, and connectivity.

Timeline: Aug–Oct 2025 (Vision Phase)

Tasks:

- **Community Kickoff Visibility:** Develop a float for the Casco Days Parade to promote the project and invite public involvement.
- **Main Engagement Event:** Host one primary, interactive community workshop (or series of smaller events) in fall 2025. This may coincide with the opening of the new all-persons trail at Mayberry Hill to encourage participation and connection to place.
- Collect feedback using large printed base maps, markers, and sticky notes.
- Optional: Use a digital crowdsourcing map (if permissible under grant terms) to gather additional input from seasonal or remote residents.
- **Stakeholder Outreach:** Coordinate small-group discussions or interviews with:

Loon Echo Land Trust

Lake associations

Local trail/rec. groups (ATV, biking, running)

Landowners of critical parcels

Youth and school-related groups

Town boards/committees (CPIC, Safe Streets)

Deliverables:

- Summary of public and stakeholder input.
- Digitized community feedback integrated into the GIS database.
- Photos and documentation from engagement.

Task 4: Final Document Production

Purpose:

Assemble the plan, align it with local priorities, and prepare clear deliverables for adoption and implementation.

Timeline: Oct–Dec 2025 (Production Phase)

Tasks:

- Draft concise, visual plan with clearly identified priority areas, implementation strategies, and a prioritization framework.
- Coordinate with the Open Space Committee for review and refinement of content and layout.
- Prepare a final version for Selectboard presentation and adoption.
- Package all GIS files and engagement documentation.

Deliverables:

- Draft Open Space Plan (October 2025)
- Final Open Space Plan (December 2025)
- GIS files, map atlas, and workshop materials
- Optional: Public-facing interactive web map (requires subscription to ArcGIS Online)



Section 4

Comparable Projects



Extensive experience analyzing, planning, and implementing.

Environmental Planning

Climate Resiliency Mapper | Meader

Loon Echo Land Trust and its partners, 2023-2024.

Active/in-use, 2025. ~ 2,000 sq. mi.

At his firm Rhumblin, Ben worked with five land trusts to establish regional priorities for allocating resources in light of climate change. Dozens of parameters were developed from a deep data inventory and compared using weighted sums to optimize conservation efforts.

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/5e65375988ef465c997dddaf43ecdbc6>

Matt Markot (Meader)

Executive Director, Loon Echo Land Trust
8 Depot Street, Suite 4
Birdgton, ME 04009
207-647-4352
matt@lelt.org

Midcoast 30x30 Prioritization | Meader

Midcoast Conservancy, 2022.

Active/in-use, 2025. ~ 500 sq. mi.

At his firm Rhumblin, Ben led the consulting team contracted by Midcoast Conservancy to research priorities and design a geospatial methodology for implementing a new conservation strategy.

<https://www.midcoastconservancy.org/s/Midcoast-30-x-30-Landscape-Priority-Assessment.pdf>

Municipal Planning

Comp Planning | Farr, Meader, Turner

Town of Brunswick, Jan 2025-present.

In production, complete by July 2025. ~ 50 sq. mi.

Haley Ward is actively engaged with the Town of Brunswick to complete their efforts to update their Comprehensive Plan. This process began before the pandemic and had seen a number of issues and iterations before the Haley Ward joined the effort. Vanessa's team, including Ben and Sarah, was tasked to bring the project back on track and to complete the effort over the course of 6 months.

During a series of intensive workshops spanning four days, the Haley Ward team re-worked the actions and strategies of the plan in conjunction with the committee. This effort involved a great deal of urban design, environmental analysis, stakeholder interviews, and code review.

Slated to finish by mid-summer, the project will result in a Comprehensive Plan for public adoption.

Julie Erdman (Farr/Meader/Turner)

Planning Director, Town of Brunswick
85 Union Street
Brunswick, ME 04011
207-721-4022
jerdman@brunswickme.gov

Recreation Planning

Trails for All | Meader, Farr

Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust, 2024-present.
In production, completion by September 2025.

Haley Ward is actively engaged with Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust to develop a new vision and an array of engineered plans that increases the accessibility of its recreation assets. This effort, called “Trails for All,” culminates in vision planning to include several key deliverables:

- Designs for several accessible trails
- A new Round Top Campus vision/concept plan
- A communications and outreach plan to better serve all members and residents

Steven Hufnagel (Meader/Farr)

Executive Director, Coastal Rivers
3 Round Top Lane
Damariscotta, ME 04543
207-563-1393 x330

Local Work: Town of Casco

Comprehensive Planning | Farr, Turner

Zoning and Streets Maps | Meader

Town of Casco, 2021-2023.

Comp Plan approved on 1/30/2024.

At previous positions, Vanessa and Sarah led the Town of Casco through a comprehensive plan process with the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) and Principle Group. This plan centers on preserving the woods, waters, and open spaces, maintaining Casco's rural character. Through a multi-day public engagement process, the team worked with residents to create visionary plans, maps, and land use strategies to decide on the kind of growth residents want using designated growth areas, and the actions needed to achieve this vision.

In separate contracts, Ben led his previous team at Rhumline through an analysis to reestablish shoreland and resource protection definitions using a variety of spatial datasets. His team also performed a revision of the Town's official Streets Map.



Bristol, Maine. Ben's team redesigns a trail to comply with USFS accessibility standards for backcountry conditions.

Section 5

Cost Estimate

Fixed fee, \$50k, regular reporting.

Proposed Fee & Tracking

We propose a fixed fee of \$50,000. This would be billed monthly according to the following breakdown of eight invoices within a week of the proposed dates:

| | |
|-------------------------|---------|
| June 1 (initiation) | \$6,250 |
| July 1* | \$6,250 |
| August 1* | \$6,250 |
| September 1* | \$6,250 |
| October 1* | \$6,250 |
| November 1* | \$6,250 |
| December 1* | \$6,250 |
| December 31* (closeout) | \$6,250 |

Effort will be tracked via effort reports, available alongside invoices indicated above with an asterisk. Communication and tasks will be tracked using Basecamp and Outlook.

Rates

We want to provide you with the best possible solutions while also being mindful of your goals and your budget. This means we will work in tandem with you to ensure that effort is properly placed and that our team will create a plan that can meet both value and efficiency goals. Level of involvement and 2025 hourly rates are included below.

Expenses

Subconsultant's fees processed through Haley Ward will be marked up 15% to cover our direct costs associated with retaining these services. No subconsultants are proposed at this time. Mileage will be billed at the rate of \$0.85 (eighty-five cents) per mile. Photocopies, blueprints, and other project related reimbursable expenses will be billed at cost.

| Staff Member | Level of Involvement | Hourly Rate |
|---------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Ben Meader, GISP | ~ 25% total effort | \$190 |
| Sarah Turner | ~ 50% total effort | \$165 |
| Kaj Overturf | ~ 12.5% total effort | \$165 |
| Vanessa Farr, CNU-A | ~ 12.5% total effort | \$240 |



Casco, Maine. Looking out at Pleasant Lake from the public boat launch. Photo courtesy of Forrest Meader, 2023.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit on this important project.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Ben Meader, Project Manager, at bmeader@haleyward.com, or call 207-350-5626.

