

FACT SHEET
STEEP FALLS, STANDISH – SUSTAIN SOUTHERN MAINE

<p>Location</p>	<p>Steep Falls is located in the western corner of Standish along the banks of the Saco River at the crossroads of Routes 11 and 113. Crossing the Saco River, Main Street (Route 11) travels southwest toward Limington and north toward Naples. The Pequawket Trail (Route 113) overlaps Route 11 at the center of the village, then travels southeast toward Route 25, and northwest toward Baldwin.</p> <p>Route 113 from Standish to Gilead has been designated by the Maine Department of Transportation as the Pequawket Trail Scenic Byway.</p> <p>The village is located on Mile 24.6 of the Mountain Division rail line, which runs 50-miles from the Port of Portland to the state line in Fryeburg.</p> <p>A Class A River that supports drinking, swimming, fishing and canoeing, the Saco River runs 136 miles from its headwaters at Saco Lake in the White Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean at Saco Bay. The stretch of river through Steep Falls is well-known by kayakers for its whitewater rapids.</p>
<p>Existing Type of Center</p>	<p>A mixed use village, Steep Falls is one of the town’s four Designated Growth Areas, which have enough undeveloped land to accommodate 100% of Standish’s projected growth. Although Steep Falls appears largely residential in character, the village contains several large Brownfields sites that once hosted plants manufacturing wood and food products. The once bustling village still boasts its own zip code and post office.</p>
<p>Acreage</p>	<p>302.9 acres (4.7 sq. mi.)</p>
<p>Demographics</p>	
<p>2010 Census Geography</p>	<p>Steep Falls is classified as a Census Designated Place (CDP). While the CDP boundary is larger than the pilot area (10.2 sq. mi. compared to 4.7 sq. mi.), it represents the most accurate demographic information available for Steep Falls.</p> <p>Selected CDP statistics from the 2010 Census: Population: 1,139 Percent White: 97.5% Median Age: 34.5 Households: 388 Percent of households with children under 18: 44.3% Percent of households with seniors 65 & over: 16% Housing Units: 402 Percent Seasonal: Less than 1% Owner-Occupied: 88.9%</p> <p>Selected CDP statistics from the 2011 American Community Survey: Percent with Bachelor’s degree or higher: 23.5% One year in-migration from outside the county: 3.1%</p>

	<p>Median Household Income: \$47,969 Labor Force: 77.2% Unemployment Rate: 10% Commute to work by car alone: 95.4% Poverty Rate: 1.7% Percent of homes built after 2000: 31.4% Percent of homes dependent on fuel oil: 64% Median Home Value: \$186,500</p>
Probable Primary Trade Area	<p>Steep Falls is part of the Sebago Lake Economic Summary Area, a trade area encompassing towns on both sides of Sebago Lake. Given this large geography, the probable trade area includes the surrounding towns of Windham, Gorham, Cornish, Buxton, Limington, and Baldwin.</p> <p>Route 113 originates at Route 25 to the south, providing access to Greater Portland. The Mountain Division rail line provides access east to the port at Merrill's Marine Terminal on Portland's western waterfront and west to North Conway, New Hampshire. Although not currently in operation, the Maine Department of Transportation owns the corridor and has plans in place to restart service when funding becomes available.</p>
Properties Profile	
Zoning	The majority of parcels fronting Main Street and Pequawket Trail are zoned as "Village Center" or "Residential"; a cluster of parcels around Mill Street are zoned as "Business and Commercial" and "Industrial"; and the remaining parcels in the study area (mostly one lot back from the road or north of Tucker Brook) are zoned as "Residential."
No. Parcels	138
• In Residential Use	106
• In Nonresidential or Mixed Use	21
• Vacant/Open Space	11
Total Land Area in Parcels	283 acres (subtracting roads and Mountain Division parcels)
• In Residential Parcels	174 acres
• In Nonresidential Parcels	55 acres
• In Vacant Parcels	54 acres
• With Dev. Potential	~110 acres (vacant parcels + areas without significant natural constraints)
Land Use Mix	
Residential	The study area is predominantly residential in nature. Most homes are single family residential, with some multi-family homes mixed in. Residential lots fronting Main St. and Pequawket Trail are typically less than 2 acres in size; however, a few select parcels are much larger (4-40 acres) and occupy mostly undeveloped outlying areas surrounding the village center.
Commercial	Of the businesses that are present in the area, the most focal retail business is the Steep Falls Market in the center of the village; a sprinkling of residential lots also double as businesses (a culinary school, a gift/antiques

	shop, and a home remodeler); additionally, two large-scale commercial warehouses are located adjacent to the Mountain Division line (one is used for storage, the other is vacant).
Other	Steep Falls boasts two public parks in close proximity to each other in the center of the village. Several larger lots are also owned by utilities: Central Maine Power owns two significant lots fronting Saco River, and the Portland Water District owns a larger lot surrounding Tucker Brook.
Focal Properties	
Baptist Church	The church is located on a 1.84-acre lot on the west side of Main St.
Steep Falls Park	Maintained by the Steep Falls Village Improvement Society, the park sits on a triangular .76 acre lot just south of the intersection of Main St. and Pequawket Trail. The park contains a mostly open, grassy area with a handful of trees and a gazebo.
Mill Street Park	Once home to the village schoolhouse, this 2-acre town-owned property on Mill Street contains a playground, skating rink, and skateboard park.
Steep Falls Library	Built in 1917 in the Colonial Revival style, this historic building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2004. A \$1 million capital campaign is underway to construct an addition that would house the Steep Falls Historical Society. In season, the library parking lot hosts a weekly Saturday farmers' market.
Steep Falls Wildlife Management Area	Managed by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, this 4,910-acre site includes upland forests and wetlands. Permitted activities include boating, fishing, hunting and wildlife watching. A portion of the site is designated as the Standish Sanctuary, where hunting and trapping are prohibited.
Central Maine Power	The Androscoggin Pulp and Paper Mill burned down in 1936, leaving only foundation remnants on this scenic site along the Saco River. Not signed for public access, this 20.9-acre parcel is used informally by walkers and kayakers. On the other side of Main St., CMP owns an additional 2.7-acre lot, which also fronts the Saco River.
Sanborn Mill site	This vacant 1.6-acre parcel at the end of Mill Street has been discussed as a potential site for a passenger rail station.
Agway Building	This hulking structure next to the Steep Falls Park is the most dominant building in the village. It is currently used by Davis & Hanscom, a local contractor, for storage.
Transportation	
Commute Times	A significant factor for the working population of Steep Falls is travel time to work. Since Steep Falls is located in the western corner of Standish, it is typically further away from most jobs in the Greater Portland labor market. This is reflected in "Travel Time to Work" Census data, which is drawn from the population of people who are 16 years and over and do not work from home. As seen in the table on the next page, compared to the Town of Standish, the working population of Steep Falls faces notably longer commute times, especially in the 30-34 min. and 35-39 min. ranges.

	Steep Falls		Standish	
	Percent	Count	Percent	Count
< 5 min.	0%	0	2%	95
5-9 min.	4%	17	7%	333
10-14 min.	3%	13	9%	442
15-19 min.	7%	32	8%	399
20-24 min.	8%	35	11%	532
25-29 min.	4%	17	5%	234
30-34 min.	39%	168	21%	1,040
35-39 min.	11%	49	7%	368
40-44 min.	6%	25	9%	464
45-59 min.	18%	76	16%	802
60-89 min.	0%	0	6%	294
> 90 min.	0%	0	1%	38
Total:	100%	432	100%	5,041

*Source: B08303 "Travel Time to Work," American Community Survey 2007-2011

Streets	Pequawket Trail (Route 113) Federal Functional Classification (FCC) = Major/Urban Collector Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) = ~4,000-5,000
	Main Street (Route 11) FFC = Major/Urban Collector AADT = ~2000
	Mill Street FFC = Local AADT = ~50
	Smith Avenue FFC = Local AADT = ~70
	Heath Lane FFC = Local AADT = ~25
Street Interconnection	Steep Falls Village occupies the area around the intersection of Main Street and Pequawket Trail. While there are other roads in the area (Mill Street and Smith Avenue) they are dead end roads separated from each other by the railroad right-of-way.
High Crash Locations	There are no DOT designated High Crash Locations in the pilot area
Transit	There is no fixed route bus service in Steep Falls. However, the town falls within the Regional Transportation Program's (RTP) service area. RTP is a demand-response service that provides low-cost transportation to the elderly, social service agency clients, the economically disadvantaged, and persons with disabilities throughout Cumberland County. Although the area has been without passenger train service since 1959,

	Steep Falls is one of three villages (South Windham, Fryeburg) in active consideration for a future passenger station should service reactivate.
Bike/Ped	<p>Unlike Main Street, the Pequawket Trail offers shoulders of adequate width for bicycling. Neither street contains sidewalks or crosswalks</p> <p>There is a vision to extend the Mountain Division rail with trail through Steep Falls, but final design/engineering has not been initiated.</p>
Parking	<p>On and off-street parking in the village is limited. The library and post office both maintain off-street parking areas. Parking at the Steep Falls Market requires users to back out onto Main and Mill Streets.</p> <p>There is no public boat launch in the village to access the Saco River.</p>
Sewer and Water	
Public Sewer	Not available
Public Water	Yes
Storm Water System	No storm water infrastructure present
Natural Resource Constraints	
Wetlands, Slopes, Etc.	<p>Wetlands exist for much of the area south of Main Street and west of Pequawket Trail.</p> <p>Parcels fronting the Saco River are subject to “Resource Protection District” and “Shoreland Development District” standards. Tucker Brook also runs southwest/northeast through the northern portion of the pilot area; a narrow band surrounding the brook is zoned as “Stream Protection District.”</p> <p>Slopes of 15-30% run south of Main Street and west of Pequawket Trail.</p> <p>The areas east of Pequawket Trail and northwest of Main Street appear to have the least environmental constraints (few wetlands, and slopes of 0-8%).</p>
Storm Water	Storm water runoff does not appear to be a constraint.
Other Background	
Historical Context	<p>The following historical description of Steep Falls was found on www.steepfalls.com:</p> <p><i>“As part of the town of Standish in Southern Maine, the village of Steep Falls has a history that relies heavily on the Saco River and its mills. While Standish was incorporated in 1785, Steep Falls village settlement did not occur until the 1820s, with the construction of the first sawmill in 1826. For the next hundred years, the economic development of the village was determined early on by its various types of sawmills, gristmills and finally by its pulp mill. While the Saco is the boundary between the towns, the mills and settlement across the river in Limington were considered part of Steep Falls.</i></p> <p><i>The construction of a railroad station in 1870 created faster growth in Steep</i></p>

	<p><i>Falls by making passenger and freight transportation much more convenient. Economic growth slowed in the 1920s, but until then the village was a destination point; home of many types of businesses including blacksmiths, cooper shops, hotels, livery stables, tailors, and general stores.”</i></p>
<p>Comprehensive Plan</p>	<p>The 2006 Standish Comprehensive Plan Update clearly articulates the Town’s vision for Steep Falls to accommodate future growth.</p> <p><i>“The village of Steep Falls will remain largely residential in character. However, limited commercial development will still be allowed, primarily on a scale to serve the needs of the village itself and surrounding neighborhoods.</i></p> <p><i>Incentives will be used to encourage higher density residential development, especially when it connects to public water, but also when it protects open space or creates affordable housing.</i></p> <p><i>Accessory rental apartments will be allowed and existing family apartments will also be usable for this new purpose.</i></p> <p><i>Density of new development will also be subject to moderation if necessary due to soil limitations or protection of the PWD wellhead and recharge area.</i></p> <p><i>Elderly housing will be permitted pursuant to a new set of elderly housing standards to be adopted so as to facilitate the development of a full range of elderly housing alternatives.</i></p> <p><i>A stronger emphasis will be placed on making the new development and the village pedestrian friendly.</i></p> <p><i>Commuter rail service has been restored through Steep Falls and Sebago Lake Villages, facilitating the development of our four-season tourist industry.”</i></p>
<p>Route 113 Economic Strategy</p>	<p>Standish is one of five communities participating in the implementation of regional plans developed by the Route 113 Corridor Committee, including <i>Economic Opportunities along the Pequawket Trail</i> (2008) and <i>Corridor Management Plan for the Pequawket Trail Scenic Byway</i> (2013):</p> <p>Champion the restoration of rail service on the Mountain Division:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the benefits of rail service to policymakers, residents and businesses along the corridor. • Provide guidance to State efforts to determine the feasibility of passenger and freight service. • Identify intermodal connections from the Port of Portland to Conway, New Hampshire. <p>Develop infrastructure for sustainable four-season activities:</p>

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply for Transportation Enhancement funding to construct the Mountain Division Trail in a manner compatible with freight and regularly scheduled passenger rail service.• Ensure the development of trailheads with adequate facilities and consistent wayfinding.• Support the development of small and home-based businesses in village centers. |
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Specific recommendations for the Scenic Byway are still in draft form.

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