



The future comes alive at the Skowhegan River Park: families tubing, friends gathering on the boardwalk, and kayakers and surfers on the adjustable wave in the distance.

TRANSFORMING THE CENTRAL MAINE REGION INTO THE STATE'S OUTDOOR RECREATION HUB

Maine's first whitewater park, featuring the Northeast's only adjustable wave, will unlock new opportunities for youth development, deepen community engagement, and drive economic growth.

The expanded Skowhegan River Park vision will open the river to local youth like never before—building confidence, leadership, and outdoor skills through hands-on programs and expert coaching. From community recreation to Olympic-level kayaking potential, the park will foster healthy, engaged, and ambitious young people while also attracting visitors, investment, new businesses, and jobs.

“The River Park transforms infrastructure into impact. By pairing Maine's first whitewater park with community-centered programs and year-round access, we're creating a space where youth thrive, residents connect with the outdoors, and the region steps confidently into its next chapter of economic and social vitality.”

— Kristina M. Cannon
President & CEO
Main Street Skowhegan



RURAL INNOVATION

A Comprehensive Vision for Revitalization

Whitewater Park

The Northeast's first adjustable wave for river surfing and kayaking, adaptable to river flow conditions and not dependent on dam releases, for year-round recreation.

Outdoor Access

Free paddling trainings, mountain bike clinics, gear lending, and diverse community recreation programs serving thousands annually through our growing Skowhegan Outdoors program.

Expanded Trail Network

Accessible to walking, biking, cross-country skiing, and other human-powered recreation.

Scenic Boardwalk

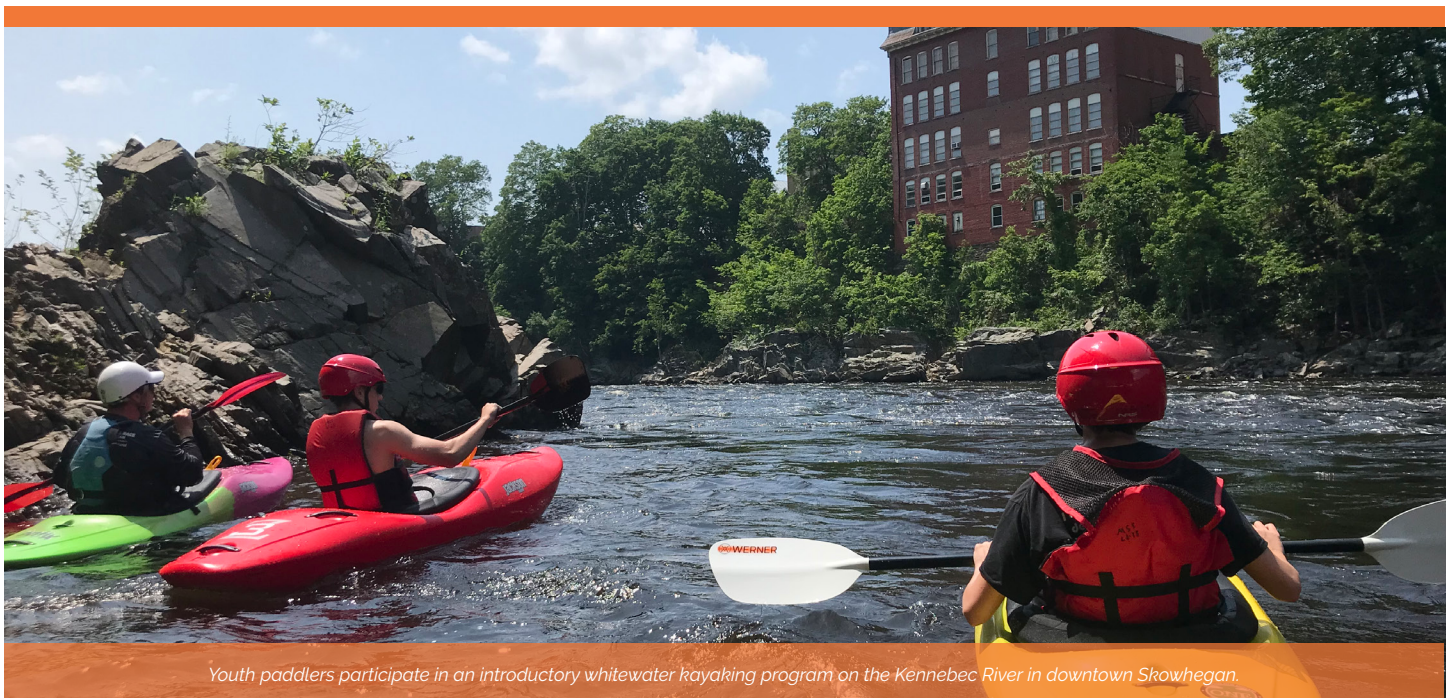
A riverfront promenade that connects Skowhegan's commercial district to the Kennebec, creating a lively waterfront corridor that fosters community gatherings, attracts visitors, supports local businesses, and strengthens the region's outdoor recreation identity.

Olympic Event Venue

A destination for freestyle kayaking and surfing competitions and olympic time-trials, bringing competitors and visitors from across the nation to central Maine.

Civic & Workforce Development

Inspiring youth careers, promoting health and wellness, and creating tourism-driven economic impact.



Youth paddlers participate in an introductory whitewater kayaking program on the Kennebec River in downtown Skowhegan.

Putting Central Maine on the National Stage

The Skowhegan River Park is transforming what's possible in rural Maine. By leveraging the Kennebec River, this visionary project strengthens communities, opens the outdoors to all, and ignites economic growth. With world-class infrastructure, free youth programs, gear access, and partnerships that inspire the next generation, the River Park will help elevate central Maine as a model for rural revitalization nationwide.

From hosting major events that will draw competitors and visitors from across the country to fostering local entrepreneurship and outdoor careers, this is rural revitalization in action—innovative, comprehensive, and community-driven.



Local teens participate in a 2-day whitewater kayaking program facilitated by Skowhegan Outdoors.

“The momentum in Skowhegan has continued to grow. We are proud to be one of several major projects* that are currently underway in this historic mill town that's reinventing itself around its river and outdoor recreation.”

— Max Patinkin
High Tide Capital

* Invested \$24 million into redeveloping Skowhegan's historic Spinning Mill.

“The Skowhegan River Park will be a true game-changer for the Kennebec Valley and for Maine's outdoor recreation economy. With the potential to generate more than \$16 million annually, support 137 jobs, and contribute \$1.6 million in taxes, this project will strengthen the region while showcasing Maine's natural assets in a world-class way. The River Park exemplifies how outdoor recreation drives both community vitality and statewide tourism growth.”

— Carolann Ouellette
Maine's Director of Tourism,
Outdoor Recreation, and Film

REGIONAL IMPACT

Youth Development

Through Main Street's Skowhegan Outdoors program, young people gain real-world outdoor experience, build advanced recreation and leadership skills, and develop a lasting ethic of environmental stewardship.

These programs build confidence, aspirations, and resilience, while connecting youth to careers and lifelong engagement with nature.



Participants excited for a day on the trails during the week-long Introduction to Mountain Biking Summer Learning Series youth program.

Annual Impact

250+ programs

2,500 participants

1500 youth experiences

Hundreds of Gear Library transactions

“ Skowhegan Outdoors creates an environment of enthusiasm and possibility around outdoor activities. I appreciate that they offer classes for the community and encourage families to participate by offering a gear library.”

— Fran M.
Skowhegan Outdoors
Program Attendee





The Skowhegan Outdoors Basecamp Gear Library

Workforce Pathways

The park creates pathways to meaningful careers in outdoor recreation, event management, tourism, and hospitality. In collaboration with the University of Maine at Farmington, we are connecting real-world outdoor experiences to structured career pathways and skills-building programs, equipping residents with the knowledge, training, and opportunities to participate in Maine's growing outdoor economy.



Riverside Festival

Tourism & Economic Growth

With its unique features and event-ready infrastructure, the River Park will attract visitors from across the state and beyond, driving tourism, supporting local businesses, and generating jobs. The park enhances central Maine's reputation as a vibrant, economically resilient region and a destination for outdoor adventure.

“Central Maine has become a destination for visitors from within the state and far beyond, leading to \$100 million in visitor spending in Waterville over the last six years. The Skowhegan River Park will build on this momentum by attracting more people to support our local businesses and increase the vitality and economic sustainability of the region.”

— David A. Greene
President, Colby College

Economic Impact



\$16.6 million in annual impact, **supporting 137 permanent jobs** from visitor spending and operations, and contributing **\$1.6 million in tax revenue**, generated from tourism spending and wages.

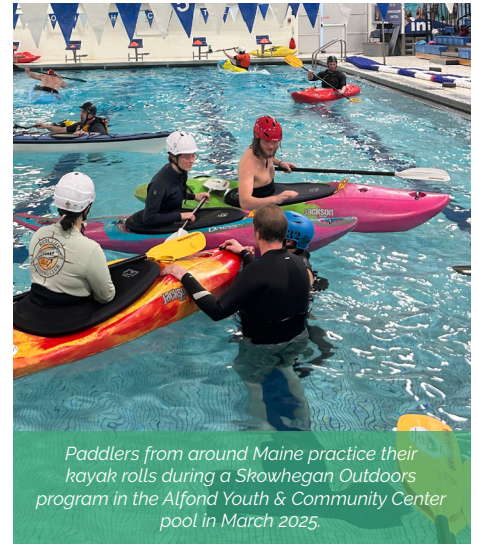
Figures from the Skowhegan River Park Economic Impact Study, 2025

PARTNERSHIPS



“UMF’s partnership with Main Street Skowhegan has opened the door to innovative opportunities that prepare the next generation of leaders for Maine’s growing outdoor recreation economy. The Skowhegan River Park will be a game-changer in how we are able to invite the youth in our communities to experience outdoor recreation in ways that create lifelong participants and, for some, spark a passion that becomes their future career.”

— Austin French
Director of Career Pathways & Employer Engagement
University of Maine Farmington



PROJECT PROGRESS

Whitewater Park



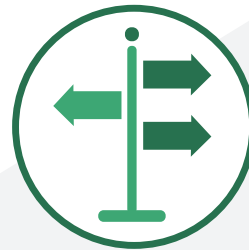
Environmental permits secured
Phase 1 construct design complete
\$6 million raised

Boardwalk



Environmental permitting underway
\$2 million raised
Phase 1 construction anticipated Nov. 2025

Trails



Master plan complete
Final design underway
Fundraising ongoing

Programming & Gear



Launched Skowhegan Outdoors program in 2019
Serving thousands of regional residents annually

FROM VISION TO REALITY

Timeline

Nov. 2025	Dec. 2025	Mar. 2026	2026-27
Phase 1 Boardwalk Construction	Fundraising Deadline: \$7.6M Needed	Phase 1 Whitewater Park Construction Begins: \$1.9M Needed	Trail Construction & Enhancements as Funding Allows
FUNDED	URGENT	PENDING FUNDING	FUNDRAISING ONGOING

Funding Status

\$8 Million Raised:
\$4.89M EDA Grant
(must retain with fundraising)

\$1M Town Match
(Sappi TIF funds)

\$2M Earmark for boardwalk
(Phase 1 construction)

Remaining Need

Whitewater Park:
\$7.6M by year-end to secure the EDA grant

\$1.9M by March 2026 to start construction

\$4M endowment for operations & maintenance

Boardwalk:
\$11 million needed to complete construction of remaining phases

Trails:
\$1 million needed to complete implementation

Donate Today

Secure the Future of the Skowhegan River Park

Keep \$6M in public funding secured

Construct the Northeast's only adjustable surf and kayak wave

Expand youth, workforce, and community programs

Strengthen central Maine's economy and civic infrastructure



Contact

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“ Whitewater kayaking is an activity that I really enjoy and I would never have gotten into it without Skowhegan Outdoors. I have had so much fun, and the staff have helped push me out of my comfort zone and taught me so much. One of the best parts is the friends I've gained along the way.”

— Kate Kiernan
Anson, Maine
Program Participant



Kate Kiernan (age 17) from Anson, Maine, paddles during the week-long Intermediate Whitewater Kayaking Summer Learning Series youth program.