



Thomas Pond, Casco and Raymond, Maine.

Thomas Pond

Thomas Pond is located just off Route 302 in Casco and Raymond, Maine. The 7.4-mile shoreline is developed with a variety of summer and year round homes, many of which are set back from the water. A public boat launch allows easy access for fishing and other small boats. The pond itself is about a mile long and a mile wide. Much of the land surrounding the Pond is undeveloped woods, and many feeder streams, including Rolfe Brook and May-Dana Brook, flow through these woods into Thomas Pond.

The Thomas Pond community has demonstrated ongoing commitment to protecting and improving the Pond. A Watershed Survey (2000) identified 125 existing sites of polluted runoff, many showing erosion from unpaved roads and driveways. The community followed this up with Conservation Projects (2005, 2009) to install measures to minimize erosion. Overall, Thomas Pond enjoys water quality that is, according to the Department of Environmental Protection, "average" in Maine. The pond's outlet begins at the Thomas Pond Dam, from where Dingley Brook flows into Sebago Lake.

Part of the Sebago Lake System

Thomas Pond's health is an important factor in the health of Sebago Lake, which is the source of drinking water for 15% of Maine's residents. Portland Water District (PWD) treats and delivers this water and is the largest water utility in Maine. PWD has a vested interest in keeping Sebago Lake clean and supports conservation efforts in the upland areas. The cleanliness and health of Sebago Lake likewise play an important role in the health of Casco Bay, found downstream.

Sebago Lake itself is the second largest lake in Maine. Approximately 261 square miles of land and numerous lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams in 24 towns drain into Sebago Lake. Over 80% of the land that surrounds the Lake is forested. Many partners work together to ensure a clean, healthy Sebago Lake.



Sebago Lake.



Thomas Pond Score Card.

What does this number mean?

- The total possible score is between 4 and 20.
- Each score is the sum of four equally important parts described on the page to the right. Each part is scored from 1 to 5, with 5 being the best.
- Higher numbers are better. The higher the number, the healthier the lake and surrounding area. The table to the right shows the scoring categories.

Overall Lake Score	Level of Concern
19-20	Lowest
16-18	Moderate-Low
12-15	Moderate
8-11	Moderate-High
4-7	Highest

Land Use

Changes in forested versus developed land over decades determined using satellite imagery.

1

Lake Health Trend

Changes in lake clarity over at least ten years.

4

Partnerships

Activity of local organizations that protect and use the lake and availability of non point source data.

4

4

Current Lake Clarity

Chlorophyll-*a*, phosphorus, and clarity measurements that indicate a lake's biological activity and nutrient levels.

13

Next steps for Thomas Pond: Support existing partnerships and evaluate municipal ordinances to ensure a healthy pond.

How Healthy is Thomas Pond?



Volunteers on a Thomas Pond property plant a buffer zone to stabilize landscaping, the slope, and soil.



A vegetated buffer at the water's edge is beautiful and also helps to keep the lake clean. A swath of plants catches sediment and other pollutants before they enter the lake.

Land Use (scored 1 out of 5)

Most of the land that drains into Thomas Pond is woods, enabling soil to filter pollution. However, the high rate of development in the past quarter century may increase pond pollution from road erosion and runoff, since hard surfaces cannot filter or absorb rainfall or snowmelt.

Partnerships (scored 4 out of 5)

Thomas Pond has enjoyed an involved citizenry and well-established partners for decades. Community support has enabled collaboration among the town, property owners, and road associations. Together they identified several locations to prevent soil erosion.

Lake Health Trend (scored 4 out of 5)

Lake clarity, measured by Secchi depths over the past decade, indicates that Thomas Pond is healthy! The clean water trend has persisted even as many waterbodies in the area suffer from pollution washed off of the land. Residents can anticipate future years of clean water for recreation.

Current Lake Clarity (scored 4 out of 5)

Clean, clear water is found in Thomas Pond. Aquatic plants and animals thrive and local residents benefit from clear swimming water and healthy fish populations. The currently clear conditions could change if there are increases in area soil erosion or polluted surface runoff.



Landowners can implement many simple practices to help keep their lake clean. Providing a clear path to the lakefront can also prevent soil loss.

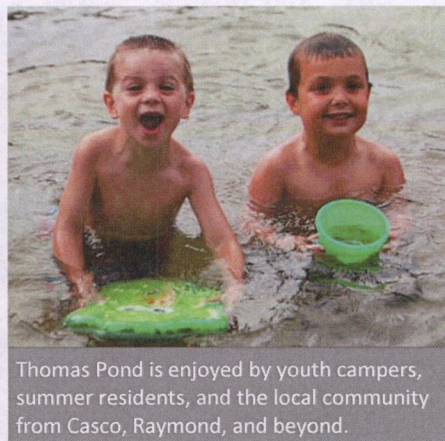


FOR More INFORMATION

To learn more about your local waterbody, resources for property owners, or the Sebago Lake Watershed Assessment and Prioritization Project:

Visit: www.cumberlandswcd.org

Call: Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District
(207) 892-4700

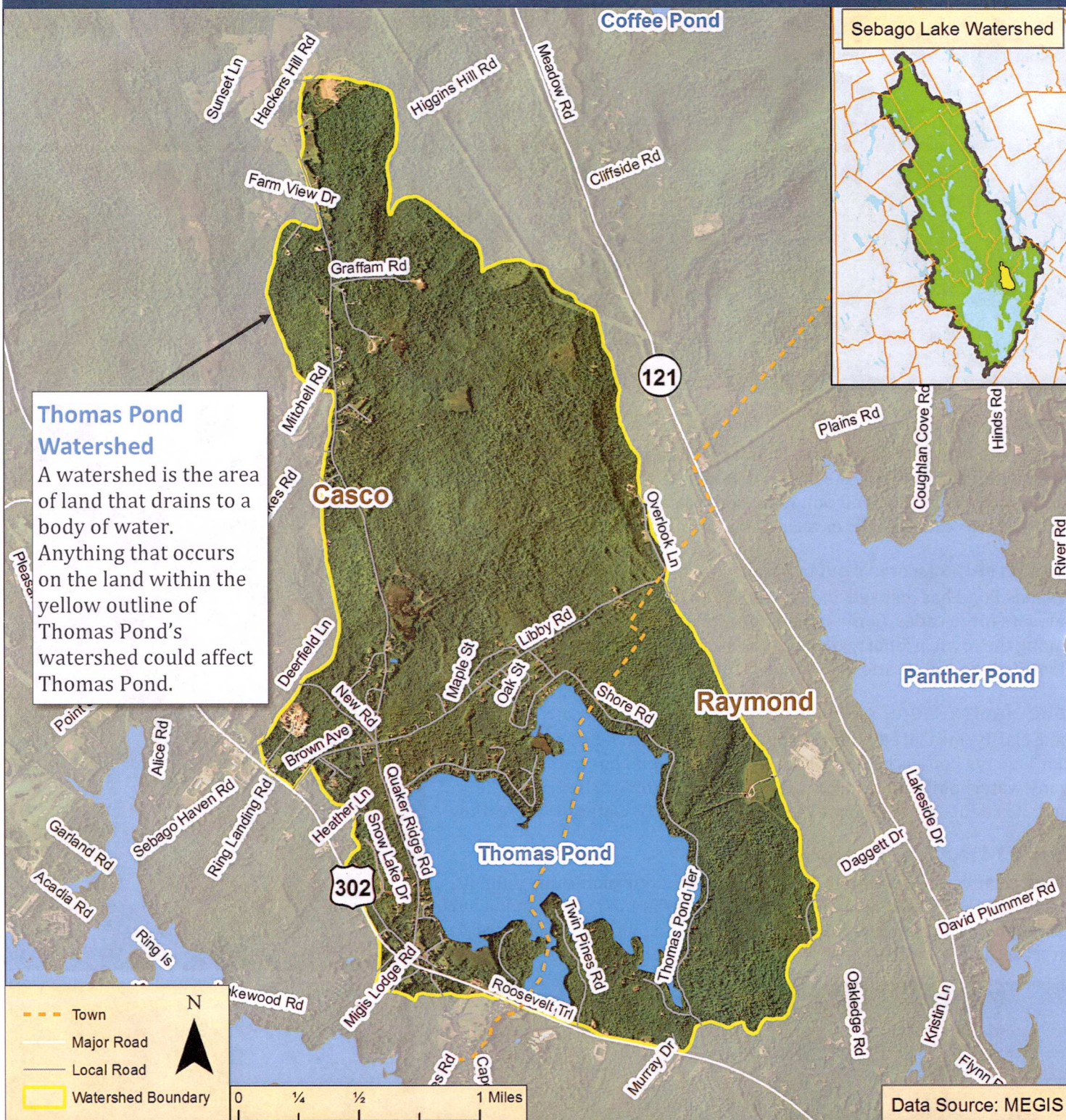


Thomas Pond is enjoyed by youth campers, summer residents, and the local community from Casco, Raymond, and beyond.



Volunteers and scientists have used Secchi disks (inset) to measure water clarity in lakes and seas since the late 1800s.

Thomas Pond and Surrounding Area.



Partners

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