



WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Week ending September 5, 2008

State law assigns four core duties to the State Planning Office that include: 1) conducting continuing economic analysis, including economic forecasting, 2) coordinating the development of the State's economy and energy resources with the conservation of its natural resources; 3) providing technical assistance to towns and regions; and 4) providing technical assistance to the Governor and Legislature by undertaking special studies and plans and preparing policy alternatives.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Natural Resource Agency Task Force

September 9-10, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM at Schoodic Research and Education Center, Winter Harbor

Contact [Linda LaPlante](#) or 287-6077

Land & Water Resources Council

September 11, 9:30 – 11:00 AM at State Planning Office

Contact [Aline Lachance](#) or 287-1485

Community Preservation Advisory Committee

September 12, 1:00 – 4:30 PM at Room 214, Cross Office Building

Contact [Linda LaPlante](#) or 287-6077

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Staff changes in SPO's community assistance program. Diana True joins the Maine Floodplain Management Program on September 8, 2008, as a Planning & Research Associate I. Diana has been working with the MaineDOT and prior to that was with the

state's Ethics Commission. Diana lives in Manchester with her family. With Diana's hiring, the Floodplain Program is fully staffed once more!! Welcome, Diana!!

Next Monday, Lana Clough transitions from the Code Enforcement Officer Training and Certification program to SPO's Waste Management and Recycling Program. She steps into the data management position vacated by Hank Tyler this spring. Lana will continue to keep 'an eye' on the CEO program until that position is filled. We look forward to having Lana become part of the team and having her energy to help further the program's mission! **CONTACT: George MacDonald at 287-5659 or george.macdonald@maine.gov**

MAINE COASTAL PROGRAM

Local groups organize coastal clean-up events for Coastweek, September 20-27.

Hundreds of groups are organizing events from Kittery to Eastport to pick up debris along Maine's coastal shoreline and beaches. Volunteers gather at designated clean-up spots, pick up trash, and record the type and amount they collect. All of the data is channeled to the US Ocean Conservancy who studies it and uses it to pinpoint the sources of marine debris and devise solutions.

This year, the volunteers will also be helping lobster fishermen recover traps. Volunteers will record license numbers from tags on the traps and where they are found. Staff will contact the owners with the information.

Organizers may register their clean-up events on-line at:

https://www.maine.gov/spo/coastal/projects/coastweek/cleanup_registration.htm.

Check here for a list of [Cleanups Open to the General Public](#). **CONTACT: Theresa Torrent-Ellis at 287- 2351 or Theresa.torrent-ellis@maine.gov**

New coastal fellow. Matt Nixon has joined the Coastal Program staff for a two-year stint as our new NOAA coastal fellow. He will assist us to proactively plan for new uses in Maine's offshore waters and assisting regional efforts in Taunton Bay and Saco Bay (and other locations). Matt comes to us having completed his master's program in marine affairs at URI. His thesis work focused on environmental justice and public access to the coast. While in school he worked for the US EPA Atlantic Ecology Laboratory on nutrient analysis of Narragansett Bay and managed complex databases. He is a sailor with extensive boating experience including the Schooner Brilliant (85')

and the Margaret Todd (150'). He was recently married on Southport and lives with his wife, Jess, in Wiscasset.

The Maine Coastal Program is eligible to compete for the services of a NOAA fellow every two years. Past fellows include Vanessa Levesque (now in Brunswick), Patrick Wright (now in Waldoboro), Pete Slovinsky (now at MGS) and Alison Ward (now at NOAA Fisheries). **CONTACT: Kathleen Leyden at 287-3144 or kathleen.leyden@maine.gov**

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY

Heating fuel prices continue to drop. The Governor's Office of Energy Independence and Security's bi-weekly summer oil survey found the statewide average cash price for No. 2 heating oil for September 2, 2008, to be \$3.98 per gallon falling \$.02 from since the last survey.

The price of WTI crude oil, major driver of refined product prices, including heating oil last closed at 115.46 per barrel, but is down more than \$6 at the time of this release. The statewide kerosene price average is \$4.53 per gallon at this time. The next scheduled survey will be on September 15, 2008. **CONTACT: Ian Burnes at 287-8927 or ian.burnes@maine.gov**