



## WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

*Week ending November 7, 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 EVENTS:

#### **7th Annual Code Official's Multi Issue Workshop**

November 12, 2008 – November 13, 2008 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM *Black Bear Inn, Orono, Maine.* Contact [Lana Clough](#) or call (207) 287-8056

#### **Community Preservation Advisory Committee**

November 13, 2008 – 12:30 PM – 4:30 PM *Natural Resources Committee Room, Room 214, Cross Office Building, Augusta*  
Contact [Linda LaPlante](#) or call (207) 287-6077

#### **Land for Maine's Future Program**

November 18, 2008 – 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM *Pine Tree State Arboretum, Hospital Street, Augusta.* Contact [Aline Lachance](#) or call (287) 287-1485

#### **Intergovernmental Advisory Commission**

November 19, 2008 – 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM *TBD – Augusta*  
Contact [Linda LaPlante](#) or call (207) 287-6077

## **The Maine Quality of Place Council**

November 20, 2008 – 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM *Taxation Committee Hearing Room, Room 127, Capitol Building, Augusta.* Contact [Linda LaPlante](#) or call (207) 287-6077

### **COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**Exploration of high resolution topography for Aroostook County announced.** The Maine Floodplain Management staff is participating in a working group formed by the Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) staff to explore the possibility of acquiring high resolution topography for Aroostook County. The spring flooding affecting many northern Maine communities has spotlighted the need for better topographical data. In a recent conference call, local and federal agencies as well as private industry representatives discussed the possibility of combining resources to develop a high resolution topographical data set for Aroostook County. All participants agreed this data would be a very beneficial long term investment for multiple purposes including floodplain mapping, economic development, forest resources planning, and transportation planning. **CONTACT: Joseph Young at (207) 287-8051 or [Joseph.Young@maine.gov](mailto:Joseph.Young@maine.gov)**

**The Province of New Brunswick embarks on a limited acquisition of data along the Saint John River from the Eastern Maine Border to Madawaska.** The discussion centered on the immediate need for floodplain data and the possibility of joining forces with our friends in New Brunswick. Regardless of the outcome the group will continue to explore a larger scale acquisition project through a partnership of federal, state, local and private resources. **CONTACT: Joseph Young at (207) 287-8051 or [Joseph.Young@maine.gov](mailto:Joseph.Young@maine.gov)**

**Maine Recycles Week 2009 kicks off this weekend, November 8<sup>th</sup>.** Bruce White met with citizens in South Berwick to help promote recycling this week. The meeting coincided with the town's introduction of a Pay-Per-Bag Program this fall. This was the first time the Governor's proclamation was read declaring 2008 the tenth year of Maine Recycles Week.

**Maine Recycles activities will begin across the state next week.** The school competition and poster competition entries are due on November 21, 2008. The posters will be unveiled in their home communities the following week. The Maine Recycles Week Steering Committee will select winners by month's end. The posters will be used to produce the much awaited calendars by the New Year. For more information **CONTACT: Bruce White at 287-5083 or [bruce.white@maine.gov](mailto:bruce.white@maine.gov) / [www.recyclemaine.com](http://www.recyclemaine.com).**

**Celebrating Maine's Recycling Success.** Jetta Antonakos authored an article this week highlighting Maine Recycles Week. In the article she discusses the economic and environmental impact recycling has on the state. Antonakos reports, "We can celebrate that our recyclables support Maine jobs. A number of Maine manufacturers rely on recycled materials, especially paper. At a time when the economy has our pricing barometer jumping up and down, lower costs and fewer overseas buyers for recycled materials means more profitable production for Maine mills." **CONTACT: Jetta Antonakos at 287-9074 or [jetta.antonakos@maine.gov](mailto:jetta.antonakos@maine.gov) .**

**The latest issue of Waste Bytes was released this week.** In this edition readers will enjoy topics on Maine Recycles Week, the Science of Waste, a report from the Maine Resource Recovery Association's annual meeting, and catalog choice. To read the newsletter in its entirety please visit [http://www.maine.gov/spo/recycle/docs/recyclethis\\_newsletter.htm](http://www.maine.gov/spo/recycle/docs/recyclethis_newsletter.htm) or **CONTACT: Bruce White at 287-5083 or [bruce.white@maine.gov](mailto:bruce.white@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 (OEIS) conducted the weekly oil survey and has found that the current statewide average cash price for No. 2 heating oil to be at **\$2.83 per gallon** falling \$.10 since the last week. Within the OEIS sample, the lowest actual heating oil price of \$2.35 per gallon was found in the Southwestern region. The high-end price of \$3.00 per gallon was found in the all the other regions except the Southwestern region. At the time of this release the price of WTI crude oil, major driver of refined product prices, including heating oil was \$64.42. The statewide kerosene price average is \$3.42 per gallon at this time. Today's propane price survey found statewide average to be \$3.05 per gallon which is \$0.05 lower than last week. The average price for propane represents the price per gallon for a 600-800 gallon domestic heating application.

The next scheduled survey will be on Monday November 10, 2008. For more information on energy prices, visit the office's web site at: <http://www.maine.gov/oeis/index.html>. CONTACT: Ian Burnes at 287-8927 or [ian.burnes@maine.gov](mailto:ian.burnes@maine.gov) .

### **The Maine Commission for Community Service**

**The HEART Act Makes AmeriCorps More Accessible to SSI Recipients.** Law H.R. 6081, the Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act of 2008 ("the HEART Act"), makes AmeriCorps more accessible to people with disabilities. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a Federal program that provides a monthly cash benefit to low-income individuals who are aged, blind, or who have a disability. In the past, receiving an AmeriCorps living allowance could disqualify an individual from eligibility. The new law directs the Social Security Administration to ignore an individual's receipt of AmeriCorps benefits for purposes of SSI eligibility. To read more visit, <http://www.maineservicecommission.gov/news/release.php?ID=1258>. CONTACT: Pam Zeutenhorst at 287-5313 or [Pam.Zeutenhorst@maine.gov](mailto:Pam.Zeutenhorst@maine.gov).

### **ECONMICS AND DEMORGAPHICS**

**Consensus Economic Forecast Commission report posted.** The commission's final report, dated November 1, 2008, has been posted to the SPO website at: <http://www.maine.gov/spo/economics/projections/index.htm> . As previously reported, the commission projects a slowdown in national and state economic activity in the fourth quarter of 2008 and into 2009. The projections will be used by the state's Revenue Forecasting Committee, which meets in December, to determine revenue projections for the state budget. CONTACT: Mike LeVert 287-1461 or [michael.levert@maine.gov](mailto:michael.levert@maine.gov).