



WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Week ending December 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.

LAND USE PLANNING

North Berwick Comprehensive Plan Update found Consistent. The Town of North Berwick Comprehensive Plan has been found consistent with the Planning and Land Use Regulation Act. The land use team is often asked for examples from other communities for visioning. Citizen participation was encouraged throughout the planning process and included inviting the community to participate in a visioning session following a public supper. North Berwick's comprehensive plan provides wonderfully vivid vision statements for each chapter of the plan. The plan also provides a number of great strategies to support green businesses such as organic farming, farm-related business, and low-impact forestry as well as home occupations/cottage industries. The comprehensive planning committee, the Town and Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission are to be congratulated on the hard work and dedication that went into preparing the plan. **CONTACT: Ruta Dzenis at 287-2851 or ruta.dzenis@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 found that the current statewide average cash price for No. 2 heating oil to be at **\$2.58 per gallon** falling \$.02

since last week. Within the OEIS sample, the lowest actual heating oil price of \$2.09 per gallon was found in the Southwestern region. The high-end price of \$2.85 per gallon was found in the Eastern region. At the time of this release the price of WTI crude oil, major driver of refined product prices, including heating oil was \$50.82. The statewide kerosene price average is \$3.12 per gallon at this time. Today's propane price survey found statewide average to be \$2.85 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 December 8, 2008. **CONTACT: Ian Burnes at 287–8927 or ian.burnes@maine.gov**

LAND FOR MAINE'S FUTURE PROGRAM



Land for Maine's Future Board selects two new proposals and gives final authorization for ten projects. At their regular business meeting, the Land for Maine's Future Board allocated funds to two new working waterfront projects:

- Bremen Lobster Pound Co–Op, Hockomock Channel, Medomak River, Bristol.
- Owls Head Village Wharf and Ship to Shore Lobster Co., Owls Head.

The Board also authorized staff to complete eight land conservation projects and two working waterfront projects.

- **Bald and Ragged Mountains Project** with the *Coastal Mountains Land Trust*, the Oxtou parcel, 18.65± acres in Camden and Rockport, Knox County.
- **Bog Brook & Moose Cove Project**, with the *Maine Coast Heritage Trust*, the 501± acre Mountains & Meadows parcel in Cutler and the Bog Brook Farm Cove parcel with 270± acres in Cutler and Trescott, Washington County.
- The first of several parcels to be added to the *Department of Conservation's Kennebec Highlands*; the 106± acre DiStefano parcel in New Sharon, Franklin County.
- A major addition to the *Downeast Lakes Land Trust's* Community Forest holding, 6,644± acres known as the **Wabassus Lake Project**, T42 & T43 MD, Washington County.
- Four parcels of land with 51.41± acres to be owned by the *Town of Falmouth*, Cumberland County as part of the **Falmouth Conservation Corridor Project**.

- Five parcels land (64± acres) in Madawaska, Aroostook County to be held by the *Four Seasons Trail Association* that are managed for cross-country ski trails.
- The **Libby Hill Project** protects 29± acres in Gray, Cumberland County, which will be held by the *Gray Community Endowment*.
- The **Pigeon Hill Phase II Project** adds 54± acres in two parcels to the lands protected earlier with the support of LMF funds. The *Great Auk Land Trust* will hold and manage this Stuben, Washington County project.
- The **Isle au Haut Town Dock**, a 0.69± acre working waterfront project with the town of Isle au Haut, Knox County.
- The **Davis Wharf**, a 0.41± acre working waterfront project with the Davis Brothers, Goose Cove, Tremont, Hancock County.

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COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Aroostook County LiDAR Project Update. Maine Floodplain Management staff continue to work with Northern Maine Development Commission staff to acquire LiDAR data to support high resolution topography. Working with FEMA Region 1 and the Maine Emergency Management Agency we expect to have a firm commitment of funds to acquire LiDAR Data for sections of the Fish and Saint John rivers in and around the Fort Kent Area soon. We are also working with the USGS to establish a partnership to expand the acquisition area with a long-term goal of being able to raise enough funds to acquire data for the whole county.

This would benefit a wide range of end users. This could potentially provide long-term savings for transportation pre-construction planning and wind power development, as well as provide important data for international border security. The forest industry would benefit from a one-time snapshot of forest volumes, as well as important micro watershed data to improve access road construction, culvert sizing and forest management resources. Many large forest land holders suffered hundreds of thousands of dollars in forest access road damages due to this year's flooding and under designed storm water management systems. Additionally communities would find many local benefits for infrastructure and land use planning, as well as better data to assist in planning local road construction and improvements.

A significant amount of FEMA disaster mitigation funds are spent on repairs to public infrastructure. This data would provide communities and the Maine Department of Transportation with better topography for properly managing storm water runoff and

minimizing severe storm damages over the long term. Another added benefit from having this data available would be the ability to move construction projects from concept to design to construction much faster. NMDC staff are continuing their efforts to raise awareness of the project and search out other partners to invest in acquiring this much needed data. **CONTACT Joseph Young at (207) 287-8051 or Joseph.Young@maine.gov .**

Maine Recycles Week Steering Committee selected winners of the MRW School and Poster Competitions. Maine Recycles Week is recognized November 8 – 15 each year, and the 2008 event was the 10th anniversary! With the help of this year's sponsors, \$3000 in awards will go to the schools in recognition of their efforts in promoting recycling within their communities. The Maine Recycles Steering Committee voted to award \$500 to three outstanding school efforts and then drew seven additional entries at random to receive \$250 each. Each school is asked to spend the money on science, environmental, or recycling projects that involve the students.

The three outstanding schools are: Fruit Street School, Bangor; Bowdoinham Elementary School, Bowdoinham; and Lincoln Middle School, Portland. Those schools receiving \$250 are: Trinity Catholic School, Lewiston; Belgrade Community School, Belgrade; Saccharappa School, Westbrook; Livermore Falls High School, Livermore Falls; South Bristol Elementary School, South Bristol; St. George School, St. George; and Easton Elementary School, Easton.

The traditional poster contest invites students in all grades to compete for placement in the annual recycling calendar. The poster competition has grown each year, with nearly 1900 posters being submitted this year. Four members of the Maine Recycles Week Steering Committee helped select the crème de la crème of the school and poster competitions.



The artwork of 13 students was selected for the calendar: Hunter (grade 3), Readfield Elementary School, Readfield; Teryn (grade 12) and Hannah (grade 10), Rangeley Lakes Regional School, Rangeley; Dominic and Natalie (grade 6), Lincoln Middle School, Portland; Mike (grade 10), Livermore Falls High School, Livermore Falls; Arielle (grade 4), Fisher-Mitchell School, Bath; Spenser (grade 6), Friendship Village School, Friendship; Duncan (grade 12), Herman High School, Herman; Tessa (grade 5), Stepping Stones Montessori School, Chelsea; Chloe (grade 10), Chevrus High School, Portland; and Alex (grade 11), The

Hyde School, Bath. **CONTACT: Bruce A. White at (207) 287-8053 or Bruce.white@maine.gov.**

Healthy Turnout for Maine Recycles Video Competition. Entries for the 2008 Maine Recycles Video Contest are still rolling in. Over 100 videos have been received so far from 27 schools, achieving the project's goal to increase entries by 20% over last year. Now in its second year, the contest has expanded to include middle schools which will be judged in their own category, separate from high schools and technical schools. Judging begins on December 11. The judges will select a short list of finalists to compete for votes on www.yourtownscable.com. This competition is sponsored by the Maine Recycles Steering Committee, the State Planning Office, and Time Warner Cable. To learn more about the competition, go to www.mainerecycles.com . **CONTACT: Jetta Antonakos at 287-9074 or jetta.antonakos@maine.gov.**