



WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Week August 6, 2009

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.

ECONOMICS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Economics newsletter available. The July 2009 edition of the Economics and Demographics newsletter from the Maine State Planning Office was released last week. To see the newsletter, please [visit our website](#). This issue contains information on Maine's historic tax reform legislation, Regulatory Fairness Board, May retail sales, 2008 town population estimates, and census highlights. **CONTACT: Michael LeVert at 287-1479 or michael.levert@maine.gov**

Regulatory Fairness Board elects chair. The Maine Regulatory Fairness Board met on July 31 for an organizational meeting. The board elected as its chair Eliot Stanley from Portland and as vice-chair Linda Synder of Auburn. The board will meet again in September on a date to be determined. **CONTACT: Thomas Merrill at 287-1478 or Thomas.merrill@maine.gov**

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Brianne Hasty joins CEO program. Brianne Hasty started her duties as planner II in the CEO program on August 3. Brianne brings a combination of education, experience, and skills that will help us revamp the program in light of today's budget realities, while meeting the needs of the CEO community. Brianne most recently worked for the Maine Math and Science Alliance (MMSA) for seven years, where she coordinated training events for teachers and maintained a certification database of 100,000 educators! Brianne was responsible for organizing and staffing training programs, managing

contracts, maintaining the MMSA website, and setting up and moderating on-line courses and determining credit hours granted to participants – all things we intend to have her do for Maine CEOs. She has a B.A. in communications from the University of Southern Maine. **CONTACT: George MacDonald at 287-5759 or george.macdonald@maine.gov**

LAND FOR MAINE'S FUTURE PROGRAM

Seboeis Lake – Northwest Pond, T4R9 NWP, Piscataquis County. This LMF supported acquisition added more than 2,200 acres with over 12 miles of lake frontage to the Maine Department of Conservation's Seboeis Public Lands Unit. The only way to describe Seboeis



Lake is “spectacular.”

There are views of Mount Katahdin, Baxter Park, and the Barren–Chairback Range. There are also many tree–covered islands, with facilities for boating, picnicking, and water access camping. The lake offers excellent warm and coldwater fishing summer and winter and the Seboeis Unit is a popular destination for sportsmen to hunt deer, moose, bear and waterfowl as well as trapping. This acquisition includes guaranteed public access



to an important snowmobile trail (ITS 111) that links the Brownville area to the Jo–Mary region and north to the Millinocket area. The Trust for Public Land provided critical support for this acquisition. For more information about this site including a detailed map visit: http://www.maine.gov/cgi-bin/online/doc/parksearch/search_name.pl?state_park=&historic_site=&public_reserved_land=67&shared_use_trails=&option=search.

The Land for Maine's Future Program was established to help secure the future economic and social well-being of the citizens of Maine by maintaining the quality and availability of productive lands and natural areas including recreation, working farms and forests, hunting, fishing, conservation, wildlife habitat, vital ecological functions, and scenic beauty. Since 1987 over 230 projects have been completed, with over 350 individual transactions completed state wide. This work has protected some 498,000 acres with roughly 60% being by easement and 40 % being in fee interest. The program

has recently completed work on the following projects. CONTACT: Steve Brooke at 287-6736 or [Steve Brooke](#) or Tim Glidden at 287-1487 or [Tim Glidden](#)

LAND USE TEAM

New planning tools available. SPO has three new planning tools to assist municipalities with understanding housing densities, protecting open space, and managing the visual impacts of wireless towers. A powerpoint presentation created by the SPO Land Use Team titled *Density; A Visualization Tool* uses Maine-based examples of different housing densities to help town planners, planning boards, and others understand what those different densities look like on the ground. Two new model ordinances are also available: 1) an open space subdivision ordinance to help communities protect open space, farmland, and rural character by minimizing landscape fragmentation in the rural zone and 2) an ordinance on personal wireless service facilities, which strives to address the visual impact, height, and location of wireless towers while meeting the requirements of the federal law. The model ordinances were prepared by the Kennebec Valley Council of Governments. All three planning tools are available on-line at: www.maine.gov/spo/landuse. CONTACT: Elizabeth Hertz at 287-8061 or elizabeth.hertz@maine.gov

MAINE COASTAL ROGRAM



Coastweek posters mailed! The posters promoting Maine's annual coastal clean-up have been distributed throughout Coastal Maine to town offices, schools, libraries, marine-based businesses, and coastal legislators. The Coastweek poster is produced annually by the Maine Coastal Program to create awareness about the need for stewardship of our coastal waters. This year's poster features an illustration by Laurie Webber of a dolphin picking up marine debris. The poster also encourages community and school groups to organize their own local clean-ups. Each year during Coastweek, community volunteers join thousands others around the world to remove debris from our coastlines as part of the International Coastal Cleanup. This year, Coastweek will be held the week of September 12-19.

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GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY

Heating oil price average rises. The Governor's Office of Energy Independence and Security's August 4, 2009, survey found the current statewide average cash price for No. 2 heating oil to be \$2.32 per gallon, four cents higher than last week. The most recent average price of natural gas delivered to Maine consumers is \$11.30 for a thousand cubic feet of gas, or equivalent to heating oil at \$1.53 a gallon. The most recent average statewide price of gasoline and diesel in Maine as posted by AAA's *Daily Fuel Gauge Report* is \$2.59 per gallon for gasoline, and \$2.62 for diesel fuel. At the time of this release, the price of WTI crude oil, a major driver of refined product prices including heating oil, was \$71.58 per barrel. **CONTACT: Ian Burnes at 287-8927 or ian.burnes@maine.gov**