



WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Week ending November 20, 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.

MAINE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

Service Learning Project Award Recipients Announced Today. In a special ceremony at the Capitol today, Mrs. Baldacci, Time Warner Cable, and the Maine Commission for Community Service presented Service Learning Awards. Awards were presented to Maine Schools and community programs, working with children (k-12), focused on STEM activities (science, technology, engineering, math). Projects selected combine classroom instruction and a focus on critical reflective thinking while engaging students in community service. Mrs. Baldacci remarked, "Combined, high quality education and active service in the community prepares our young people for their future." Winning Applicants are as follows: Habitat for Humanity of Greater Portland Youth Programs, The New School in Kennebunk, ME., Buckfield Junior Senior High School, Jay Middle School, Rockland District High School and Youth Links. **CONTACT:** Rochelle Runge at 287-8933 or rochelle.runge@maine.gov

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

31 Grants Awarded to Municipalities for Outreach Programs. The Waste Management & Recycling Program receives requests from municipal recycling programs throughout the year, asking for technical and financial assistance with education and outreach efforts. To address the first part of those needs, the [Maine Recycles Toolkit](#) was created with downloadable resources that can be modified to be community-specific.

In September SPO offered a fall round of funding support for recycling promotion. Seed grants up to \$500.00 were made available to municipal programs to help with recycling education and outreach and to encourage toolkit use.

On November 18th, 31 awards were made to individual municipalities and regional programs. Anticipated projects range across the spectrum of new and traditional information sources employing network, on line, print and video, and local committee development; covering a variety of waste reduction, recycling and composting topics. Projects are to be completed by March 31st 2010. **CONTACT: Sam Morris at 287-8054 or sam.morris@maine.gov .**

Proposal to acquire LiDAR data announced. Maine floodplain and MeGIS staff are coordinating efforts with all the Northeastern Coastal states to submit an application for USGS ARRA (stimulus) funding to acquire LiDAR data used for developing high resolution topography. The proposal will acquire data for all the coastal communities from the New Brunswick border to New York City. In addition, depending upon participating states ability to raise partnering and matching funds, full county wide data acquisition may be accomplished. Rhode Island has managed to garner commitments for contributions of nearly \$350,000 which will ensure complete statewide data acquisition at a higher resolution than the USGS base level requirements. We have received a lot of encouragement and positive feedback so far and anticipate the proposal will be funded. The application is due December 1, 2009. **CONTACT: Joseph Young joseph.young@maine.gov or 287-8051.**

ECONOMICS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The Community Preservation Advisory Committee (CPAC) met on Thursday Nov. 12th for the first time this year. The CPAC is composed of members from the Natural Resources and Business, Research, and Economic Development Legislative Committees, as well as private residents representing rural, service center, development, housing, and environmental interests. At their meeting last week, members heard updates and offered advice on the following projects: Gateway 1, Quality of Place Legislation, Rulemaking on DEP's Site Law, the Transit TIF, and the Maine Downtown Center. The committee also responded to a draft report (from SPO) on LD 11 Resolve, To Encourage the Preservation of Dark Skies. LD 11 was passed last legislative session and requests SPO to draft a report on policy options for preserving the night sky and preventing light pollution. The Community Preservation Advisory Committee will meet again next

April. For more information on CPAC, including meeting minutes and presentations, please visit <http://www.maine.gov/spo/boards/communitypreservation/index.htm>
CONTACT: MacGregor Stocco at 287-4818 or macgregor.stocco@maine.gov

LAND USE PROGRAM

Comp plan review criteria rule to get modified again. [07-105 CMR Chapter 208](#), Maine's Comprehensive Planning Review Criteria Rule, was developed in 2006 and 2007 and had an effective date of September 20th, 2007. SPO and those who have prepared comprehensive plans using the new rule have identified changes needed to clarify and improve its utility. The State Planning Office is now beginning the process of drafting updates to Maine's Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rule ([07-105 CMR Chapter 208](#)).

At this time, SPO is soliciting additional comments and suggestions for changes to Chapter 208. If you would like to be included on future correspondence regarding Chapter 208 revisions then please fill out the online form at: <http://www.maine.gov/spo/landuse/compplans/208revisions/>. Formal rule-making will begin sometime later this winter; dates and timing for the comment period will be posted at the above website and sent via email to those who have requested future correspondence.

Please see <http://www.maine.gov/spo/landuse/compplans/208revisions/> for more information. CONTACT: Tom Miragliuolo at Tom.Miragliuolo@maine.gov or 287-3215.

LAND FOR MAINE'S FUTURE PROGRAM

LMF Board approves projects. At their board meeting on November 10, the Land for Maine's Future Board gave final approval for five conservation, water access, and working water front projects throughout the state. The board agreed to consider a new water access proposal to improve parking for Higgins Beach. The board also approved public access improvement grants for five conservation holdings including new trails on the Appalachian Mountain Club holdings west of the Katahdin Iron Works and in support of a new pedestrian and snowmobile bridge across the West Branch of the Penobscot at Abol Campground. CONTACT: Tim Glidden at 287-1487 or tim.glidden@maine.gov

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY

Heating Oil Prices Remain Stable. The Governor's Office of Energy Independence and Security (OEIS) conducted its off season oil survey and has found that the current statewide average cash price for No. 2 heating oil to be at **\$2.56 per gallon**, unchanged from last week. Within the OEIS sample, the lowest actual heating oil price of \$2.22 per gallon was found in the Southwestern region. The high-end price of \$2.85 per gallon was found in the Eastern region. The statewide kerosene price average is \$2.95 per gallon at this time. The statewide average for propane based on a use of 600 gallons a year was \$2.66 per gallon. At the time of this release the price of WTI crude oil, major driver of refined product prices, including heating oil was \$79.12. The next survey is scheduled for November 23rd, 2009. **CONTACT: [Jennifer Puser at 207-287-6250](mailto:jennifer.puser@maine.gov) or jennifer.puser@maine.gov .**