



## WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

*Week ending April 17, 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.

### COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

**Earth Day is April 22.** First celebrated in 1970, Earth Day saw the environmental issue come of age. Throughout the 70s, the environmental movement focused on clean air, clean water, recycling, and pesticides. Now, almost 40 years later, Maine and the US has made tremendous strides in cleaning up the environment. Today, the focus of Earth Day has grown to include climate change and green house gas emissions. This generation may well be known as the green generation. Now more than ever, there are resources to assist communities, schools, and others with reducing their carbon footprint. Nineteen Maine communities have become Cool Cities. [Cool Cities](#), a campaign begun in 2005 by the Sierra Club empowers city residents and local leaders to join and encourage their cities to implement smart energy solutions to save money and build a cleaner, safer future.

Maine is celebrating Earth Day in lots of venues. From [Earth Day at the College of the Atlantic](#) to the [15th Annual Hope Festival](#) at the University of Maine, Maine has many ways of celebrating Earth Day including cleanups throughout the state, Go Green challenges, art exhibits, and an Earth Expo. To find out more information on these events, please visit <http://www.epa.gov/region1/earthday/events.html#me>. To learn more about Earth Day: <http://www.epa.gov/earthday/history.htm> or <http://www.earthday.net/earthday2009>. CONTACT: Jetta Antonakos at 287-9074 or [jetta.antonakos@maine.gov](mailto:jetta.antonakos@maine.gov) .

## **LAND USE PLANNING**

**Active Communities Conference scheduled for May 12.** The State Planning Office will co-host the second annual Active Communities Conference in Freeport. The conference, also hosted by MaineDOT, the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Maine Department of Conservation, encourages local and regional public health, planning, transportation and recreation officials to work together to improve our public and environmental health, transportation system, economy and quality of life by making our towns and cities safe and inviting places to walk and bike. Registration for the one-day conference is free. **CONTACT: Phil Carey at 287-3860 or [phil.carey@maine.gov](mailto:phil.carey@maine.gov).**

## **MAINE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE**

**Maine HEARTH Call for Partners.** Maine HEARTH project aims to connect the many generous responses communities have developed to support those trying to stay safe and warm in their homes. The project will establish or support existing regional or countywide councils that foster coordination and replication of successful approaches to home heating issues, identify gaps in responses to local needs, connect volunteers with opportunities to support responses, and identify emerging needs that are visible first at the local level.

Maine HEARTH partners will need broad-based connections in their county or region, understand the multiple ways home energy impacts families, be able to foster idea sharing and cooperation between those responding locally, and be sufficiently organized to insure high quality communication among all those engaged in creating the council. Interested organizations may view the scope of work and application at [www.maineservicecommission.gov](http://www.maineservicecommission.gov). Deadline for submission of applications is 5:00 p.m. on May 8, 2009. **CONTACT: Pam Zeutenhorst at [pam.zeutenhorst@maine.gov](mailto:pam.zeutenhorst@maine.gov) or 287-5313.**

**Peer-to-Peer Network Conveners.** The Maine Commission for Community Service is establishing four new regional peer-to-peer networks of managers of volunteers to share best practices, encourage collaboration, and create communities of practice focused on engaging citizens as volunteers. Individuals are needed who would be interested in serving as Network Conveners.

Network Conveners will conduct outreach to local managers of volunteers, convene meetings, and arrange training activities for network participants. Network Conveners must have five or more years experience as a manager of volunteers, be able to devote ten hours per month to network activities, and, if applicable, have authorization of their employer. Project period is May 1, 2009 to December 12, 2009 with potential to extend the project period. The scope of work may be viewed at [www.maineservicecommission.gov](http://www.maineservicecommission.gov). **CONTACT: Pam Zeutenhorst at [pam.zeutenhorst@maine.gov](mailto:pam.zeutenhorst@maine.gov) or 287-5313.**

### **MAINE COASTAL PROGRAM**

**2009 Maine Beaches conference set.** The annual Maine beaches conference is scheduled for Friday, July 10. Titled Valuing Maine's Beaches: Assets, Challenges, and Actions for Today and Tomorrow, it will be held at the Southern Maine Community College campus. The Maine Beaches Conference provides continuing opportunities for communication and exchange of the most current information among beach stakeholders with diverse interests and presents findings from the state's beach monitoring programs. The Maine Coastal Program, among other organizations, are conference sponsors. For more information, please contact [kngrant@maine.edu](mailto:kngrant@maine.edu). **CONTACT: Kathleen Leyden at 287-3144 or [Kathleen.leyden@maine.gov](mailto:Kathleen.leyden@maine.gov)**