



## WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

*March 11, 2010*

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.

### **DIRECTORS TEAM ON POLICY AND MANAGEMENT**

**LD 1389 bill signing.** Governor Baldacci will host a ceremony to sign his quality of place bill on Wednesday March 17, 2010 at 1:00p.m. in the Cabinet Room, 2nd floor of the State Capitol building. The bill was passed by the House and Senate and enables the state to reap the economic benefits that our quality of place offers in terms of creating high-value jobs, products and services, retaining and attracting skilled works, and drawing public and private investment to the state. The signing will be followed at 1:30pm by a Quality of Place Council meeting in the Cabinet Room to discuss moving the new law ahead. **CONTACT:** Sue Inches at 287-2989 or [sue.inches@maine.gov](mailto:sue.inches@maine.gov) or Jody Harris at 287-5424 or [jody.harris@maine.gov](mailto:jody.harris@maine.gov).

### **ECONOMICS AND DEMOGRAPHICS**

**2009 population loss driven by domestic out-migration.** In a recent analysis released by SPO's economists, Maine's population declined by one-tenth of one percent between 2008-2009. This follows a decade of increasing population, primarily from net in-migration: more people moving into Maine than out of Maine. That changed from 2008 to 2009, as Maine saw net out-migration. The overall out-migration was driven by an increase in domestic out-migration. Maine and the US as a whole were in recession throughout 2008 and 2009, and recessions can affect people's decisions about moving, so more years of data would be needed to call it a trend. Regardless, population growth is an important component of long-term economic growth because

businesses need a dependable supply of labor to provide goods and services. Promoting Maine's quality of place and other strategies to boost in-migration over the long run are thus crucial for Maine's economic future. For more information:

<http://www.maine.gov/spo/economics/index.htm>. **CONTACT: Michael LeVert at 287-1479 or [michael.levert@maine.gov](mailto:michael.levert@maine.gov).**

## **MAINE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE**

**Welcome Brad Hunter, AmeriCorps VISTA Leader.** Brad joined the Commission in February 2010 and is a native of Michigan. He graduated from Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, MI. Brad recently completed a year of service as an AmeriCorps VISTA with the United Way of the EUP Volunteer Center in Sault Ste. Marie, MI. As a VISTA in the Volunteer Center, Brad was a member of the Volunteer Centers of Michigan network, and from the experience this connection provided decided to pursue a VISTA Leader position in order to contribute to the national service movement through a positive leadership role to other VISTAs. Brad is serving a second term of service and is a VISTA Leader with the VolunteerMaine VISTA Project which is sponsored by the Maine Commission for Community Service. **CONTACT: Rochelle Runge at 287-8933 or [Rochelle.runge@maine.gov](mailto:Rochelle.runge@maine.gov) .**

**VolunteerFare online Newsletter Released.** In this issue training opportunities and grant announcements were made. In addition, citizens were encouraged to enter volunteer hours into the Volunteer Meter on VolunteerMaine.org and enter the Photo Contest, "Volunteers in Action," in celebration of Maine volunteers. "Volunteer Fare" aims to provide volunteer program managers, sponsors, and funders with a forum for exchanging news, technical information, best practices, recommendations on useful resources and more! **CONTACT: Rochelle Runge at 287-8933 or [Rochelle.runge@maine.gov](mailto:Rochelle.runge@maine.gov) .**

**The Maine Commission for Community Service Receives airtime on MPBN.** The Maine Commission for Community Service, VolunteerMaine.org, and AmeriCorps are highlighted on "Maine Things Considered", a radio show on Maine Public Broadcasting. Dean Tsakos from the VolunteerMaine.org VISTA project and Rochelle Runge of the Maine Commission for Community Service discuss AmeriCorps in Maine. You can listen to the recorded interview on our website:

<http://www.maineservicecommission.gov/news/release.php?nID=1403> . **CONTACT: Rochelle Runge at 287-8933 or [Rochelle.runge@maine.gov](mailto:Rochelle.runge@maine.gov) .**

## **COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**The Maine Science Teachers Association (MSTA) will be “Greening” their conference.** The MSTA recently invited the State Planning Office to offer suggestions for a “Greener” conference in the fall of 2010. MSTA President, Laurette Darling, announced the 2010 conference will be held at the Gardiner Area High School (GAHS) in October. Conference planning was the focus of the Board’s agenda and establishing a recycling plan for the event was discussed. Without a long-standing recycling program at the host high school, making the effort to offer a ‘green’ conference, and involving appropriate parties was important. Discussion also supported the importance of recycling in schools and the change in attention with recent concern for sustainability and how solid waste reduction fit in the curriculum with the Waste Management Hierarchy. The MSTA Board welcomed the presentation and committed to support recycling at the conference and at their respective schools. **CONTACT: Bruce White at 287-8053 or [bruce.white@maine.gov](mailto:bruce.white@maine.gov) .**

**Maine Compost Team/Maine Compost School.** In August of 2009, the Green Living Project team travelled to Maine to record sustainable practices and activities. Among the sites they visited was the Maine Compost School, located at Highmoor Farm in Monmouth. The video was premiered at a showing of all the Maine videos made by the Project’s Team in January in Brunswick, and are now posted on the web.

Since 1997, the Maine Compost School, a collaborative effort among the Maine Department of Agriculture, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Maine State Planning Office and the University of Maine Extension, has been teaching the basics of composting, through a combined format of classroom training, hands on activities and tours of operating compost facilities. Students include compost facility operators, local and state environmental staff, and others interested in learning more about composting. The school has had students from across our country and from over 30 other countries, including Australia and the Galapagos Islands. FMI: [www.composting.org](http://www.composting.org) To view the video, go to: <http://www.greenlivingproject.com/projects/maine/maine-compost-school/> FMI on the Green Living Project, go to [www.greenlivingproject.com](http://www.greenlivingproject.com). **CONTACT: George MacDonald at 287.5759 or [George.MacDonald@maine.gov](mailto:George.MacDonald@maine.gov).**

## GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY

**Average Heating Oil Prices.** The Governor's Office of Energy Independence and Security (OEIS) conducted its seasonal oil survey and found that the current statewide average cash price for No. 2 heating oil to be at **\$2.68 per gallon**, up one cent from last week. Within the OEIS sample, the lowest actual heating oil price of \$2.36 per gallon was found in the Southwestern region. The highest price of \$2.88 per gallon was found in the Northern region. The statewide kerosene price average is \$3.05 per gallon at this time. The statewide average for propane based on a use of 600 gallons a year is \$2.94 per gallon. At the time of this release the price of WTI crude oil, major driver of refined product prices, including heating oil was \$81.90. The next survey is scheduled for March 15, 2010. **CONTACT: Jeffrey Marks at 287-8927 or [Jeffrey.marks@maine.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.marks@maine.gov) .**