



WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Week ending April 3, 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

Census Count Comes to Maine. The Maine State Planning Office announced today local preparations for the 2010 Census, which is one year away this week. State Planning Office Director Martha Freeman recognized the importance of the 2010 Census for Maine and observed, "The 2010 Census data can affect funding in communities throughout Maine. Census data helps shape decisions for the rest of the decade about funding for public health, neighborhood improvements, transportation, education, and much more." Beginning April 20, people from Maine communities will be conducting Address Canvassing operations. Approximately 800 census takers working under the direction of the Portland Local Census Office will work to make sure the address list is accurate. **CONTACT: Amanda Rector at 287-1475 or Amanda.K.Rector@maine.gov .**

Consensus Economic Forecasting Commission Meets. The Maine Consensus Economic Forecasting Commission (CEFC) convened on March 31, 2009 to revise its November 2008 forecast. The Commission delayed its normal spring meeting in order to have the most recent employment data for Maine available at the time of the meeting. This report provides a summary of the Commission's findings. Further details on the changes in the components of personal income will be made available prior to the meeting of the Revenue Forecasting Commission.

The spring forecast reflects the sharp decline in national and state economic activity that began in the fall of 2008. The revised forecast estimates that this decline will result in continued employment losses through 2009 and the beginning of 2010, with a recovery beginning in late 2010. Personal income will continue to grow in 2009 and

2010 but at significantly diminished rates. Sharp declines in employment will result in reductions in total wages and salaries paid in Maine on a year over year basis in both 2009 and 2010.

The national and state economic outlook has continued to worsen since the CEFC met in October. Although oil prices fell from their mid-2008 peak, the housing and credit markets have continued to decline. Significant anxiety among consumers and business owners along with tight credit conditions have caused steep drops in consumption, which has resulted in drops in business activity and U.S. gross output. While funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 have begun entering the economy, the majority of these funds will not begin to affect the economy until later in 2009, and then will only ameliorate the decline in economic activity.

The commission is projecting continued losses in Maine non-farm wage and salary employment in 2009 and 2010 (-3.8% and -1.6% respectively, on an annual average year over year basis), followed by a recovery period starting in late 2010. The forecast for personal income in 2009 through 2012 has been reduced as a result of the weak job market. The commission decreased its forecast for the Consumer Price Index (CPI), a measure of household inflation, reflecting the significant drop in energy prices that followed the 2008 peak. The table below outlines the forecast's major indicators.

Calendar Years	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Wage & Salary Employment (Annual Percentage Change)						
CEFC Forecast 11/2008	-0.2	-0.7	0.4	1.0	0.8	0.7
CEFC Forecast 4/2009	-0.3	-3.8	-1.6	1.4	2.2	2.0
Personal Income (Annual Percentage Change)						
CEFC Forecast 11/2008	3.7	2.6	3.9	4.0	4.3	4.3
CEFC Forecast 4/2009	4.2	1.0	1.2	2.8	4.0	4.7
CPI (Annual Percentage Change)						
CEFC Forecast 11/2008	4.4	2.5	2.5	2.2	2.2	2.2
CEFC Forecast 4/2009	3.8	-1.4	1.7	2.3	2.1	2.0

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COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Grants Awarded to Municipalities for Outreach Programs. The Waste Management & Recycling Program receives requests from municipal recycling programs throughout the year, asking for financial assistance with education and outreach efforts. To address some of those needs, the [Maine Recycles Toolkit](#) was created with

downloadable resources that can be modified to be community-specific. Recently, SPO advertised that small grants (\$500) would be made available to municipal programs (in the form of matching funds) to help with recycling education and outreach and to promote toolkit use. Applications were made available and a total of 16 awards were made to individual municipalities and regional programs. Anticipated projects range from printing and distributing revised flyers on the municipal recycling program, working with seasonal residents and encouraging them to recycle, development and airing of public service announcements, to the purchase of and distribution of re-useable shopping bags. Projects are to be completed by June 2009. **Contact: Jetta Antonakos at 287-9074 or jetta.antonakos@maine.gov.**

LAND FOR MAINE'S FUTURE

Land for Maine's Future Program Contributes to a Conservation and Recreation Project in Hollis, York County. The Land for Maine's Future Program, with assistance and contribution by the Trust for Public Lands, the Town of Hollis, and the Maine Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks & Lands, has completed the fee acquisition of 81.7± acres of undeveloped forested land and riparian area, with nearly one mile of water frontage, including the section of river that flows into an area known as the Saco River/Salmon Falls Gorge. The subject property will be owned and managed by the Town of Hollis, subject to a Project Agreement, to conserve highly scenic, forested habitat and providing a recreational link to other parcels of conserved land along this stretch of one of Maine's significant river systems. These lands provide traditional public access for outdoor recreational purposes including hand-carry boat access. **CONTACT: R. Collin Therrien at 287-5619 or rcollin.therrien@maine.gov or Tim Glidden at 287-1487 or Tim.Glidden@maine.gov.**

THE MAINE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

Governor Proclaims Volunteer Week in Maine. [The Maine Commission for Community Service](#) and the Governor's Office are pleased to announce that April 19th-25th has been proclaimed Volunteer Week across Maine and that all citizens are urged to recognize this observance. Maine joins the national celebration of volunteers across the county during this special week. Maine has a volunteer force of over 356,000 citizens that on average dedicate 44.5 million hours of service each year. The estimated economic contribution of volunteers across the state is \$868 million. **CONTACT: Rochelle Runge at 287-8933 or rochelle.runge@maine.gov .**