



HCPC NEWSLETTER

Hancock County Planning Commission

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HCPC Executive Board Fiscal Year 2010-2011

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In this issue. . . .

Table of Contents	Page
PLANNING BOARD NEWS	1
BROWNFIELDS NEWS	3
CDBG NEWS	3
SOLID WASTE NEWS	4
TRANSPORTATION NEWS	5
GIS NEWS	7
IN MEMORIAM	7

PLANNING BOARD NEWS

By Tom Martin

WIND ENERGY FACILITY UPDATE - NOTE CORRECTION FROM OUR PREVIOUS NEWSLETTER

The Fall 2010 HCPC Newsletter article on wind energy facility regulation stated that towns could enact an ordinance that prohibits large-scale wind generators. *Subsequent discussions with Maine Municipal Association attorneys revealed that a blanket prohibition of a use that is not highly hazardous would be of questionable legality. HCPC apologizes for the erroneous information.* Feel free to contact Tom Martin if you have any questions.

PREPARING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE: BUILDING A MORE RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

HCPC is seeking funds to prepare a manual on infrastructure adjustments that local governments might want to take to prepare for climate change. One of the key changes is more severe storm events. According to an article, which is summarized below, by Ray Sirois, Senior Associate, IT Director, Wright-Pierce and Ryan Wingard PE, Project Manager, Wright-Pierce, we can expect:

1. Hotter summers, wetter winters, increased evaporation rates, and reduced soil moisture;
2. Increased number of short-term droughts by the end-of-century;
3. Increased frequency of heavy rain events;
4. The heavy rain events will be more intense; and
5. Ocean levels will rise more in the next century than in the past century.

These changes will affect stormwater drainage. The majority of the stormwater infrastructure was designed to accommodate 50 or 100-year storm events. Engineers relied on published rainfall intensity data from the National Weather Service compiled for the various design storm scenarios. These data were derived by performing statistical analysis of historical data. While a good representation of historical trends, it does not reflect what can be expected in the future. Preliminary studies indicate that the 24-hour, 100-year storm for the end of this century (2100) could be 66 percent higher than the historical 100-year storm for Boston, Massachusetts. It is thus likely that many existing systems will not have sufficient capacity for future rainfall events. Flooding problems and infrastructure damage will become more common.

Wastewater collection and treatment systems will also be affected by climate change. With more intense rainfall patterns, infiltration and inflow problems are apt to worsen, tying up more capacity with clean water. Communities with combined sewers could find their overflow problems worsening. Homeowners may experience more seasonal basement flooding, which often translates to more sewer system inflow.

Wastewater treatment plant discharge standards could also be impacted by climate change. As summertime low flow conditions get lower, water quality based discharge standards are apt to become more stringent. Coastal treatment facilities and pumping stations could also be affected by the sea level rise.

What Can Towns Do?

Here are some sample goals, which could be modified for use in your community:

A. Stormwater Drainage Measures

1. Map the current stormwater drainage system and analyze its ability to accommodate increased flows;
2. Review the current stormwater drainage standards and incorporate low impact development techniques into site plan review standards;
3. Identify areas likely to see increased flooding and evaluate the adequacy of culverts in these areas and map areas where road washouts could occur; and
4. Undertake measures to assure that any prohibition against the connection of stormwater drains from private dwellings to the public sewer system is strictly enforced.

B. Land Use Ordinance Revisions

1. Evaluate shoreland zoning standards for adequacy to address increased storm surges and flooding;
2. Review the current flood plain ordinance and work with NFIP staff at the State Planning Office to assure that standards reflect changes in likely 50 and 100-year storm events;
3. Assess the adequacy of erosion and sedimentation standards to address more intense storm events; and
4. Evaluate impervious surface ratio standards to determine if it is feasible to reduce the extent of these surfaces without restricting parking and safe vehicular access.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT NEWS: SEA THE SURGE

By Stephen Dickson, Maine Geological Survey (excerpted from the Holiday 2010 Maine State Planning Office Floodplain Management and Mapping News)

The National Hurricane Center has developed Storm Surge Overview, a series of web pages that describe and animate flooding along a coast. (See: <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/ssurge/index.shtml>) Surges can come from winter northeasters as well as tropical hurricanes so the animations are helpful in visualizing how waves and storm tides interact with the Maine shoreline. In one example, beach erosion lowers the ground surface as waves break farther and farther inland. Other examples show how different coastal profiles affect overtopping and how moving flood waters can impact structures. The site also has photographs of coastal damage and SLOSH model simulations of past hurricanes, including the 1938 Hurricane that affected New England.

The Ocean Prediction Center (see: http://www.opc.ncep.noaa.gov/et_surge/et_surge_info.shtml) at NOAA provides continuous storm surge predictions for the Gulf of Maine. This web site allows users to see anticipated surges from all types of weather including northeasters. This site maps potential coastal surge levels along the Maine coast before a storm arrives. As a storm approaches, tides can be monitored in real time from tide gauges along the coast in Portsmouth, Portland, Bar Harbor, and Eastport. As winter storm season approaches, these resources can provide valuable information on coastal flooding.

DOES YOUR TOWN NEED A COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN?

Adapted from an article by the Forest Protection Division of the Maine Forest Service

What is a CWPP?

A Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is a written document that identifies steps a community will take to reduce its risk of damage from wildland fire. The plan addresses the community's wildland fire response capability, as well as the protection of homes and structures within the community.

The plan also should identify and prioritize area of private, state and federal land where fuel treatment projects are necessary to reduce wildland fire threats to the community and its infrastructure. Finally the CWPP should include details about how steps outlined in the plan will be implemented.

For more information, see www.maineforestservice.gov or www.firewise.org or contact Kent Nelson, Fire Preventions Specialist, Maine Forest Service at 287-4989 or kent.nelson@maine.gov.

BROWNFIELDS NEWS

by Tom Martin

As we go to press Campbell Environmental, the HCPC's brownfields consultant, is completing an environmental assessment for a property in Ellsworth that may become part of the intermodal STAR (Strategic Transportation And Recreation) Center. Plans for this site include a trailhead for the Sunrise Trail, a park and ride lot, and a bus and rail station. This is another example of how brownfields money may be used in conjunction with other sources of funds.

HCPC still has funds available for brownfields assessments. We would be happy to arrange an informal site visit by our consultant if you feel there is a site in your town with potential. Generally speaking, priority is given to sites with reuse potential. Examples of successful reuses include public access points, conservation land, job creation projects, and sites that are part of a larger downtown revitalization effort. Contact Tom Martin for details.

CDBG NEWS

by Tom Martin

Well and Septic Tank Replacement Program

HCPC and Washington Hancock Community Agency are planning to seek another round of funding for the well and septic tank replacement program. There is already a waiting list for the current grant. Our application will be more competitive if we can document additional systems that need replacement. If you know of any deficient systems in your town, please contact Tom Martin.

HCPC Available To Help Towns With All Phases of CDBG Application Process

Do you have questions about the various CDBG programs? Do you need information about how to meet the household income requirements? Do you need advice on how to submit a competitive application? Are you having trouble finding matching sources of funds? The HCPC staff can help with these and other CDBG-related services. *There is no charge for these services.*

HCPC staff has been working with the CDBG program for over 30 years and has extensive experience in general program orientation, application preparation, and grant administration. We would be happy to meet with your town to discuss the program and any specific projects that you wish to pursue. If CDBG funds are not an appropriate funding source, we can recommend other sources. Contact Tom Martin if you have any questions.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

UPCOMING LEADERSHIP TRAINING OPPORTUNITY IN JANUARY

After two years of in-depth planning, community input and generous sponsorship by **Camden National Bank**, *LEADERSHIP Hancock County* will welcome its first class on January 29, 2011.

What is LEADERSHIP Hancock County and who should attend?

Click this link to learn about this comprehensive leadership program and download the application. Space is limited to 15. Don't miss out - apply today!

<http://learn.maine.edu/ellsworth/courses-programs/leadership-hancock-county/>

LEADERSHIP Hancock County is designed for and by Hancock County people to build the leadership capacity

of its participants as they learn to better communicate, collaborate and manage their resources. Hancock County needs citizens who appreciate the diversity of the people, businesses, communities and natural resources across the county—present and future leaders who see challenges and opportunities as countywide, who understand how an investment in one area strengthens the whole.

The program consists of six day-long sessions, three weeks apart, in various locations across the county. In the morning session, participants take part in skill building workshops led by professional facilitators and HCL alumni. The afternoon sessions are opportunities to learn proven leadership and management practices first-hand from leaders in Hancock County businesses and organizations.

For more information contact Phyllis Young, Associate Director, Ellsworth Area Chamber of Commerce, 163 High Street, Ellsworth, ME 04605 www.ellsworthchamber.org, Telephone: 207-667-5584

SOLID WASTE NEWS

by Tom Martin

HCPC AVAILABLE TO HELP WITH SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING SERVICES

We have received USDA funding to help towns develop and implement measures that reduce the amount of waste that is incinerated or deposited in a landfill. We can also work with towns and community groups to increase recycling, promote various forms of composting and encourage the use of safer alternatives to household hazardous waste. Our services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Organizing, in conjunction with other towns, an annual household hazardous waste and/or universal waste collection and facilitating other forms of regional cooperation.

- Assisting with transfer station designs and improvements that increase recycling rates.
- Helping develop sound Construction and Demolition Debris (CDD) management strategies.
- Designing and producing brochures and posters for community waste management/recycling programs.
- Working with hotels and owners of other transient accommodations in developing recycling and other waste diversion programs.
- Arranging backyard composting workshops.
- Organizing presentations on household hazardous waste management, composting, recycling, and pay-as-you-throw programs.
- Assisting major generators of shellfish waste (or other organics) in diverting this material from disposal through composting or by linking producers with local compost operations or farmers.
- Preparing or amending transfer station operations manuals, job descriptions, annual recycling reports, local solid waste and recycling ordinances and policies.

Plus, we have expertise, connections, and resources in other areas. If you have a need or an idea, just ask! We are particularly interested in promoting shared services among several towns. Contact Tom Martin for more information.

TRANSPORTATION NEWS

by Jim Fisher

MaineDOT Drafts New Highway Planning Program

The Maine Department of Transportation is proposing a new system for prioritizing state and federal dollars for transportation operations, maintenance and improvement. These changes will be largely invisible to local governments, but understanding them will be an asset for planning local projects as well as petitioning for state and federal grants. These are proposed changes that will be considered by Governor LePage, the 2011 Legislature and MaineDOT.

The proposed system categorizes roads into six groups:

- 1) Maine Turnpike and major interstate highways
- 2) Non-interstate national highways and arterial highways
- 3) Remaining arterials, including heavy haul truck routes and some major collectors
- 4) Remaining major collector highways
- 5) Minor collector highways
- 6) Local roads

The second proposed level of prioritization would be the level of service roads will be maintained.

- A) Excellent
- B) Good
- C) Fair
- D) Poor
- F) Unacceptable

Prioritization, as in the past, would go first to the interstate and arterial network, seeking to eliminate all poor or unacceptable areas. In Hancock County, Route 1A and Route 3 connecting Bucksport and Bangor with Bar Harbor, and all of Route 9 fall into the proposed highest category.

Another tier of support would go to remaining arterials and some major collectors, particularly those identified as heavy haul truck routes and roads that have higher regional and economic significance. In Hancock County this would include Route 15 between Bucksport and Bangor, Route 1 east of Ellsworth, and Route 172 between Blue Hill and Ellsworth.

Minor collector highways have historically received state support, but have required a local share in the neighborhood of 30 percent for paving related projects. The state continues to explore options for long term highway simplification, such as reconstructing minor collectors, then turning them over to towns for future maintenance. MaineDOT would emphasize maintenance of minor collectors in the interim.

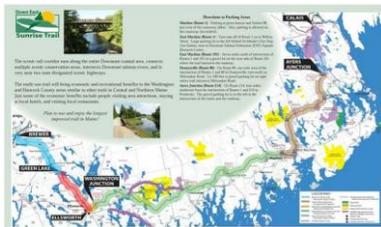
Local roads have historically not received state funding, though some are subsidized as “State Aid Roads.” Proposals under consideration do not alter stewardship for local roads. The Maine DOT Local Roads Center provides educational outreach and technical support to the towns.

Shift in Planning Time Frame

Currently transportation planning is conducted in Long Range Twenty Year, Mid-Range Six Year and Short Range Two year plans. The more immediate plans are specific and operational while long range plans are more comprehensive. MaineDOT is considering dropping the six-year plan in favor of a ten-year time frame. The mid-range plan plays an important role in turning long range goals into measurable, time specific objectives. Towns will continue to be contacted in the spring of even-numbered years for their transportation improvement priorities. A map of Hancock County 2010 Municipal Project Requests for the 2012-2017 Six Year Plan is available online at www.hcpcme.org/transport.html.

Sunrise Trail Launched

On September 21st the Down East Sunrise Trail was formally inaugurated. This rail to trail conversion is a first for Hancock and



Washington Counties. An 84-mile segment of the long disused rail corridor has been stabilized and secured as a rail corridor, but has been resurfaced to accommodate multiple users including walking, cycling, horses, skiing, snowmobiles and ATVs. One recent new article featured a musher riding an ATV pulled by a team of sled dogs.

The trail is a regional asset that is stimulating new economic investments and encouraging residents to enjoy Maine’s great outdoors. The Hancock County Planning Commission provides ongoing planning assistance for transportation and recreational uses of the Down East Sunrise Trail. Recent initiatives have included:

- Coordinating trail development with Bangor Hydro Electric Transmission System upgrades.
- Developing signage policies to promote local businesses while preserving the natural character of the trail.
- Creating an online, interactive map of the trail where you can take a virtual ride, identify parking, food, fuel, scenic turnouts and more.
- Managing the website www.sunrisetrail.org as well as a Facebook page.
- Assisting with newsletter creation and distribution.
- Developing future intermodal connections for trail users.

HCPC encourages towns to include the Down East Sunrise Trail as regional asset for recreation, fitness and transportation. We will be happy to provide more information and promotional materials to towns and schools interested in promoting the trail.

Safe Routes – School Travel Plans

Spring is right around the corner. This is our best season for engaging town and school leaders in planning safer ways for kids to walk and bike to school. The reasons for investing in sidewalks and trails to schools include encouraging fitness, reducing waste of fuel, reducing traffic congestion caused by door-to-door school bus services, reducing air pollution and freeing some parents from driving kids to school every day.

HCPC has developed an online tool for planning Safe Routes to Schools called “School Travel Plans”. We encourage towns and school systems to contact us for free support in creating School Travel Plans and preparation of proposals to fund new walking and cycling infrastructure. You can learn more about School Travel Plans at www.hcpcme.org/transportation/schooltravel.

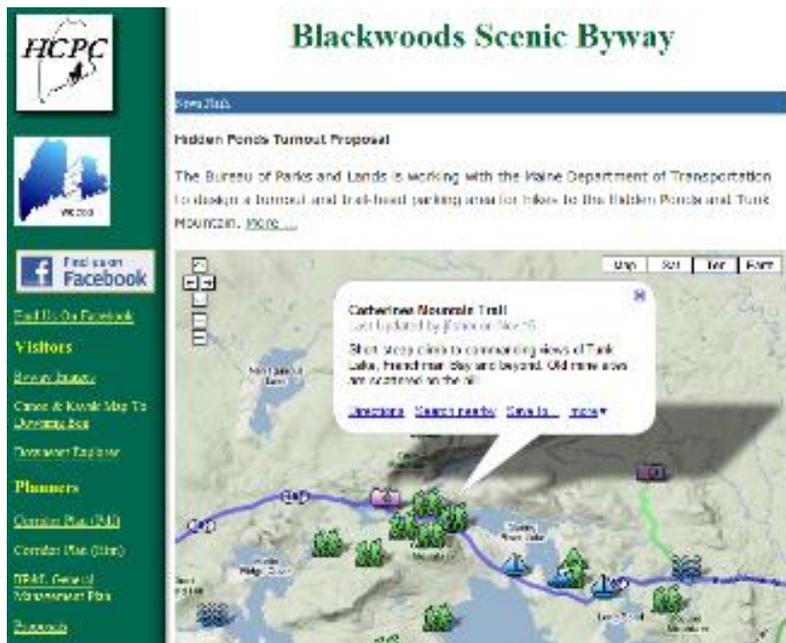


- Identifying trail access needs.

GIS NEWS

by Jim Fisher

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)



HCPC continues our role as Hancock County's center for geographic information systems and digital mapping. Over the last three years we have added capacity to scan historical maps up to three feet in width, created digital maps from paper maps and print a variety of paper maps up to four feet in width. We have assisted numerous towns with mapping including tax parcels, 911 road networks, shoreland zoning, flood plains, wetlands and more.

More recently we have added new ways to deliver maps to towns that provide greater flexibility than paper maps. Among these are geo-PDF maps that can be viewed in Adobe Acrobat Reader and that allow users to turn various map features, such as wetlands, on and off. We are also converting maps to Google maps and Google earth. Examples online include blackwoodsbyway.org, schoodicbyway.org, sunrisetrail.org and www.hcpcme.org/castine/history. Visitors to these websites can drill down by clicking on icons to learn more about the particular location and even look around the location if it appears in Google Street Level view.

We are heading a step further this year, adding capacity for preliminary site mapping, advanced editing features to work with survey data such as metes and bounds for

parcels, and use of global positioning systems (GPS) to inventory locations such as critical infrastructure. These tools will enable us to assist towns in a variety of planning tasks such as creating scenic turnouts, parking analysis, identifying drainage problems, safe routes to schools planning and more. Contact Jim Fisher at HCPC if you are interested in our mapping services.

IN MEMORIAM: WAYNE AMES

We were saddened to learn that former HCPC executive board chair Wayne Ames passed away on November 25, 2010. Wayne was a wise and compassionate person who helped lead the agency through a period of transition. After his departure from the executive board, we had the pleasure of working with him in his capacity as Orland selectman. Under his leadership the town obtained many grants, built a new town office, and updated its comprehensive plan. He will be greatly missed.

HUH?

Portable signs are permitted for a period not to exceed three hundred sixty five days per year.
-- Section 20.66.140 - El Paso, Texas Zoning Code

The loss of a forest or a farm is justified only if it is replaced by a village. To replace them with a subdivision or a shopping center is not an even trade.
-- Andres Duany

Neighborhood - Any collection of hitherto unacquainted individuals with physically proximate homes who find themselves suddenly united in vigorous opposition to unpalatable change, especially a rezoning, development, or highway.
-- Joel Garreau

It's not the plan that's important, it's the planning.
- Dr. Gramme Edwards



*Happy Holidays from
the Staff at HCPC*

*Tom Martin
Jim Fisher
Sheri Walsh*



Hancock County Planning Commission is a partner with local and county government to: protect our heritage and resources, plan for the future and promote a sound economy for the people of Hancock County.

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Change Service Requested