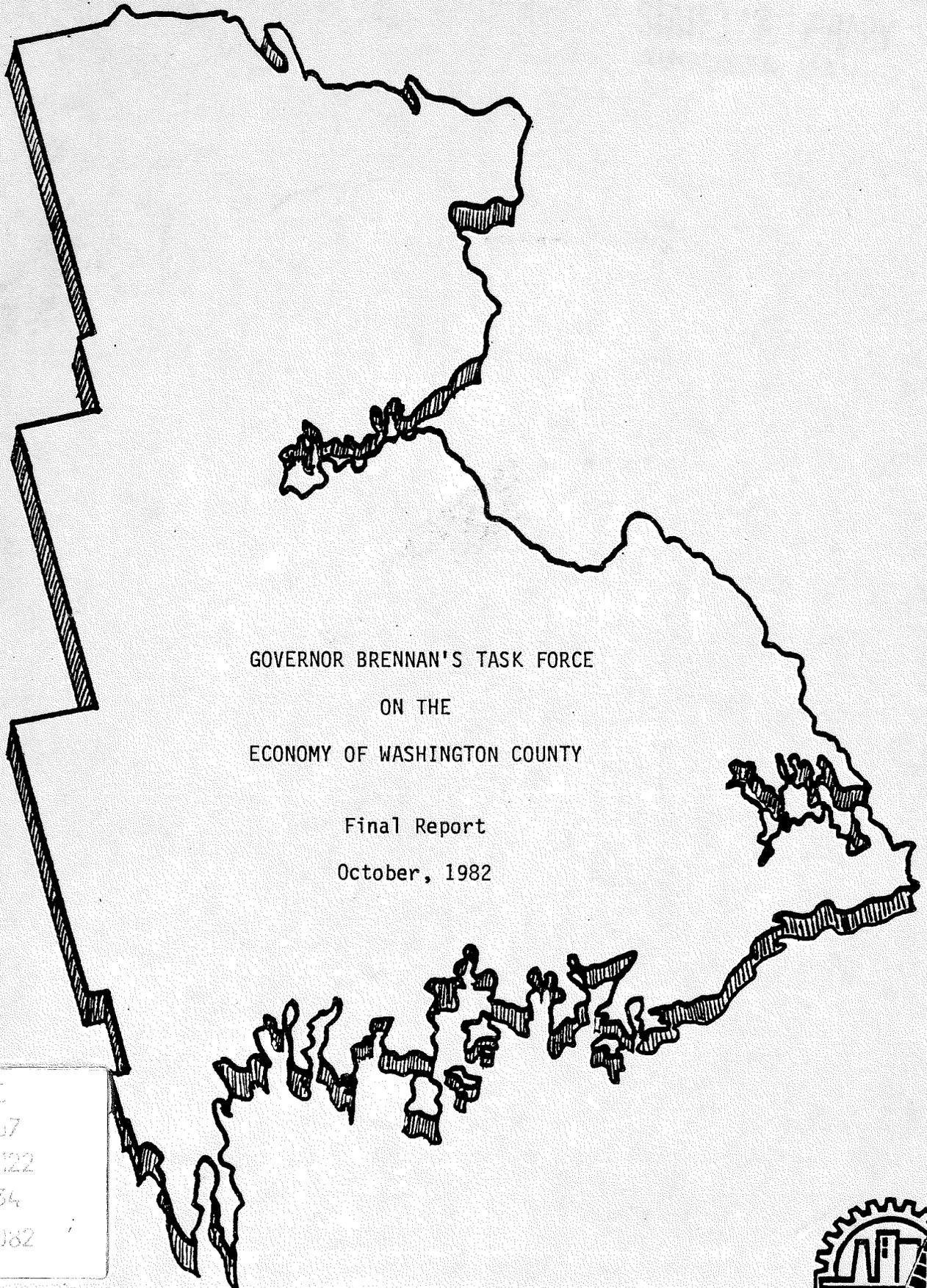


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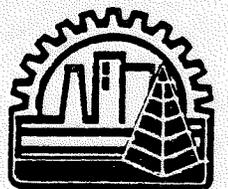
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GOVERNOR BRENNAN'S TASK FORCE
ON THE
ECONOMY OF WASHINGTON COUNTY

Final Report
October, 1982

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GOVERNOR BRENNAN'S TASK FORCE
ON THE
ECONOMY OF WASHINGTON COUNTY

FINAL REPORT
OCTOBER, 1982

Prepared by
EASTERN MAINE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of members of the Task Force and do not necessarily reflect the views of Eastern Maine Development Corporation. The recommendations outlined herein were arrived at through over fifteen formal Task Force meetings, fourteen public hearings and analysis of written testimony submitted from numerous public and private sources. EMDC is very pleased to have been able to assist the Task Force in this process as well as in the final preparation of this document.

SEP 27 1984

October 28, 1982

To: Governor Joseph E. Brennan

The Task Force on the economy of Washington County submits the following economic development strategy and 31 recommendations for implementing that strategy as a means of alleviating some of the long-term distressful economic conditions that have plagued Washington County residents since the turn of the century. The elements of the development strategy are neither new nor are they idealistic. They form a general basic strategy for dealing with the conditions. However, some of the recommendations are new, and together they represent a realistic and practical approach to development in this area. The recommendations are general in nature, and they provide a foundation upon which an on-going economic development committee can build more specific strategies to accomplish more specific goals.

This is the first opportunity Washington County residents have had to formally express their wishes and desires for determining their own economic future. We thank you for providing that opportunity.

We are sure that your purpose in requesting this report is to act on the recommendations presented. The first step, the key to implementing the strategy, is contained in the first recommendation: ". . .to target Washington County for economic development and to appoint an on-going Committee to maintain follow-through on implementation. . ." We ask that you initiate action on this within a reasonable period of time so that our efforts for the past 10 months will begin to bear fruit. We know that development is a process which takes place over a period of time, and that some of the indicated projects will take several years to accomplish. However, we are anxious to get started.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present this report. We look forward to working together to create an economically stronger Washington County,

Sincerely,

Richard A. Burgess
Task Force Chairman

RAB:ewn

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The members of the Task Force would like to express their sincere appreciation to the Eastern Maine Development Corporation for their excellent effort in assisting with the preparation of this report. From the first meeting of the group held on January 25, until its final meeting on October 12, EMDC has actively participated in Task Force activities, offering policy guidance, clerical and administrative assistance, and research assistance.

Certainly without the "extra effort" put forth by this agency the Task Force's job would have been considerably more difficult. The Task Force would like to acknowledge especially the efforts of EMDC staff member Jon Prichard, who assisted the group throughout the process leading up to this report.

The Task Force also acknowledges with appreciation the assistance offered by members of the Interagency Support Group, headed by Les Stevens of the State Development Office.

Finally, the Task Force would like to thank the residents of Washington County who took part in the public hearing process on which this report is based.

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IN MEMORIAM

Reverend Donald Stockford

1907 - 1982

The Reverend Stockford, appointed to the Task Force to represent District #103, believed that community service contributed to the quality of life. Throughout his 40-year ministry in Washington County he willingly and enthusiastically worked with individuals and civic and volunteer groups to improve the well-being of area residents. His dedication will be an inspiration to others.

PART I
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On December 29, 1981, Governor Joseph E. Brennan signed an executive order establishing a "Governor's Task Force on the Washington County Economy". Citing the numerous economic problems of the county including its low per capita income, high unemployment, high percentage of population receiving social assistance, and high percentage of elderly people, the Governor charged the task force with soliciting public opinion and attitudes and preparing a strategy document outlining ways that the economic condition of the county could be improved.

The specific responsibilities of the Task Force, which is comprised of 25 residents of Washington County, are defined as follows:

1. To develop a strategy to improve economic opportunities for Washington County people;
2. To develop consensus and support among Washington County people and institutions for the Strategy Document;
3. To hold public hearings during the strategy development process;
4. To identify potential state and federal resources that could assist in implementing the strategy; and,
5. To present a final Strategy Document for the Governor's consideration on or before September 30, 1982.

This report represents the culmination of a lengthy public hearing process, numerous meetings of the Task Force, and considerable input from both the public and private sectors of Washington County. The first meeting of the Task Force was held on January 25, and at least one meeting per month was held following this date. The purpose of these meetings, held in Machias, was to plan a strategy and timetable for preparing and completing the Strategy Document by September. Also, these meetings served the purpose of bringing together members of the Task Force, who represent various perspectives and sectors of the county, to discuss what they felt the county's problems and needs were.

The most important aspect of the Task Force's activity since January, however, has been its public hearings. During the months of April and May, the Task Force held twelve public hearings in various locations throughout the county. The purpose of these hearings was to solicit public testimony and comment on the county's economy, its problems and possible

solutions. To facilitate this information gathering process, the Task Force was divided into four subcommittees which encompassed all sectors of the county's economy. These subcommittees were: Agricultural Resources, Forest Resources, Industrial/Commercial Development, and Marine Resources. These subcommittees acted individually to contact people to give written and oral testimony at the hearings, to advertise their hearings, and to act as a panel at the hearings. This public hearing process generated literally hundreds of pages of testimony representing the ideas of those citizens who attended the hearings. The testimony, collectively, represents the feelings, suggestions and comments of those citizens presenting testimony at the hearings, and serves as the base from which this report has been written. Background data and statistics have been compiled from various sources including Eastern Maine Development Corporation, Washington County Regional Planning Commission and various state agencies. Finally, a preliminary draft of this report was presented to residents at two hearings held in October. The report has been modified to reflect their concerns.

The following is a summary of the recommendations which the Task Force is presenting to the Governor as a means of improving the economy of Washington County.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

First Recommendation

The Task Force's first recommendation is that the Governor sponsor a resolution to the Legislature targeting Washington County for economic development and that all necessary steps be taken to fund a position for a full time individual to work with individuals, organizations and designated State agencies to assist and promote economic development in the county; and that the Governor appoint a Washington County Development Committee to maintain follow-through on the implementation of the Task Force recommendations for at least the next five years.

Highest Priority Recommendations

The Task Force's top priority recommendation is for the construction of deep water bulk cargo port facilities in the City of Eastport.

The Task Force recommends that a feasibility study be funded for the design of a solid waste disposal system or systems for Washington County communities that incorporates incineration and recycling.

The Task Force recommends that the Maine Department of Transportation step up its efforts to improve all the major roads leading into and through the county, routes 1, 9 and 6, to support industrial and commercial growth. Route 191 also should be improved.

The Task Force recommends that the Governor and State Legislature quickly and equitably resolve the problem of worker's compensation rates in order to lower business costs, save jobs in Washington County and remove barriers to new development.

The Task Force recommends that the development of our widespread peat resources as a means of creating new capital investment and new employment opportunities for county residents be explored.

The Task Force recommends that a local advisory panel made up of County residents be established in order to participate in the determination of how monies will be loaned through the revolving loan fund which has recently been created through the Community Development Block Grant program. The Task Force also recommends that the State explore various ways in which this loan fund can be capitalized immediately with additional monies.

Very High Priority Recommendations

Industrial/Commercial Development

The Task Force recommends that there be increased development activity in the creation of tourist related and recreation facilities.

The Task Force recommends that increased efforts be made to seek clean industries for the area to provide more capital investment, more employment opportunities, and diversification of industry in the county.

The Task Force recommends that the University of Maine at Machias and the Washington County Vocational Technical Institute be maintained and allowed to grow and adapt to new conditions as the need arises.

The Task Force recommends that two airports in the County be well maintained and improved to provide stimulus for the growth of air transportation into and out of Princeton and Machias and surrounding areas.

The Task Force recommends that the State Planning Office continue to fund community applications to restore blighted areas of communities such as projects similar to those being funded in Calais, Eastport and Lubec.

The Task Force recommends that attention be given to the development of solar energy techniques that can benefit Washington County.

Marine Resources

The Task Force recommends that the potential for developing further seafood processing should be explored to determine if the values of food products from the sea can be increased by secondary processing and improved marketing. The following actions should be implemented: Appointment of an on-going sub-task force to develop a program to increase the value of seafood; funding of the position of "Food Processing Technology Specialist", based at the University of Maine at Machias.

The Task Force recommends that clam harvesting be protected and enhanced through a two-inch size standard law and through the promotion of quality clams through a program of washing and grading.

The Task Force recommends that in order to conserve and protect the lobster resource that pressures be brought to bear for a regional (East Coast and Canadian) minimum size law and V-notch seed lobster program; and that research on seed lobster continue.

The Task Force recommends that the Department of Marine Resources undertake a study of the effects of bottom dragging fishing gear on species of fish habitat.

The Task Force recommends that the Department of Environmental Protection be directed to develop a system for simplifying the licensing procedures for sardine processors and other marine resource processors.

The Task Force recommends priority research by the Department of Marine Resources, University of Maine and the private sector to determine various new technologies for aquaculture ventures in the county.

The Task Force recommends that education concerning the county's marine resources and industries be promoted in primary and secondary schools for teachers and students K-12 in Washington County.

Forest Resources

The Task Force recommends that emphasis be placed on researching the potential for developing secondary wood processing manufacturing operations through utilization of existing species and marketing analysis.

The Task Force recommends that efforts be undertaken to attract a major paper convertor into the area for envelope and/or business form manufacturing.

The Task Force recommends that an extensive program to develop and improve the management of existing woodlands should be instituted by means of education and owner assistance.

The Task Force recommends that an assessment be made to determine if Christmas tree production can be developed as an appropriate industry for Washington County.

Agricultural Resources

The Task Force recommends a study to determine the feasibility of growing fruit orchard crops such as apples and pears, for those with available farmland that could support this type of industry.

The Task Force recommends that there be an increased level of research by the UMO blueberry research specialists to increase the productivity of the low-bush blueberry fields in the County, and that there be a swift determination by the Board of Pesticides Control on the use of weed control methods to improve productivity. Also there should be on-going program research in organic as well as conventional methods of managing blueberries.

The Task Force recommends that more research be undertaken by the Maine Department of Agriculture to determine if vegetable crops can be adopted to the short growing season and the marginal soils of Washington County.

The Task Force recommends that there be a legislative act authorizing the cataloging of agricultural land to bring it into maximum productive use and a subsequent action to initiate a land bank and attempt to influence national legislation.

The Task Force recommends a joint effort by agriculture related state agencies and those engaged in the farm producing component to develop a marketing technique for small farmers in Washington County.

The Task Force recommends that the need be explored for a State-level small farm development agency and a similar county-level agency in Washington County, that would address such issues as business management techniques, marketing seminars, and political action.

The Task Force recommends that there be continued investigation into the possibility of raising sheep in Washington County.

The Task Force recommends that education concerning the county's agricultural resources and industries be promoted in primary and secondary schools for teachers and students K-12 in Washington County.

PREAMBLE

As a Task Force we are seeking to arrest the downhill slide of the economy, to re-open closed plants, to put idled workers back to work, and to arrest the decline of and regenerate resources which have provided economic benefit to families for generations. We are seeking to build a foundation for the future upon which new opportunities will be available so that our most treasured resource, our sons and daughters, will have choices and options here in the County. We don't want them to have to move away to survive as they have in the past. Finally, we are seeking to retain our image of self-sufficiency, self-reliance and independence now and in the future.

Our overall strategy for the development of Washington County is to:

1. Strengthen and regenerate existing resources so they can continue to support large numbers of families.
2. Develop secondary processing facilities to add value to the resources we already produce, and to create more jobs.
3. Develop other resources in the area to attract new capital investment, and to create new employment opportunities.
4. Attract other conventional clean industries to diversify the economy.
5. Move the economy in new directions for the better utilization of our resources for economic growth, such as the development of deep water bulk cargo port facilities at Eastport.

We need our state and federal governments to assist with research projects and with the building of infrastructure facilities, such as industrial parks, port facilities, roads, commercial piers, solid waste disposal units and others, because of the tremendous expense to create such facilities. Also, we need assistance to attract capital investment for manufacturing facilities and to develop our resources. Much of the projected growth we can accomplish by ourselves if we can get an occasional boost.

FIRST RECOMMENDATION

The Task Force's first recommendation is that the Governor sponsor a resolution to the Legislature targeting Washington County for economic development, bringing the powers of the Executive Office and the Legislative branch to bear on that effort, and that all necessary steps be taken to designate a full time individual to work with individuals and organizations to assist and promote development in the county.

The Task Force further recommends that the Governor appoint a Washington County Development Committee to maintain follow-through on the implementation of the Task Force recommendations for at least the next five years. The committee will act as liaison between the Governor's office and Washington County and will assist individuals, groups, community and county governments and organizations with their dealings with the State and Federal government. The committee will report, in writing, to the Governor at least annually, progress or non-progress, make review and further recommendations, and make changes in development strategy if and when necessary because of changing economic situations. Some members of the original Task Force should be appointed to serve on the on-going committee in order to provide continuity.

HIGHEST PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force's top priority recommendation is for the construction of deep water bulk cargo port facilities to be constructed in the City of Eastport. Recent tonnage figures released by the Eastport Port Authority demonstrate that they are already in the shipping business, however, indications are that present cargo handling facilities will not sustain continued use at present levels nor does the present location offer potential for expansion needed to handle larger vessels and greater shipping capacity. The Maine Department of Transportation should be authorized to engage an appropriate firm to study location and engineering concerns for such construction. Funds for the study should be provided by the State. When the study is complete the MDOT and the City of Eastport officials should work out the most practical and feasible means for funding the actual construction immediately. A marketing and development plan should be developed by the Eastport Port Authority, the MDOT, the State Development Office, and the Maine Development Foundation. Tax incentives or other investment incentives should be devised to encourage private enterprise to re-establish the rail lines into Eastport and link up with other rail systems. The MDOT should also study the possibility for construction of an East-West highway linking Eastport and its hinterlands and Quebec Province as a potential customer.

Eastport shows outstanding potential for development as a major port facility in Maine and on the Eastern seaboard. Eastport has been largely ignored as a viable port by previous state and private studies. However, domestic and worldwide economic conditions have changed and new factors supporting and favoring Eastport should not be overlooked by the Governor and the Department of Transportation.

Eastport on its own, and with the help of a major exporter of kraft pulp, has established considerable shipping traffic out of Eastport. Port authorities have testified that interest has been expressed by other corporations and shipping concerns about developing Eastport. This interest is due in part to its proximity to Europe, its favorable status in terms of an available labor force and to the ease of maintaining channels.

The costs of dredging port installations have been shifted from the Army Corp of Engineers to the user and this cost has been added to commodity shippers. Eastport has the deepest water on the eastern seaboard and currents in the area are strong enough to keep the channels open without dredging -- an added cost savings to potential shippers. Also, it has been demonstrated that there is considerable savings for firms using the port of Eastport over present costs of shipping through present ports of St. John, New Brunswick, Canada, Boston and New York.

Sites along the waterfront are available in Eastport for dock construction and warehouse and loading facilities. Improved transportation into Eastport would open up new markets in the hinterlands. Adjunct developments for a port facility could include secondary wood processing plants, diversified wood yards, a debarking operation, and food processing facilities.

Development of a port facility in Eastport would impact on the entire County through the spin-off effect of having increased capital investment in the area, added jobs and increased demands for goods and services. Initial bulk cargo potential for Eastport for export includes wood pulp, printing paper, wood chips, round logs, lumber, peat, fish, blueberries, and potatoes. Potential for import includes salt, potash, coal, and orange juice.

The Task Force recommends that a feasibility study be funded for the design of a solid waste disposal system, or systems for Washington County communities that incorporates incineration and recycling. A policy of allowing open burning of dumps should be reinstated for landfills until this problem is resolved. The funds for the study should be provided at the state and federal level, and several municipalities can be joined for the study.

The Task Force recognizes that solutions to the problem of waste disposal are especially difficult in the thin soils of Washington County, but that without good, long-term solutions to this problem, the future of economic development in the County will be severely limited.

A recent ruling on the Site Location of Development Law has created the situation where no development subject to this law can be permitted without proof of adequate solid waste disposal. All existing dumps and solid waste facilities in Washington County are subject to closure. No adequate landfill sites are available except for one on top of Cooper Mountain. The solution for Washington County may be regional waste disposal systems incorporating recycling where feasible and incineration. Engineered landfill systems are prohibitively expensive and the population density may be so low as to make "garbage to energy" plants unrealistic.

The Task Force recommends that the Maine Department of Transportation step up its efforts to improve all the major roads leading into and through the County, Routes 1, 9 and 6, to support industrial and commercial growth. Route 191 between Calais and Machias also should receive increased attention.

The MDOT should begin a study to determine the most practical and feasible routes to be re-constructed to link Eastport with Aroostook County and with I-95. This connection will also aid in other development such as tourism and industrial growth.

Washington County and industries established within the County are at an economic disadvantage in having an under-developed and undeveloped road transportation system as well as being at greater distances from the markets compared with other areas of the state. The condition of the road system contributes to the cost of doing business in Washington County and acts as a deterrent to investment. In addition, the highway system perpetuates the isolation of the County from the rest of the state.

There is no major artery linking Washington County with Interstate 95 and both existing primary and secondary roads are in poor condition. Roads that were built for horses and wagons are being subjected to carrying loads of up to 80,000 pounds.

The Task Force recommends that the Governor and State Legislature quickly and equitably resolve the problem of worker's compensation rates in order to lower business costs, save jobs in Washington County and to remove barriers to new development. The impact of the resolution of this problem will be felt countywide. Over 80% of the county's industries are woods oriented and small business firms.

The Task Force recommends that the potential for development of our widespread peat resources as a means of creating new capital investment and new employment opportunities for county residents be explored.

Development of the peat resource in Washington County should be explored seriously and objectively in recognition of the economic benefits that might accrue to the County as a result. The following actions should be taken.

1. An open-minded attitude towards peat development should be adopted in the County until all the evidence is in and public awareness about the potential for economic and environmental impact should be promoted.
2. A study by the State to be completed this coming year should be made to determine, on a bog by bog basis, the best practical use for each deposit based on its utilization for energy, agriculture and other uses.
3. Standards and guidelines to assist peat developers should be promulgated by the Department of Environmental Protection with input from state agencies, local residents and private developers.
4. Research efforts into the use of peat in septic systems presently on-going at the University of Maine at Orono should be continued and additional funding supplied to expand these efforts and to explore other uses. The possibility of direct agricultural production on peat lands should be among the potential uses of peatlands that

receive attention from the state and from university and other researchers, as should the possibility of peat hydrolysis for livestock feed production. Peat uses that can be integrated with the agricultural revitalization that Washington County is experiencing should get top priority attention.

Peat mining is controversial and environmental protection laws uncertain. Some commercial mining of peat for agricultural purposes is presently being carried on. Interest has been expressed by a major corporation in mining peat for energy and construction of a pelletized peat processing plant with associated mining operations creating about 200 new permanent jobs.

The Task Force recommends that a local advisory panel made up of County residents be established in order to participate in the determination of how subsidized, low risk monies will be loaned through the revolving loan fund which has recently been created through the Community Development Block Grant program. The State Planning Office and Eastern Maine Development Corporation should invite the participation of County residents, through this advisory panel, when the details of the loan fund structure are being determined. This fund should be geared toward microbusinesses, defined as businesses employing twenty people or less.

The Task Force further recommends that the State explore various ways in which this loan fund can be capitalized immediately with additional monies, since under the existing mechanism it could be several years before there will be sufficient monies in the fund to start granting loans.

The mechanism for a revolving loan fund in Washington County was created when the State Planning Office awarded a Community Development Block Grant to the town of Princeton in which block grant monies would be used to help finance the reopening of the Quoddy Lumber Mill. In the block grant application, Quoddy Lumber Mill would receive the entire grant award as a loan which would, under certain stated conditions, be repaid in time. The money which is repaid by the mill will be put into a revolving loan fund for use exclusively in Washington County. The application does not detail the structure of the revolving loan fund and the State Planning Office appears flexible as to how this loan fund could function. The mill is given a fair amount of flexibility in the repayment of the loan, and it appears that it could be several years before the loan fund would be capitalized through this source alone.

VERY HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Task Force recommends that there be increased development activity in the creation of tourist related and recreational facilities. The impact of the development will be felt countywide in terms of tourist industry created jobs and financial benefit. The following specific activities should be undertaken.

1. West Quoddy Head State Park in Lubec should be further developed to provide a wider variety of accommodations for tourists. Several types of campsites ranging from camper trailer hook-up arrangement to primitive campsites, a system of trails and a park headquarters with daily nature tours and other activities should be developed at the park, and tourists should be encouraged (through state tourist literature, signs, etc.), to stay for several nights at the park while visiting other area tourist attractions. Whale watching is an existing unique tourist attraction at West Quoddy Head, where whales may be viewed from the shore.

The expansion of West Quoddy Head State Park into an overnight facility will result in the attraction of more tourists to the area for extended periods of time and thus will create a financial and economic boost to area residents and businesses.

2. Private landowners should be educated as to the potential to expand the opportunities for visitors to the area to enjoy the natural beauties and recreational pleasures by developing activities related to both nature trails, backpacking, orienteering, hiking experiences, cross country ski trails, etc. in conjunction with tourist facilities.
3. Promotional effectiveness should be increased by constructing and operating a first-class tourist information center strategically located in Calais to service traffic to and from the Maritimes and constructing and operating a secondary, complementary facility at the opposite end in Steuben. Funding sources should be explored among the county Chamber of Commerce, County Commissioners, tourist and recreational facilities owners and operators, the Maine Publicity Bureau, and the State Development Office, with local, municipal and County officials taking the lead to organize this activity.
4. Directional signs should be planned and erected to point out tourist attractions along Route 1 in an attempt to draw tourists to other sections of the County. Encourage the development of bed and breakfast facilities offering accommodations for special interest groups such as artists, photographers, environmentalists, etc., by private individuals.

5. A mandatory guide law should be established on an experimental basis for Washington County to service the estimated 3,000 out-of-state deer hunters who visit the area each year. This would create about 200 seasonal jobs for local residents.
6. State and Federal agencies should be petitioned to release considerably more salmon smolt in Washington County's rivers, and Atlantic Salmon-oriented tourism should be encouraged.
7. A study should be undertaken to determine the feasibility of developing a Peatlands State Park. Such a study should include the feasibility of planning and promoting a peat bog area for scientific study and passive recreation, and should include the potential for "primitive" camping facilities (equivalent to those at Cobscook Bay State Park), a visitor's center and nature trails as well as interpretive services such as guided natural history trips.

The Task Force recommends that increased efforts be made to seek new clean industries for the area to provide more capital investment, more employment opportunities, and diversification of industry in the County.

Both Calais and Machias have constructed Industrial Parks hoping to attract new industry. Some success has been achieved; however, local resources for reaching industrial prospects is limited. The Task Force recommends that the State Development Office and the Maine Development Foundation provide supplemental efforts to assist those communities to make contact with industrial prospects, to promote the positive attributes of the area, and to locate new industry in the area. Special effort should be concentrated on secondary wood products manufacturing, users of marine resources in the development of a product, manufacturers of finished paper products such as computer paper and other industries that will create high quality products which will overcome the additional expense of transportation to and from this area. Since investments have already been made to construct the Parks, and since the gain of just one new industry has a large positive impact, the communities involved should increase their efforts to locate suitable prospects.

The Task Force recommends that the University of Maine at Machias and the Washington County Vocational Technical Institute be maintained and allowed to grow and adapt to new conditions as the need arises. These institutions are providing high quality education and highly marketable skills at reasonable cost to Washington County residents. Many of our sons and daughters would never have received post-secondary education had the institutions not been located here. The skills learned can be applied to employment here in the County and increases the quality of workmanship. Both institutions provide many services to area communities and industries, the value of which is difficult to determine. Students and teachers provide a very positive social uplift. These institutions have the capability for training personnel needed to fulfill development goals. The Task Force further recommends that the University of Maine at Machias faculty and per-

sonnel be given a role in conducting research projects designed to assist Washington County development.

The Task Force recommends that two airports in the County be well maintained and improved to provide stimulus for the growth of air transportation into and out of Princeton, Machias and surrounding areas. The airports provide additional support for industrial and commercial growth, and will become more important as a transportation link in the future. Daily commuter flights between Bangor and Princeton became a reality in 1981. Such commuter traffic will become practical and feasible for Machias in the near future. The two communities should be studying the steps to orderly growth and development of their facilities, and should be seeking County, State and Federal assistance to implement that growth and development.

The Task Force recommends that the State Planning Office continue to fund community applications to restore blighted areas of communities such as projects similar to those that are being funded in Calais, Eastport and Lubec and other areas. Such projects provide a tremendous positive psychological impact on area residents, providing them with incentive for stimulating further economic development activity on their own. Communities should be encouraged to undertake locally sponsored projects of a similar nature.

The Task Force recommends that attention be given to the development of solar energy techniques that can benefit Washington County. Information about solar energy options should be circulated to county residents by the state Office of Energy Resources, and the state should host a series of "nuts and bolts" solar demonstrations in the county to educate the public as to the potential of solar energy.

MARINE RESOURCES

The Task Force recommends that the potential for developing further seafood processing by food producers, processors, governmental agencies and higher education should be explored to determine if the values of food products from the sea can be increased by secondary processing and improved marketing. The following actions should be implemented:

1. The Governor should appoint an on-going representative subtask force charged with developing a program to increase the value of seafood products through increased emphasis on processing. This representative group would act in an advisory and planning capacity for development and applied research activities.
2. A position based at the University of Maine at Machias should be funded for two years for a Food Processing Technology Specialist who would work with the subtask force, the University and Washington County Vocational Technical Institute to carry out the following objectives:
 - a. Identify the existing resources, staff and facilities available to research new product development.
 - b. Identify resources and staff available to do market analysis for new products.
 - c. Develop a methodology and instrument to assess present and future employment and training opportunities for quality control technicians, food scientists, food technologists, food processing technicians and other skilled workers.
 - d. Determine the resource agencies of state and federal governments available to support this effort including the State Development Office, Maine Development Foundation, State Planning Office, Department of Marine Resources, Department of Food, Agriculture and Rural Resources, Farmer's Home Administration, Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce and other governmental agencies including the Food and Drug Administration.
 - e. Identify food producers and processors interested in new product development to increase the added value to Maine food products from the sea.

The commercial fishery in Washington County is a substantial contributor to the County's economy both in jobs and utilization of the marine resources. Many seafoods from the County, and in fact in Maine generally, are marketed presently in raw form with little value added from processing. Rising transportation costs, foreign competition and the demand for highly processed convenience foods create new marketing problems for seafoods.

Washington County's dependence on its marine resource has been evidenced by public support for waterfront development and fish pier development. Public monies have been used to fund both these efforts. But to realize the full

potential for value from sea products, a comprehensive development and research effort is needed to develop food processing with support from State government, private industry and higher education.

Development of a strategy for food processing, applied marketing research and product development in Washington County would serve as a model for the entire industry in the State.

Eventual construction of additional processing facilities or expansion of present facilities in the County would provide added benefit to the economy of the region and further provide an alternative to Maine fishermen to shipping products out of state in the raw form.

The Task Force recommends that clam harvesting in Washington County should be protected and enhanced in two ways:

1. A two-inch size standard for harvesting should be adopted by the Legislature and accompanied by an incentive program by the Department of Marine Resources for re-seeding heavily harvested flats and reclaiming exhausted flats. This would ensure a sustained yield and quality control. The Department of Marine Resources should be given responsibility for monitoring compliance in addition to its existing responsibilities regarding paralytic shellfish poisoning and certification of shellfish shipments.
2. The Department of Marine Resources should promote quality clams through a program of washing, grading and developing an identifiable mark indicating "quality" in order to command maximum market value for the product.

Washington County accounts for an average of nearly 50% of all soft shell clams harvested annually in Maine, making clams one of the region's more valuable marine resources. Conventional municipal clam conservation practices, however, range widely from excellent to poor and, further, suffer from sporadic enforcement.

A State program for conserving clam populations should be developed and enforced along with an incentive program for re-seeding heavily harvested flats and reclaiming worn out flats.

The Department of Marine Resources should work with County clam producers to instill conservation practices. The Department of Marine Resources should actively engage in the two measures described above since development of such a program would be consistent with other Department of Marine Resources projects designed to enhance the market value and quality appearance of fresh Maine seafood products.

The Task Force recommends that the following measures be undertaken in order to conserve, protect and increase the lobster resource, which is vital to the health and stability of our economy:

1. That the state and federal governments pressure other state governments in New England, New York and New Jersey, and also the provincial governments of the Canadian Maritime Provinces to legislate the same minimum legal size law for their fishermen, so that our lobster fishermen can continue to be competitive in the market place, and so that they will not lose revenue needlessly. The maximum size law also needs to be set uniformly or abolished along the same coastline so that some fishermen are not disadvantaged.
2. That the state and federal governments pressure other state governments in New England, New York and New Jersey, and the governments of the Canadian Maritime Provinces to adopt a V-notch seed lobster program similar to ours to increase the hatch of eggs.
3. That research continue on the holding of seed lobsters in special areas until the eggs have hatched and have developed beyond the "floating stage" before their release. Such research should be expanded into leased lobster pounds to increase its effectiveness. Funding for such research can be shared by private sources and DMR funds jointly. Also the DMR seed lobster fund should be used specifically for purchasing seed lobsters, not just female lobsters.

It is our intent to insure that fishermen will be able to preserve their way of life and to receive a reasonable return for their heavy investment of time, gear and equipment in the lobster business in these inflationary times.

The Task Force recommends that the University of Maine undertake research and study of the effects of bottom dragging fishing gear on species of fish habitat.

Conflict and controversy are prevalent in regard to the effects of bottom dragging fishing gear which may result in inequitable and unfair limitations on the exploitation of some types of marine resources, and the consequent loss of revenues to one type of fisherman or another. Such studies may result in further economic benefits for all fishermen or in conservation efforts which will preserve one or more species for future harvesting.

The Task Force recommends that the Department of Environmental Protection be directed to develop a system for simplifying the licensing procedures for sardine processors and other marine resource processors. This would be achieved either by combining the several applications into a single application for licensing or by setting up a vehicle for information, referral and assistance in processing with a single agent within the Department with concurrence from other agents. This procedure would be similar to that instituted between the DEP and the Land Use Regulation Commission to avoid unnecessary duplication.

Additionally, the mission of the DEP should be expanded to include "education and service". The original legislative intent for creating the Department of Environmental Protection was to protect the environment through regulations

and enforcement. The Legislature should add "education and service" to the mission of the DEP to aid in overcoming adversary relationships between applicants and DEP staff, to assist rural residents far removed from the complexities of departmental offices in Augusta to understand the regulations, and to provide assistance in processing applications.

The Task Force recommends priority research by the Department of Marine Resources, the University of Maine and the private sector to determine various new technologies for aquaculture ventures in the County. Such ventures can be undertaken by individual investors, fishermen and fishermen cooperatives. Several aquaculture ventures have become established in the State and have been fairly successful. State marine biologists can assist potential entrepreneurs in determining the feasibility of such ventures. The feasibility of several technologies should be assessed.

The Task Force recommends that education concerning the county's marine resources and industries be promoted in primary and secondary schools for teachers and students K-12 in Washington County. Program development should be carried out by all educational facilities in the county.

FOREST RESOURCES

The Task Force recommends the development of secondary processing utilizing the County's wood resources should be undertaken with emphasis on identifying markets, assessing species utilization, and attracting capital investment. Funding should be provided for studies that would consider the following:

1. Manufacturing of pallets and skids.
2. Furniture manufacturing utilizing veneered waferboard as a low-cost substitute for solid wood construction.
3. Manufacturing fence posts and rails.
4. Wood pellet production for domestic heating, schools, hospitals and small manufacturing plants.
5. Chip production for industrial use and export with particular emphasis on budworm salvage.
6. Tax incentives through deferred payment, low-cost loans and tree growth.
7. Treatment plant for preserving wood for pilings, poles and highway posts.

The forest industry in Washington County is almost exclusively involved with primary processing -- pulp, paper and lumber. Raw material is shipped out of the County for further processing and in many instances brought back into the County for resale or use in boatbuilding and home construction.

Lack of secondary processing is the lost opportunity for value added to product, more jobs with more payrolls, and more tax revenue from capital investment.

Washington County has forestland with a diversified species--many of which go unutilized or are underutilized. Suitable paper is presently being exported from the County for the purpose of manufacturing envelopes and business forms and computer paper which have been identified through a study by the Maine Development Foundation as being of high-to-medium potential for development.

The Task Force recommends that efforts to attract a major paper converter into the area for envelope and/or business form manufacturing be undertaken by local industry, local municipal and development groups, the State Development Office and the Maine Development Foundation to utilize an existing raw material in the form of paper generated by an existing industry to keep the benefits of the value added to the product in the County.

The Task Force recommends that an extensive program to develop and improve the management of existing woodlands should be instituted by means of education and owner assistance to incorporate the following:

1. Increase the number of available assistance foresters from five to fifteen by the addition of personnel from the State and by funding new positions with the University of Maine at Machias and through the University of Maine Extension.
2. Educate the public to the economic value of Washington County forest land and the value of practicing good management. This should be carried out by education and service programs, state and university, through newly funded programs.
3. Encourage forestry education and forest fire prevention in primary and secondary schools for teachers and students K-12 in Washington County. Program development should be carried out by all educational facilities in the County.
4. Provide funding for additional training for independent contractors in wood harvesting and small business management. Washington County Vocational Technical Institute should be identified as the provider for wood harvesting training and the University of Maine at Machias for business education and assistance.
5. Establish an experimental forest plot in Washington County which could be utilized for public education, for growing seedlings and for carrying out experiments for stand improvement and developing under-utilized, or unutilized species. This area could be designated from public lands.

Approximately 39.2% of all the commercial forest land in Washington County is owned by private non-industrial landowners. Commercial forest land is that land capable of sustaining productive tree growth. Remaining forest land is 57.6% owned by private industry and 3.2% by state and federal agencies.

The demand for wood fiber is expected to continue to increase and there is a need for improving timber growth on non-industrial lands to meet the fiber demand. The quality and volume of wood from private non-industrial woodlands can be expanded with proper management from 1/3 of a cord per acre to 3/4 of a cord per acre in Washington County.

A majority of small woodlot owners lack basic knowledge of sound forest management and many have no real objectives in land ownership. According to a survey, 2,923 landowners own 10 acres or more of forest land in Washington County and about 53% of these are absentee owners, that is they reside out of County or out of State.

There are not enough professional foresters available in the area to service all the private non-industrial forest landowners. Managing forest stands properly creates jobs in harvesting, surveying, thinning, pruning, planting and consulting.

The Task Force recommends that an assessment be made to determine if Christmas tree production can be developed as an appropriate industry for Washington County and, if determined to be economically practical and feasible,

that such development be undertaken by implementing the following;

1. Landowners should receive education and assistance in improving management techniques on existing stands and for creating plantation production on old fields through funding for state agencies, vocational-technical and university to carry out the services.
2. Private enterprise should be encouraged to invest in, and develop, Christmas tree production by providing initial investment incentives such as low interest loans and by strengthening the Tree Growth Tax Law.
3. The process of treating Christmas trees with fire retardant materials to supply commercial domestic markets should be assessed by a study and evaluation of the existing techniques and the markets for treated trees.
4. The State should maintain its effort to police fir (wreath) tippers to see to it that poaching is not done on unauthorized private lands. But the State should declare just how much of the revenue projected from the current \$12 tippers license fees will actually be needed to maintain the policing of those moving fir tips and branches along the County's roads, and the license fee should be set so as to cover these costs and no more, since the current \$12 fee is a disincentive to tipping for many lower income people. If possible, the tipper's license fee should be decreased to \$3 per year or less.

Washington County has hundreds of acres of underutilized lands suitable for growing Christmas trees. Existing stands damaged by spruce budworm will regenerate naturally to fir in great numbers. Markets for trees, wreaths and cones are available already.

Christmas tree production in Washington County appears to be economically viable for the high rate of return on investment (estimated at 30%) and is an appropriate industry for the County. Christmas tree production is possible either by managing existing stands or planting new stands using intensive methods. County soils and climate are advantageous to growing Christmas trees.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

The Task Force recommends a study to determine the feasibility for growing fruit orchard crops such as apples and pears and additional varieties of small fruit crops, for those with available farmland that could support this type of industry. The Task Force also recommends that the State set aside suitable acreage in the County for the purpose of experimentation with fruit trees such as apples, cherries and pears to determine what crops and what varieties can be feasibly grown by farmers in this County.

The Task Force views agricultural production as a source of supplementary income at this time because some of our large scale agricultural and poultry producers in the County have failed due to extremely high production costs making them non-competitive in the market place.

The extremely high initial investment in land and equipment to get into agricultural production in a big way is a disincentive for producers to get into the business because margins are so slim they would never realize a decent return on their investment and because of the potential sudden adversities that could be suffered as a result of bad weather and pestilence.

However, the Task Force feels that there are worthwhile agricultural activities in which producers can become involved on a smaller scale which would produce a high rate of return and a reasonably good supplemental income.

The Task Force recommends that more research be undertaken by the Maine Department of Agriculture to determine if vegetable crops can be adapted to the short growing season and the marginal soils of Washington County, so that such vegetable crops can be grown by County farmers to supplement incomes.

The Task Force recommends an increased level of research by the UMO blueberry research specialists to increase the productivity of the low-bush blueberry fields in the County. The Task Force also recommends a swift determination by the Board of Pesticides Control on the use of weed control methods to improve productivity. There needs to be an ongoing blueberry growers committee composed of organic blueberry growers as well as large conventional growers to deal with the peaceful and productive co-existence of both groups. The Task Force also recommends ongoing program research in organic as well as conventional methods of managing blueberries.

The Task Force recommends that there be a legislative act authorizing the cataloging of agricultural land to bring it into maximum productive use and a subsequent action to initiate a land bank and attempt to influence national legislation. Food producing land is going to be one of the central issues of international concern in the 21st century so it is essential to begin to take a serious look at the issue now. Our present agricultural lands must be protected for food growth and fallow lands must be brought back into production.

The Task Force recommends a joint effort by agriculture related state agencies and those engaged in the farm producing component to develop a marketing technique for small farmers in Washington County. The Maine Department of Agriculture has a strong marketing component which could be brought to Washington County on a periodic basis to assist with this need. Further, a mechanism (such as a book, report, or manual) should be developed for marketing of agricultural resources.

The Task Force recommends that the need be explored for a State-level small farm development agency and a similar county-level agency in Washington County, that would address such issues as business management techniques, marketing seminars, and political action. There is a need for encouragement of small farm enterprises both as part-time income producers and self-sufficiency units.

The Task Force recommends that there be continued investigation into the possibility of raising sheep. There appears to be a growing interest in the possibility of raising sheep as a viable animal "crop" for Washington County, both for small and large scale farmers as well as for supplementary income. Further, there would appear to be a spin-off into wool and woolen items, weaving, dyeing, etc.

The Task Force recommends that education concerning the county's agricultural resources and industries be promoted in primary and secondary schools for teachers and students K-12 in Washington County. Program development should be carried out by all educational facilities in the county.

The foregoing recommendations of the Task Force are projected to provide economic betterment for all of the residents of Washington County including members of the Indian tribes who are an integral and important part of the Washington County society. All of these residents of the County are fully deserving of the benefits resulting from the area's economic growth and we invite them all to participate in this growth.

APPENDIX

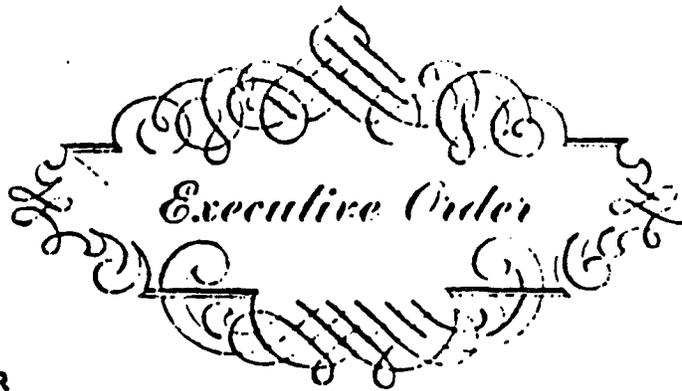
INDIVIDUAL COMMENTS

After considerable discussion and refinement, all of the members of the Task Force were able to reach agreement to present their recommendations as they are detailed in this report. This section was reserved for those members who, while they agreed with and fully supported the report, felt strongly that certain other items needed to be added. The following comments are those of individual Task Force members.

LARRY LACK

I am in basic agreement with the main body of the Task Force recommendations, but submit the following points to make my own position clear:

1. More emphasis should be placed on support for aquaculture, including a formal University and State effort to evaluate the potential in Washington County for at least two "farmable" species - mussels and salmon.
2. Particular attention should be directed to the potential for small scale production of waxes, sodium humate, and edible yeast for cattle feed and other purposes from peat in Washington County.
3. To avoid needless conflicts, the State should immediately (within three months of the date of this report) designate the bogs that will be left in their natural state because they are environmentally important and unique, and because of their potential for adding to our knowledge about peat.
4. Until the full agricultural, industrial, environmental and energy potential of peat is better understood, development of peat for energy should be approached with the greatest of caution. The agricultural potential of peat should be fully explored, as the state Agricultural Department Task Force report on peat recommended. (This recommendation was included as part of the rough draft of the Washington County Task Force report, but was deleted at one of our last meetings. I feel strongly that it should have remained a Task Force recommendation).



OFFICE OF
THE GOVERNOR

NO. 6FY 81/82
DATE December 29, 1981

AN ORDER ESTABLISHING A GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON THE WASHINGTON COUNTY ECONOMY

WHEREAS, Washington County has the lowest per capita income of any County in Maine; and

WHEREAS, Washington County consistently has one of the highest unemployment rates in Maine; and

WHEREAS, Washington County has a high percentage of elderly people; and

WHEREAS, Washington County has a higher percentage of the population receiving some form of social assistance than any other county in Maine; and

WHEREAS, there exists a need to address these problems in a comprehensive and coordinated manner;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH E. BRENNAN, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby establish a Governor's Task Force on the Washington County Economy.

MEMBERSHIP

There shall be 25 voting members of the Task Force, all of which shall be residents of Washington County, and appointed by the Governor. The Governor shall name a Task Force Chairperson from among the voting members.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the Task Force shall be:

1. To develop a strategy to improve economic opportunities for Washington County people.
2. To develop consensus and support among Washington County people and institutions for the Strategy Document.
3. To hold public hearings during the strategy development process.
4. To identify potential state and federal resources that could assist in implementing the strategy.

5. To present a final Strategy Document for the Governor's consideration on or before September 30, 1982.

ADMINISTRATION

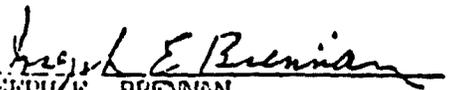
1. The Governor's Task Force on the Washington County Economy shall receive support from the Eastern Maine Development Corporation and a State Interagency Support Group.

Eastern Maine Development Corporation shall:

- a) Provide administrative and clerical support for the Task Force.
- b) Act as liaison between the Task Force and the Interagency Support Group.
- c) Provide policy direction, policy options, and issue identification leadership for the Task Force.

Interagency Support Group shall:

- a) Provide information and data to the Task Force as needed.
 - b) Act as a sounding board in reviewing the Task Force proposals before they reach the final recommendation stage to insure that recommendations are practical and capable of implementation.
 - c) Within the constraints of fiscal practicality, ensure that the resources of the State of Maine are available and utilized to implement the Strategy.
 - d) Act as an advocate on behalf of Washington County to secure whatever federal resources might be available to implement the Strategy.
2. This Executive Order shall terminate with the submission of the Strategy Document to the Governor.


JOSEPH E. BRENNAN
Governor

GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE
ON THE
WASHINGTON COUNTY ECONOMY

SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING SCHEDULE

<u>Subcommittee</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Time</u>
Marine Resources	Tue., April 20, 1982	University of Maine Machias Powers Hall Auditorium	7:00 p.m.
Marine Resources	Tue., May 4, 1982	Eastport City Hall	7:00 p.m.
Marine Resources	Tue., May 18, 1982	Narraguagus High School	7:00 p.m.
Forest Resources	Mon., April 12, 1982	Woodland Elementary School	7:00 p.m.
Forest Resources	Mon., April 26, 1982	University of Maine Machias Powers Hall Auditorium	7:00 p.m.
Forest Resources	Mon., May 10, 1982	Cherryfield Town Hall	7:00 p.m.
Agricultural Resources	Wed., April 21, 1982	University of Maine Machias Powers Hall Auditorium	7:00 p.m.
Agricultural Resources	Wed., May 19, 1982	Calais H.S. Auditorium	7:00 p.m.
Industrial/Commercial	Wed., April 14, 1982	Calais H.S. Auditorium	7:00 p.m.
Industrial/Commercial	Sat., April 17, 1982	University of Maine Machias Room 102, Science Bldg.	10:00 a.m.
Industrial/Commercial	Wed., April 28, 1982	Milbridge Town Hall	7:00 p.m.
Industrial/Commercial	Wed., May 12, 1982	University of Maine Machias Room 102, Science Bldg.	7:00 p.m.

GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE
ON THE
WASHINGTON COUNTY ECONOMY

Draft Report Hearing Schedule

<u>Public Hearing Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Time</u>
October 6, 1982	Calais High School	7:00 p.m.
October 7, 1982	University of Maine at Machias	7:00 p.m.