

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Commissioner's Report

on

Matters Related to Reorganization



Report to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Pursuant to Public Law 2013, Chapter 405, LD 837

November 2013

Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Commissioner's Report

on

Matters Related to Reorganization

November 2013

Table of Contents

I.	Statutory Requirement	page 3
II.	New ACF Department Structure	page 4
III.	Organizational Charts	page 5
IV.	Bureau/Program Accomplishments	page 7
V.	Department Initiatives	page 17
VI.	Legislative Studies & Resolves	page 31
VII.	News Articles	page 40

I. **Statutory Requirement**

Public Law 2013, Chapter 405, LD 837, 126th Maine State Legislature

**An Act To Clarify the Laws Establishing
the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry**

Sec. A-22. Report. The Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry shall provide a written report on matters related to the reorganization of the former Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources and the former Department of Conservation into the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry by November 1, 2013. The commissioner shall provide an additional written report to the committee on these matters by February 1, 2014.

II. New ACF Department Structure

On August 30, 2012 the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry began serving the public as one agency pursuant to statutory changes proposed by the LePage Administration and enacted by the 125th Legislature that combined the former Department of Conservation and former Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources. On October 9, 2013 Public Law , Chapter 405, LD 837, "An Act To Clarify the Laws Establishing the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry" went into effect continuing the consolidation of the two former departments as well as portions of the State Planning Office. The law removed a sunset provision and made further changes to the organizational structure.

The ACF Department is now comprised of the following four bureaus:

1. Bureau of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources - Director Ellis Additon
This Bureau is comprised of the former Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources and all associated divisions and programs;
2. Bureau of Forestry – Director Doug Denico
This Bureau is comprised of the former Division of Forestry and all associated units and programs;
3. Bureau of Parks and Lands – Director Will Harris
This Bureau is comprised of the former Division of Parks and Public Lands and all associated units and programs;
4. Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning – Director Dr. Robert Marvinney
This Bureau is composed of the Division of Land Use Planning, Permitting and Compliance; the Division of Geology, Natural Areas and Coastal Resources; the Land for Maine's Future Program, the units of municipal planning assistance and flood plain management and all other associated units and programs.

The new bureau directors were selected from existing division directors. The law eliminated a Deputy Commissioner position plus it created positions for a director of The Land for Maine's Future program and a Natural Resource Marketing and Economic Development Specialist

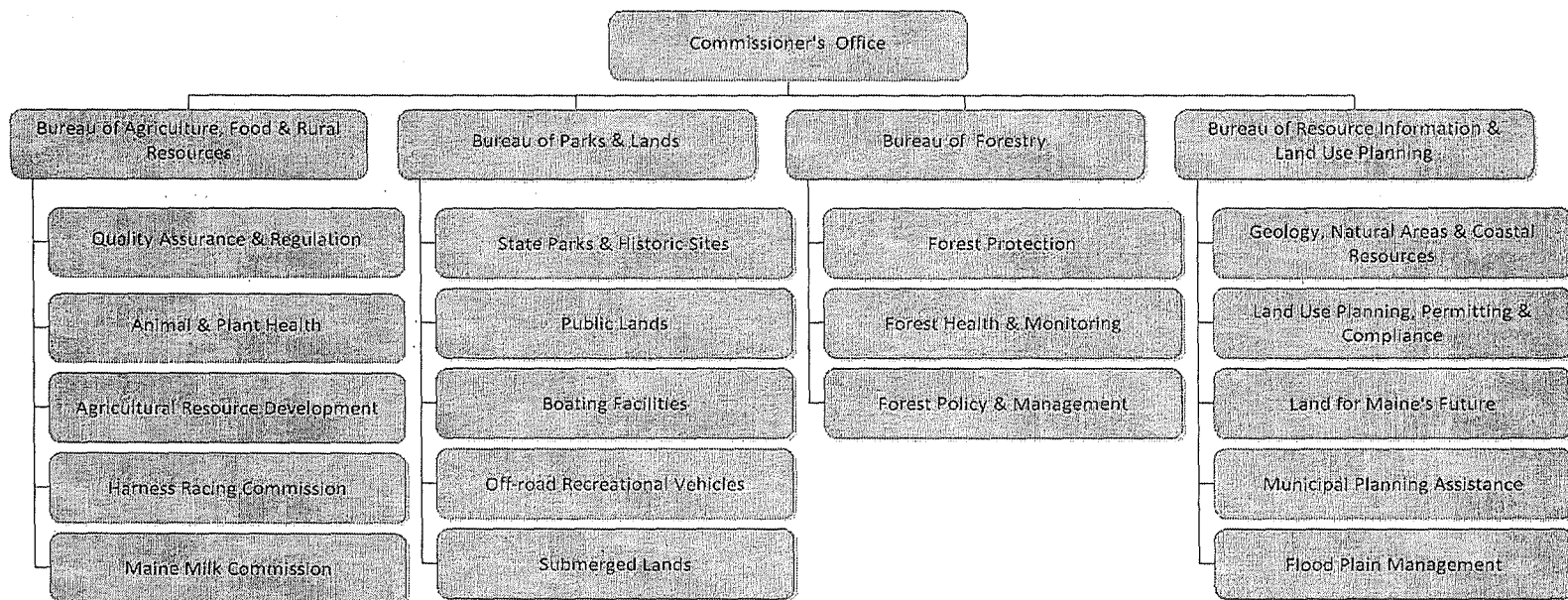
New Positions Created by Law

Land for Maine's Future Director: We are working with the Natural Resources Service Center to establish and permanently fill the position. Ed Meadows is acting in this position.

Natural Resource Marketing and Economic Development Specialist: Caldwell Jackson is the Development Specialist, making connections through DECD and other agencies to grow Maine's rural economy. The Development Specialist also works with local and statewide organizations to provide support in the areas of development planning, easing regulatory burdens and assisting with the coordination of State and Federal natural resource programs.

Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry

November 2013

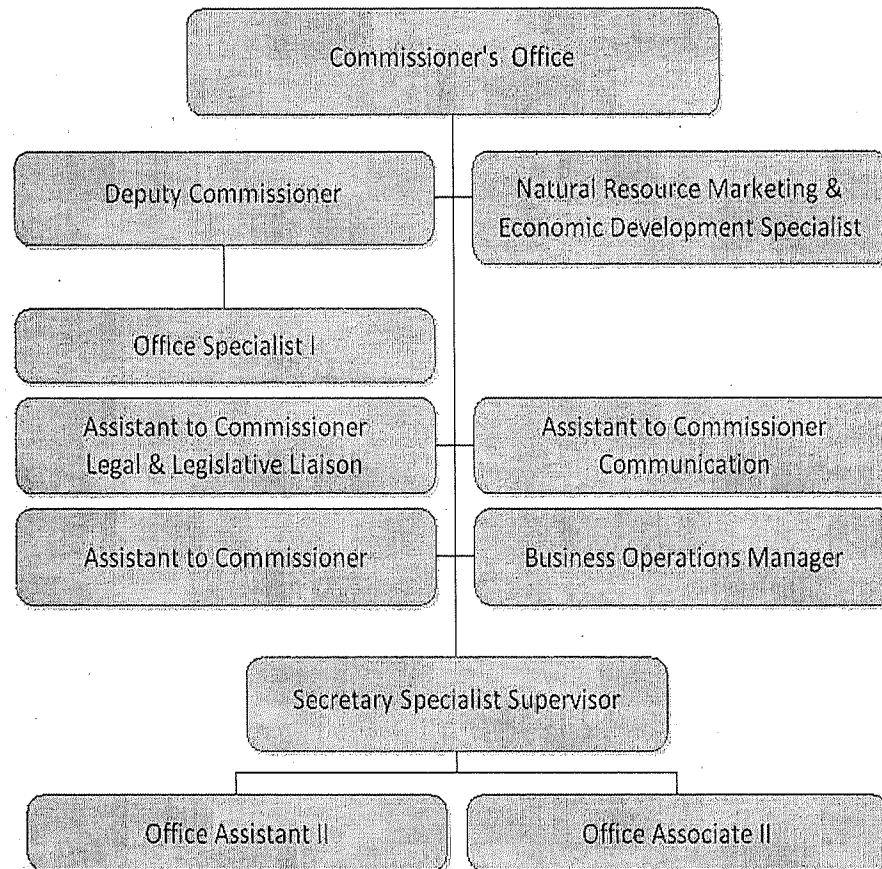


III. Organizational Charts

Prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry

November 2013



Prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

IV. Bureau Accomplishments

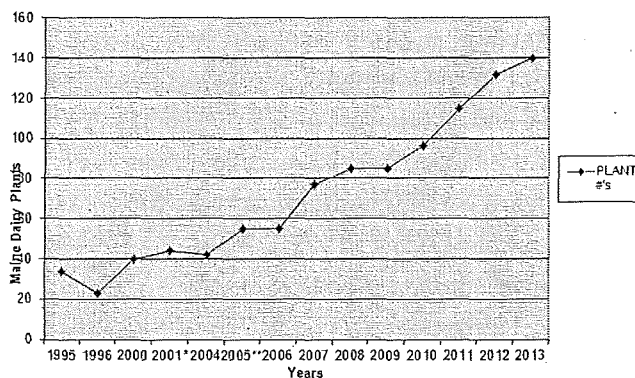
The Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry is moving forward with utilizing various combinations of staff talent. The DACF is a new framework to assist in delivery of existing natural resource services. Emphasizing the unique public benefit of each of our programs and the increased value of teamwork in disseminating information,

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL RESOURCES

- Partnered with USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program to invest \$401,852.47, to assist Maine producers of fresh fruits and vegetables and help strengthen markets for specialty crops such as potatoes, wild blueberries, cranberries, other fruits, vegetables, and horticultural crops. Funding will also help with schools to provide Farm to School education.
- Senior Farm Share program paid out on 17,291 shares (\$50 each) for Maine's low-income seniors.
- In 2012 the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) took \$860,000 in federal grant funds and distributed roughly \$1.3 million worth of USDA foods. In 2013 TEFAP took in fewer grant funds, and turned it into \$2 million worth of USDA foods.
- Cony Gardens collaborated with the Kennebec County Sheriff's Office, and increased the amount of produce distributed statewide by 7.7% in 2013. The program supplemented soup kitchens and food pantries with 26,000 lbs. of potatoes, squash and tomatoes.
- The Board of Pesticides Control and Department entomologists are working with the Maine Center for Disease Control (CDC) to develop the State of Maine Plan to Protect the Public Health from Mosquito-borne Illness as directed by State Legislative Resolve 2013, Chapter 13.
- The Obsolete Pesticide Collection Program, jointly sponsored with the Maine DEP, set a collection record in 2013 for the number of registered participants. Collections were conducted on October 22-25 on consecutive days in Presque Isle, Bangor, Augusta and Portland respectively. Each year, approximately three tons of waste pesticide is collected and disposed of through this program.
- The Board of Pesticides Control is creating an electronic inspection application. The team has been mapping a comprehensive Business Process Management (BPM) application that can focus on improving business efficiency, adaptability and enhanced applications for end users.
- Department staff participated in several meetings of the Northeast Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NEASDA) working group which is charged with looking at changes to the Federal Milk Order in an effort to stabilize the Northeast Dairy Industry
- To promote food safety, Department staff, Extension dairy specialists, and other dairy stakeholders are organizing a series of educational workshops for farmers marketing direct to consumers, such as licensed raw milk producers, on-farm egg sales, etc.
- The Animal Health team investigated and facilitated diagnoses of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE)-infected animals in Maine. Information was shared with veterinarians to make sure they had the most current outbreak information, and to help them advise clients on vaccination strategies and other precautionary measures.
- State Animal Welfare Humane Agent Rachel Croce made her national TV debut on North Woods Law. Agent Croce was seen working with the Maine State Warden Service on a case involving the inhumane treatment of several wolf-hybrids. The episode highlighted the cooperation between the different state agencies.

- The State Apiarist responded to a Portland Press Herald inquiry regarding a recently released report on bee health and reports from area beekeepers about hive mortality. He explained that the bee mortality was associated with starvation due to the excessive rain during late July/early August and not pesticides as some hobby beekeepers had implied. The Department registered 860 resident beekeepers that manage 9,656 honey bee hives and issued Import permits for 74,772 commercial migratory hives for crop pollination (a new record number for hives used to pollinate Maine's blueberry/apple crops). Staff worked with blueberry growers concerning crop pollination (inspect hives for: regulated diseases, health, quality & nuisance issues) and inspected commercial migratory and resident hives for regulated diseases and abate diseased hives.
- Plant Health staff and Bureau of Forestry staff worked together on the successful adoption of amendments to the hemlock woolly adelgid quarantine rule. The amendments include removing logs from the list of regulated articles and expanding the regulated area to included 81 towns in mostly coastal counties.
- Plant Health staff were instrumental during the Federal government shutdown helping ensure that Maine businesses could obtain export certificates for international shipments. Staff performed inspections and certifications at Johnny's Selected Seeds to enable them to continue with their international exports of seed. They also performed an inspection in Portage of maple lumber that was purchased by a company in Oregon, but was shipped to China.
- Maine's small dairies have increased by 8 so far this year bringing the total to 140. There are currently 8 plants pending. Maine also has its first Water Buffalo plant which started operations in August. The number of samples received in the lab continues to be high, ranging from 60 to 85 per week.

Maine's Dairy Plant Growth 1995 - 2013



- Per contract agreement with USDA, the QAR program inspected 14 retail food establishments to determine compliance with Country of Origin Labeling (COOL).
- The Health program performed a total of 32 commercial food processor public health inspections to determine compliance with FDA's CFR Part 110 Good Manufacturing Practices and Part 123 Seafood HACCP Regulations.
- Maine regulations provide that no potato seed be planted in lots of one acre or more unless it meets the minimum disease standards. 205 potato growers complied with reporting requirements and reported **54,939.2** total acres
- Total Food & Fuel licenses issued – 8,230

- Total Weights & Measures licenses issued – 446
- Total Wood Measurement licenses issued – 502
- Feed, Seed & Fertilizer Label Registrations, Fertilizer: 3248, Liming Materials: 96, Commercial Feed: 1915, Pet Foods: 8309, Plant and Soil Amendments: 441, Seeds: 88
- Table stock inspections: 4,057 inspections, 1,289,953 cwt
- School lunch inspections at McCain Foods: 839 loads, 352,364 cwt
- Broccoli: 476 inspections, 102,681 cwt
- Easements (potato shipments to Canada): 1,129 loads, 629,891 cwt
- GAP/GHP Audits: 205 audits (163 audits for potatoes, 42 audits for 22 other commodities)
- Federal Market Inspections: 25 market inspections
- The Horticulture staff was able to assist growers this year to insure that businesses were selling healthy plants to the public and facilitate both domestic and international plant product shipments. The Department has licensed 1353 businesses selling rooted plants and has conducted 731 inspections looking for plant pests. There are 23 businesses under compliance agreement to facilitate shipments of products to other states. 274 plant health certificates for products including; seed, potatoes, feed barley and nursery/forest materials have been issued to meet the export requirements of other countries.
- Changes to the rule governing the seed potato certification program supported by the potato industry, were finalized allowing the ability to set fees for services and changing the designation of the propagation of seed potatoes to be in line with other states. This will allow fees to be changed more easily to cover the costs of the program and the change in designation will allow comparisons with other states production.
- The 2013 Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey Program (CAPS) allowed the survey of 12 exotic pests that could be serious threats to vegetable crops, fruit orchards, and landscape and forest trees. These surveys, which uncovered none of the target pests, were carried out in cooperation with the Maine Forest Service, and the University of Maine's Pest Management Office.
- The CAPS Program facilitated the Potato Cyst Nematode Survey, which looked for two regulated soil pests in seed potato fields. Approximately 4000 samples were collected and tested, and neither nematode pest was found.
- CAPS staff assisted the Bureau of Forestry with the trapping survey for the emerald ash borer, where over 900 traps were deployed throughout the state. The CAPS Program facilitated the Forest Pest Outreach project, which provided 4 train-the-trainer sessions on recognizing the signs and symptoms of invasive forest pest threats, such as the Asian long horned beetle and the emerald ash borer. This led to over 100 known outreach efforts, with an estimated 23,000 people reached. The project also produced a short documentary on invasive forest pests, which has been aired on a variety of local access cable TV stations.
- We offered two Integrated Pest Management (IPM) workshops for 45 greenhouse growers on 'Maine Greenhouse Best Practices' where they learned about crop health monitoring methods, using natural enemies to control pests, and marketing tools and techniques to grow their businesses. In addition, approximately 70 greenhouse growers participated in the Tri-State IPM Workshop to learn pest identification, prevention and management skills, especially biological control methods, and learn about emerging pests and new research.

- The Maine School IPM Program provides tools and training to support healthy school environments through adoption of best practices for pest monitoring, prevention and management. The Maine School IPM Program developed a new on-line training module to meet revised requirements and new school IPM reporting systems were established in collaboration with the Department of Education.
- The Maine School IPM Program aims to improve IPM literacy among teachers and students and support adoption of IPM in school gardens, greenhouses and orchards. Teacher training is provided at conferences and at classes at the University of Maine Farmington. Approximately 300 Maine teachers were trained in 2013. Lessons and activities, aligned with academic standards, are made available on-line at maine.gov/ipm.
- The Maine State Harness Racing Commission has maintained the number of horses for competition and the number of days racing and the number of dashes per day of racing.
- QAR staff has performed eight Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) /Good Handling Practices (GHP) food safety audits on this year's crop of potatoes, strawberries and early season vegetables. A few growers/packers are looking to do a Harmonized GAP audit, a much more comprehensive food safety program, which is the direction the food industry is moving.
- The Maine Meat and Poultry Inspection Program (MMPIP) received final approval for FY 2014 from the USDA Food Safety Inspection Service. Changes in Maine's poultry laws provide more flexibility to small growers and processors. Department staff worked to ensure that both food safety and the producers' options were considered in the approval.
- The Division of Quality Assurance & Regulations and DHHS Health Inspection Program have completed the joint adoption of the new 2013 Maine Food Code, which replaces the 2001 Maine Food Code. The newest code contains the most up-to-date food safety requirements approved by the 50 states, US territories and local jurisdictions. This new code contains the most recent sanitary practices and science based standards available to promote safe food processing and handling to assure the public health of consumers to reduce the chances of food borne disease outbreaks caused by pathogenic organisms that can occur in food products offered for sale at retail. While nothing can guarantee 100% safe foods all the time adherence to these standards can significantly reduce the likelihood of illness caused from consuming foods offered on the commercial market. These standardized rules promote uniformity across the country and allow industry to comply with a single set of standards and regulatory requirements rather than a patchwork of different state to state regulations.
- Harvested potato acreage (54,940) the industry appears to be stabilizing in the last 4 or 5 years. The average farming operation is rapidly growing in size with more acres planted and more cover crops acres needed for soil rotation purposes. Modern advancements in farm planting and harvesting equipment and good farming practices have also led to increased yields.

BUREAU OF FORESTRY

- Adopted rules to streamline the process of placing wood in streams to improve cold-water fisheries habitat.

- Eliminated unnecessary and burdensome reporting requirements of the forest practices rules, resulting in cost savings for the regulated community.
- Submitted recommendations for streamlining the forester licensing process, to reduce barriers to entry into the profession.
- Supported the University of Maine and Maine Forest Products Council in the development of "Maine's Forest Economy," a concise summary of the contributions of Maine's forest products industry to the state's economy.
- Provided financial and technical assistance to loggers and landowners through a program to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of Best Management Practices to protect water quality.
- Maine's Healthy Forests Program is a partnership with the goal of encouraging active management of privately owned woodlands in Maine. The program engages woodland owners, foresters, loggers, and mills in efforts to improve the productivity of Maine's family woodlands.
- Provided \$166,269 in grants matched by \$200,296 in local dollars to 20 towns, schools, and non-profit organizations for tree planting, maintenance, and public forest management planning.
- The Be WoodsWISE Incentives Program, reaching thousands of Maine's family woodland owners, funded the development of 58 Forest Stewardship Plans covering 3,599 acres and the implementation of scores of individual management practices.
- Worked with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to provide over \$450,000 in Direct Link loans to loggers to upgrade harvesting equipment and protect water quality.
- Forestry staff monitored implementation and effectiveness of the highly successful best management logging practices to further protect water quality.
- Staff worked with forest industry, fisheries agencies and non-governmental organizations to start the Fisheries Improvement Network, promoting a non-regulatory outcome based approach to improving stream crossing installations for fish passage.
- \$75,000 in cost share was provided for logging contractors to purchase portable forestry bridges in southern Maine.
- Organized two dozen workshops on water quality protection in locations across the state on topics such as road grading, culvert installation, timber harvesting BMPs and road construction.
- Continued to offer the Forester's Institute, providing statewide training and educational opportunities for Maine's licensed foresters.
- Early inspection of some spruce budworm pheromone traps revealed increased moth catches in locations scattered across northern Maine. Reports of heavy moth flights around Rimouski, Quebec indicate an increasing threat. Increased ground and aerial survey efforts are looking for evidence of budworm damage. Thus far, none has been detected in Maine.
- Gypsy moth trapping conducted by the Bureau of Forestry and USDA-APHIS in 2013 has identified a multi township area (from Webbertown in Aroostook County across the band of T8 towns in Penobscot County) where a significantly higher number of moths were caught than in previous years. Maine's gypsy moth infestation has expanded into previously uninfested townships. Ground surveys will be conducted later to determine the extent to which this federally regulated pest has become established outside the current quarantine area. Staff will be working with the USDA and with local wood using industries to minimize impacts to the resource and to resource flow caused by the anticipated expansion of the regulated area.

- There is a build-up of the exotic elongate hemlock scale (a serious tree killer to our south) in south coastal Maine. Treatments were conducted on two sites in southern Maine to eliminate incipient infestations on planted ornamentals – hopefully before the infestations escape into the adjacent forest stands.
- The continued detection of new Emerald Ash Borer infestation to our south and west, and the continued presence in the Montreal area should be taken as fair warning that we will detect a beachhead of this pest in Maine within a few years. Since most new infestations are associated with movement of firewood, we continue to emphasize the “Don’t Move Firewood” message. DACF has been a pioneer in developing bio surveillance for Emerald Ash Borer, and was recently contacted by an entomologist from the state of Texas who was exploring options for monitoring EAB there.
- The Forestry Bureau received the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District Cooperator of the Year Award. The award is reserved for an organization that contributes to the stewardship of Cumberland County's natural resources.
- The Kennebec Land Trust (KLT), representatives of the Sewall Foundation and forestry staff will demonstrate small scale forest management on one of KLT's newest properties. This foundation is very interested in supporting more working landscapes workshops. The foundation is very interested in supporting this type of collaboration where working landscapes are highlighted.
- Forestry staff led a presentation for Code Enforcement Officers (CEOs) about harvesting and presented the new statewide standards rules for timber harvesting.
- Staff provided a forestry day for 2013 Piscataquis County Soil and Water Conservation District Summer Camp, including interactive activities for campers that highlighted the ecological and economic importance of Maine trees, forests, and forestry. We participate in similar activities throughout the year that increase students’ environmental literacy.
- Over 45 Maine Licensed Foresters and landowners attended a “Growing Oaks in Maine” Institute. Foresters learned about oak management, silviculture, principal insect and disease issues, economics, and opportunity and threats associated with oaks.
- Forest Rangers continue to work with landowners and sporting camp owners on fire prevention and fire readiness programs. Examples include helping LandVest foresters evaluate their wildfire equipment to supply guidance on repairs and supplemental purchases and helping the owners of a sporting camp on Millinocket Lake to evaluate how they can best protect their infrastructure in case of fire.
- As part of Rangers’ outreach and training for wildfire preparedness across the state, rangers are training firefighter recruits at Penobscot Job Corps. This new partnership provides Job Corps students with national certification as wild land firefighters, and additional trained wild land firefighters for fire emergencies.
- Forest rangers responded to wildfires, law enforcement complaints, timber harvest inspections, prevention events and wildfire training sessions. Rangers also participated in several emergency management and disaster response exercises with the Maine Emergency Management Agency.
- The Bureau of Forestry was part of an industry group of landowners, land managers, reserve groups, business leaders and state agencies at the Northern Maine Fair in Presque Isle, highlighting importance of forestry in educating about how Maine’s natural resources are used and protected.

- The new SIMtable fire simulation display was demonstrated to firefighters and community members in Boothbay Harbor fire station to show how a large wildfire would behave in Boothbay Harbor. It projects a digital map of the local area on a sand table and simulates fire behavior based on wind speed / direction, terrain and forest type, emphasizing the need for reducing forest fuel loading.
- Landowner Appreciation Cleanup Day cleaned up over 106 illegal dump sites with assistance from volunteers from ATV and snowmobile clubs, several high school and university groups, and the Maine Warden Service.
- Forest Protection Division awarded \$221,624 this year in Volunteer Fire Assistance Program Matching Grants to 176 fire departments in Maine to purchase wild land fire suppression equipment.
- The Bureau of Forestry utilized federal grant funds to install a pellet boiler in the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Department regional office in Ashland. Initial fuel savings were estimated to be between \$4000.00 and \$5,000.00 annually, but that estimate now appears to be low.

BUREAU OF PARKS AND LANDS

- Rangeley Lake State Park: In a three-way swap, DACF acquired a 160-acre addition to the park, the State released its option to acquire an adjacent 57-acres lakeside property; and Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust acquired 8 acres of that restricted property to be used as a youth summer camp.
- Penobscot River Corridor-Lobster Lake: DACF accepted a donated conservation easement on a 500-acre island in Lobster Lake, Piscataquis County, from the Leadbetter family. Now called Leadbetter Island, it is open to public use and contains hiking trails.
- West Grand Lake Conservation Easement: DACF acquired a 21,870-acre working forest conservation easement on West Grand Lake and Big Lake in Grand Lake Stream, ensuring public access to over 17 miles of lake shoreline.
- Allagash Wilderness Waterway Management Plan: 15-year management plan was adopted for the Allagash Wilderness Waterway.
- Spedinic Lake/Upper St. Croix River Management Plan: A fifteen year plan for management of the Maine portion of the St. Croix International Waterway was adopted jointly by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, covering lands owned or managed by both agencies.
- Moosehead Region Trails Planning Project: The Bureau of Parks and Lands began a regional trails planning project to create a system of non-motorized trails in the Moosehead Lake region, on Plum Creek conservation easement lands and BPL public lands. The project is a public-private effort with input from a broad stakeholder group, funded by a grant from Plum Creek as part of the Moosehead Region Concept Plan.
- Canadian and Maine Representatives met to plan for the future management of the St. Croix International Waterway Commission.
- The Allagash Wilderness Waterway (AWW) staff met with representatives of New Brunswick's Departments of Tourism, Heritage and Culture, and Economic Development as well as representatives from the Restigouche River Management Council in Bangor to discuss ways to develop, manage and market the Restigouche as a wilderness river similar to the AWW.

- The safe that was stolen from Colonial Pemaquid State Historic Site has been recovered. The Department presented the boy with a letter from the Governor recognized him for his quick thinking and assertive actions, a season Parks pass good for the rest of this season and all of next, and several small gifts from the gift shop at Colonial Pemaquid.
- Despite the many rainy days this summer, 11169 vehicle season passes were sold generating \$781,830 to the General Fund. State Parks picked up the slack from Acadia being closed during the Federal Government shutdown. Increased camping usage at Camden, Lamoine, and as far south as Sebago helped visitors enjoy Maine.
- Very wet weather in the woods in May, June and July delayed the start of harvesting this summer but we are now back on track to complete our planned harvests. Parks and Public Lands is working with the Bureau of Forestry to acquire modeling software to conduct forest growth modeling on Public Lands.

BUREAU OF RESOURCE INFORMATION AND LAND USE PLANNING

- A geological report, *"Improving seismic hazard assessment in New England through the use of surficial geologic maps and expert analysis"*, co-authored by Marvinney and other New England state geologists, was published by the Geological Society of America in a multi-paper volume, *Recent advances in North American paleoseismology and neotectonics east of the Rockies*. Studies from Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut demonstrated the value of detailed geologic input to hazard assessment analysis.
- At the Maine Water Conference, attended by 300 groundwater professionals, Maine Geological Survey staff organized a session on "Groundwater management and sustainability" and a presentation by staff on "Water use, water trends, and water policy in Maine."
- Staff organized a meeting for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to discuss their current proposal to address erosion at Camp Ellis caused by the Corps' jetties. About 50 people heard the current proposal calling for a short spur jetty to be constructed to divert wave energy and rebuilding of the beach with 365,000 cubic yards of sand.
- Maine Geological Survey (MGS) marine geologists have been assisting Popham Beach State Park, the Maine DOT, and the town of Popham with coastal erosion issues, a consequence of dramatic winter beach and dune erosion that threatens State Route 209, the only road to Fort Popham.
- The Maine Coastal Mapping Initiative (MCMI), a coalition of state agencies, academic institutions, and non-profit partners with a shared purpose of mapping Maine's submerged lands; is initiating survey work in State waters near Boothbay Harbor. The MCMI, led by the Maine Coastal Program, has completed outfitting of the *R/V Nucella* (a survey vessel owned by the University of Maine's Darling Marine Center). High resolution bathymetric soundings are collected, accurately fixed to specific geographic locations in the marine environment and verified with video of the sea bottom.
- The Maine Coastal Program completed its Maine Coastal Public Access Guide, the first comprehensive publication to include coastal access sites owned by federal, state, and local governments, along with privately owned land from organizations. Over 700 recreational sites are described.

- Maine Coastal Program worked with eleven coastal towns on waterfront planning and redevelopment, providing both small grants and staff technical assistance. Successful projects included new mooring plans that alleviated overcrowding; feasibility studies for boardwalks and harbor improvements; and public access plans.
- MCP supported the completion of the *Stream Habitat Viewer* –an online tool that displays fish habitat and other stream features, locations of dams and public road crossings that might impact fish and stream-dependent wildlife. The Viewer is a starting point for towns, private landowners, and others to learn more about stream habitats.
- The Maine Natural Area Program collaborated with the Maine Forest Service and Maine Department of Inland Fish & Wildlife to develop a free, self-serve, web-based mapping tool to determine the presence of important habitats or rare species. The Maine Data Checker is a non-regulatory tool intended to help landowners, loggers and foresters acquire information that may be relevant for timber harvests, forest management plans, cost-share practices, forest certification or related purposes.
- Floodplain Management Program staff coordinated a symposium on geospatial data for over 50 community and GIS professionals to discuss the efficiencies and economic opportunities afforded by LiDAR with sessions related to forestry, engineering and community uses.
- The Floodplain Management Program focused on flood insurance changes brought about by the passage of the Federal Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012. Concerned groups include County Emergency Management Directors, Mid-coast Code Enforcement Officers Association, Maine insurance agents, the Association of State Floodplain Managers, and the state insurance commission.
- Maine Geological Survey and Municipal Assistance Program participated in several workshops of the Maine Marsh Migration Project. This project, administered by the Maine Coastal Program through a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, works specifically with six selected coastal communities (Scarborough, Topsham, Bowdoinham, Georgetown, Phippsburg, and Bath) identifying potential impacts of several sea-level rise scenarios on public infrastructure and coastal wetlands.
- State Geologist Marvinney led four LUPC Commissioners and two LUPC staff on a tour of several metallic mineral mines in the Bathurst, New Brunswick, area. The trip provided direct exposure to mining activities of various scales for the LUPC, who will make decisions on zoning, should a mine proposal be advanced.
- Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) staff working with biologists from the US Geological Survey created an Appalachian Trail map of habitat and vegetation. The USGS is mapping habitat types on the Trail from Maine to Georgia and has requested MNAP's expertise on statewide forest and wetland types.
- MNAP is working to create a Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) in southern Maine. The purpose is to address invasive species issues within a defined geographic area.
- The LUPC Commission selected Aroostook County, in partnership with the Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC), to be the first region to participate in community guided planning and zoning. Following a series of stakeholder meetings the stakeholder steering committee approved a framework document to establish the procedure for Aroostook County to work together to develop a land use plan and accompanying zoning that best serves the region and helps the

region fulfill its own vision. With the groundwork laid, community guided planning and zoning – lead by NMDC and with involvement from the county, municipalities, service providers, business owners, land owners, agricultural interests, environmental organizations, recreation/guide/sporting industry, Native American tribes, and permanent resident camp owners –will begin in earnest.

- Starting in 2012 the Commission began a major overhaul of its rules that apply to the recreational lodging industry. After those working in the industry expressed their business needs and explained how land use regulations ideally would work, the Commission adopted the final recreational lodging rules. The revised rules provides recreational lodging industries greater flexibility to run their businesses, with the goal of allowing them to deliver the services customers demand and to better compete in the marketplace, while at the same time protecting the natural resources.
- LUPC staff and staff from other state agencies, met with representatives of Irving Forest Products as part of a pre-application meeting to discuss efforts to reopen the Pinkham Mill in Nashville Plantation. LUPC staff helped Irving understand the certification review that LUPC would conduct and the information needed as part of the review. Irving promptly submitted a request for certification. Eight days after accepting Irving’s request and approximately two weeks after the initial pre-application meeting, the LUPC issued a certification for the proposed development. This is the first LUPC certification for a non-wind power project.
- The LUPC approved certification for the Bingham Wind Project, a grid-scale wind energy development that may include up to 63 turbines. The portions of the project reviewed by the LUPC are proposed to be located in Mayfield Township and Kingsbury Plantation. This is the third wind power project certified by the Commission this year.
- Staff of the Land Use Planning Commission and the Maine Floodplain Management Program (MFMP) visited Matinicus and Monhegan Islands to review new draft FEMA floodplain maps. These maps, which are produced by the federal government, will have significant impacts on the cost of flood insurance and where people are allowed to build and renovate homes and businesses.
- The Maine Coastal Program and the Department of Marine Resources convened a group of 30 ocean and coastal stakeholders to provide input on the New England Ocean Planning process. This is a state, federal, tribal and NE Fisheries Management Council effort to create a blueprint for economic development, regulatory streamlining, enhanced conservation and improved public participation.
- The Maine Coastal Program with funding from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has an 18-month project to look at the effects of severe storms on coastal state parks. The project looks at public infrastructure, changing shorelines and natural habitats.
- Staff from the Municipal Planning Assistance and Maine Natural Areas Programs met with biologists from the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and University of Maine as part of the vernal pool regulatory streamlining project. Partners are developing a “Special Area Management Plan” (SAMP) to allow for streamlined regulation of vernal pools in municipal growth zones. The partnership includes DACF, MDIFW, DEP, the US Army Corps of Engineers, EPA, real estate developers, realtors, municipal economic development staff and land trusts. The SAMP will be submitted to US Army Corps of Engineers and if approved will become part of the Maine general permit.
- The Land for Maine’s Future Board (LMF) is updating procedures and criteria for a new round of land conservation proposals, using LMF bond funds approved by voters. By statute, the \$5 million bond approved in November 2012 specifies that deer wintering areas (DWA) are to be given preference in the scoring of proposals. Public input is being obtained, and several interest groups are participating. The Board will also discuss funding for other types of proposals including working forests, farmland preservation and working waterfront projects.

V. Department Initiatives

Three very distinct ACF Department sponsored activities occurring over the last several months highlight both the variety and depth of our staff leadership as they impact Maine's rural landscape and economy.

Maine Association of Conservation Districts Annual Meeting

On July 25, 2013, ACF staff hosted the Maine Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) summer annual training meeting with the specific purpose of expanding the decades of cooperation between ACF and MACD in assisting landowners with wise use of natural resources. About 50 local staff and volunteer representatives from nearly all Maine's 16 Soil & Water Conservation Districts attended and were apprised of the many ACF human resources that can expand their current assistance to local conservation outreach programs.

In return, districts with their hundreds of local landowner and conservation enthusiasts became aware of ACF Department needs in which districts would be able to provide assistance.

The following ACF staff provided a brief introduction to their own ACF outreach programs and responded to questions related to local concerns. The afternoon session also built a better understanding within our own staff regarding the many landowner assistance programs.

ACF Staff Attendees:

Commissioner - Walt Whitcomb

Deputy Commissioner - Dave Lavway

Assistant to the Commissioner – Amy Higgins

Assistant to the Commissioner (Communications) – John Bott

Director of Animal & Plant Health- Ellis Additon

Agricultural Viability & Farmland Protection Specialist-Stephanie Gilbert

State Horticulturist-Ann Gibbs

Forest Entomologist-Karen Coluzzi

Nutrient Management Program Manager-Mark Hedrich

Agricultural Compliance Supervisor-Matt Randall

State Soil Scientist-Dave Rocque

Director, Forest Policy & Management- Don Mansius

State Entomologist-Dave Struble

Landowner Outreach Forester-Andy Shultz

Forest Entomologist-Alison Kanoti

Director of Division of Geology, Natural Areas & Coastal Resources-Bob Marvinney

Senior Geologist-Dan Locke

Director of Natural Areas Program-Molly Docherty

Exec. Dir., Land Use Planning Commission-Nick Livesay

Director, Municipal Planning Assistance Program Director-Liz Hertz

Senior Planner, Division of Parks and Public Lands-Dave Rodrigues

Food Safety Modernization Act Public Listening Session

In August the ACF Department hosted the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) officials on a farm tour and listening session to receive input about the new Food Safety Modernization Act. The underlying premise of FSMA is to focus on prevention of illness vs. reacting to food borne illnesses. This is the biggest shift in FDA food policy in over 50 years. The department continues to monitor new rules

as they are generated by FSMA, including recent rules impacting animal feeds. The FSMA rule process is expected to develop well into 2014 and will impact most of if not all areas of agriculture and food safety.

A 15 member delegation from the FDA arrived in Maine on Sunday 8/18 for the purpose of learning more about small fruit and vegetable production in Maine and how the new FSMA rules would affect growers throughout the State.

Commissioner Whitcomb and other department personnel met the group in Portland and escorted them to see firsthand vegetable/farm stand operations in Maine. The group heard from actual farmers about how small agriculture functions in Maine and how the new rules will affect them.

On Monday the group gathered at Maine Farm Bureau to collect input. Several ACF Legislative committee members attended also. Later that morning the Department hosted a listening session for the Ag Community at the Augusta Armory. Three FDA officials gave presentations about the new rules being developed and more importantly they then listened to input from growers, restaurant owners, packers, industry organizations and even one member of Congress.

A lunch was served to a group of key food producers, regulators and representatives of several interested organizations at Lakeside Orchards where the FDA officials heard from the University of Maine Cooperative Extension.

The meetings and tours uncovered several areas of concern and Commissioner Whitcomb has been actively working through the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) to file written comments with the FDA in hopes of having a positive effect on the final rules.

Forest Legacy Crocker Mountain Partnership Recognition

Added to the Public Reserved Lands within ACF's Parks and Lands Bureau is the title to 12,046 acres of pristine mountain tops, public access to motorized recreational trails, working forests and the corridor for 9.7 miles of the Appalachian Trail all within Franklin County's "High Peaks Region." This example of ACF Department accomplishment in the Crocker Mountain Forest Legacy acquisition encapsules a large local partnership in the Town of Carrabassett Valley, the Mt. Abram Township as well as substantial organizations and business support from Trust for Public Lands, Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust, Plum Creek Timber Company, Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust and dozens of other interested individual and group partners. The lands abut the Sugarloaf Mountain ski area, and are in close proximity to the Maine Huts and Trails system in Carrabassett Valley as well as the Bigelow Preserve. Funding was derived from the USFS Forest Legacy Program; the Land for Maine's Future fund; and private funds raised by the Trust for Public Land.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY INITIATIVES

In 2012 the ACF Committee received a list of 45 initiatives within the new DACF that could be pursued. The following summary outlines the status of the DACF activities related to these initiatives.

TOPIC TO BE EXPLORED	OBJECTIVE	STATUS
1. Facilitate a collaborative effort of DACF staff to prepare response capability plan for likely state spruce budworm infestation.	To explore sharing of expertise, training and collaboration between staffs of the Bureau of Forestry, Board of Pesticides Control and various other agricultural programs to prepare plan for spruce budworm outbreak.	Ongoing- The team continues to monitor forest damage and coordinate Maine's response plan.
2. Use technical expertise of Department's hydro-geologists.	To explore how hydro-geologists from the Maine Geological Survey might work with the Division of Agricultural Resource Development to provide guidance on water sources for agricultural processing, distribution of aquifers for irrigation, water quality and options to mitigate drought.	Long term program being developed.
3. Maximize grant resources to support programs of the new Department.	To identify and capitalize on grant opportunities that exist under the new Department.	Business manager and bureau resource administrators collaborate on are grant funding management.
4. Improve food, agricultural compliance, pesticide, seed potato and animal welfare inspection capabilities through adoption of technology utilized by the Bureau of Forestry.	Discussions of use of a handheld, web based data collection device are ongoing between staff of the Bureau of Forestry, the Division of Animal & Plant Health, Board of Pesticides Control, Division of Quality Assurance & Regulation and Nutrient Management compliance staff. Utilization of this type device would significantly improve records management by allowing for "in the field" capability to log inspection activities, improve photo taking of inspection sites, and provide the technology to facilitate immediate status reports. Feasibility is being evaluated by OIT and a pilot project evaluated for pesticides inspections.	Established pilot program with Office of Information Technology to test equipment for field data collection.

TOPIC TO BE EXPLORED	OBJECTIVE	STATUS
<p>5. Establish teams of key agency staff working on various pest related issues to serve as a "Horticulture and Entomology Resource Group" for discussion of issues and to provide for coordination and implementation of plans.</p>	<p>To bring the State Horticulturist, State Entomologist, key staff from the Bureau of Forestry and Division of Animal and Plant Health and USDA's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) staff together to facilitate internal discussions on issues of concern and to coordinate efforts.</p>	<p>Ongoing- Invasive team coordinates training and educational programs statewide.</p>
<p>6. Utilize expertise of geologists and soil scientist to enhance information/products available to the public.</p>	<p>To explore how State Soil Scientist (currently under Division of Agricultural Resource Development) and geologists with Maine Geological Survey can increase collaboration to interpret soils and earth surface materials and to prioritize key areas for mapping work. Example: Explore how application of sophisticated LIDAR mapping technology may improve understanding of landscape and surface materials to help determine which areas of fields to irrigate or where to apply costly fertilizer or pesticides.</p>	<p>Ongoing-Position Soil Scientist just moved to Bureau of Resource Information & Land Use Planning to be incorporated in current working team.</p>
<p>7. Facilitate collaboration between State Soil Scientist, Nutrient Management staff and the Division of Forestry when requests are made for an agricultural exemption related to a permit for harvesting timber/clear cut.</p>	<p>If notified, agricultural staff can assist landowners in process by providing technical assistance to ensure compliance with best management practices. Instances of landowners incurring liability by proceeding ahead with projects in violation of environmental rules could be avoided.</p>	<p>Program in Development.</p>

TOPIC TO BE EXPLORED	OBJECTIVE	STATUS
<p>8. Offer opportunities to lease state's Public Non-Reserved lands to encourage food production activities and agricultural research. Exploring how the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Program and the Maine Water and Soil Conservation Districts might be able to partner on a pilot project.</p>	<p>To discuss collaboration between Bureau of Parks and Lands and Division of Agricultural Resource Development for the leasing of Public Non-Reserved public lands (3,635 acres) for food production operations or for possible agricultural research. The expansion of collaborative programs between state and local entities working to provide food assistance also to be explored. Example: The Emergency Food Assistance Program /Kennebec County Sheriff's program at Cony Road. Soil sampling and other expertise might be provided by partnering with Cooperative Extension and W&SCD.</p>	<p>Program in place on limited basis. Soil and Water Conservation Districts are part of implementation discussion.</p>
<p>9. Utilize technical expertise of agricultural staff to provide education and assist with problems involving pests, weeds, stinging insects and irritants, such as poison ivy, at public places managed by the Department.</p>	<p>To facilitate how staffs of the Board of Pesticides Control, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program and Division of Animal & Plant Health can provide assistance to reduce the need for pesticide use, to limit pest problems at State Parks and on Public Lands, and to provide education to Park staff to help with public outreach. Staff could also work with individuals providing ATV and snowmobile trail maintenance programs to encourage the use of integrated pest management.</p>	<p>Achieved- Educational training provided to park staff to better serve the public. Activities were implemented in summer of 2013.</p>
<p>10. Support legislative task force charged with promoting expansion of Maine maple sugar industry.</p>	<p>Increasing focus and collaboration among staff of new Department to provide assistance to maple task force with landowner education, food license issues, forest management, facilitation of leasing of public lands and promotional expertise.</p>	<p>Ongoing- Provided infrastructure information and assisted the task force.</p>

TOPIC TO BE EXPLORED	OBJECTIVE	STATUS
<p>11. Facilitate cross training by Animal Welfare Program to Bureau of Forestry and Bureau of Parks and Lands staff on a variety of animal issues.</p>	<p>To provide training to staff who may encounter animal issues in the course of duty. Topics to be discussed include field safety when dealing with pets and their owners and reporting of evidence of crimes related to hoarding, neglect, abuse and animal fighting.</p>	<p>Achieved- Training to assist with pet safety to the Bureau of Forestry and Bureau of Parks and Lands.</p>
<p>12. Expand the Division of Parks and Public Lands "Take It Outside" program to include good nutrition as part of their efforts to foster natural resource based recreation at State parks.</p>	<p>To discuss collaboration between the Bureau of Parks and Lands and agricultural program staff to promote programs for recreation, healthy local foods and good nutrition at State Parks. Examples: institute a pilot project based on a Farm to School challenge curriculum whereby points are earned on nutrition activities resulting in achievers winning free park passes; cooking demonstrations by agricultural program staff on how to prepare healthy picnic foods nutritious snacks for winter activities like ice fishing, etc.</p>	<p>Program in Development- Working with partners on building healthy eating and recreation by using existing programs like "let's Go" and "Take it Outside".</p>
<p>13. Share motor vehicles to improve services.</p>	<p>To explore how the sharing of vehicles (ATV's, snowmobiles, etc.) can improve services related to inspection and collection of data. Examples: difficult agricultural nutrient management inspections involving hours of walking (i.e. inspections at hunt parks and at deer farms) could be improved with use of ATVs or snowmobiles. The Division of Animal & Plant Health will likely attain equipment for soil sample collection used for seed potato inspections soon as part of a federal grant which might be useful to Departmental geologists and to Bureau of Parks and Lands for soil sampling on non-reserved lands.</p>	<p>In Development- Business Manager establishing policies and streamlining of resources when available.</p>

TOPIC TO BE EXPLORED	OBJECTIVE	STATUS
<p>14. Advance pilot projects to allow farmer's markets to be held at select State Park locations and promote nearby markets or farm stands to visitors or campers.</p>	<p>To explore collaboration between Bureau of Agriculture Resource Development and Division of Parks and Public Lands to promote availability of local foods to visitors and campers. Example: provide informational handouts and post info on web to promote local farms, farmer's markets. Utilize Get Real Get Maine information cell phone application and website information.</p>	<p>Program in Development- Maine State Parks mobile application lists local farmers markets in area. Working to establish expanding farmers markets in the future.</p>
<p>15. Realign state programs to further assist private landowners and public entities.</p>	<p>Identify areas of program realignment which could help private landowners and public entities. Examples: Supporting financial infrastructure (grants, loans, tax abatement, tax exemptions, etc.); providing increased technical assistance to help meet regulatory requirements; establishing training and certification programs.</p>	<p>Program in Development - Potential cooperative activity with MACD.</p>
<p>16. Facilitate increased coordination among employees who staff Departmental booths and provide educational presentations at public forums.</p>	<p>To explore how staff from various agricultural, conservation & forestry programs can share resources (promotional displays, utilization of technology, etc.) when representing the Dept. at fairs, events & other educational and public forums. There are many instances when staff from various programs attend the same event – instead of multiple booths there could be a design team established to coordinate a DACF presence.</p>	<p>Achieved- Established a cross promotional resource area for staff to have access to all department materials to take to various trade shows and fairs.</p>
<p>17. Facilitate sharing of expertise and educational cross- training between Board of Pesticides Control and Bureau of Forestry staff.</p>	<p>Foster collaboration and sharing of expertise between BPC, agricultural entomologists and forestry. Example: planning for future potential mosquito abatement program – forestry has expertise with aerial spray programs and BPC has expertise on minimizing</p>	<p>Program in Development.</p>

TOPIC TO BE EXPLORED	OBJECTIVE	STATUS
	<p>pesticide risks and regulatory requirements. To enhance public education efforts provided by Forest Rangers on topics such as pests, pesticides and integrated pest management. Forest rangers routinely work with many forest management interests who confront pest related issues.</p>	
<p>18. Collaborate with Soil and Water Conservation Districts.</p>	<p>To bring Departmental staff together with Soil & Water Conservation District representatives to facilitate discussion concerning forest, land management, agricultural production and promotion, and resource protection that have local and statewide interests. Review how to extend the state technical assistance programs through the SWCD network.</p>	<p>Achieved - MAC summer meeting resulted in increased partnership with new program ideas and educational presentations by Department staff.</p>
<p>19. Explore sharing of Departmental field office space.</p>	<p>To determine if inspection staff and other employees, especially those working in remote areas, can utilize office space now available under merged Department for computer access and other support. Example: Bureau of Forestry staff has offered various field offices to Animal Welfare humane agents for use.</p>	<p>Program in Development- Further resource inventories planned.</p>
<p>20. Increase collaboration between staffs of Board of Pesticide Control and Maine Geological Survey.</p>	<p>To explore how staffs of Board of Pesticide Control and Maine Geological Survey can further collaborate and assist in each other work such as developing water monitoring plans, sample collection and survey design. Example: BPC has relied on MGS expertise with complaints about well contamination.</p>	<p>Programs Ongoing are working together more frequently.</p>

TOPIC TO BE EXPLORED	OBJECTIVE	STATUS
21. Advance promotion of DACF's integrated programs.	To create printed materials and use web-based tools to effectively deliver information to constituencies of DACF. Examples: Develop a web-based directory of programs, contacts, technical assistance and available funding for land use planning and implementation in both the organized and unorganized territories.	Achieved- New Website established.
22. Maximize the sharing of agriculture, conservation and forestry information at various properties operated by Department.	To explore establishing a centralized information office to help identify locations where promotional or educational materials on various topics could be posted to increase awareness. Example: utilizing state parks, public lands campground, boat launch sites, etc. to post agricultural, invasive species, firewood pests, etc. information.	Achieved/Ongoing- Working through the Bureaus to share information and resources when planning educational materials. Interpretive panels at Maine State Parks; display material at Big E and trade shows.
23. Coordinate DACF programs to support local entrepreneurship in the natural resources dominated areas of Maine.	Focus the natural resource programs in DACF to provide rural businesses, farmers, woodland owners, government entities, and private and public interest groups' thorough and timely assistance.	Programs in Development- Bureau of Parks and Lands staff is working with Agricultural Resource Development Staff.
24. Share expertise in mapping and GIS applications.	To define how mapping and GIS technology can assist in providing more timely and relevant reporting of public data on water availability, soils, forest resources and other data maintained by the Department in support of economic development in agricultural and natural resource sectors. Identifying mapping teams could facilitate problem solving and data presentation.	Programs in Development- Test piloting new technologies to better identify capabilities.

TOPIC TO BE EXPLORED	OBJECTIVE	STATUS
25. Facilitate information sharing to benefit public interests.	Identify topics where information sharing could benefit constituencies of new Dept. Example: Forestry staff may have knowledge of carbon sources (sawdust, shavings, chips, etc.) which could be used by agricultural interests for composting of dead animals.	Programs in Development- Improving internal communication to connect with economic opportunities.
26. Utilize Division of Forestry regional weather stations and information from NOAA via Maine Geology Survey to provide information important to crop growing interests.	Explore ways to provide information useful to farmers relative to wind, rainfall, relative humidity, temperature and other information tracked on a daily basis.	Ongoing- Starting with inventory of the many weather data collection systems in house.
27. Facilitate increased cooperation with University of Maine Cooperative Extension to provide services to constituencies served under new Department.	Explore services currently provided and assess technical assistance that may be needed for forestry interests and other conservation constituencies.	Program in Development- Establishing direct link for Forestry Federal Partners like FDA and other programs.
28. Increase cooperative outreach to farmers with woodlands.	Discuss how to provide collaborative outreach in forestry and agricultural programs by providing more information on topics such as Forest Stewardship Program, landowner succession planning and wood marketing.	Coordinating with interest groups.

TOPIC TO BE EXPLORED	OBJECTIVE	STATUS
29. Assess collaboration between Division of Quality Assurance and Bureau of Forestry on wood measurement issues.	Discuss how Divisions/ Bureaus can work together on wood measurement issues. Example: providing training on firewood measurement for processors.	Under discussion.
30. Coordinate efforts to plan for mosquito spraying if mosquito borne illnesses become a public health threat.	Explore collaboration between Board of Pesticide Control, Integrated Pest Management entomologist, Forestry and Maine Geological Survey to plan for spray programs and mapping of areas to be managed in a spray program. Discuss coordination of public education efforts, providing technical assistance to municipalities and landowners and helping the Maine Center for Disease Control with mosquito surveillance.	Interested parties are coordinating planning and control efforts.
31. Use technical expertise of Department's forest rangers to provide education to farmers on issues related to equipment.	To explore how forest rangers can assist farmers with use of irrigation systems, pumps and hydraulics.	Program in Development- Establishing opportunities for MEMA planning.
32. Streamline of blueberry burn permitting.	To address ways to ease multiple permit requirements to blueberry landowners when burns cross town lines.	Achieved- Online burn permitting in implementation stage.
33. Agriculture permitting use issues in unorganized territories.	To discuss how the Land Use Planning Commission might review agricultural permitting for farmers in unorganized territories who want to grow blueberries, clear land for livestock grazing, etc.	Ongoing- Established dialog for the LUPC Comprehensive Plan and working with maple industry.
34. Activate Water Resource Planning Committee for agriculture and other water users.	To facilitate discussion with Water Resource Planning Committee regarding ground water and natural resource needs as part of the state's watershed.	Water Committees are being coordinated.

TOPIC TO BE EXPLORED	OBJECTIVE	STATUS
35. Enhance continued cooperation and collaboration between the Bureau of Forestry and Division of Animal and Plant Health in conjunction with the operation of Incident Management Team's work to respond to complex emergency situations.	To facilitate additional combined efforts and cooperative exercises to prepare for a response to an animal or plant related disease outbreak. Increase interaction with State Veterinarian regarding West Nile virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis.	Ongoing- Coordinating efforts with multiple state agencies to improve planning. MEMA and Vigilant Guard.
36. Increase natural resource educational outreach to children.	Fostering collaboration between groups such as Project Learning Tree and Ag in the Classroom to promote enhanced natural resource based educational efforts.	Ongoing- Increasing the cooperation between resource based education groups.
37. Utilize Division of Forestry to aid in market development of specialty wood products.	Working with Bureau of Forestry to respond to requests received by Division of Agricultural Resource Development staff for sources of specific types of wood needed for specialty wood product production.	Program in Development.
38. Determine how to better deliver information and services to private small and large landowners.	Inventory current DACF programs that provide information and services. Inventories to include: programs that provide technical assistance with planning, production/harvest, quality assurance, market development, trail corridors, conservation areas; state grant programs that foster land and resource stewardship and infrastructure improvements, some of which leverage significant federal investment support; regulatory programs, such as those administered by DEP.	Program in Development- Provide information through the Website as well as working directly with landowners through groups like Soil and Water Districts.

TOPIC TO BE EXPLORED	OBJECTIVE	STATUS
39. Explore how the Engineering and Real Property Division under the Bureau of Parks and Lands can assist former Dept. of Agriculture needs.	To determine if agricultural programs might be served with assistance in areas of designs, plans, specifications and cost estimates for construction and repair projects.	Limited application of long term.
40. Develop state "Historic Trail Program" / "Forts and Farms Trail Program" to showcase historic sites and forts, historic farms, barns or other agricultural operations.	Facilitate discussion between Bureau of Parks and Lands and Division of Agricultural Resource Development for development of a historic trail program to promote increased visitation to land based historic sites.	Program in Development Additional rural tourism initiatives in very active development.
41. Increase communications with existing constituents and program users through use of social media.	Expand range of DACF's programs and messages through use of social media.	Program in Development- Promoting the department through MAINE.GOV delivery system.
42. Identify ways to increase value of small woodlots.	Examine how best to maximize value of small woodlots to private landowners, farmers and conservationists.	Ongoing Educational Material present at many Department displays.
43. Increase economic benefits of recreational trail use.	Facilitate discussions with private landowners for increased access of lands for interconnected trail system.	Achieved/Ongoing- Coordinated efforts to increased use by citizens and rural visitors program.

TOPIC TO BE EXPLORED	OBJECTIVE	STATUS
44. Expand market information about DACF programs.	Explore ways to share information about DACF programs with participants in other programs. Example: email information about fairs and agricultural events to mailing list within state park reservation system.	Programs in Development- Establishing more partnerships with tourism to promote the ACF Department. Creation of "Maine Landscapes" magazine to showcase Maine's resource industries.
45. Wider utilization of state park and public land visitor data.	Analyze state park and public land usage to coordinate increased promotion of area agri-tourism.	Ongoing- Working with University of Maine on survey information.

VI. Legislative Studies and Resolves

During the first session of the 126th, the Legislature tasked the Department with undertaking a number of studies and reports on issues including mosquitos, a veteran to farmer training pilot program, snowmobiles trail funds and milk tier pricing. The Maine Maple Task Force continued its work from previous sessions to research promotion of the maple sugar industry. In addition, the Governor issued an Executive Order to study several issues on natural resources law enforcement, including whether or not to arm forest rangers.

LD 292 Resolve, Directing the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry To Develop a Plan for the Protection of the Public Health from Mosquito-borne Diseases

Sec. 1. Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to develop a plan for the protection of the public health from mosquito-borne diseases. Resolved: That the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry is directed to develop, within existing resources, a plan for the protection of the public health from mosquito-borne diseases, in cooperation with appropriate personnel from the Department of Health and Human Services and with other state agencies as may be necessary. In developing this plan, the department shall consider, at a minimum, the ecological and economic impacts of proposed methods of controlling mosquitoes and preventing their breeding. These proposed methods must include integrated pest management techniques and other science-based technology that minimizes the risks of pesticide use to humans and the environment. The department shall include in the plan the criteria for declaring a mosquito-borne disease public health threat, the elements of a response to such a threat and a description of the lines of authority and responsibilities during a public health threat; and be it further

Sec. 2. Report. Resolved: That the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry shall report on its plan for protecting the public health from mosquito-borne diseases to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry by December 15, 2013. The Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry may report out a bill on the plan for the protection of the public health from mosquito-borne diseases to the Second Regular Session of the 126th Legislature.

LD 409 Resolve, To Establish a Veteran-to-farmer Training Pilot Program

Sec. 1. Veteran-to-farmer training pilot program. Resolved: That the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, in consultation with the agriculture program at Kennebec Valley Community College, the Maine Apprenticeship Program in the Department of Labor, the Finance Authority of Maine and the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, Bureau of Veterans' Services, shall design a veteran-to-farmer training pilot program to enable veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States to develop necessary skills in farming while also addressing the difficulties some veterans face in their transition back to civilian life after military service. The pilot program designed under this resolve must:

1. Use existing programs and resources to the extent possible;

2. Establish a certificate program that provides a hands-on farming skills training curriculum, classroom-based business training, business start-up support and health monitoring for veterans; and

3. Enable veterans, upon completion of the certificate program under subsection 2, to create new farm businesses and to meet the requirements to acquire the leases and loans needed to farm.

After its design, the curriculum for the pilot program must be submitted to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs for approval in order to allow eligible veterans to use education benefits available pursuant to the federal Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, as amended, for participation in the certificate program; and be it further

Sec. 2. Report. Resolved: That the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and the University of Maine Cooperative Extension shall jointly submit a report, including findings and recommendations, on the pilot program designed under section 1 to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs no later than January 10, 2014. The joint standing committee may report out a bill related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 126th Legislature.

✓ **LD 505 Resolve, Directing the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry To Conduct an Internal Review of the Snowmobile Trail Fund**

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, recreational snowmobiling in the State contributes more than \$350,000,000 per year to the State's economy and accounts for at least 3,100 full-time jobs in the State; and

Whereas, a large part of this economic activity takes place in rural areas of the State, thus providing an important source of economic activity in areas with limited economic development opportunities; and

Whereas, the State has an unrivaled statewide snowmobile trail system consisting of 13,500 miles of groomed snowmobile trails maintained by 290 snowmobiling clubs and 115 municipalities; and

Whereas, the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Division of Parks and Public Lands, Off-road Recreational Vehicle Division uses a portion of resident and nonresident snowmobile registration fees to reimburse the clubs and municipalities for part of the local costs for capital equipment and trail maintenance and grooming; and

Whereas, increasing costs for capital equipment, fuel and trail maintenance and recent declines in snowmobile registrations are putting increasing financial pressure on the clubs and municipalities that must be resolved in order to ensure the quality of the trail system; and

Whereas, there has been no effort in the past to systematically investigate and identify opportunities for greater economic efficiencies within the Snowmobile Trail Fund to resolve questions

of economic equity in funding clubs and municipalities and between the Snowmobile Trail Fund and other funds in the maintenance of state-owned trails; and

Whereas, the future of snowmobiling in the State is directly linked to the need for an economically efficient, equitable and predictable program for providing funds to the snowmobile clubs and municipalities that develop and maintain the State's excellent and economically important snowmobile trail system; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1. Internal review. Resolved: That the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, referred to in this resolve as "the commissioner," shall review the expenditures and operations of the Snowmobile Trail Fund, referred to in this resolve as "the fund," operated by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Division of Parks and Public Lands, Off-road Recreational Vehicle Division as provided by this section and report the findings of that review to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry as provided in section 2.

In conducting this review, the commissioner shall consult with representatives of statewide snowmobiling organizations, municipalities, local snowmobile clubs and other appropriate stakeholder groups.

The commissioner's review must include, but is not limited to:

1. A review and documentation of the allocation of funds to the fund and the amount of funds carried forward in the fund from one fiscal year to the next. The review must include a written explanation as to why those funds were carried forward. The review must also propose written criteria, to be applied prospectively, that justifies the conditions under which funds may be carried forward into a subsequent fiscal year;
2. The development of a quarterly reporting system detailing the revenue to and expenditures from the fund, including all nongrant expenditures, and a recommendation that the reports be submitted quarterly to interested parties. The commissioner shall also develop an annual reporting system on the finances and operations of the Snowmobile Trail Fund program for the submission to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over agriculture, conservation and forestry matters;
3. The development of a written policy for distributing funds from the fund to municipalities and snowmobile clubs that ensures, to the fullest extent possible, that the funds are distributed in an equitable manner, and the development of an educational program to ensure that grantees are properly trained in grant policies and procedures; and
4. The development of a plan for the elimination of state-administered snowmobile trail grooming projects; and be it further

Sec. 2. Report. Resolved: That the commissioner shall submit a written report on all matters included in section 1 to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry no later than

December 4, 2013. The report must include recommendations on all matters required to be included in the review under section 1 and may include draft legislation necessary to implement any such recommendations. Following its review of the commissioner's report, the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry may submit a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 126th Legislature to implement any mandatory reporting requirements or to authorize the adoption by the commissioner of any rules necessary to implement the commissioner's recommendations.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

✓ LD 789 Resolve, To Establish the Task Force on Milk Tier Pricing

Sec. 1. Task force established. Resolved: That the Task Force on Milk Tier Pricing, referred to in this resolve as "the task force," is established; and be it further

Sec. 2. Task force membership. Resolved: That the task force consists of 11 members, one of whom is the Executive Director of the Maine Milk Commission. The Executive Director of the Maine Milk Commission shall invite the following to participate as members of the task force:

1. The Executive Director of the Maine Dairy Industry Association;
2. One representative of a large milk processor;
3. One representative of a small milk processor, giving preference to an organic milk processor;
4. One representative of a Maine milk retailer;
5. One representative from each of the 4 milk pricing tiers;
6. One representative from the farm equipment industry; and
7. One representative from the grain industry; and be it further

Sec. 3. Compensation. Resolved: That members of the task force are not entitled to reimbursement for their expenses; and be it further

Sec. 4. Convening of commission; chair. Resolved: That all invitations to join the task force must be made to designated members no later than 30 days following the effective date of this resolve. The Executive Director of the Maine Milk Commission shall call and convene the first meeting of the task force, at which the members shall elect a chair from its members; and be it further

Sec. 5. Staffing. Resolved: That, within existing resources, the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry shall provide staffing to the task force; and be it further

Sec. 6. Duties. Resolved: That the task force shall study the current dairy stabilization tier program, established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 7, chapter 611, to determine if any modifications are necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the program; and be it further

Sec. 7. Report. Resolved: That, no later than December 4, 2013, the task force shall submit a report that includes its findings and recommendations, including suggested legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. The committee is authorized to report out a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 126th Legislature based on the recommendations of the task force.

LD 1814-125th **Resolve, To Promote the Expansion of the Maine Maple Sugar Industry**

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, the task force convened in accordance with Resolve 2011, chapter 48 has determined that Maine's forest resource is able to support significant expansion in maple sugar production and has identified obstacles to expansion; and

Whereas, continuing involvement of stakeholders is vital to facilitate the expansion of this industry; and

Whereas, in order to provide the task force created in this resolve the most time possible to complete its work, it is necessary that it be convened before the end of the 90-day period; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1. Task force. Resolved: That the Commissioner of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, referred to in this resolve as "the commissioner," shall convene a task force to develop strategies to address obstacles to the expansion of Maine's maple sugar industry. The commissioner shall invite members of the task force convened under Resolve 2011, chapter 48 to continue to serve. The commissioner shall invite others to serve as needed to ensure that each of the following are represented on the task force:

1. A statewide association of producers of Maine maple sugar products;
2. A regional association of producers of maple sugar products in southern Maine;
3. An association of producers of maple sugar products in Somerset County;
4. A producer of maple sugar products in Aroostook County;
5. A producer of maple sugar products with more than 5,000 taps;

6. A producer of maple sugar products with 1,000 or fewer taps;
7. A statewide organization of small woodlot owners;
8. A statewide organization representing the forest products industry;
9. The University of Maine Cooperative Extension; and
10. A statewide farming association with a committee actively involved with maple sugar production; and be it further

Sec. 2. Chair; convening of initial meeting. Resolved: That the commissioner shall designate a person to serve as chair of the task force and shall convene the initial meeting no later than 30 days following the effective date of this resolve; and be it further

Sec. 3. Duties. Resolved: That the task force shall:

1. Monitor and analyze growth in maple sugar production and demand for maple sugar products;
2. Work with private landowners, foresters and managers of public lands to develop guidance on and facilitate the leasing of forest lands for maple sugar production;
3. Develop strategies to increase educational opportunities for producers;
4. Work with education professionals on a curriculum to increase awareness of the maple sugar industry and train workers for the industry;
5. Develop recommendations for establishing an ongoing council in statute to guide the expansion of Maine's maple sugar industry and oversee a comprehensive promotion initiative. The task force shall make recommendations as to the membership, terms and responsibilities of the council;
6. Identify funding sources to support the maple sugar industry, including recommendations for allocating resources within the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources and the University of Maine Cooperative Extension; and
7. Develop recommendations for a comprehensive promotion program for the maple sugar industry, including a funding source or sources. In developing its recommendations, the task force shall review models that have been successfully employed to promote other Maine food product industries, including marine products and agricultural products such as potatoes and blueberries; and be it further

Sec. 4. Meetings. Resolved: That the chair, in consultation with the commissioner, shall schedule meetings of the task force as necessary to complete the task force's assigned duties. The commissioner shall notify members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and other Legislators with a known interest in the maple sugar industry of all meetings of the task force; and be it further

Sec. 5. Staffing and funding. Resolved: That the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources shall provide staff support to the task force from existing resources. The Department of Conservation, Bureau of Forestry and Bureau of Parks and Lands shall provide staff from existing resources to assist in discussions relating to landowner education, forest management and leasing land for maple sugar production. The commissioner and the Commissioner of Conservation may use contributions of money, services and supplies accepted under existing authority to support the work of the task force; and be it further

Sec. 6. Agency cooperation. Resolved: That the commissioner, the Commissioner of Conservation, the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development and the Chief Executive Officer of the Finance Authority of Maine shall each designate a representative from their respective agencies to serve as a resource to the task force, respond to information requests and attend task force meetings upon request; and be it further

Sec. 7. Final report. Resolved: That, no later than December 4, 2013, the commissioner shall submit a report that includes the findings and recommendations of the task force, including suggested legislation to implement the recommendations, for presentation to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over agriculture matters; and be it further

Sec. 8. Authority to submit legislation. Resolved: That the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over agriculture matters may submit legislation pertaining to the Maine maple sugar industry to the Second Regular Session of the 126th Legislature.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

Executive Order

An Order Establishing the Governor's Task Force on Review of Needs, Resources and Opportunities for Efficiency among Natural Resource Law Enforcement

2013-002

AN ORDER ESTABLISHING THE GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON REVIEW OF NEEDS, RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EFFICIENCY AMONG NATURAL RESOURCE LAW ENFORCEMENT

WHEREAS, a comprehensive review of the mission of Maine Forest Rangers is due; and

WHEREAS, the legislature is currently considering LD 297, An Act to Require Forest Rangers To Be Trained in Order To Allow Them To Carry Firearms; and

WHEREAS, enactment of LD 297 will have significant policy implications; and

WHEREAS, the changes contemplated in LD 297 could dramatically alter the role of government responsibility to the forest products community; and

WHEREAS, LD 297 if enacted will have significant immediate and long term public safety, state personnel, and long term financial implications to Maine citizens; and

WHEREAS, executive branch leadership needs to review and prepare solutions to a wide range of safety concerns expressed by Maine Forest Rangers; and

WHEREAS, a comprehensive review of Maine state-wide law enforcement resources and opportunities for cross-training should occur; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Paul R. LePage, Governor of the State of Maine, hereby order as follows:

1. The Governor's Task Force on Review of Needs, Resources and Opportunities for Efficiency Among Natural Resource Law Enforcement is hereby established.
 2. The membership of the task force shall consist of (10) ten people, appointed by the Governor, as follows:
 - a. Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation, Forestry, or designee;
 - b. Commissioner of the Department of Marine Resources, or designee;
 - c. Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, or designee;
 - d. Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety, ex officio, or designee, as chair;
 - e. Colonel Warden, Maine Warden Service, or designee;
 - f. Colonel Maine Marine Patrol, or designee;
 - g. Chief Forest Ranger, Maine Forest Service, or designee;
 - h. One representative of a large landowner (greater than 10,000 acres) engaged in forest management;
 - i. One representative of a small landowner (less than 10,000 acres) engaged in forest management;
 - j. One Forest Ranger currently employed at the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry familiar with the concerns shared by Maine Rangers.
1. The Task Force shall:
 - a. Develop recommendations for short-term and long-term solutions in addressing the role of Forestry as the lead agency in forest fire suppression and forest land protection (law enforcement), including reviewing the Forest Ranger duties, and mission and their need to carry a sidearm. The Task Force shall review safety questions regarding whether arming forest rangers aids in carrying out their duties or increases personal safety;

b. Review and consider opportunities for cross-training and reduction in redundancy among the Maine Warden Service, Maine Marine Patrol, and Maine Forest Rangers;

c. Review the core mission of each the Maine Warden Service, Maine Marine Patrol, and Maine Forest Rangers;

d. Review and consider costs associated with proposed changes;

e. Consider anything else needed to achieve safety and maximum efficiency among Maine Natural Resource Law Enforcement and the Maine State Police.

1. The Task Force Chair shall:

a. Identify the process, schedule and information to carry-out the Executive Order.

1. The Task Force shall submit a written report with recommendations to the Governor no later than December 1, 2013, after which the Task Force shall dissolve.

The effective date of the Executive order is July 1, 2013.

Paul R. LePage, Governor

The Lincoln County News

The Only Weekly Newspaper Locally Owned, Printed and Published in Lincoln County
Serving Lincoln County for 138 Years

Web Site: lincolncountynewsonline.com

©2013 by The Lincoln County Publishing Co., Damariscotta, Maine

E-mail: (news) lcn@lincoln.midcoast.com / (adv.) lcnad@lincoln.midcoast.com

Lincoln County News (USPS 313-500), Damariscotta, Maine 04543. Periodicals Postage Paid

Governor recognizes Westport Island boy



Young Garrett Pinkham holds a framed letter from Governor Paul LePage in recognition for finding a safe that was stolen from Colonial Pemaquid last month as Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry Director Willard Harris presents him with items from the state park which included a patch that was found in the safe. (Charlotte Boynton photo)

By Charlotte Boynton

Garrett Pinkham, 10, the young man who found a safe that was stolen from Colonial Pemaquid last month was recognized this past Saturday by Gov. Paul LePage, the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, as well as Colonial Pemaquid State Park.

At a gathering on Westport Island at the Cromwell property

overlooking the site where the safe was found, Willard Harris, director of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, along with John Bott, director of communications, presented Pinkham with several tokens of their appreciation.

A framed letter from Governor

See PINKHAM page 1A

Pinkham...

continued from page 1

Paul LePage was read and presented to Pinkham along with a season pass to all Maine State Parks for the remainder of this year and all of next year. In receiving these items Pinkham said a very polite 'thank you.'

However, when Harris presented him with a variety of items from Colonial Pemaquid his eyes really lit up. Included in the gift was an old arrowhead, a musket base, and a patch of Colonial Pemaquid that had been in the safe that Pinkham found. Pinkham said 'thank you' with a big, big smile.

Harris asked Pinkham about the morning he found the safe. Pinkham said the tide in the cove was going out, and he was able to pull the safe out of the water. At that time the safe door was closed, but when he started to bring it up the hill the door opened and he saw the patch from Colonial Pemaquid.

"That's when I knew who the safe belonged to," Pinkham said.

"How much money was in the safe when it was stolen?" Pinkham asked.

Harris said, "About \$1500."
"What you did in finding the safe and returning it was a good thing. We are very proud of you," said Harris.

In his letter to Pinkham, Gov. LePage said, "I want to thank you for your decisiveness and honesty shown on Aug. 24, 2013. Your quick decision to retrieve a stolen safe played a key role in the recovery of historic artifacts displayed at Colonial Pemaquid State Park.

"By immediately contacting the authorities, you helped in the investigation to catch the thieves who stole the safe. Your brave act will allow visitors to continue appreciating the history of Colonial Pemaquid. Your outstanding character is an example to others," the Governor wrote.

Pinkham is the son of Alice Cromwell, of Westport Island, and Andrew Pinkham of Bath. He is a fourth grader at the Fisher-Mitchel School in Bath. He spends his summers and weekends on Westport with his mother, during the week he is with his dad in Bath.

Lincoln County Sheriff's Department Detective Scott Hayden said on Tuesday, the investigation on the theft of the safe is still on-going.

continued from page 1

Got something going on?
The Lincoln County News
Will let the County know about it!
Call 563-3171, 1-800-339-5818
or e-mail your info to
lcn@lincoln.midcoast.com

CRASHPLAN
Protect Everyone, Everywhere.

Back Up All Endpoint Data
On Premises, Behind Your Firewall

Water on-Demand Now

Chilton's
Table & Chair Sale
On NOW

[Jobs](#)
[Cars](#)
[Real Estate](#)
[Today's Paper](#)
[Facebook](#)
[Twitter](#)
[Blogs](#)

Portland Press Herald

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2013

670

Partly Sunny
RealFeel® 64°
High: 66° | Low: 47°
High Tide: 10:14PM
Low Tide: 4:03PM



[News](#)
[Sports](#)
[Politics](#)
[Business](#)
[Opinion](#)
[Life & Culture](#)
[Obituaries](#)
[Connect With Us](#)
[Classified Ads](#)

Save This Story | Email This Story | Print This Story | Large Type

August 19

Maine's farmers wary of new food safety rules

By MICHAEL SHEPHERD / Kennebec Journal

AUGUSTA – Maine farmers worried about the implications of new federal food regulations outlined their concerns Monday at a forum attended by a top Obama administration official.

Their message was consistent: The Food Modernization Act, signed into law by the president in 2011 and aimed at reducing foodborne illness, may impose onerous regulations on small Maine farms with no history of making people sick.

"I think you're trying to mold small, family farmers to an impossible ideal that will not work in Maine," said Jim Gerritsen, a potato farmer from Bridgewater, in Aroostook County.

The forum, held at the Augusta State Armory, featured Michael Taylor, deputy commissioner for food safety at the Food and Drug Administration. Federal officials explained the act and took questions and testimony.

One set of rules looks to ensure that produce usually consumed raw is safely grown; the other looks to reduce contaminants introduced during the processing stage.

The produce-safety rules would force farmers to adhere to standards relating to water quality, manure application, hygiene and the effects animals have on crops. Proposed processing rules would make facilities that process food register with the government and implement a food-safety plan.

There are many exemptions: Produce rules wouldn't apply to foods not typically consumed raw, such as potatoes. The rules also aim to protect small-scale farmers, but many said those provisions don't go far enough.

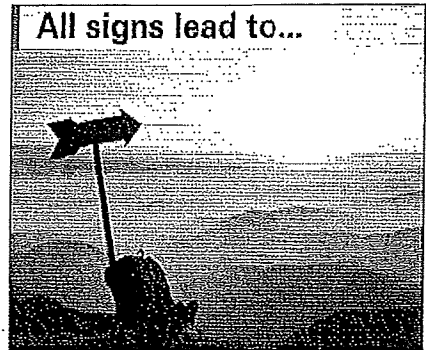
For example, growers selling less than \$25,000 worth of food annually would be exempt from the proposed produce rules, along with those who sell less than \$500,000 if half of sales are to stores, restaurants or customers within 275 miles of the farm.

However, Rep. Jeffrey Timbertake, R-Tumour, owner of Ricker Hill Orchards, said \$500,000 in sales doesn't necessarily make for a big farm. He said five trailer-truck loads of apples could sell for that, but a farm may see just \$10,000 in profit from them.



Lisa, left, and Ralph Turner of Laughing Stock Farm in Freeport and Jan Coranson of Coranson Farm in Dresden listen to Food and Drug Administration Deputy Commissioner of Food Safety Michael Taylor speak Monday in Augusta about new rules for farmers to reduce food-borne illness.

Andy Molloy / Kennebec Journal



All signs lead to...

Most...

Recent Read Shared

TSA agent killed in Los Angeles airport shooting
Posted: 1:22 PM
Updated: 3:14 PM

Peaks Island vehicle ferry out of commission Friday
Posted: 2:00 PM
Updated: 3:12 PM

Man arrested after entering Stephen King's home
Posted: 2:30 PM
Updated: 2:32 PM

Hannaford objects to proposed Scarborough office project
Posted: 1:14 PM
Updated: 2:18 PM

Lack of disclosure prompts Portland to take down anti-pol signs
Posted: 11:16 AM
Updated: 1:53 PM

More >

Farms also will have to spend money to comply with the law, with different proposed phase-in dates for compliance based on farm size.

The office of U.S. Rep. Chellie Pingree, D-1st District, said the FDA estimates a medium-sized farm with annual sales of \$250,000 to \$500,000 would spend about \$13,000 a year to comply, while farms with sales of more than \$500,000 would spend more than \$30,000 a year.

Pingree's husband, S. Donald Sussman, is majority owner of MaineToday Media, publisher of the Portland Press Herald.

Pingree testified on the rules, saying "one-size-fits-all regulations" could force family farms out of business. Taylor said the department intends to adopt rules that allow flexibility.

According to 2010 U.S. Census Bureau data, the average size of Maine's farms dropped from 190 acres in 2000 to 167 acres in 2010, following a national trend that showed growth in the number of farms but a reduction in average size.

"This isn't where most of those problems lie," Pingree said in an interview. "I'm worried about food safety, but I'm more worried about someone who grows 500 acres of cantaloupe or 1,000 acres of spinach, not someone who grows six rows of spinach and two rows of tomatoes."

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say annually, about 1 in 6 Americans suffer from foodborne illness. Of those 48 million people, about 128,000 are hospitalized and 3,000 die.

According to the Pew Charitable Trusts, Maine has been part of just one multi-state outbreak of foodborne illness since the 2011 passage of the act. In 2012, 166 people were sickened in 15 states after eating mangoes grown in Mexico, one of whom was a Mainer.

"My guess is you're more likely to get struck by lightning than get sick from locally grown produce," Rep. Brian Jones, D-Freedom, said in testimony.

Within the proposed rules are provisions that may be unworkable for New England farms.

For example, they say manure must be applied nine months before harvest. Maine's growing season lasts about six months.

Also, it's unknown how many Maine farms will be affected once rules are adopted, said John Bott, spokesman for Maine's Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. It would be "a small percentage" of Maine farmers, he said.

Michael Shepherd can be contacted at 621-5632 or at: mshpherd@mainetoday.com

Were you interviewed for this story? If so, please fill out our accuracy form

Send question/comment to the editors

Recommend 12 people recommend this. Be the first of your friends.

Tweet 1

You May Like

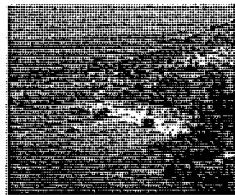
Sponsored Content by Taboola



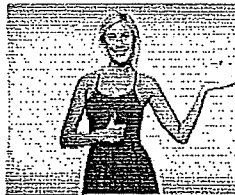
We Can't Help But Stare? Miley Cyrus Photos



Julia Roberts' Malibu Mansion Is An Architect's Dream



Top Ten Cheap All-Inclusive Resorts TripCurator



Hand Sanitizer Could Kill You USA

Simple, secure, convenient

Just a few clicks and you'll be able to view your bills online whenever you'd like.

eBill makes it easy!

- Access up to 12 months of bills in one place
- We'll send you a reminder before your payment is due
- Choose from filing and record-keeping options

Enroll your CWP account today!

CENTRAL MAINE POWER

This is Google's cache of <http://www.growsmartmaine.org/ArborDay2013>. It is a snapshot of the page as it appeared on Oct 16, 2013 04:43:52 GMT. The current page could have changed in the meantime. [Learn more](#)
Tip: To quickly find your search term on this page, press **Ctrl+F** or **⌘-F** (Mac) and use the find bar.

[Text-only version](#)

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry: Town of Falmouth to Receive Frank Knight Community Service Award during Arbor Week Celebration

posted by  **GrowSmart** on  **Thu, 05/16/2013 - 19:38**

The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry will recognize the importance of trees in urban settings and the dedication of Maine communities to caring for those trees during its 2013 Maine Arbor Week Celebration.

Held on Monday, May 20th at the Hilton Garden Inn overlooking the Androscoggin River in Auburn, the celebration, sponsored by the Maine Forest Service (MFS), its urban forestry program, Project Canopy, and GrowSmart Maine, will honor the civic devotion of several notable Maine residents.

During the event, participants will recall the memory of the late Frank Knight, former Yarmouth tree warden and guardian of the fabled elm, "Herbie," for whom Project Canopy's "Excellence in Community Forestry" Award was named.

This year's recipient of the award, The Town of Falmouth, will be honored with a unique plaque made from wood from "Herbie." Bob Shafto, Open Space Ombudsman for the community, and architect of the plan that began Falmouth's journey to acquire and manage community woodlands with a strong stewardship ethic will be in attendance to accept the award.

Conifer seedlings donated by Irving Woodlands LLC, CedarWorks of Rockland, and Central Maine Power Co. will be available for participants.

Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry Commissioner Walter Whitcomb will speak at the event. "Arbor Week is our moment to celebrate our bond with our trees. We plant trees by the thousands this week and remind ourselves of how the lives of Maine forests and people all intertwine. Maine forests, from veneer to paper to timber to energy and fuel oil and maple sugar are inseparable from the Maine way of life."

In addition, the following municipalities will be recognized for their participation in the Tree City USA program, supporting urban and community forests:

Auburn – 10 years & Growth Award

Kennebunkport – 36 years

Augusta – 19 years

Lewiston – 10 years and Growth Award

Bangor – 9 years

Orono – 17 years

Bath – 16 years & Growth Award

Portland – 33 years

Camden – 18 years

Saco – 3 years

Castine – 4 years

South Portland – 33 years

Dover-Foxcroft – 1 year

Waterville - 15 years

Farmington – 36 years

Westbrook – 36 years

Hallowell – 11 years

Yarmouth – 34 years

Hampden – 6 years

200 geologists in Maine for field conference

AP / October 12, 2013

MILLINOCKET, Maine (AP) — About 200 geologists are in northern Maine for a field conference.

The 105th New England Intercollegiate Geological Conference is aimed at exposing geology students to field investigations. A total of 17 trips were being run from Friday to Sunday, covering everything from the glacial history of Mount Katahdin to the origin of ore at Katahdin Iron Works.

This is the 20th time the event has been held in Maine. The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry's Maine Geological Survey staff is conducting five of the trips.

© Copyright 2013 Globe Newspaper Company.

Be the first to comment below


Oldest Newest Best

Please log in to comment.

Follow @LWCFCoalition

Contact Us
Follow us on facebook
Follow us on twitter

HOME ABOUT LWCF CASE STUDIES LEGISLATION IN THE NEWS TAKE ACTION ABOUT US



LWCF IN YOUR STATE

TAKE ACTION!



- USA Conservation
- Alabama
- Alaska
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Vermont
- Virginia
- Washington

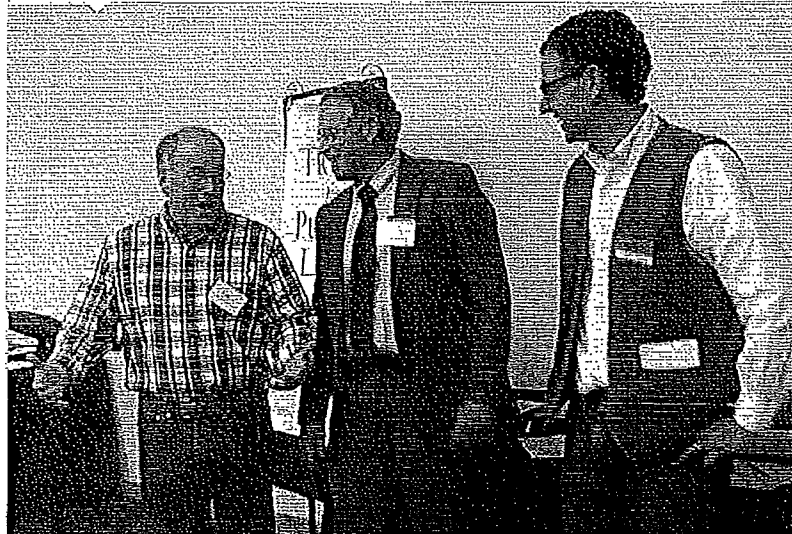
Recent News

- Maine- October 16, 2013, Town, state celebrate Crocker Mountain Conservation Project
- Maine- June 29, 2013, Timber Point designated as part of National Park System
- Maine- June 13, 2013, 12,000 acres in Western Maine now public reserved land
- Maine- June 3, 2013, Keep up support for Land & Water Conservation Fund
- Maine- January 4, 2013, Thanks to Sen. Collins for LWCF support

Sun Journal

Lewiston/Auburn Franklin Oxford Hills River Valley Maine Sports Obituaries Events Lifestyle Opinion

Town, state celebrate Crocker Mountain Conservation Project



Valerie Tucker, Special to the Sun

VALERIE TUCKER PHOTO

West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

Robert Luce, left, Carrabassett Valley selectmen chairman, Walt Whitcomb, center, state commissioner of the Department of Conservation, Agriculture and Forestry, and Wolfe Tone, director of the Maine offices for the Trust for Public Lands, attend the formal signing of the town and state partnership in the Crocker Mountain Conservation Project at the town library Wednesday night.

JournalFranklin |

Wednesday, October 16, 2013

CARRABASSETT VALLEY -- The state's recent acquisition of 11,800 acres in the Crocker Mountain Conservation Project was celebrated Wednesday night by those involved in the effort, especially town officials.

The Western Maine property includes the peaks of North and South Crocker mountains. The property will be protected from development but will continue to be a working forest and used for recreation. The property, now public reserved land, is managed through the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.

The project cost \$7.6 million, with the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program providing \$5.8 million. The Land for Maine's Future program contributed \$650,000 and the town of Carrabassett Valley gave \$10,000. Individuals and foundations donated more than \$1.2 million.

Wolfe Tone, director of the Maine offices for the Trust for Public Lands, works countless hours over several years to recruit hundreds of supporters and millions of dollars in funding. He said he regularly hears two comments when he tells people what he does for a living.

"Hey, you guys did that project?" is the first response, he told the audience at the Carrabassett Valley Public Library. The other response, he said, is his favorite: "We had the best experience on that piece of land. We're so glad you did that."

The purchase will also preserve local timber jobs, protect 10 miles of the Appalachian Trail, and guarantee access to all-terrain vehicle trails.

Walt Whitcomb, commissioner of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry, said the partnerships were the key to the project's success.

"This is a project you all should be proud of," he said.

Jason Horn, a senior Trust for Public Lands project manager in Vermont, said he became very enthused about the Crocker Mountain Conservation Project when he learned it could involve skiing, his favorite sport.

He met with David Cota, town manager of Carrabassett Valley, and learned Cota was the "go-to" contact for local information and advice on maneuvering successfully through land access obstacles. Cota and the Board of Selectmen were adamant they didn't "want another Bigelow," he said.

The nearby Bigelow Range has limits on the types of recreational opportunities, and

Hello Anonymous, please login or register.



Fiddlehead Focus

WHERE THE WORLD
FINDS OUT ABOUT THE VALLEY

Support Your Acadian Heritage and the 2014 World Acadian Congress

CONGRES MONDIAL ACADIEN 2014 ACADIA OF THE WORLD

Help Fund the Event! Purchase Your Commemorative Plate at the Credit Union

NEWS | POLICE BLOGS | EDITORIAL | OBITS | FUNPAGE | CALENDAR | CLASSIFIEDS | FOOD | ABOUT | ARCHIVE



The Big E worth the trip, potatoes and Rib Truck to appear as part of Maine exhibit

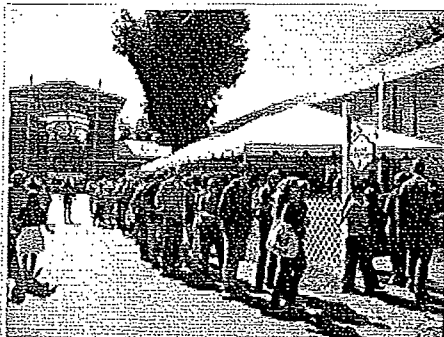
News Local News
Send by email

Like 9 people like this. Be the first of your friends.

CONTRIBUTED
14 September 2012

MAINE- It's probably one of the least-known parcels of state land, a little island of Maine down in West Springfield, Mass., that for 17 days each year becomes a whirling center of exciting activity.

The State of Maine building at the Big E - the Eastern States Exposition - is one of the most popular exhibit buildings at the mammoth regional fair, last year drawing more than 1 million visitors during the annual fall event. Yet not many folks from Maine actually make the trip to see the best that Maine has to offer in products made back home.



HOT POTATOES - A line of eager fair-goers wait to buy baked potatoes at the Maine Potato Board's baked-potato booth at the State of Maine building at the Big E - the Eastern States Exposition - in West Springfield, Mass. The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry manages the state's presence at the regional exposition, which opens on Friday. - Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry photo

The annual Maine exhibition is under the management of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (ACF), and department staff members want to encourage more Maine people to visit their own exhibition hall from Sept. 14-30 at the Big E. This year, the State of Maine building has some new features among 18 favorite participants, and Maine Day, always recognized on the last Saturday of the fair, will be celebrated in a brand-new way on Sept. 29.

"For generations, families from Maine, like my own, have traveled to the Big E and represented our state at New England's biggest exhibit of natural-resources products," said ACF Commissioner Walt Whitcomb, who will attend later this month. "Maine will have dozens of youths presenting their agricultural projects and numerous businesses showcasing their Maine-made products to the 1 million-plus visitors at the fairgrounds.

Local Channels NOW in HD

AUTHORIZED RETAILER

1-800-829-3632

Become a SUBSCRIBER TO *Fiddlehead Focus.com* TODAY!

Your lifelong Financial Partner

USER LOGIN

Username:

Password:

Log in

CREATE NEW ACCOUNT →

REQUEST NEW PASSWORD →

CONGRÈS MONDIAL ACADIEN 2014

279 days, 20 hrs, 32 min 13 sec

This could be your ad spot.

Sponsor the countdown TODAY

Call 207-316-2243

ADVERTISE WITH US

Help keep the Fiddlehead online and gain exposure for your business or cause.

CLICK HERE TO START

Those youngsters would really appreciate the support of the home-town crowd in the competitive events.

"It's a great show, and the State of Maine's building is one of the most popular spots on the 125-acre fairgrounds," Commissioner Whitcomb continued. "A visit to the Big E is an experience you never forget."

The Eastern States Exposition began in the fall of 1917, and Maine became the second state to have its own building on the Avenue of States when the Maine Legislature approved a sum of \$25,000, matched by private businesses in the state, for the construction of an exhibition hall.

The Maine building was dedicated in 1925 and renovated about 10 years ago at a cost of \$1 million. Most people, however, don't know that through the fairground deed, the building site actually is part of the state, according to Amy Allen, Big E coordinator for the ACF department.

"When you are in that building, you are physically in the state of Maine," said Allen, who has been working intensely on organizing the state's presence at the fair since April. "You go next door to Vermont, and you're in Vermont - it's a great way to tour New England in a day."

Attendance at the Maine building has remained quite strong through the years, Allen said, but unfortunately only .6-.8 percent or so are Maine people, most likely because of the distance to the regional fair.

"We spend a long time every year to put this together, and Maine people don't know about it," she said.

To encourage attendance, the State of Maine building will feature a new vendor, The Rib Truck of Westmanland, in Aroostook County, and its delicious "pulled-pork parfait." The Maine Potato Board, the longest-standing Maine exhibitor, will continue its ever-popular baked-potato booth, Allen said. Last year, the booth sold 81,000 baked potatoes, she said.

"It's such a popular thing that they actually have a potato line that forms outside and around the building with crowd control," the Big E coordinator said.

On Maine Day, Saturday, Sept. 29, WHOM radio, the classic-hits station that provides the largest FM coverage in the U.S., will broadcast for the first time from the exhibit hall, featuring giveaways and interviews with Maine's commodity queens and other Maine personalities. The station live-streams on the Internet, so listeners back in Maine can hear all the fun, Allen said.

Commissioner Whitcomb will be present to meet and greet visitors, following the traditional flag-raising ceremony by the Maine State Police. The famous L.L.Bean Bootmobile will be at the exhibit hall, as will Slugger, the Portland Sea Dogs mascot, and Smokey Bear, who is celebrating his 63rd birthday, from the Maine Forest Service. The Wildwoods Band, well known for its 1950s and '60s rock 'n' roll and traditional country music, will play three sets.

ACF department staff will be present to manage the exhibit hall each day of the fair, answer questions and make sure things run smoothly. Other department staff members will participate at the Maine Office of Tourism booth, Allen said.

"The Big E is a great way to showcase our Maine companies and products," Allen said. "It helps our economy, it helps create jobs, and it gives Maine people a chance to be proud of what we have."

For more information about the State of Maine at the Big E, contact Amy Allen, Big E coordinator, at (207) 287-3166 or email: amy.allen@maine.gov.

For more information about the Big E, go to: <http://www.theblge.com/fair/>.

For more information about the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, go to: <http://www.maine.gov/acf>.



Valley Computer Services
Professional Computer Repair & Web Development

Virus & Spyware Removal
Data Recovery - Backups
Diagnostics & Repair
Hardware Replacement
Full System Upgrades

Specializing in the repair of computing devices, web development and web hosting.
Onsite service & support, we'll go to you!
Also offer remote support without you leaving home.

valleycomputer.me

134 West Main Street
Fort Kent, ME 04743
207-834-9120
Cell 231-4642

REMOTE SUPPORT
HelpMeKey



Millers
Has it All!

Now your local source for
FINE FURNITURE!
and see us for
CARHARTT CLOTHING
HUNTING & FISHING
WINTER WEAR
VERIZON WIRELESS
DEALER
AND MUCH MORE!

143 W. Main
Fort Kent
834-3663

Please
Subscribe
Click
Here

**Support
Community
Journalism**

379 Subscribers and counting

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Clayton McBreairy
Lucy Elliott
Nancy Raymond
Anna Mae Raymond
Thomas Gregson

[View Stakeholders](#)

Follow us to the
*World Academic
Congress 2014*

REGISTER →
LOGIN →

Prof. Becker's Weather

THIS WEEK'S POLL

Does technology in schools help students learn, or is it a waste of taxpayer money?

Technology has done little to improve learning, and it is a huge waste of taxpayer money.

Students are better at reading, writing, and arithmetic today than in the past because of technology.

FIDDLEHEAD VOICES

CONGRATULATIONS ON A JOB WELL →
5 hours 1 min ago

JOB WELL DONE →
5 hours 25 min ago

AWARD →
7 hours 3 min ago

THE OLD CEDAR TREE →



Portland Press Herald

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2013

67°

Partly Sunny
RealFeel® 84°
High: 68° | Low: 47°
High Tide: 10:14PM
Low Tide: 4:03PM



Save This Story | Email This Story | Print This Story | Large Type

September 14

Mainers take part in Landowner Appreciation Day

The day is designed to thank property owners who allow the use of their land for recreational purposes.

The Associated Press

AUGUSTA — People across Maine are taking part in an effort to clean up more than 100 illegal dump sites on private property in the state.

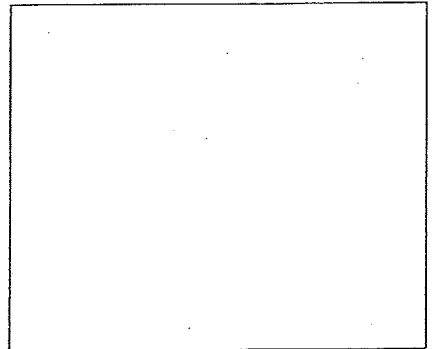
Saturday is Maine's fourth annual Landowner Appreciation Day. The day is designed to thank property owners who allow the use of their land for recreational purposes.

The forestry division of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry has been working with other state agencies and recreational groups to identify locations that need cleaning up. The state will track the cleanup progress using an online database.

Forestry staff is supplying trucks and trash bags and volunteers are helping to clean up and load the items. The state says sites could include anything from one piece of discarded furniture to several pickup-truck loads of shingles and mattresses.

Were you interviewed for this story? If so, please fill out our accuracy form

Send question/comment to the editors



Most...

Recent Read Shared

Man arrested after entering Stephen King's home Posted: 2:30 PM Updated: 3:44 PM

TSA agent killed in Los Angeles airport shooting Posted: 1:22 PM Updated: 3:14 PM

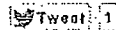
Peaks Island vehicle ferry out of commission Friday Posted: 2:00 PM Updated: 3:12 PM

Hannaford objects to proposed Scarborough office project Posted: 1:14 PM Updated: 2:18 PM

Lack of disclosure prompts Portland to take down anti-pot signs Posted: 11:16 AM Updated: 1:53 PM

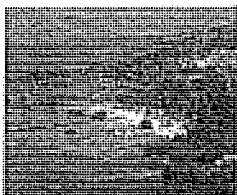
More »

Recommend 2 people recommend this. Be the first of your friends.

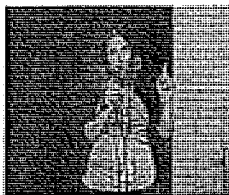


You May Like

Sponsored Content by Taboola



Top Ten Cheap All-Inclusive Resorts
TripCulator



Michelle Barbera is (Accidentally) Pregnant!
Nick Men



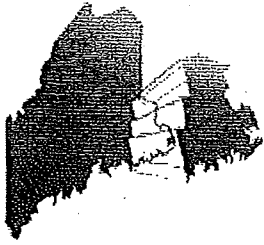
The Wine Club You'll Want To Join
The Huffington Post



Taylor Swift's Childhood Home for Sale
Bankrate

From the Web

More from the Press Herald



Washington County Council of Governments

Helping communities plan for their future in Washington County, Maine

(1)

WCCOG Home
(<http://www.wccog.net/>)

Community
Development
([community-
development.htm](#))

Community
Planning
([community-
planning.htm](#))

Transportation
Planning
([transportation-
planning.htm](#))

Economic
Development
([economic-
development.htm](#))

Energy and
Environment
([energy-and-
environment.htm](#))

Emergency
Management
([emergency-
management.htm](#))

[WCCOG Home \(1\)](#) » ME Coastal Program Grants available

ME Coastal Program Grants available

September 25, 2013

The Maine Coastal Program (MCP) at the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry announces the availability of funds for two grant programs:

Two grant programs:

Shore and Harbor Planning - Maximum Award: \$20,000 (25% cash or in-kind match)

Projects that promote sound waterfront planning, harbor management, and balanced development of shore and harbor areas to improve marine infrastructure and assure access to the shore.

Coastal Communities - Maximum Award: \$50,000 (25% cash or in-kind match)

Projects that improve water quality, increase resiliency/adaptation to erosion and flooding, conserve marine habitat, promote sustainable development, and enhance the coastal-dependent economy while preserving natural coastal resources

Eligible applicants include: towns in Maine's coastal zone, groups of towns in Maine's coastal zone; coastal Regional Planning Commissions; and coastal Councils of Government.

The contact person for the Shore and Harbor Planning Grant Program is Matthew Nixon, Assistant Program Manager, Maine Coastal Program at 207-287-1491 and matthew.e.nixon@maine.gov

The contact person for the Coastal Community Grant Program is Elizabeth Hertz, Director, Municipal Planning Assistance Program at 207-287- 8081 and elizabeth.hertz@maine.gov

Applications are due by 2:00 pm local time on Friday, November 1, 2013.

[Full Program Statement and Applications available for download here. \(http://www.maine.gov/doc/commissioner/landuse/financial/index.shtml\)](http://www.maine.gov/doc/commissioner/landuse/financial/index.shtml)

[Project Budget Template \(Excel format\) \(assets/files/Funding%20Opps/Coastal%20Community%20Grant%20Project%20Budget%20by%20Task.xls\)](#) - download for use in preparing applications.

WCCOG staff is available to assist you with your questionnaire and application - call the office at 454-0465 or via e-mail to Judy East (jceast@wccog.net)

Read more on our [WCCOG News page \(news.htm\)](#).

Page last modified on: September 25, 2013 at 2:43pm

WCCOG is a municipal membership organization that delivers a wide range of customized planning, advisory and resources development services to help communities build the future of Washington County, Maine.

E-mail: Judy East (<mailto:jceast@wccog.net>), Executive Director

Washington County Council of Governments
PO Box 631, Calais, ME 04619
(207) 454-0465

[SHARE](#) [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#) (<http://www.addthis.com/bookmark.php?v=250&username=xa-4b2a7371564b012d>)

Washington County Council of Governments (<https://www.google.com/csahome?cx=007038618966945554905%3A3Aueclqwy0y>)

Seacoastonline

Thursday, October 31, 2013
69° Forecast | Radar

SUCCESS is in the details

Norton
Insurance • Financial

Print this Article Email this Article

Text Size: A | A | A

Advertisement

Kittery's Acorn Kitchen earns state honor

Commissioner Whitcomb visits town, presents certificate of appreciation

Photo 1 of 2 | Zoom Photo +

BUY PHOTO



Maria Farrah Howell bakes her signature chocolate and nut cookies in Acorn Kitchen, in Kittery, Maine. Susan Tuveson, director of Acorn Kitchen, is assisting her throughout the process of creating, packaging developing recipes. Susan was presented with a certificate of appreciation earlier when visited by the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, Walter E. Whitcomb, during Small Business Week.

Raya Al-Hashmi photo

TODAY'S MOST VIEWED ARTICLES

- 5 UNH students arrested, bottles thrown at police after Red Sox Win - 10/31/2013
- Developments don't 'increase the tax base' - 10/31/2013
- Bobcat sightings on the rise in Seacoast - 10/31/2013
- Red Sox fans celebrate World Series win in Portsmouth - 10/31/2013
- Maine woman found in swimming pool dies - 10/31/2013
- The Barn owner pushes for speed limit reduction after Route 1 crashes - 10/31/2013

SUCCESS is in the details

Talk with Norton

Specialists in business insurance and employee benefits

Norton
Insurance • Financial

Time **Hold On!**

Current Price: **\$20**

50% off

The Oar House
\$20 for \$40 to Spend at The Oar House

BUY NOW!

Deal Expires 4d:09h:22m
View More Deals

PREMIUM CONTENT

1 of 3 clicks used this month

LOGIN | REGISTER | SUBSCRIBE

By Deborah McDermott
dmcdermott@seacoastonline.com
June 21, 2013 2:00 AM

KITTERY, Maine — A top Maine official was in town Thursday to present a certificate of appreciation to Kittery business owner Susan Tuveson.

Commissioner Walt Whitcomb of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry was at Tuveson's Acorn Kitchen for Maine Small Business Week.

Acorn Kitchen is a fully licensed, multipurpose kitchen that can be used for anything from producing specialty foods to offering cooking classes. Tuveson is the former owner of Cacao Chocolates.

Whitcomb said Gov. Paul LePage charged commissioners with traveling across the state this week to honor small businesses.

In essence, Acorn Kitchen fits two bills. It not only is a small business in its own right, but its clients are entrepreneurs as well.

Among them is Maria Farrah Howell of York, who is using Acorn Kitchen, and Tuveson's expertise, to make her gourmet cookies and brownies under the name Chocolat and Sel (salt in French).

"The advice I'm getting from Susan is not even to be measured," Howell told Whitcomb. "She appreciates that great ingredients, locally sourced, is going to make a great item."

Another client of Acorn Kitchen is Garen Heller of South Berwick, a farmer who uses the facilities to make specialty ready-made salads that he sells at the Portsmouth farmers market.

LOGIN 1 of 3 Premium Clicks used this month **PRINT** In a state that no one is swimming with people, both the nation and the world, however, no one wants that will change in the future.

"We don't have enough right now, but in five years, you will need more than your fingers and toes to count them," he predicted.

Tuveson said she was honored to be given the certificate of appreciation. The longtime Kittery resident said

COURTNEY OF THE WEEK

\$45 Pumpkin Facial and MORE!
Try our special pumpkin facial for only \$45! Get a 45 minute massage...
Pinewood Medical Laser

SUBSCRIBE

HANDWASHING SPECIAL

Upgrade your access.

Already a Registered User or Subscriber? **Log In Now!**

Seacoastonline.com

Kingston, New Hampshire Adecco

More jobs



Navigation bar with icons for Jobs, Cars, Real Estate, Today's Paper, Facebook, Twitter, and Blogs.

Portland Press Herald

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2013

67°

Partly Sunny
RealFeel® 64°
High: 66° | Low: 47°
High Tide: 10:14PM
Low Tide: 4:03PM



News Sports Politics Business Opinion Life & Culture Obituaries Connect With Us Classified Ads

Save This Story | Email This Story | Print This Story | Large Type

July 22

Maine farmers offer peek behind barn doors Bessie's Farm Goods and scores of other agricultural operations welcome the curious during the annual Maine Open Farm Day.

By Beth Quimby bquimby@pressherald.com
Staff Writer

FREEPORT - Barn doors were flung open, fresh produce samples arranged on trays and farm equipment rolled out as dozens of farms welcomed the public Sunday during Maine Open Farm Day.

Nearly 100 farms across the state take part in the annual event organized by the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to highlight what Maine farmers do.

Maine farmers collectively own 1.25 million acres of land and have a \$1.2 billion annual impact on the economy, according to the department.

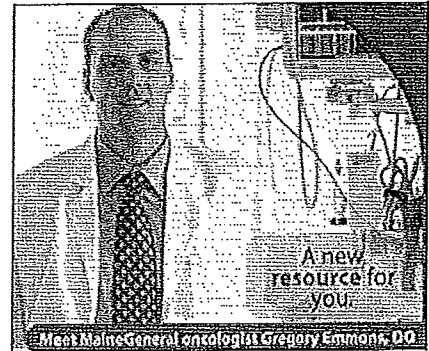
Maine is the largest producer of brown eggs and wild blueberries in the country. It is the second largest maple syrup producer and eighth largest potato producer. Among New England states, it ranks second in milk and livestock production.

At Bessie's Farm Goods on Litchfield Road in Freeport, Maine Open Farm Day gave proprietors Kathy Heye and Deede Montgomery a chance to talk about their four-year-old business. Talking to customers is what Montgomery likes best about the business.

"My favorite thing is meeting people and talking to people. We have met the most wonderful people and heard the most fabulous stories," she said.

The two were team teachers at the middle school in Freeport when, discouraged by a new administrator, they decided to quit four years ago and do something else.

Longtime spinners and weavers, the two opened a farmstand on Heye's 30-acre farm and stocked it with yarn spun from the farm's 11 llamas, alpacas and Angora goats, eggs from a



Most...

Recent Read Shared

Man arrested after entering Stephen King's home
Posted: 2:39 PM
Updated: 3:42 PM

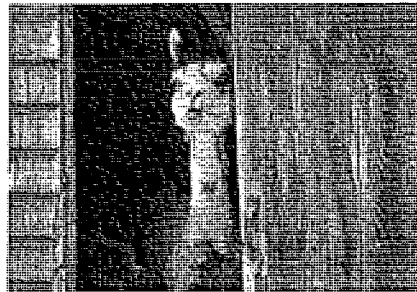
TSA agent killed in Los Angeles airport shooting
Posted: 1:22 PM
Updated: 3:14 PM

Peaks Island vehicle ferry out of commission Friday
Posted: 2:00 PM
Updated: 3:12 PM

Hannaford objects to proposed Scarborough office project
Posted: 1:14 PM
Updated: 2:18 PM

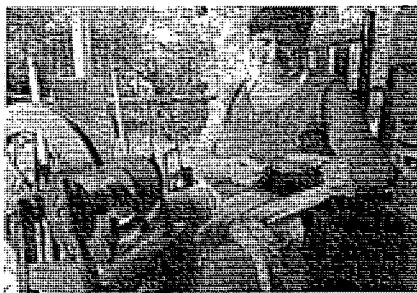
Lack of disclosure prompts Portland to take down anti-pot signs
Posted: 11:16 AM
Updated: 1:53 PM

More >



A llama peeks its head out of a barn at Bessie's Farm Goods in Freeport on Maine Open Farm Day, an annual event held Sunday. The two women proprietors savor the chance to talk to customers.

Derek Davis/Staff Photographer



Kathy Heye and Deede Montgomery, co-owners of Bessie's Farm Goods in Freeport, spin wool Sunday during Maine Open Farm Day.

Robert Anagnostis/Staff Photographer

flock of chickens, organic produce, baked goods from their certified kitchen, flowers, and crafts from area artisans.

The two also operate a community-supported agriculture operation and grow enough flowers for a couple of weddings each summer. They offer classes and workshops for children, such as felling and making bagels.

The business was named in memory of Heye's aunt, a child of the Great Depression who was frugal and loved crafts. Heye and Montgomery say their families also help out with the business.

The farm was a big hit with Bode Kaikini, 21 months, and his mother, Kara Kaikini, of Freeport.

"He really likes the alpacas," said Kaikini.

Beth Quimby can be contacted at 791-6363 or at:

bquimby@pressherald.com

Were you interviewed for this story? If so, please fill out our accuracy form

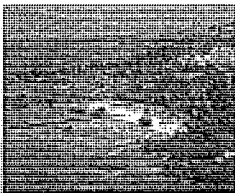
Send question/comment to the editors

Recommend 41 people recommend this. Be the first of your friends.

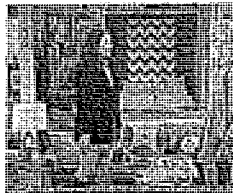
Tweet 6

You May Like

Sponsored Content by Taboola



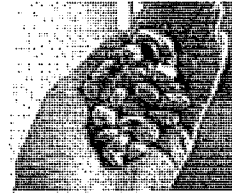
Top Ten Cheap All-Inclusive Resorts
TripAdvisor



What 6 TV Homes Would Cost in Real Life
Bankrate



Why the west is fumbling over Syria
Financial Times



The Unhealthiest "Healthy" Foods
Stack

From the Web

Restaurant Bucket List on Foodie (Foodie)

Best Places to Work 2013: Large Companies (Washington Business Journal)

The Wine Club You'll Want To Join (The Huffington Post)

Taylor Swift's Childhood Home for Sale (Bankrate)

8 Chinese Dishes You Need to Know (Zagat)

More from the Press Herald

Police identify Kennebunk man who fell to his death from porch roof

N.H. man accused of firing gun at jogger in road-rage incident

Mass. couple sentenced after raping adopted kids

Police investigate marijuana cultivation near Freeport athletic fields

Kennebunk construction worker dies after fall from roof

Promoted Content by Taboola

Further Discussion

Here at PressHerald.com we value our readers and are committed to growing our community by encouraging you to add to the discussion. To ensure conscientious dialogue we have implemented a strict no-bullying policy. To participate, you must follow our Terms of Use.

Questions about the article? Add them below and we'll try to answer them or do a follow-up post as soon as we can. Technical problems? Email them to us with an exact description of the problem. Make sure to include:

- Type of computer or mobile device you are using
Exact operating system and browser you are viewing the site on (TIP: You can easily determine your operating system here.)

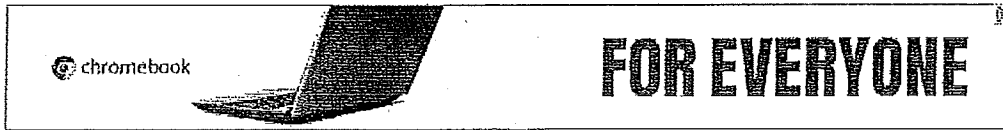
Simple, secure, convenient

Just a few clicks and you'll be able to view your bills online whenever you'd like.

eBill makes it easy!

- Access up to 12 months of bills in one place
We'll send you a reminder before your payment is due.
Choose from filing and record-keeping options





Navigation bar with icons for Jobs, Cars, Real Estate, Today's Paper, Facebook, Twitter, and Blogs.

Portland Press Herald

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2013

Weather forecast: 66° Cloudy, RealFeel® 63°, High: 66° | Low: 47°, High Tide: 10:14PM, Low Tide: 4:03PM.

News Sports Politics Business Opinion Life & Culture Obituaries Connect With Us Classified Ads

Save This Story | Email This Story | Print This Story | Large Type

April 20

Maine Voices: New state department's responsibilities as big as all outdoors

The Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Department brings a unified view to its task.

By WALTER E. WHITCOMB

AUGUSTA - Maine's image is built around our natural resources. These resources offer outstanding, self-renewing, economic and recreation opportunities.

Every day Maine benefits from unmatched outdoor visitor destinations, New England's largest, most diversified food production and forest growth that continually exceeds harvest.

The Legislature in 2012 recognized the need to both protect and enhance Maine's natural resource economy in the face of declining public financial support by creating the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.

Such action was driven by many factors, including a nearly 40 percent reduction in General Fund dollars available to the former Agriculture Department in the last 10 years.

Maine's unique alignment of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry staff -- there is no other state with an agency quite like it -- very well matches our unique landscape.

We have many more trees than people, and we have natural places that should not be disrupted. But we also have a tremendous, barely tapped capacity to grow healthy food to feed an entire region.

Maine's efforts to reposition our natural resource agency have not gone unnoticed. We have created a natural approach in Maine government to allocate scarce public services to the many citizens who care about and wisely use our outdoor resources.

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack frequently encourages all states to boost their rural economy by strengthening the historic linkage between agriculture and forestry while connecting with rural recreation opportunities. During his recent visit to Maine, we discussed Maine's innovative approach and how other states can follow a similar path.

The new Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry is organizing to meet its broad range of responsibilities to citizens in every corner of Maine. Our department covers forests, fields, lakes, state parks, beaches, submerged lands (including 3 miles out to sea), minerals, forest fires, rivers, animal welfare, invasive species, food safety, land use planning, livestock, fairs, trails, milk and many other interests.

Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry professional staff assists with tasks as wide-ranging as municipal land use planning, providing guidance on private forest land improvement and creating networks to assist beginning farmers.

The developing satellite imagery within the Geology Division has applications for forest

Advertisement for Breast Cancer Awareness Month: 'In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month get your mammogram. Don't delay getting this important test! Click Here for More Information!' Includes logos for KNOWyourHEALTH and MaineGeneral Medical Center.

Most...

Recent Read Shared

Suspect in custody in shooting at Los Angeles airport Posted: 1:22 PM Updated: 2:40 PM

Man arrested after entering Stephen King's home Posted: 2:30 PM Updated: 2:32 PM

Hannaford objects to proposed Scarborough office project Posted: 1:14 PM Updated: 2:18 PM

Peaks Island vehicle ferry out of commission Friday 2:00 PM

Lack of disclosure prompts Portland to take down anti-pol signs Posted: 11:16 AM Updated: 1:53 PM

More >

Advertisement for Red Sox: 'CONGRATS RED SOX! WORLD SERIES CHAMPS!' featuring images of Red Sox merchandise.

harvest verification, agriculture crop water usage, hiking trail placement and the high altitude detection of damage from oncoming invasive insects.

The department takes seriously our responsibility to protect our land resources.

We work with coastal communities to address erosion, help growers use the best crop rotation to keep prime soils in place, advise on forest road placement to minimize stream sedimentation and carefully design Conservation Corps-built trails to protect that wilderness we seek to visit.

Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry represents a very well-connected equation that divides 770 public servants throughout our 17 million acres of productive timberland; 8,100 families producing an agricultural crop; 50-plus state parks, historic sites and wilderness areas; and access points to hundreds of lakes and 3,000 miles of shoreline.

Maine's maple season and the entire maple industry are both illustrations of the public value of the new Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Department. The Agricultural Resource Division promoted the 30th anniversary of Maine Maple Sunday and Gov. LePage's annual tree-tapping on the Blaine House lawn.

Our Division of Parks and Public Lands worked on leasing agreements to increase the number of maple trees that could be tapped. Our forest rangers identified the issue of illegal tree-tapping on private property and brought it to everyone's attention. That story became an international talking point about Maine.

The maple syrup industry taps a natural resource, turns it into a marketable product and then employs Mainers in its sale and distribution.

Wood lots also need protection from fires, diseases and invasive pests. And the syrup industry also has huge growth potential to create more jobs.

With a unified department, and all of these inter-related functions under one roof, we were able to combine efforts to promote the Maine maple syrup industry when the opportunity arose. For almost a month, the focus was on Maine's maple syrup industry, not on our competitors.

We are learning to work within the new Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to apply public resources in the most effective support for the people in our natural resource economy.

Walter E. Whitcomb is commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.

Were you interviewed for this story? If so, please fill out our accuracy form

Send question/comment to the editors

Recommend One person recommends this. Be the first of your friends.

Tweet: 0

You May Like

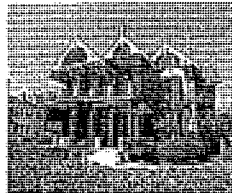
Sponsored Content by Taboola



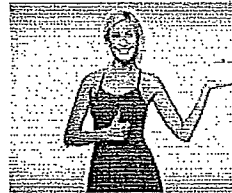
We Can't Help But Stare? Miley Cyrus Photos
StyleBistro



Pros and Cons of Concrete and Asphalt Driveways
Angle's List



Sandra Bullock's New Orleans Mansion - How Does It Compare to O...
Lenny



Hand Sanitizer Could Kill You
uive

From the Web

More from the Press Herald

Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Response to Questions Posed by Members of
the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Regarding the
Commissioner's Report on Matters Relating to Reorganization
November 21, 2013

1. What has been the impact of the merger on what the Department has been able to do?

The Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry has continued to prioritize customer service throughout the now nearly 3 year discussion of structural reorganization. Implementation of structural change has occurred in many stages and is not yet complete given the October 9, 2013 effective date of Public Law 2013 Chapter 405, LD 837. The DACF framework is now completed.

- From Parks we hear that our merger with Agriculture helps to broaden our thinking to expand programs and opportunities such as promoting the development of maple sugar leases and improved agricultural leases on public lands as well as promoting local farmers markets and agricultural fairs at State Parks. Reasonably-priced recreation opportunities for Maine's citizens and its visitors through our State Parks system is still an exceptional service that has not diminished as a result of the merger.
- When we showcase Agriculture we are seeing that Conservation, Forestry and even Tourism are interested in teaming with us as we all have protecting our natural resources as a common goal. Because a lot of our duties involve inspection type work in the field, as a larger department we see the potential to share technology and to purchase hardware and inspection technology as a group rather than on our own.
- Programs in Resource Information and Land Use Planning have been continuing with little impact. New initiatives, such as the Maine Coastal Mapping Initiative, have included multiple segments from within the new bureau.
- The Bureau of Forestry believes that the reorganized department will expand its expertise on insects and be more effective at managing disease pests. The former Agriculture Department has a tremendous line up of capable employees able to join in impending threats from both domestic (Spruce Budworm) and foreign invasive insects (such as the Asian Long Horned Beetle and Emerald Ash Borer).

2. What efficiencies and increased effectiveness have been experienced over the past year?

We have reduced the number of Commissioner's office staff from the level existing in the previous agencies. Legislative testimony and other legal matters are being more carefully developed.

Once all the changes that follow the Oct. 9th, 2013 effective date of the reorganization legislation are fully implemented we will be able to concentrate more attention on individual programs.

Consistency in the financial management of grants among merged bureaus/divisions will facilitate more competitive grant proposals and better tracking time and expenditures.

3. Where are the challenges and sticking points still facing the Department?

Getting the word out on the great programs within the Department has been a major challenge as well as combining the websites of the former departments. A challenge remaining is the digital integration of data over department network(s) to improve interoperability, access and systematic organization.

4. What work still needs to be done to maximize the benefits of the merger?

Because most of the statutory change regarding the new Department impacted the central office structure, the program changes will occur over time as managers are able to integrate the improved broad agency support into specific tasks. In section VI of the "Commissioner's Report on Matters of Reorganization", the list of 45 topics to be explored and the status update are an indicative snapshot of using the expanded resources within DACF to enhance program output. Since consolidation has and will continue to occur in many stages over years, definitive program comparisons will likely be best ascertained by the biennium, not the month.

We need to create a routine information flow and we need to support bureaus with appropriate oversight.

5. What didn't get done because of the time and resources involved in reorganization?

Staff time devoted to reorganization and study resolves has drawn a significant amount of human resources away from program accomplishment, including multiple report-backs on ACF consolidation.

As examples explored in the previously mentioned list of 45 initiatives, we are moving forward with planning and implementation.

6. Are the four new Bureaus appropriately staffed and adequately trained for their duties?

Yes.

7. Have redundancies been eliminated? Are there on-going staff development needs?

To reduce redundancies the law eliminated one Commissioner and one Deputy Commissioner. Staff is busy adjusting to legislative changes and to new Department policies, some of which had not been updated since the 1980s.

There is an on-going need for staff to participate in appropriate trainings for technology (GPS, GIS, data acquisition systems), as well as to stay engaged with professional communities.

8. What are the top 3 -5 greatest gains to the Department and the State from the merger?

Five specific areas of expanded service:

- The ACF website was redesigned to become a consolidated user-friendly portal for our hundreds of widely recognized programs. The new website was launched on November 14, 2013.
- Legal support for legislative preparation, regulatory activities, statute and rule interpretation, and in-house legal advice regarding state and federal laws and rules is a new valuable service to program managers.
- Communications and public relations support for natural resource groups and ACF Department initiatives is now available.

- Prudent fiscal management required us to establish a clear Policy and Procedure manual to guide employee activities.
- GIS mapping is increasingly used in a multitude of applications including (Maine Geological Survey) of hurricane inundation (Floodplain/National Hurricane Center/US Army Corps of Engineers) for (a) public safety and infrastructure at (1) parks (Bur. of Parks & Lands), (2) transportation networks (Dept. of Transportation), and (3) coastal lowlands (Maine Coastal Program, Maine Natural Areas Program, Inland Fisheries & Wildlife) and (b) development of hazard mitigation/evacuation plans (Maine Coastal Program, Land Use Planning, Land Use Planning Commission, Land for Maine's Future, Parks & Lands, Maine Emergency Management Agency/Emergency Operations Center, counties, municipalities).

9. What is the role of the business operations manager?

The Business Operations Manager ensures that the integrity of business operations is a key focus in the agency. The Business Operations Manager serves as the Department's Controller working with the Deputy Commissioner, Office of the State Controller, Bureau of Human Resources and Natural Resource Service Center to ensure that the conduct of the Department's day to day operations adheres to all DACF, state and federal standards, rules and policies. This position reviews, resolves and implements all financial and human resource audit recommendations. It also ensures uniform implementation of policies and standards; improved management and control over revenue systems, capital assets and other resources; better ability to monitor compliance with internal controls; sharing of resources and cross training and that business concerns are addressed consistently and effectively.

10. How often do you meet with bureau directors?

Regularly scheduled meetings of the four Bureau Directors are held on a bi-weekly basis. Meetings with individual Directors are held as needed, which is often daily or even multiple times a day as issues demand attention.

11. a. What is your vision for the new department?

As presented by the Commissioner to the ACF Committee Aug. 20, 2012, 'Commissioner Beardsley and I presented for your consideration one of Governor LePage's major initiatives that recognizes the significance of Maine's rural economy. The legislation that creates in a few days the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry codifies in statute a vision we all share with Governor LePage – that rural jobs and our multi-faceted natural resources are at the same time a rich heritage to be carefully passed to successive generations and an evolving economic engine driving the recreation, food and fiber components of the Maine workplace'.

In hundreds of pages of detailed ACF Committee testimony and accompanying documents over the last 18 months, we have noted how DACF staff is striving to improve our professional responsibility to support the Maine people who carefully maintain the diversity of the natural resource economy.

b. How have you communicated your vision to the staff and constituencies?

Commissioner testimony and further information detailing the mechanics and the vision behind creation of the ACF Department were provided to the staff. The Nov. 14, 2012 ACF Committee presentation was the

100th public appearance by the Commissioner in 2012. Most of the public and constituent appearances that year featured a discussion of the new ACF Department.

12. What do you plan to accomplish in the next 6 months? In the next year?

We plan to intensify our attention to the suggested priorities of staff, the 45 initiatives and to the delivery of service to constituents. The accomplishments become an easier focus after the completion of the legislative session.

The actual merger itself took a significant amount of our time. Now that it is complete, we are moving forward with planning and implementation. We will be able to better fund and execute as a team rather than as individual departments. We continue to become more mindful of countless opportunities where programs overlap and where staff can benefit from the expertise of their colleagues from other programs.

13. What have you accomplished that could not have been accomplished without a combined department?

The five specific items in question 8 are products of the reorganized department. The updated status list of 45 initiatives provided in the November 13th, 2013, "Commissioner's Report on Matters Related to Reorganization" noted many projects in progress. Other Bureau accomplishments and Department Initiatives that are products of the new agency are in sections IV and V of that report.

14. There are over ten positions now in your office. Why so much overhead?

The two previous Commissioner's offices in Agriculture and Conservation plus the Office of the Director of State Planning in 2009 had a total of 19 positions. As we have reduced staff by almost half we are increasing financial, legal and public communications support to the four Bureaus and their many programs. We have implemented a unified Policy and Procedure Manual to provide a new level of employee guidance for improved delivery of constituent service.

15. Do you see the different programs and missions of the new department as strengths or weaknesses? Please explain.

Strengths: The LePage Administration proposed and the new Legislature combined these natural resource related agencies to improve logistical support and to build upon the connections between programs. Having different programs and missions enables us to build on the successes of programs through varied perspectives across the department.

16. What actions have you taken to develop staff from within the department?

The Policy and Procedure guidance manual has assisted staff in daily program performance. Additionally, we have approved more professional training outside the Department. Functions like that Maine Association of Conservation Districts Summer meeting, noted in Section V, Department Initiatives on page 22 of the "Commissioner's Report on Matters Relating to Reorganization" have improved staff interaction.

17. What are your priority programs? Is there any program or initiative that you are going to eliminate altogether?

Programs are constituent driven. We work to support all facets of the Department. The largest potential change is in Forest Protection with the role of Forest Rangers in a very public discussion.

18. We pay bureau directors over \$100,000 per year to run their bureaus. We trust them to make sound decisions. How does your policy which requires your signature for any purchase over \$2,500 improve efficiency? How does it develop trust and ownership? What has led you to decide that you do not trust your bureau directors to make these decisions? Should we be worried?

Legal and financial oversight is an important function of State Government. Over time, outdated and/or sometimes non-existent policies became unsound business practices. The Commissioner's office is now working to bring all programs into compliance with current rules and regulations as well as prudent business practices by working with Bureau Directors.

Personnel matters are confidential in nature and cannot be disclosed. Our management approach is to be good stewards of state resources and to diligently work with our directors giving them the resources necessary for effective, efficient, sound and prudent business practices.

19. What are your plans for streamlining processes? How are you improving the delivery of services to the constituencies?

As noted in the response to question #2 and the top gains outlined in the answer to question #5 we are moving forward in many areas of management. For example; financials are being processed more accurately with fewer errors; we are focusing on details ensuring that rules meet legal requirements. Each Bureau Director shared in their individual responses to question #1, there are many opportunities to gain constituent service efficiencies by working together in this combined agency.

20. In a previous appearance before the Committee you mentioned that you had reached out to the forest products industry and had initiated a discussion to improve markets. Please update us on this initiative.

Our new natural resources marketing and economic development specialist is working with Department of Economic and Community Development and the forest industry to better enable the state to move dying wood fiber to markets, again minimizing negative pest impacts on Maine's rural communities.

Questions in Response to Commissioner's Report on Matters Relating to Reorganization

From Senator Eloise Vitelli, Chair

The report provides a picture of a Department that has been active and engaged in providing a range of services to the people of Maine by all four newly established Bureaus within the newly merged agency. The Department and its staff are to be commended for their efforts.

What the report does not provide is a sense of whether the activities documented are consistent with what occurred in the past under separate Departments of Agriculture and Conservation or if they represent a departure from or divergence from the past. There is no way to ascertain if the activities listed constitute an increase or change in output, new or expanded partnerships, or a shift in outcomes or objectives, for example.

What has been the impact of the merger on what the Department has been able to do?

What efficiencies and increased effectiveness have been experienced over the past year? Where are the challenges and sticking points still facing the Department? What work still needs to be done to maximize the benefits of the merger? What didn't get done because of the time and resources involved in reorganization?

Are the four new Bureaus appropriately staffed and adequately trained for their duties? Have redundancies been eliminated? Are there on-going staff development needs?

What are the top 3 -5 greatest gains to the Department and the State from the merger?

Without framing the report in the above manner, it is difficult to make any realistic assessment of what has truly been accomplished.