

**JUNE-SEPTEMBER 2010**

Providing responsive service and leadership to our municipal members and community partners through regional cooperation and collaboration.

**MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES:**

- [Bridgton](#)
- [Cape Elizabeth](#)
- [Casco](#)
- [Chebeague Island](#)
- [Cumberland](#)
- [Falmouth](#)
- [Freeport](#)
- [Frye Island](#)
- [Gorham](#)
- [Gray](#)
- [Harrison](#)
- [Long Island](#)
- [Naples](#)
- [New Gloucester](#)
- [North Yarmouth](#)
- [Portland](#)
- [Pownal](#)
- [Raymond](#)
- [Scarborough](#)
- [Sebago](#)
- [South Portland](#)
- [Standish](#)
- [Westbrook](#)
- [Windham](#)
- [Yarmouth](#)

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:**

- [Portland Trails](#)
- [PROP](#)
- [RC&D](#)

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS:**

- [Cumberland County](#)
- [Portland Water District](#)

**GPCOG Officers Elected for 2010-2011**

This year, the Annual Meeting featured guest speaker Janine Bisaillon-Cary, President and State Director of the [Maine International Trade Center](#). In addition to passage of the FY 2011 budget, the following officers were elected for the 2010-2011 fiscal year:

Gordon Billington, President, Standish  
Cathy Breen, 1st Vice-President, Falmouth  
Mike Reynolds, 2nd Vice-President, Raymond

Joining the Officers on the Steering Committee are:

Tom Blake, South Portland  
Pat Finnigan, Portland  
Anthony Plante, Windham  
Matthew Sturgis, Gray

**Regional ReCOgnition Awards Presented**

The following Awards for best practices were presented at the GPCOG Annual Meeting:

- **Town of Cape Elizabeth and City of Portland** for Best Practices in Regional Collaboration for public safety dispatching services.
- **Town of Falmouth** for Best Practices in the Application of Video Technology.
- **Town of Freeport and the Greater Freeport Chamber of Commerce** for Best Practices in Regional Economic Development
- **PACTS Transit Committee** for Best Practices in Regional Collaboration for the development of a Regional Transit Guide.
- **Southern Maine Regional Water Council** for Best Practices in Regional Collaboration
- **Town of Standish** for Best Practices in Sustainable and Innovative Community Planning for the development and implementation of a Village Master Plan.
- **PACTS** for Best Practices in Public Information for developing a public information video.
- **President's Award to Anthony T. Plante**, Windham Town Manager, for Outstanding Regional Leadership.



Gordy Billington Presents Award to Tony Plante

**Economic Development Assistance Available**

In a cost saving measure, the [Maine Department of Economic and Community Development](#) has entered into a partnership with the six Economic Development Districts to perform business development functions for their respective regions. [Caroline Paras](#), who has been at GPCOG for eight years, will now serve as the Community and Business Development Specialist for the GPCOG region. Following an extensive training, she is ready to work with companies and organizations in Cumberland County to access Maine's business resources, such as the Pine Tree Zone program. Caroline will also continue as GPCOG's point person for economic and community development, including public infrastructure, affordable housing, tourism, and demographic data.

**Lakes Region Planning Initiative**

Seven Lakes Region towns have agreed to participate in the first phase of a GPCOG-led regional planning initiative. The purpose of Phase I is to design a citizen-based process for the development of a regional plan. Once the planning process has been developed, it will be reviewed with the participating towns. Phase II, the development of a regional plan, will only occur with the support of the participating towns. Final adoption of a plan will also require the support of the participating communities. The participating towns are [Bridgton](#), [Naples](#), [Casco](#), [Raymond](#), [Frye Island](#), [Windham](#) and [Standish](#).



## Cooperative Services

We are expanding our cooperative purchasing program to include energy efficient technology and services such as smart power strips, boiler tune-ups and idle-reduction technology. Watch for more details.

Midcoast COG will be participating in GPCOG's cooperative services program thereby generating additional bid fee revenue and an increase in the volume of goods and services.

### Recent Bids Awarded

**Sign Bid:** [Perma-Line Corp.](#) of Brockton, MA was awarded the bid for signs and posts.

**Tree Bid:** [Davey Tree Experts](#) of Portland was awarded the bid for tree removal.

## HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant

Working with a Consortium Partnership of 26 organizations from [Kittery](#) to [Brunswick](#), GPCOG as the lead applicant has submitted a proposal for a \$2 million grant under HUD's Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program. The HUD program brings together two other federal departments, the DOT and EPA, in an effort to integrate housing, economic development, transportation, land use and environmental planning through "multi-jurisdictional" partnerships with the goal of developing not just a plan but a sustainable implementation strategy. The Consortium Partnership reflects a broad-based group that includes the [Muskie School of Public Service](#), [Cumberland](#) and [York Counties](#), [SMRPC](#), municipalities, housing authorities, the [Maine Turnpike Authority](#), [MaineDOT](#), the [State Planning Office](#), [PACTS](#) and [KACTS](#) among others.

**We Welcome...**  
[Portland Trails](#) as a new Associate Member of GPCOG.

## Maine Energy Handbook Available

GPCOG is pleased to announce the completion of [The Maine Energy Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide to Municipal Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Energy](#). The Handbook was created to provide a "how to" guide for municipalities and individuals. See the 'Six Steps for Success' below:

1. **Connect with Helpful Resources**
2. **Organize Efforts**
3. **Assess Energy Use**
4. **Identify Efficiency Options**
5. **Identify Financing Opportunities**
6. **Evaluate and Implement Measures**

### Climate Fellows -

GPCOG hosted two [Clean Air-Cool Planet](#) Climate Fellows during the summer of 2010:

- Steve Erario adapted CA-CP's New Hampshire Handbook on Energy Efficiency and Climate Change to Maine.

- [Ben Lake](#) worked to expand GPCOG's cooperative purchasing program to include energy efficiency technology. He also conducted an energy inventory of GPCOG.



[Ben Lake](#), [Rebecca Lambert](#), [Steve Linnell](#), Steve Erario

## Energy Working Group

Working with [Clean Air-Cool Planet](#), GPCOG formed an Energy Working Group in early 2010. The EWG includes interested stakeholders from nonprofit, private and public sectors with the goal of coordinating efforts and assisting communities in local energy conservation efforts. With oversight from the EWG, an Energy and Greenhouse Gas Inventory was prepared for the GPCOG service area. Recent funding from [Cumberland County](#) provides the needed resources to create an energy plan for the entire Cumberland County region.

## Energy Grants

GPCOG worked with the towns of [Gray](#), [Windham](#), [North Yarmouth](#) and [Harrison](#) on the first round of Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant (EECBG) template grants. All four towns were awarded grants and now staff will help the towns conduct the inventory and identify areas where they can reduce energy costs. Last year GPCOG completed energy and greenhouse gas inventories for [Yarmouth](#) and [Cape Elizabeth](#).

## Workshops

GPCOG recently hosted two workshops for municipalities:

- Ready-Set-Go! With [Clean Air-Cool Planet](#) presented easy first steps to reducing energy costs
- Efficiency Maine PACE workshop - [Efficiency Maine](#) presented on the PACE home weatherization and retrofit program

Visit the GPCOG web site at [www.gpcog.org](http://www.gpcog.org)

## Lakes Region Public Safety Feasibility Study

The towns of [Casco](#), [Raymond](#) and [Naples](#) are engaged in a project to determine the feasibility of consolidating their Fire and Rescue Departments. GPCOG has been coordinating and facilitating the process.

Following several months developing a scope for investigating the feasibility of combining some or all of each town's public safety functions, an RFP was issued. Seven qualified consulting firms responded with MMA Consulting Group, Inc. of Brookline, MA selected.

The study's objective is to assess the viability of creating a regional public safety department for the three towns. The study will examine a range of cooperative efforts including: administrative; operational cooperation or consolidation; and analysis and advisability of merging and or consolidating some or all of the public safety functions.

## Collaboration with Maine Office of GIS and the Maine Library of Geographic Information (Geolibary Board)

**Orthoimagery** - GPCOG is assisting in the development and launch of a statewide orthoimagery program. We anticipate that the program will begin with Cumberland and York Counties in the spring of 2012. [Click here](#) for the program details.

**Integrated Land Record Information System (ILRIS)** - [The Maine Office of Geographic Information Systems \(MEGIS\)](#) is currently undertaking an initiative to create a statewide parcels dataset and web-based parcel viewer. GPCOG has been included in the project meetings and will coordinate the submission of available member-town data to MEGIS for inclusion in the project. The parcel viewer is expected to be available in the spring of 2011.

## Transportation Planning

PACTS Transit continues to be an active, hard-working Committee. Since GPCOG is the designated transit planning entity in the region that means GPCOG staff are busy too, staffing the monthly committee meetings, working on projects and helping out with the Transit Operations Workgroup meetings that are held each month. Along with the many administrative duties involved with the MPO work, the Committee is focused on completing the tasks laid out in the Unified Planning Work Program and the Regional Transit Coordination Study. These include:

- **Regional Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) project** - Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technology that helps answer the persistent question, "where's my bus?"
- **Regional Sign and Shelter project** - Coordinated branding for the whole system and shelters where they are most needed, with an emphasis on high use stops.
- **Regional Passenger Survey** - Satisfaction assessment of current riders and outreach to potential new riders with access along existing routes.

## News from [PACTS](#)

### Destination Tomorrow Update

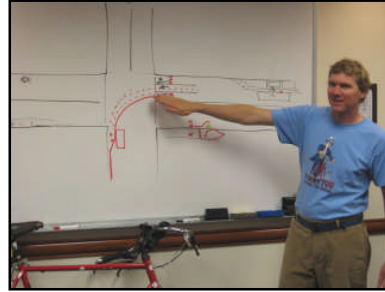
In December the PACTS Policy Committee will adopt an update of the 20-year regional transportation plan, called [Destination Tomorrow](#). The PACTS Committees and staff use the Plan during the annual allocation of \$10 million for roadways and public transportation projects, and for raising awareness of transportation issues and opportunities in our region. Please join us at a public forum on October 28<sup>th</sup>. Contact [Carl Eppich](#) for more information.

## Bike Commuter Education Program

[GO MAINE](#) and the [Bicycle Coalition of Maine](#) have teamed up to offer a new FREE presentation on Bicycle Commuting that can help people feel more confident on their bikes and possibly commute to work by bike.

During the two presentations, the instructors cover basic riding techniques, traffic situations, Maine law and bike safety and maintenance issues. Presenters are certified instructors who can speak from experience.

If you would like the FREE Bicycle Commuter Education program to come to your workplace, please contact Erik West at [ewest@gpcog.org](mailto:ewest@gpcog.org) to learn more or set up an appointment.



## GO MAINE Wins Award

At the recent Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) Conference, GPCOG was awarded 2nd Place nationally for Marketing and Outreach - Public Sector for its [GO MAINE Nation](#) campaign. Additionally, the ACT Patriot Chapter was recognized by ACT for Chapter of the Year.

[Carey Kish](#), GO MAINE Program Manager, was recognized as a TDM Fellow by ACT for completing the nine-month Leadership Academy.

GO MAINE is funded by the [Maine Department of Transportation](#) and the [Maine Turnpike Authority](#).

## Mountain Division

On September 10, 65 people from Maine descended on North Conway to inspect the New Hampshire portion of the Mountain Division rail line via the Conway Scenic Railroad. The ride was hosted by the Route 113 Corridor Committee, which is comprised of community leaders from the Towns of [Stan-dish](#), [Baldwin](#), [Hiram](#), [Brownfield](#), and [Fryeburg](#) and staffed by GPCOG and [SMRPC](#). In 2008, the group adopted a regional economic strategy with a central goal to "Champion the restoration of rail service on the Mountain Division line" for freight, passenger, commuter, and excursion use. The group also supports the development of a multi-use recreational trail within the right-of-way where safety and physical constraints permit rail and trail uses to co-exist.



The State of Maine now owns 45 of the 51 track miles in Maine. On June 8, 2010, Maine voters approved Question 3, which dedicates \$4 million for reconstruction of the rail line. [MaineDOT](#) will deploy these funds to restore the tracks, starting at the Sappi Mill in Westbrook and moving west. Another \$15 million is still needed to restore the line all the way to Fryeburg.

Visit the GPCOG web site at [www.gpcog.org](http://www.gpcog.org)

## Brownfields Update

The GPCOG Brownfields program is in full swing. In August 2009, GPCOG was awarded a total of \$400,000 in Stimulus funds from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct environmental assessments on sites in Cumberland County contaminated by hazardous substances and/or petroleum. One of the conditions of receiving Stimulus funds was the capacity to spend at least one-third of the funds in just twelve months. This goal was successfully met by the August 2010 deadline. To date, six sites have been enrolled in the program:

- Bridgton Memorial School, built on the site of the Bridgton and Saco River narrow gauge rail yard.
- Town-owned properties on Shaker Road in Gray, one of which was a former gas station.
- Greater Maine Auto Auction facility on Route 202 in Gray.
- Main Street Fire Station in Gray, which will be reused as the new home of the Gray Historical Society.
- Former Public Works site in Windham, located next to a new four-lot residential subdivision.
- Adams School in Portland, site of a former grenade factory, now slated for 16 units of housing to be developed by AVESTA

Selection was based on a variety of factors, including presence of an environmental stigma, property owner participation, and redevelopment potential. Funding is still available to assess additional sites. For more information, please contact [Caroline Paras](#) at (207) 774-9891.