

Sunrise County Economic Council Board of Directors, 2009



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SCEC Board &
Staff



Sunrise County Economic Council

Annual Report of Activities Fiscal Year 2009

Our Future Depends on Today!



*Initiating and facilitating the creation of
prosperity and jobs in Washington County*



Sunrise County Economic Council

PO Box 679, Machias, ME 04654
www.sunrisecounty.org

To the Friends of SCEC

As SCEC wraps up its 2008-09 fiscal year, we are pleased to report that local people are playing a leading role in rebuilding our regional economy. Whether it's alternative energy, communications, tourism, enhancement of our rail and port infrastructure, or countywide telecommunications and transportation initiatives, SCEC is working hand in hand with businesses, communities, and county government to make recovery a reality. By working together, we have helped shepherd over \$220 million investment dollars into Washington County in just the past three years.

Along these lines, SCEC's Board and staff are strengthening the Sunrise County Business Resource Center (SCBRC), a clearinghouse for Washington County based business and community resources, co-located at one central location for the convenience of the entire county. SCBRC offers business counseling and support services, economic and community development tools and, perhaps most importantly, information and resource sharing, so that each of our collaborators can effectively and efficiently best serve the people of Washington County.

Our staff has also made great strides in launching a youth leadership program in area schools, providing career advancement scholarships to young adults looking to stay in Washington County, and communicating who we are and what we do through social networking, a bi-annual newsletter, and frequent press releases.

As a private nonprofit, SCEC is in a unique position to make lasting change to the county's economy. We do not receive state or federal subsidy for our work. Most of our income comes from grants or contract work as well as our annual fundraising campaign. We again sincerely thank all those businesses and individuals whose faithful support of our campaign demonstrating your continued belief in SCEC and its programs.

Sincerely,



Edwin S. Plissey, Chairman
Board of Directors

Developing Organizational Capacity

- ☆ to forge partnerships
- ☆ to empower organizations to become more effective & sustainable
- ☆ to remain responsive and flexible to emerging issues

Support Services

SCEC provides administrative and financial services to the Down East Institute (DEI), WC Council of Governments, Greenland Point Center, Washington County Development Authority (WCDA), WC:OC, and others. By pooling our resources, SCEC and our fellow not-for-profits are able to keep costs down and provide better quality of service to the people of Washington County.

The Opportunity Fund

SCEC does not receive federal or state subsidy for its work. As a result our Board has established an annual fund that helps SCEC respond to immediate needs and opportunities within the region and the organization, such as research, public education, and project coordination.

Culture of Collaboration

There is no one solution to fixing Washington County's economy. That's why SCEC works with many different individuals, groups and organizations, our county commissioners, local, state and federal policy makers and area businesses to implement a multi-pronged approach to the economic challenges and opportunities facing Down East Maine.

SUCCESS STORY: In August 2009 SCEC honored the county legislative delegation for their commitment to economic and com-



munity development by hosting an Appreciation Luncheon at the University of Maine at Machias (UMM). Senator Kevin Raye, Representatives David Burns, Howard McFadden, Anne Perry and Dianne Tilton attended.

Developing Individuals

- ☆ to build leadership
- ☆ to encourage educational success
- ☆ to enhance opportunities

Washington County Leadership Institute (WCLI)

WCLI is an annual program for Washington County residents to strengthen their leadership skills, increase awareness of the region's economic challenges and opportunities and build a supportive network of peers. Since its inception in 1997, WCLI has graduated over 200 local leaders from all walks of life.

The Gracie Fund

The Gracie Fund is a student loan repayment program that encourages natives of Washington County to return to or remain in their communities following completion of their post-secondary education. In 2009 the Gracie Fund selected 4 participants who will receive \$5,000 per year for up to 3 years. The Fund's selection committee also awarded 2 one-time \$2,000 stipends. SCEC and the Maine Community Foundation co-administer the program.

Washington County Youth Leadership Institute

Based on the successful WCLI approach, WCYLI will offer sixth, seventh and eighth graders the opportunity to build their leadership skills while learning more about their own community and the rest of Washington County as well. The program has begun in several pilot schools this year in conjunction with the WC:OC, Down East Teen Leadership Camp, Down East RC&D, Greenland Point Center, DEI, and the Maine Rural Partnership.

Eaton Foundation Young Adult Scholarship Program

This program is for Washington County residents aged 18-29 who need specialized training or certification to advance in their chosen career field. Eligible applicants can receive up to \$500. This scholarship program was launched in 2007 using funding from the Eaton Foundation.



SUCCESS STORY: Since the Young Adult Scholarship Program launched in January 2008, SCEC has awarded approximately \$7800 in scholarships including 7 for Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training, 6 for Certified Residential Medication Aide (CRMA) training, 3 for participation in the WCLI, 1 for English 101, and 4 for automotive certification.

A message from the Executive Director

On behalf of SCEC's Board of Directors and staff, I am pleased to present our 2009 Annual Report, entitled, Our Future Depends on Today. Although times are tough, SCEC is still moving forward with new and exciting ideas. Creating jobs and prosperity in Washington County continues to be our top priority – perhaps now more than ever.

Since October 2008, SCEC and our partners have worked to:

- Retain, expand and attract businesses of all sizes through the Sunrise County Business Resource Center – a network of area business resource providers co-located under one roof
- Foster & facilitate economic & community development initiatives
- Develop productive and meaningful collaborations
- Promote and advocate for our county regionally, statewide and nationally by working with leaders at all levels of government
- Build upon infrastructure (transportation, alternative energy, broadband, etc.) improvements, accessibility, and options
- Persist in being a catalyst for improving our economy
- Work with our regional neighbors to advance economic development opportunities and encourage investment in Washington County.

That said, nobody has all the answers. We are not the overlords of economic development. There are many committed people and organizations with great ideas in business, the not-for-profit world, individuals and municipalities across our region. SCEC works with these groups, balancing the need for jobs and prosperity with sustainability. Whether it's alternative energy, telecommunications, transportation, or improving upon our collective productivity, SCEC recognizes the need for broad-based community involvement in everything we do.

I would like to extend my sincere and heartfelt thanks to SCEC's incredible and talented staff. They are the reason that our many efforts succeed. I thank them personally for their hard work, dedication and passion for Washington County.

It is with that note that I present our latest report of activities.

Sincerely,

Harold W. Clossey
Executive Director

Developing Businesses

- ☆ to encourage prosperity
- ☆ to increase incomes
- ☆ to create and retain quality jobs

Sunrise County Business Support Center

A network of business resource providers including the Women's Business Center at Coastal Enterprises, Inc., Department of Economic and Community Development, Eastern Maine Development Corporation, Downeast Business Alliance, Maine Small Business Development Center, and the Maine Small Business Administration. FREE business counseling, technical assistance, lending and web based resources and data through WACOBIZ.com.

Sunrise Loan Fund

A source of flexible gap financing for business start-up and expansion when traditional financing options are not enough. The SLF has been reinvigorated with a \$75,000 grant from the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME).

Resource Packaging, Referrals and Advocacy

Ongoing efforts to work with existing and new businesses to identify a variety of appropriate financing sources and incentive programs; make referrals to public and private business services that will best meet their needs, and serve a problem solving role when needed. Nowhere was this more important than in our efforts to bring federal, state and local legislators together with our colleagues to help bring the Domtar Mill back online after a shutdown threatened over 300+ good paying jobs in Baileyville.

Alternative Energy & Telecommunications

SCEC is firmly committed to developing Washington County's alternative energy and telecommunications sectors including on and off shore wind and tidal power generation initiatives. We've also advocated for greater high speed internet access in Washington County's most rural regions, giving area businesses the same tools many of their urban counterparts routinely access.



SUCCESS STORY: In September 2009, SCEC co-hosted Washington County's first ever alternative energy and telecommunications expo at the Lee Pellon Center in Machias. With over 350 people passing through in two days, and vendors representing communications, wind, tidal and solar power generation, Destination Washington County 2009 & Beyond

helped further establish Downeast Maine as an alternative energy & telecommunications hub.

Developing Communities

- ☆ to help local leadership address local issues
- ☆ to convene citizens to meet common goals
- ☆ to encourage regional cooperation

Municipal Technical Assistance Program

In collaboration with county government and the Washington County Council of Governments (WCCOG), SCEC provides direct services to communities, including grant writing, grassroots economic development planning and implementation, project management, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) technical assistance, and municipal web site design.

Washington County: One Community

SCEC and WC:OC have partnered on a range of initiatives involving economic development, youth leadership, alternative energy and telecommunications and transportation. SCEC also serves on WC:OC's Board and is an active proponent of the coalition's approach toward economic and community development.

Eastport Gateway Project

In the past year, SCEC has worked hand in hand with the Eastport Port Authority, legislators at all levels of government, as well as area businesses and regional stakeholders to bring rail opportunities back to Washington County. We have also worked with Port officials to diversify the facility so that it can handle break-bulk cargoes and better position itself in the global economy.

SUCCESS STORY: In May 2009 the Port of Eastport received its first shipment of wind blades with subsequent deliveries following throughout the year. These blades will be used to assemble wind turbines in New England and the Mid Atlantic states, and are helping to further of the Port's mission to diversify cargoes and better compete on the global stage.

