

MAJOR PROJECTS OF THE 2018 MAINE GOVERNMENT INTERNS

The 2018 Maine government interns worked in fifteen departments of state government and thirteen municipal governments. Interns were assigned to specific projects while also assisting in general workflow. This list shows a sampling of the interns' activities.

Interns used their scientific training to

- Comprehensively test to assess water quality and biota to determine the causes of an algae bloom in Highland Lake
- Inspect over 50 closed landfills to ensure the municipalities are appropriately maintaining them
- Conduct stream barrier surveys as part of a statewide inventory of all stream crossings and their ability to pass fish and other organisms, which will be used to prioritize stream restoration projects
- Work with dairy farmers training them to perform tests and maintain records for drug testing mandated by the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance
- Work with the department dive team on bridge inspections
- Research location and property information for hazardous waste sites, and collect environmental samples
- Perform soil assessments at agricultural sites and carry out site evaluations for on-farm composting
- Assess gravel roads and wetlands to prevent erosion, ensure proper run-off, and identify wetlands
- Participate in a stream habitat enhancement project, installing structures made of natural woody debris within a stream channel
- Evaluate groundwater sample results at 15 landfill projects, update GIS maps, and prepare data tables.

Interns used their computer/technology skills to

- Create GIS coverage for MaineDOT and State Police weigh stations and WIM (weight in motion) sites
- Build an informational map describing the features of hydropower dams throughout the state
- Redesign websites and manage social media accounts
- Staff computer help desks, evaluate and upgrade several hundred computers
- Develop online survey tools to assist the state in assessing its emergency and disaster preparedness and for municipalities to report solid waste management practices
- Create maps and interactive GIS layers for towns' public lands; storm drains, sewer manholes, culverts, and dry wells; and historical cemeteries.

Interns used their analytical skills to

- Develop a tenant housing survey, conduct 125 interviews around the state, and analyze the data
- Collect use counts for all statewide Park and Ride System facilities and organize and present data from Pedestrian Safety Forums
- Conduct legal research relating to regulation of natural gas distribution, policies of broadband expansion, and process for requesting approval of financing for water utilities
- Make a 50-state comparison of bureaus of transportation planning and compile best practices in scoping, public involvement and NEPA
- Research policies on recreational marijuana, tiny homes, senior citizen resources, impact of a natural gas pipeline, and economic development initiatives for the city manager
- Help with case law research, draft file summary memos, prep cases for mediation and further litigation
- Provide data analytical support on the environmental benefits of different waste management options
- Survey every municipally maintained road and develop a road plan including budgets, spreadsheets, road status, and cost estimates.

Interns used their communications skills to

- Create a 40-page Financial Guide for Maine Veterans, and present it on local TV news programs
- Create videos on how money is allocated to school districts in Maine and on Maine's new catalytic converter law
- Redesign Finding Funds for Farming, distilling an 89-page publication into 5 user-friendly factsheets
- Plan and host Computer Science Day to bring together educators, industry leaders, nonprofits and government officials, including designing logos, posters, signs, packets, and social media posts
- Host a webinar to teach the local transit agencies how to translate their data into GTFS (general transit feed specifications)
- Act as the city manager's liaison to downtown business owners and residents for a marketing effort to keep commercial activity strong during a major road project in tourist season.

