



Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District

Volume 2
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Winter 2005

DISTRICT NEWS

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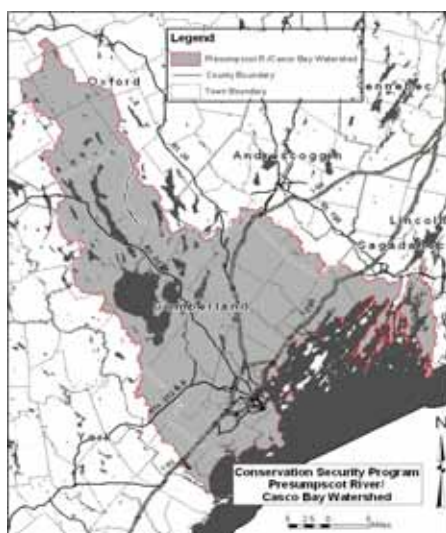
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District Conservationist
Wayne Munroe
Soil Conservationist
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NEW USDA CONSERVATION PROGRAM AVAILABLE TO CASCO BAY WATERSHED FARMERS



Casco Bay Watershed

Informational meetings are scheduled for producers in the Casco Bay watershed who are interested in the new USDA Conservation Security Program (CSP). The Casco Bay Watershed was selected as one of 202 watersheds nationwide for this year's CSP signup. CSP, part of the 2002 Farm Bill, is a tremendous opportunity for farmers who practice good soil and water conservation. The purpose of CSP is to reward the farmers for their stewardship efforts and motivate others to become good stewards of the land. To qualify for CSP, farms need to have soil erosion and water quality practices in place, including nutrient and pest management.

Lands that are eligible include cropland (row crops, orchards, small fruits, vineyards, and horticultural crops), hayland, pasture lands, and incidental forest land. The CSP signup process will be different from other USDA conservation programs. Participants are required to conduct a self-assessment to determine whether or not they are eligible for the program. Before taking the self-assessment, NRCS recommends you complete the following checklist for land you are considering enrolling in CSP.

- Do you take soils tests and follow the recommendations when applying nutrients/fertilizer?
 - Do you have records of where you apply nutrients/fertilizer?
 - Do you have records on how much nutrients/fertilizer you apply?
 - Do you have records on when you apply nutrients?
 - If you raise cultivated or row crops (i.e., potatoes, corn, beans, vegetables) do you follow a crop rotation so these crops are only produced half of the years and hay or small grains (i.e., oats, barley) are grown the other years? (cont. next page)
- If you apply pesticides do you have records that document the pesticide type, amount, time applied and rate?

(cont. on page 2)



NEW USDA CONSERVATION PROGRAM AVAILABLE TO CASCO BAY WATERSHED FARMERS (Cont. from page 1)

If you answered “yes” to most of these questions you would potentially be eligible to participate in CSP and should call your local NRCS office to reserve a spot at one of two workshops to be held on:

- ★ January 26, 2005 at the Spring Meadows Golf and Country Club, Rt. 100, Gray (across from Cole Farms Restaurant), 6:00-8:00 p.m.
- ★ February 2, 2005 at the Waterford Town Hall, 366 Valley Road (Route 35), Waterford, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

If you answered “no” to most of the checklist questions, you should still consider completing the self-assessment in the next few months to help you prepare for future CSP signups and to help NRCS identify other conservation programs which can help you better protect the natural resources on your farm. Contact the local NRCS office to get a copy of the self-assessment workbook, or go to www.me.nrcs.usda.gov.

“Producers in the Casco Bay Watershed are known for their stewardship commitment to conserve natural resources,” said District Conservationist Wayne Munroe. “These informational meetings will provide the opportunity to obtain a copy of the self-assessment workbook and to learn more about CSP, which is designed to financially reward outstanding conservation work on private lands.”

For more information or to sign up for a workshop contact your local NRCS office:

Wayne Munroe, District Conservationist
207-883-0159 ext. 114
306 U.S. Route 1, Suite A1
Scarborough, ME 04074-9774



AROUND THE OFFICE

New staff highlight



Starting in January, the District will have two new staff members. Abby Morgan and Michael Landis will be joining us as AmeriCorps volunteers. Abby is a member of the Maine Conservation Corps and will be primarily working on environmental education and outreach projects. Her past experience working on an organic farm and teaching about the environment make her a great fit for the position. She recently moved to Portland from Massachusetts.

Michael will be working through the Community Resource Corps and will be recruiting GIS (Geographic Information Systems) students to setup internships with specific towns that are looking to use GIS to map their stormwater systems. The Interlocal Stormwater Working Group is overseeing this effort. Michael has had some great experience coordinating events which will be well utilized in this position. He is moving to Maine from New Jersey.

The District has had a great partnership with AmeriCorps in the past. Three of our current staff members are former AmeriCorps members, and there has been an AmeriCorps education position at the District for many years.

We were lucky to have such great applicants for these positions and look forward to working with both Michael and Abby!



GORHAM COMMUNITY SUPPORTS EFFORTS IN TANNERY BROOK WATERSHED



Deborah Loveitt, a Gorham landowner, presents ideas for encouraging good land stewardship

Approximately 30 Gorham residents and interested citizens gathered on October 23rd for the Tannery Brook Watershed Community Forum. The daylong event sponsored by the Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District, was designed to gather local input, increase awareness and incorporate the outcomes into a watershed management plan.

The day began with a few words from Representative Chris Barstow of Gorham thanking the participants for taking advantage of an opportunity to show their support of efforts in the watershed. The facilitated event drew discussion in several areas including water quality, riparian & aquatic habitat, recreation, development, and stewardship.

The group identified the Forum as an important first step to increased awareness and were appreciative of the opportunity to express their concerns and ideas. Some of the issues raised included property rights, high impact recreational use, and the negative impacts on water quality. Another point of discussion was the rapid pace of development and shrinking natural spaces. The group also brainstormed solutions for some of these issues such as interpretative signage, more media coverage, and outreach to local schools to help promote environmental awareness and good stewardship of our natural resources. The group also wanted to see the existing work within the watershed continue with the University of Southern Maine, Project Learning Tree, Gorham Middle School, Presumpscot River Watch, the Town of Gorham, Cumberland Co. SWCD, and Gorham residents.

Workgroups will be formed in the near future to further define the outcomes from the community forum. If anyone is interested in participating in the workgroups please contact Betty Williams at 856-2777 or email betty-williams@me.nacdnet.org.



NATIVE PLANT SPOTLIGHT

Redosier Dogwood (*Cornus sericea*)

- * Large shrub, can grow to 6 feet
- * Grows best in full sun
- * Tolerates wet soil, well adapted for stream banks and other moist areas
- * Stems are bright red and attractive in winter
- * Spreads by suckering



ENVIRONMENTAL 2005

The District will be hosting this year's 2005 Southern Maine Regional Environmental. It will be held on May 3rd at Pineland Farms in New Gloucester. The current issue is "Managing the Cultural Landscape." National organizers chose this as the topic in hopes that students will:

- * Understand the values of both cultural and natural resources in cultural landscapes and find ways to successfully integrate the understanding into management.
- * Understand what makes cultural landscapes significant.
- * Explore how to determine the degree of modification appropriate for a cultural landscape at a particular time.

If you are interested in participating in Environmental please contact Melissa Sternlieb at melissa-sternlieb@me.nacdnet.org or call 856-2777.



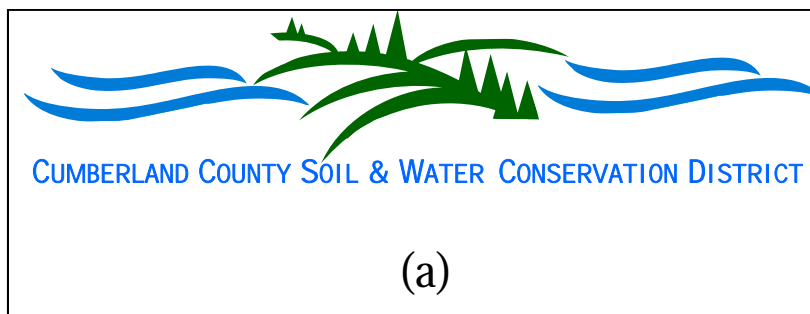


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HELP US PICK A NEW LOGO!



The District is looking for a new logo. These are the two finalists. If you would like to help please call or email your choice by February 14th, 2005.

To vote contact: 856-2777 or melissa-sternlieb@me.nacdnet.org

THANKS!

