



Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District

DISTRICT NEWS

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Project Manager
Jami Fitch
Project Manager
Heather True
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Soil Conservationist
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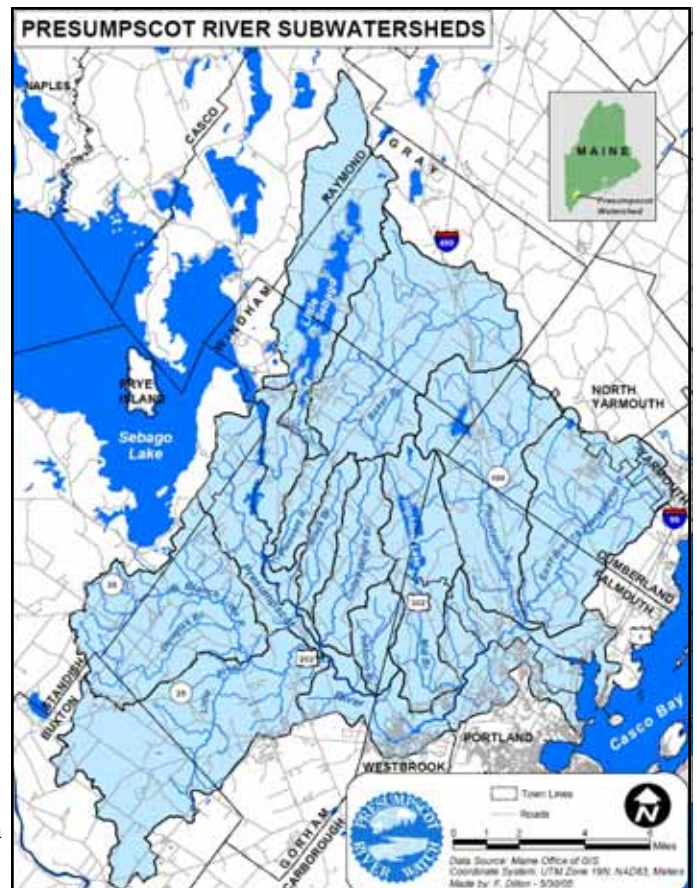
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PRE SUMPSCOT RIVER WATERSHED A WARDED RESTORATION GRANT

The Presumpscot River Watershed Coalition and the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership received a \$740,000 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to continue restoration efforts on the River. Additional project partners include the Presumpscot River Watch, Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District, and Friends of Casco Bay. This grant is 1 of 12 awarded throughout the United States out of 74 proposals submitted. The grant funds will address several different issues.

The District will be working on several aspects of the Project, including:

- **Stream Crossing Erosion Control** and culvert replacement at 46 sites throughout the watershed will be addressed by public works departments, volunteers, and student service learning projects.
- A “**YardScaping**” program will be piloted. This program encourages the use of natural yard care techniques to reduce the transport of pesticides and fertilizers to the receiving waters of the Presumpscot River. For more information, refer to page 3 of this issue.
- The **Presumpscot River Youth Conservation Corps** will be established to help enhance the riparian corridor by re-establishing forested buffers along the River corridor. An estimated 2000 native upland and wetland plantings will be installed. For more information about YCCs, refer to the article on page 2 of this issue.



(Story continued on p. 2)



WATERSHED PROTECTION

Presumpscot River Watershed Awarded Restoration Grant (Continued from p. 1)

- A “**Maps for Schools**” program will be composed of place-based education programs in middle and high schools in the Presumpscot River Watershed. The programs will cover environmental science, history, social studies, and geography.
- The **Agricultural Management Improvements Program** grant funds will be used to cost share with agricultural landowners to provide streamside fencing and alternative watering systems for livestock. The application process can be completed easily and sites will be selected based on criteria that includes highest impact on natural resources.

Additional Project partners will be involved with other aspects of the grant. Comprehensive water quality monitoring efforts will involve sampling at various sites through data collection devices called *sondes*. A Golf Course Certification Program will involve working with six golf courses in the watershed to improve environmental practices. In addition to the “Maps for Schools” program, other Education and Outreach efforts will include the development of a comprehensive project website with an Internet mapping component that will feature specific project accomplishments throughout the grant.



If you are interested in learning more about these offerings, please contact our office at 892-4700.

District Expands its YCC Involvement

For the past several years, the District has been closely involved with Youth Conservation Corps (YCCs) in the Highland Lake and Royal River Watersheds. In 2006, the District is expanding its work with YCCs by starting a program on Little Sebago Lake and assisting the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership with their new Presumpscot River Youth Conservation Corps.

YCCs are composed of a group of highly motivated high school students, led by a college-aged crew leader, who are hired to fix runoff and erosion problems within their designated watershed. A YCC Program Director is responsible for contacting towns, landowners, and road associations to set up potential sites. All YCC labor is undertaken without the aid of power tools, and is provided at no cost. Landowners are responsible for providing the necessary materials. Types of projects YCCs undertake include:

- Light road maintenance (nothing that requires the use of machinery)
- Conservation landscaping (planting rain gardens and shoreline vegetation, path building, etc.)
- Installing infiltration steps, roof drip line trenches, and other conservation practices
- Stormdrain stenciling

YCC programs have proven to be one of the most effective ways for communities to correct soil erosion problems and protect long-term water quality. In addition, crew members are inspired to become environmental stewards.

Because the services of the YCCs are free, money and supplies are needed to keep the programs running. If you'd like to help the District sustain these programs, a “wish list” of desired tools and materials is provided to the right.



Crew members of the Royal River Youth Conservation Corps install a meandering, waterside trail in 2005.

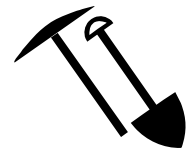
YCC Wish List

Materials

- Conservation grass seed mix (75 lb. bag)
- Hay mulch
- Geotextile fabric & staples
- Soil amenities (compost, peat moss, etc.)
- 6” stone riprap
- 3/4” crushed stone
- First-aid kit

Tools

- Shovels (preferably with fiberglass handles)
- 2 Rock rakes
- 2 Leaf rakes
- Pry bar
- Rubber mallets
- Hammers
- Wheel barrows (preferably with “never-flat” tire)
- Toolbox



Monetary donations are always appreciated!

Spring YardScaping Tips: Lush Lawns for Le\$\$

We Love Lawns. They are part of the image of what our home should be, and when healthy, they can provide a personal refuge and place to play.

Maintaining a healthy lawn is the best way to combat weeds, diseases, and pests. If you find you have to continually add chemicals to your lawn to keep it looking lush and green, it could indicate an underlying problem.

Weed and Feed is a combination of both pesticides & fertilizers.

Because these products are generally applied to the entire lawn, unneeded chemicals may be applied to the lawn. For example, there may be areas of the lawn without weeds that don't need pesticides. Or, using weed and feed may result in applying fertilizer at a time of the year when the grass is not growing and the fertilizer won't be absorbed. This can waste money.

What You Can Do

- If you do fertilize your lawn, hold off until August. August is the best time for the uptake of nutrients so your money will not be wasted.
- If you use weed and feed, consider spot treating your weeds and then applying your fertilizer in August.
- For additional information about natural lawn care alternatives, check out **Yardscaping for a Healthy Maine: www.yardscaping.org**



AROUND THE OFFICE



Staff Highlight

Heather True is the District's newest Project Manager. Heather is a native of Windham and University of Southern Maine alumna, where she graduated magna cum laude with a BS in Biology in 2001. She has gained valuable watershed protection experience first as an AmeriCorps Watershed Educator and then as a Stewardship Associate at the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve. In her spare time, Heather enjoys yoga, knitting, kayaking, and spending time with her dog, Lyric, and boyfriend, Chad. Heather says she likes working at the District because of the opportunity to protect Cumberland County watersheds while working with a variety of different people. Heather lives in Gorham with her dog, cat, and twenty chickens.



Native Plant Spotlight

Sheep Laurel or Lambkill (*Kalmia angustifolia*)

- Bright pink flowers bloom early in the summer
- Grows 1 - 3 feet high with a greater spread
- Grows best in full sun to partial shade with moist, organic, acidic soil, but is tolerant of a variety of soils types
- As the name suggests, it is poisonous to livestock





Cumberland County Soil & Water
Conservation District

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WE 'VE MOVE D!

We've moved into a spacious, wonderful new location in the heart of Cumberland County. We are now located in Suite 3 at 35 Main Street (also known as Route 202) in Windham, just over the Gorham town line. Come by and check out our new space!



All programs and services of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, marital, or familial status.



To receive this newsletter electronically, please email sarah-plummer@cumberlandswcd.org.