

# Penobscot County

Soil & Water Conservation District



*Educating our children about farming is the key to our future. Here, Kailey Schmidt (Left), Dan's daughter, tours the Roger's Farm at the University of Maine.*

## 2001 Annual Report

# District Supervisors



**Daniel Kusnierz**  
Chair



**Mary Thomas**  
Vice Chair



**Robert Fogler**  
Treasurer



**Neil Crane**  
Supervisor

## Associate Supervisors

*Leslie Bolstridge •  
Lloyd Bolstridge •  
John Fogler • Keith  
Parlette • Larry  
Smith • Robert Weeks*



**Joseph Chernosky**  
Supervisor

The Mission of the Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide leadership, information, education and technical assistance to conserve, improve and sustain our natural resources through partnerships with individuals, businesses, organizations and government.

# District Staff

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**Christopher Brewer**  
District Office  
Coordinator



**Joseph Bertolaccini**  
District Engineer



**Jennifer Wiersma**  
District Clerk

# Natural Resources Conservation Service Staff

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**Daniel Schmidt**  
District Conservationist



**Alice Begin**  
Soil Conservationist



**Sarah Kron**  
Soil Conservationist



**Kenneth Blazej**  
Soil Conservation  
Technician



**Ronald Olson**  
Soil Resource Specialist



**Ernest Neptune**  
Soil Conservationist

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# Financial Report

## Income

Administrative Services	\$1,615
Annual Banquet Income	610
County Salary Support	28,300
Fundraising	28,120
Grants	16,800
Interest Income	1,266
Miscellaneous Income	1,508
Kenduskeag Watershed Program	209,717
Postage & Handling Charges	63
Special Project - Kenduskeag St	2,200
Video Rentals	385

<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$290,584</b>
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## Expense

Annual Banquet Expense	\$1,124
Awards	342
Association Dues	2,055
Cold Stream 319 Expenses	6,121
Donations	580
Education Programs	2,367
Engineering Services	193
Fundraising Expenses	20,478
Insurance	243
Licenses and Permits	50
Office Supplies	4,418
Payroll Expenses	42,841
Kenduskeag Watershed Program	209,717
Postage and Delivery	2,013
Printing and Reproduction	1,128
Program Expense	1,192
Travel & Enter	494

<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$295,356</b>
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<b>Net Loss for 2001</b>	<b>(\$4,772)</b>
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## Chairman's Corner



Any attempt to review 2001 cannot escape the memory of the tragic events experienced in our beloved country on September 11. We will all remember where we were and what we were doing on that morning. The attack on our country and the related changes across the globe inevitably give us perspective and cause each of us to ponder about what is important. We have unified as a country and are more appreciative of the freedoms and values we enjoy.

For me personally, I have become even more grateful of the serenity of rural life in Maine. Television images of the barren terrain of Afghanistan make me appreciate the bountiful natural resources, the productive lands and waters of Penobscot County. With these blessings comes the responsibility to protect and use these resources wisely.

It is the responsibility of the District to promote and assist with doing just that...

A central role of the District is to connect the landowners within Penobscot County who have conservation needs to the resources available and best suited to meet those needs. In many cases those resources, such as funding or technical assistance may come from USDA-NRCS, our primary partner. Whereas, in other cases, we may partner with different federal, state, or local agencies to address natural resource conservation needs. Additionally the District is responsible, as mandated by law, to administer many USDA Farm Bill Programs.

In late 2001 the District supervisors and staff devoted much time to examining our purpose and defining our goals and needs. Through this effort we identified a great need to expand the attention and services we provide to municipalities, camp and lake associations, and individual landowners to address nonpoint source pollution impacts on water quality. To meet this need we will hire an additional staff person this spring to work collaboratively with these entities to implement water quality and erosion control practices, to conduct educational programs, and to develop grant proposals to fund these projects.

Also, in the next month or two the District will be sending you a survey seeking your assistance in identifying natural resource concerns and needs within the Penobscot County. We will use information from the survey to evaluate current land uses, identify natural resource concerns, prioritize areas that require cooperative efforts to solve, and obtain funding for cost-share programs. Information from the survey will be the foundation on which our future plans and programs will be built. The survey will help us to ensure that our programs and priorities are locally driven. You are our customers and we want to know how to serve you better. So be on the lookout for the survey and please take time to respond. We need and value your input!

Be well and good luck during the upcoming year.

*Dan Kusnierz, District Chair*

## Little Known Facts About Your Conservation District

The Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District was formed on June 15, 1945, in accordance with Chapter 29, Revised Statutes 1944, of the Laws of the State of Maine. A board of supervisors carries out the District's programs. Two members are appointed by the Maine Association of Conservation Districts Advisory Council and three are elected by the residents of the District. The laws of the District are based on the principle that landowners and operators should take the initiative and responsibility in creating programs that will protect and improve resources that have a direct and immediate bearing on the people.



We work with many partners to provide conservation assistance to the public. Our primary partner is the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Through this partnership, NRCS provides the District with a strong technical background. We also work with many other federal, state and local partners.

The District reaches out to all local stakeholders in the community to determine priorities and set a course of action to solve natural resource problems. We provide local conservation leadership, teach the value of natural resources, encourage conservation efforts, and help plan and implement voluntary programs.

Our unique grass roots approach to conservation allows us to work closely with the residents of Penobscot County. **If you have any conservation or natural resource issues, please contact us. We can help.**

## 2001 Central Maine Envirothon

The Envirothon is a competitive educational program that tests high school students' knowledge of natural resource subjects and environmental issues. In an outdoor environment the students are tested in five areas: soils, wildlife, aquatics, forestry and a current natural resource issue. The current issue in 2001 was Non-Point Source Pollution in the home and community.

Each spring, 5 regional competitions are held throughout Maine. The top three teams from each regional competition compete at the State Envirothon Finals.



The Penobscot County SWCD hosted the Central Maine Envirothon on May 17<sup>th</sup> at the Fields Pond Nature Center in Orrington. Fifteen teams, with 5 students each, competed from Cony High School, Bangor High School, Nokomis Regional High School, Mattanawcook Academy, Old Town High School, Upper Kennebec Valley High School, Messalonskee High School and Carrabec High School.

The members of Old Town High School Team # 2 were the Central Maine Envirothon Champions for 2001. The team consisted of Jason Tillotson, Kyle Noonan, Lauren Swett, Matthew Tyler and Sarah Spencer. Cony High School Team # 1 placed second and the team consisted of Mike Rocque, Brian Burnette, Matthew Mills, Jason Laptewicz, and Brian Miller. Messalonskee High School Team #1 members Ari King, Jess Davis, Sadie Mardin, Evan Summers, and Lindsey Burgoin, finished in third place. Two of these high schools are from Penobscot County. These teams competed in the State Competition which



*Old Town High School Envirothon Team: Jason Tilotson, Kyle Noonan, Lauren Swett, Matthew Taylor, Sarah Spencer show their current issue posters.*

was held at the Chewonki Foundation in Wiscasset on May 31<sup>st</sup>, with 13 other teams that were successful in their regional competitions.

With a score of 402 out of 500 points Old Town High School placed first at the state competition. They went on to compete at the

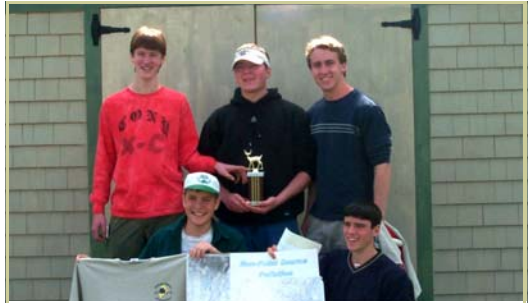
Canon Envirothon which was held in Raymond, Mississippi from July 24-29. The Canon Envirothon is an International competition in 2001 high school teams from 36 states and 3 Canadian provinces participated. Despite the sweltering heat our representatives scored 472.33 points out of 600. They didn't place in the top ten however they did an excellent job representing Maine.

Envirothon began in Pennsylvania in 1984. Maine's first competition was held in 1990 and Penobscot County SWCD hosted their first regional competition in 1991. The program has grown dramatically throughout the United States and Canada.

Teams can be created from High Schools, Home School Groups and other civic organizations. Each team is required to have one adult advisor. The advisor is not required to have any knowledge of natural resource issues the District and our many partners provide educational materials and will meet with the students to help train them for the

competition. If you would like more information on forming a team please contact us at 990-3676 or Liz Frederic the MACD Envirothon Coordinator at 778-4767.

We would like to congratulate the Old Town for their success throughout last year.



*Cony High School Team #1  
Second Place*



*Messalonskee High School Team #1  
Third Place*

# 2001 Conservation

## Kenduskeag Stream Restoration Projects:

- Kenduskeag Stream Watershed Program (PL-566): We have been working on this watershed project for over 10 years now. The



*Dick Perkins expanded his waste storage facility in 2001.*

project was slated to end in 2001, but due to overwhelming interest and participation it will remain active through 2006. Over \$950,000 has been provided to landowners in cost-share assistance, which translates to well over \$2 million in conservation practice installation. The total contracted cost-share funds that have been obligated exceeds \$1,600,000. When completed over \$4,000,000 will

be spent in the watershed for conservation measures. There are currently 29 farms participating in this program with more planned. We are also looking to expand the participant list to include municipalities within the watershed. We have begun the process of developing conservation contracts with the towns of Exeter and Garland.

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): We have written 2 new contracts in this watershed for approximately \$38,000.

## Sebasticook Lake Watershed Restoration Projects:

- We have been working with the Town of Newport, Penobscot Valley Council of Governments, Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP), NRCS, and the Sebasticook Lake Association to address Non-Point Source (NPS) pollution concerns in the watershed through a 319 Grant. 319 Grant funds are provided through MDEP from the Environmental Protection

Agency. The District and NRCS provide technical and advisory assistance to landowners and project partners. This year the group will be asking for an extension to finish implementing practices in 2002.

- Maine DEP has notified us that we have received funding to begin the first phase of a Watershed Implementation Program in 2002. This grant will allow us to work in Newport, Corinna and Dexter to address NPS issues in the Sebasticook Lake Watershed
- Funding was obtained through the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), a Farm Bill program administered by NRCS, to repair wildlife habitat on the East Branch of the Sebasticook River in Newport and Plymouth. In Newport we will remove an obsolete dam to allow fish passage into Sebasticook Lake, and reestablish the streambed from the dam site upriver to the lake. In Plymouth a fish passage will be added to the dam on Plymouth Pond, which will allow fish passage into Plymouth Pond. The total cost-share assistance for these projects will be approximately \$321,000.

## Education:

- Through our Education program we have provided lesson plans and materials to schools, teachers and home schooled families throughout the county. Several presentations were also made in schools around the county.
- The Ground Water Movement Model was loaned to local schools.
- Scholarships were provided to three teachers from Enfield Station School and one teacher from Newport Jr. High School to attend the Natural Resources Institute (NRI). The NRI is a five day workshop that focuses on such environmental issues as natural resource conservation, water quality, agriculture, forestry, soils, wildlife, marine



*Alice admires the horses at the University's Rogers Farm, leading a tour for preschool children.*



*Ben Lorenson is a participant in the Forest Land Erosion Control EQIP. We helped him fix his woods road to reduce soil erosion.*

resources, mining, waste management, recycling and composting. The Maine Association of Conservation Districts in conjunction with NRCS coordinates NRI.

### General Assistance

- We are completing work on the 319 grant on Cold Stream Pond. We have been working with the Campowners Association, MDEP, and NRCS to install

conservation practices. We will be compiling the information from the field survey completed last year and hope to use the information to write another grant proposal in the spring to address some additional sites in the watershed.

- We are continuing to work with the Penobscot Nation under EQIP. Last year over 30,000 feet of road ditching was installed on tribal lands in Mattagamom and Mattamiscontis. Permit approval has been obtained to replace the Sam Ayers dam. Replacing this dam will allow the Nation’s Department of Natural Resources to maintain proper water levels, which will increase the quality of the wetland habitat and its associated wildlife benefits.
- Advisory services were provided to many Penobscot County municipalities and non-farming citizens on such matters as soil testing, fertility management on lawns and recreational fields,

erosion control measures at construction sites and shore frontage, soil maps, soil information, flood control area maps, aerial photography and much more.

- Assistance was provided to the Town of Corinna for a drainage problem at the Morse’s Corner Cemetery. The cemetery has experienced flooding during the spring runoff. We surveyed the site and came up with several



*This box arch culvert was installed on the Penobscot Nation’s Land to replace a failed double culvert system.*

alternatives to help them address this problem the town chose to install a grassed waterway and a berm to direct the flow away from the cemetery.

- The District sponsored a Flood Plain Management Study that was conducted by NRCS for the Town of Kenduskeag. The results were published and provided to the town.
- Assistance was provided to the Town of Garland for the public access on Garland Pond. We developed a conservation plan that included erosion control and bank stabilization, that was installed in the fall of 2001.
- We continue to assist the Maine Department of Agriculture with agricultural complaints. We are also working with the Department to implement the Nutrient Management Law and Nutrient Management Grant Program (NMGP), by providing assistance to farmers, in assessing needs completing NMGP applications, and providing technical design and construction inspection.



*The newly seeded and mulched waterway at Morse's Corner Cemetery in Corinna*

## Fundraising and Informational Outreach

- In the spring we coordinated the 2001 Tree and Shrub Sale. This event provided plants and assistance to over 200 families. Each customer received information on our Back Yard Conservation campaign. The Back Yard Conservation campaign is an informational program that highlights conservation practices that landowners can use in their own yards to promote soil and water stewardship. Twelve people volunteered their time to assist the District in making this a successful fundraising effort.
- 2001 was a record-breaking year for the Trout Sale Program. We sold over 5,200 trout for stocking in private ponds.



*Susan Poole is one of the many volunteers that helped make the 2001 Shrub Sale possible. Thanks Susan!*

# 2001 Conservation Farm Award



*Ken & Virginia's home is where it all started.*

When receding glaciers shaped and formed central Maine over 10,000 years ago, they left gently rolling hills, deposits of till soil material and a subtle river valley dotted with lakes and streams known as the Sebasticook Watershed. Within the past few centuries European and Colonial people settled this valley, cleared much of the land of trees and stones, and began raising crops and livestock.

Halfway between Wassoogeeag and Sebasticook Lakes, in the town of Corinna, lives a family that is now on its fourth generation farming their land in Sebasticook Valley. Veazland Farm is a partnership between Rick and Rob Veazie. Their grandfather Harold Veazie began the farm at the present location of Ken and Virginia Veazie's home and the adjacent homestead. He started with six dairy cows. When Ken graduated from High

School in 1950 he purchased the farm and began farming with a herd of 25 milkers. Ken had a keen eye for the latest in technology and efficiency, and he participated in conservation programs whenever possible. He steadily increased the herd size and built new buildings, including the construction of one freestall barn, bunker silos and the first milking parlors in the State.

“We feel that conservation practices are very important to our farm. Soil is something you just can't go out and buy. It is something that you need to conserve for future generations.”

*Rick Veazie*

In 1980, with the assistance of the Sebasticook Watershed Program sponsored by NRCS and the Conservation District, Ken and his sons built the area's first fully con-

tained manure storage structure. It was a wooden building with a roof and concrete floor, and held a winter's worth of manure pumped from the barn. In addition to this storage, the Veazies also installed conservation practices on their land. This was part of a watershed wide effort to reduce soil erosion, and nutrient laden runoff, as well as to improve downstream water quality. In connection with this effort, the Veazies installed thousands of feet of diversions, grass waterways and subsurface drainage systems. They changed their cropping pattern on many fields to plant row crops more on the contour. One large highly erodible field was planted in contour strips to reduce erosion. The strips alternate between corn and alfalfa and are rotated every 6 years.



*Contour Strips are rotated between corn and alfalfa.*

In 1983, Rick and Rob took over the farm from their dad. Much of the family is still involved. Their wives Margaret and Kelly manage the office and paperwork. Rob's son Justin, a senior in High School, works on the farm as do nephews Sean and Brett Towle. The Veazies also have 5 full and part-time employees depending on the time of year and workload. Ken still helps a lot during the summer months, mowing hay and planting corn.



*The Veazies use a soil saver to incorporate nutrients into the soil.*

Currently the Veazies manage over 700 acres of land. They annually raise 400 acres of corn, 100 acres of which are high-moisture corn. 250 acres of grassland, mostly stored as haylage, and 80 acres of alfalfa are mown each year. This feed is for 200 Holstein milkers and 200



*This new barn will house an additional 150 milkers.*

replacement animals. Whenever they acquire new land, the Veazies develop a plan with NRCS for reduced soil erosion and maximum long term potential and sustainability.

Rick and Rob are in the process of building a new barn for another 150 head of cows, and they have plans to replace the aging milking parlor in the near future. They have partici-

ipated in the variety of conservation programs that have come along, the most recent being EQIP.

Through this program they were able to replace the obsolete manure storage with a precast concrete structure and add a cross gutter/manure pump system for the most recent barn addition. This new storage and handling system allows the Veazies to manage the farms manure as efficiently as possible. The pit is agitated for two days before emptying. The manure is spread at the proper rate with liquid truck spreaders, and is incorporated the same day (or within 24 hours,) with a soil saver, a minimum tillage implement. This is done to retain as much nitrogen as possible for the plants.



*The recently updated and expanded waste storage facility.*

In honor of their efficient, productive, profitable dairy farm with an eye towards conservation, the 2001 District Conservation Farm Award goes to Veazland Farms of Corinna Maine.



Article by Ken Blazej

## We Need Your Help

We need your help in reducing soil erosion, conserving our water and improving its quality. The job of conserving our natural resources cannot be done by government alone. The collective talents and energies of private individuals and groups are vital. The Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service have opportunities for volunteers to use their talents and abilities on behalf of conservation. These volunteers are known as the “Earth Team.”

Earth Team Volunteers must be at least 14 years or older and interested in conserving our natural resources. You can work part-time or full-time, evenings or weekends, outdoors or in our office. You can volunteer as an individual or as a group.



As an Earth Team Volunteer, you can work with professionals on conservation activities in our community. Whatever your talents or interests, there is a volunteer opportunity for you. Technical assistance is needed to plan, lay out, and design conservation practices, to make natural resource inventories, and to improve wildlife habitat. Schools

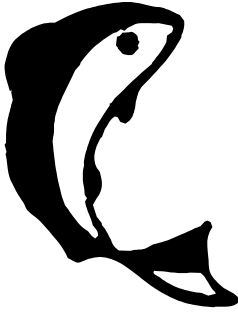
and community groups benefit from conservation tours and exhibits that volunteers can organize. Taking photographs writing articles, speaking to community groups, and producing artwork and publications are some of the opportunities available. Office support services include opportunities in computer data entry, typing and filing. There are opportunities for everyone.

If you are interested in volunteering your time to our organizations please contact either Chris Brewer, District Office Coordinator or Alice Begin, Soil Conservationist at 990-3676.

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Penobscot County Soil &  
Water Conservation District

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