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Providing conservation assistance to the landowners of Penobscot County for over 60 years.

Penobscot County Soil & Water Conservation District

# District News

Summer 2007

## Lakeside Landscapes Now Appearing in Lincoln

Bessie Wright & Byrhonda Lyons

This year the Penobscot County SWCD is implementing the first phase of the Lincoln Lakes Watershed Project which was funded through the Maine DEP. Part of the funds from this grant were used for a demonstration buffer. The town of Lincoln wanted a "Lakeside Landscape" planted on Mattanawcook Lake's shoreline next to the junior high school. As part of the agreement, the District designed and implemented this buffer. The District's AmeriCorps intern Bessie Wright designed and oversaw the installation of this project.



The buffer design incorporated the wishes of the Town: a native buffer that still allowed a lakeside view, was aesthetically pleasing, and most specifically would inhibit canadian geese encroachment. This demonstration buffer is meant to encourage other shoreline owners to plant buffers on their property. The buffer contains several elements to encourage others to plant buffers, some of the elements include a butterfly garden as well as berry producing plants to attract birds and

people. Additionally, there will be continuous flowering in the buffer from early spring into fall.

The designated shoreline necessitated a buffer that would be 134ft by 25ft. This of course meant a large number of plants (well over 300) would need planting and that help was needed. John Gordon, science teacher at Mattanawcook Junior High School, volunteered his seventh grade classes to assist the District on the buffer project. On June 8th (the day before the planting) Miss Wright introduced seventh graders to non-

*(Continued on page 2)*

## 2007 EQIP Allocation Announced

Chris Brewer

This year the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in Maine received \$6,309,782 in funding for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. Out of that allocation \$1,242,253 was provided to landowners in Penobscot County. This year the staff in our office wrote 31 new contracts. These contracts will address environmental concerns on agricultural land in the county.

Penobscot County's allocation was the largest county allocation in the State (20% of the funding). From this allocation \$855,221 will be used to address animal waste management, \$83,177 will be used to create Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans, \$91,197 will be used on crop land, \$101,649 will be used on grazing operations and \$111,009 will address environmental concerns on forest land owned by the Penobscot Indian Nation.

point source pollution, watersheds and vegetative buffers in a presentation given during their science periods. According to Mr. Gordon, the project couldn't have come at a better time. "We currently are studying Plant and Agricultural Resources," said Mr. Gordon. "We are learning how to maintain the quality of a lake after the land near it is landscaped."

On Friday June 8th instead of being inside the students spent their science classes learning, hands-on, how to protect the lake from non-point source pollution. Students ventured to the



waterfront in groups of 15 to 20, picked up shovels and began planting. In all about 100 seventh graders, their teacher and a few teacher's aides committed their time and hard work to the project. "I am glad we got a chance to come outside and learn instead of sitting in the classroom," said Jenna Brown, a student from Mr. Gordon's seventh grade class.

For more information on this project or to participate in future Lincoln projects contact Bessie.

## 2007 Envirothon Competitions

Chris Brewer & Elaine Tremble

The 2007 Envirothon season was a busy one for the District. In addition to hosting the Central Maine Regional Competition we hosted the Maine State Competition.

Envirothon is a hands-on outdoor environmental event in which teams, consisting of three to five high school students, compete. Working as a team, students test their knowledge of natural resource issues by answering questions and solving hands-on problems at five stations: Wildlife, Aquatics, Forestry, Soils and a current natural resource issue. This year's current issue was Renewable Energy in a Changing World. The Maine Envirothon's objective is to provide opportunities for high school students to acquire and increase their outdoor skills and knowledge about Maine's natural resources so they can make informed, educated decisions about the environment. Maine Envirothon is part of an international program representing over 500,000 high school students in the United States and Canada.

Districts awarded plaques to the top three scoring high school Envirothon teams. Out of the 13 teams competing at the regional competition Penobscot County had 3 teams competing. One team was from Old Town High School and the other two teams were from Nokomis Regional High School.



Nokomis Team A—Advisor Jennifer Briggs, Justin Leavitt, Andrew Richard, Meghan Curtis, Taylor Smith and Teresa Cooper

When all of the dust settled the competition yielded the following top three teams; in first place was Bonny Eagle High School followed by, Nokomis High School Team A in second place and Bucksport High School Team A in third place. The Bonny Eagle team will go on to represent Maine at the Canon Envirothon to be held at the Hobart and William Smith Colleges in New York in late July.

### Central Maine Regional

On May 16, 2007 nine hearty teams from 7 high schools gathered at Rogers Farm in Old Town to compete. The teams fought the wind driven rain and hypothermia to determine which team had gathered the most environmental knowledge. The teams competing at the competition were from Bucksport High School, Georges Academy, Hampden Academy, Mt. View High School, Piscataquis Community High School, Waldo County Technical Center and Washington Academy.

At the end of the competition Bucksport High School's Team 1 natural resource experts placed first, followed by Greenville High School Team 1 and Bucksport High School Team 2 in second and third place. These top three teams qualified to compete at the state finals.

### Maine Envirothon

In a total contrast from our regional competition the state finals were held under sunny skies and with warm temperatures at Leonard's Mills in Bradley. The Maine Association of Conservation

Resource specialists who cooperated in the Regional and State Envirothon included: Maine Department of Agriculture, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Maine Forest Service, Penobscot Nation Department of Natural Resources, University of Maine, Maine's Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The Regional and State Envirothon was funded by grants, sponsorships and contributions from the Maine Association of Wetland Scientists, Maine Department of Conservation, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Maine Potato Board, Dairy Farmers of America, Frito Lay, New England Organics, Oakhurst Dairy, Organic Horizons, Wild Blueberry Commission, and Canon North American Envirothon.

For more information on the Maine Envirothon Competition visit [www.maineswcds.org](http://www.maineswcds.org).

## Maine NRCS Hosts Senior Advisor to the Chief

Elaine Tremble, NRCS

Michael Sanders, Senior Advisor to the Chief in Washington, DC, visited Maine to participate in an Open House of the new USDA Service Center facility in Bangor (Penobscot County). This event was sponsored by Rural Development (RD), Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Heart of Maine Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) and the Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to give the public an opportunity to view their new facility.

"The partnership that exists between the agencies represented here today is critical to our goal of conserving our land for tomorrow's generation," said Sanders. "I am happy to see that the Heart of Maine Resource Conservation and Development Office has joined the Service

NRCS projects in Penobscot County. He, along with District Conservationist Dan Schmidt and State Conservationist Joyce Swartzendruber, visited (1) the Crane



State Conservationist Joyce Swartzendruber, Frank Thomas of Thomas Vegetable Farm, Michael Sanders, and District Conservationist Dan Schmidt.

Brothers, Inc. in Exeter, one of the most progressive chip stock potato farms in Maine; (2) Stonyvale Inc. in Exeter, a fourth-generation farm operated by the Fogler Family, it is the largest dairy farm in Penobscot County; (3) Thomas Vegetable Farm in Corinth, formerly a second generation potato farmer, recently changed to a market garden enterprise; (4) Veazland Farms in Corinna, a fourth-generation farm consisting of silage corn, high-moisture corn, grassland and alfalfa, in addition to Holstein milkers and replacement animals; (5) and the Sebastcook River Restoration Project in Newport, a WHIP project which included a dam removal, a fish passage, and stream restoration.



It is rewarding to see that all of our hard work paid off restoring this section of the East Branch of the Sebastcook River. On the day of the tour children could be seen swimming and fishing all along the river bank.

Center. With their partnership, and the longtime partnership of the Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District, we are meeting the needs of our clients in a seamless manner."

Following the Open House, Sanders had the opportunity to visit some of the



Our new office is located at 1423 Broadway in Bangor.



Michael Sanders, NRCS Sr. Advisor to the Chief and Jim Fitzgerald, RD Chief of Staff cut the ribbon at our new USDA Service Center.

## Supervisors & Staff

### District Supervisors

- Neil Crane
- Bob Fogler, Vice Chair
- Dan Kusnier, Treasurer
- John Simon
- Mary Wilson, Chair

### Associate Supervisors

- Leslie Bolstridge
- Joseph Chernosky
- John Fogler
- William Michaud
- Larry Smith

### Conservation District Staff

- Joe Bertolaccini: District Engineer
- Chris Brewer: District Office Coordinator
- Bessie Wright: Americorps Educator
- Kate Jones, District Soil Conservationist

### NRCS Staff

- Ken Blazej: Soil Conservationist
- Eric Giberson: Soil Conservationist
- Seth Jones: Conservation Technician
- Ron Olson: Area Soil Resource Specialist
- Dan Schmidt: District Conservationist

## Maine Agricultural Specialty License Plates Coming October 2007

We did it!!! Thank you!!!

The Maine Legislature voted 'in favor' of the license plate bill (L.D. 968) and on June 28th, the governor signed it into law. The language of the bill reads that the plate is to be issued October 1st of this year.



Why did it take so long? In trying to help the future success of the agriculture plate, and in response to requests from people ordering the plate, legislators added a clause to include FARM and COMMERCIAL vehicles to the bill. This delayed the process slightly by making it a budget item because there are some initial costs to do this.

Of the \$15 annual fee, \$10 will be transferred to a special fund for agricultural education programs administered by the Maine Agriculture in the Classroom Association. The remaining \$5 (per set of plates) is devoted to the State highway fund.

For more information on the Maine Agricultural License Plate visit [www.maineagtag.com](http://www.maineagtag.com).

## Conservation On Agricultural Land

Seth Jones

Farmers in Penobscot County strive and protect our soil & water. The land is their livelihood and they want to insure that it is useable for future generations. In this new segment we will highlight conservation practices that are being installed on agricultural lands.

The District Sponsored PL566 Kenduskeag Watershed program is still being used to construct conservation practices on working lands within the Kenduskeag Watershed. Although no new money has been added to the program in the last few years, some remaining contracts are still active. Double D Farms has a contract and it is currently being used to construct an irrigation pond to be used for potatoes.

The pond will have a surface area of two and one half acres and will be used to irrigate 60 acres of potatoes. Recharge for the clay lined pond will be primarily via overland flow from the surrounding fields during rain events and spring runoff. Double D Farms is able to build an irrigation pond with NRCS assistance because it will allow John Dorman to irrigate his potato fields without withdrawing from the Kenduskeag Stream and its tributaries.

The pond will be twelve feet deep when complete. The berm, built with marine clays excavated from the bottom of the pond, will be twelve feet high at the highest point, and fifty

feet thick at the base. A core trench is constructed in the natural ground and packed with clay also to prevent water from seeping underneath.

John has committed to working with NRCS to protect the environment and natural resources on his working lands, and continues to do his part to protect and enhance the land he farms.



This excavator is creating the berm that will hold the water for the pond.

## Have You Heard?

### It's All About Listening to the Consumer

Tessa Burpee

With all the excitement about buying local, how many of us have stopped to find out from the consumer how to make the experience of buying local better? What do consumers really want? Why do they buy what they buy and where do they buy it? Find out the answers to these questions and more on Saturday, October 27th, 2007 at the Spectacular Events Center in Bangor, Maine.

The Heart of Maine RC&D and Maine Department of Agricul-

ture are providing Maine farmers with a unique opportunity to hear from consumers first hand. Greg Franklin, a marketing professional from New Hampshire with a background in agriculture, will facilitate a consumer focus group LIVE at an all day marketing workshop especially for Maine farmers.

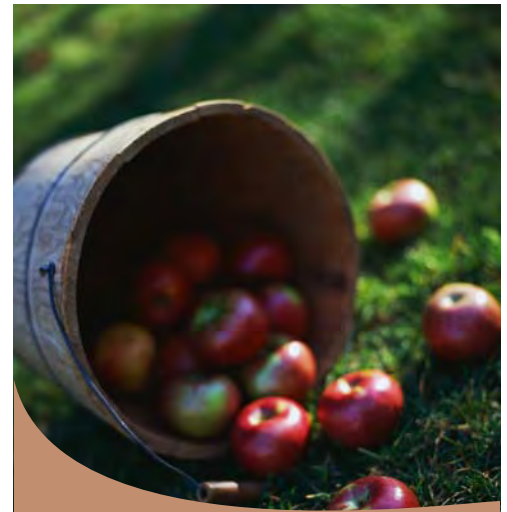
Morning sessions will focus on word of mouth (WOM) marketing. Virginia Miracle, of South Carolina marketing firm, Brains on Fire, will share WOM mar-

keting techniques that you can use to encourage people to talk about your product and make it easy for them to do so. To top off the day, Steve Taylor, New Hampshire's Commissioner of Agriculture for over two decades, will provide his insights about the trends and future of agriculture in New England.

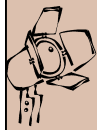
The cost is \$20 per person. To find out more and to register, go to [www.heartofmaine.org](http://www.heartofmaine.org) or call Tessa at 947-6622 x5.

# Eat Healthy Buy Local Food at Penobscot County Farmers Markets

- Brewer Farmer's Market:** May thru October, Tues thru Fri 8-1 and Saturday 8-3  
Brewer Auditorium on Wilson Street
- Dexter Farmer's Market:** June thru October, Fridays 9-1  
P & L Country Market parking lot on Route 7
- European Farmer's Market:** Saturdays 9-1 year round  
Sunnyside Greenhouse 117 Buck Street, Bangor
- Orono Farmers Market:** May thru November, Tuesdays 2-5:30 & Saturdays 8-1  
University of Maine Steam Plant on College Ave in Orono  
FMI: [www.oronofarmersmarket.org](http://www.oronofarmersmarket.org)



## Meet Our New Staff Members



### Backyard Conservation Spotlight

Adapted from Conservation Practices for Homeowners Factsheet Series

## Permitting—Understanding Environmental Laws and Requirements

As the summer season begins many landowners are planning to install some improvements on their shoreland properties. If you have any plans to construct, expand or relocate a structure, clear vegetation, create a new path or driveway, stabilize a shoreline or otherwise disturb the soil on your property, contact the DEP and your Town Code Enforcement Officer. Even if the projects are planned with the intent of enhancing the environment, contact the DEP and the Town to be sure.

Protection of Maine's watersheds is ensured through the goodwill of residents around the lakes and through laws and ordinances created and enforced by the State of Maine and local municipalities. The following laws and ordinances require permits for activities adjacent to wetlands and water bodies.

**Shoreland Zoning Law**—Construction, clearing of vegetation and soil movement within 250 feet of lakes, ponds, and many wetlands and within 75 feet of most streams, fall under the Shoreland Zoning Act, which is administered by the Town through the Code Enforcement Officer and the Planning Board.

**Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA)**—Soil disturbance and other activi-

ties within 75 feet of the lakeshore or stream also falls under the NRPA, which is administered by the Maine DEP.

### How to Apply for a Permit by Rule with DEP:

To ensure that permits for small projects are processed swiftly, the DEP has established a streamlined permit process called **Permit by Rule**. These one page forms are simple to fill out and allow the DEP to quickly review your project.

1. Fill out a notification form before starting any work. Forms are available from your town code enforcement officer, Maine DEP, the District Office or online at [www.mainedep.com](http://www.mainedep.com).
2. The permit will be reviewed by DEP within 14 days. If you do not hear from DEP in 14 days, you can assume your permit is approved and you can proceed with work on the project.
3. Follow all standards required for the specific permitted activities to keep soil erosion to a minimum. It is important that you obtain a copy of the standards so you will be familiar with the law's requirements.

**Eric Giberson**—joined NRCS as a Soil Conservationist in April 1, 2007.



Born and raised in Fort Fairfield, Eric grew up on a potato farm which is still operated by his father and brother. He received his B.S. in Sustainable Agriculture from the University of Maine as well as his Masters in Agronomy, specializing in Nutrient Management.

After school Eric worked at the Aroostook Research Farm for two years. In May 2000 he started working at Cornell Cooperative Extension. Most recently Eric worked on a 2,500 cow dairy farm.



**Elizabeth Wright**—“Bessie” joined the Conservation District in April. Bessie is with AmeriCorps and is a member of the Maine Conservation Corps. Bessie is assisting the District with our watershed and education programs during her service.

Bessie is a native of Buxton and was active in Bonny Eagle High School's Environment Team. Bessie is a recent graduate of the University of Maine where she received degrees in Ecology and Environmental Sciences as well as Wildlife Ecology.

# Look inside for details on the 2007 Fall Bulb Sale

The District News is a service of the Penobscot County Soil & Water Conservation District & the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

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[www.penobscotswcd.org](http://www.penobscotswcd.org)

[www.me.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.me.nrcs.usda.gov)

## Upcoming Events

### Agricultural Fairs:

- Bangor State Fair—July 27th through August 5th. [www.bangorstatefair.com](http://www.bangorstatefair.com)
- Springfield Fair—August 30th through September 3rd. [www.thespringfieldfiar.com](http://www.thespringfieldfiar.com)

**Maine Farm Days**—Friday & Saturday, August 17 and 18th at the Misty Meadows Farm on Hill Road in Clinton.

**Open Farm Day**—July 22th. Rain or shine you can watch farm activities and educational demonstrations, pet animals, farm raised products and crafts for sale. For a

list of participating farms in Penobscot County visit [www.getrealmaine.com/visit/ofd](http://www.getrealmaine.com/visit/ofd)

**Bulb Sale**—Orders are due by August 24th.

Did you receive more than one newsletter? If so please let us know and we will correct the error. Thank You for your assistance.

The Penobscot County SWCD and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service are Equal Opportunity Providers and Employers



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