

Penobscot District News

Penobscot County Soil & Water Conservation District

Fall 2005

www.penobscotswcd.org

Wassookeag Buffer Planted with the Help of Many Hearty Volunteers

Sara McCabe

At 7:45 am on September 7th, volunteers gathered for the buffer planting project at the boat launch on Lake Wassookeag in Dexter.

Keep in mind that the official meeting time was 8 a.m., and you will have an idea of how dedicated, hard-working and efficient this group was! 14 volunteers from the Dexter Lakes Association, 3 Town of Dexter employee volunteers, 1 Dexter Utilities volunteer, 3 Soil and Water Conservation District employees and 1 landscape designer put their shovels, rakes, wheel barrows and bodies to work planting, hauling, and spreading. In all, volunteers planted over 297 plants, hauled and spread 6 yards of mulch, 3 yards of compost, and 6 yards of stone!

A great deal of thanks goes to the Dexter Lakes Association.

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Peggy Kaufman presents Sara with a donation from the Dexter Lakes Association for the Buffer Project. The others in the photo are Chris Brewer, Duke Leighton, Ed Graham, Bill Murphy and Kirsten Reberg-Horton.

Pushaw Lake To Receive Funding For Water Quality Protection

Chris Brewer

The District recently received notification from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection that we have received a grant for \$96,090 for the "Pushaw Lake Partners – Non-Point Source Watershed Project." The purpose of this project is to improve the water quality of Pushaw Lake through the installation of Conservation Best Management Practices (BMPs) and educational programs.

This is the first phase in a multi-phased project. To implement the first phase of this project, we have partnered with the Greater Pushaw Lake Association (GPLA), the University of Maine Cooperative Extension's Water Quality office, the towns of Glenburn, Hudson, Orono and the City of Old Town. This first phase will target implementation of BMPs in the Towns of Glenburn and Hudson for sites that have been documented in a recent watershed survey that was completed by the GPLA.


There will be many educational opportunities that will be open to the public even if you are not in the Pushaw Watershed. We will be holding several workshops covering the following topics, Vegetative Buffer Design and Implementation, and Camp Roads Design and Maintenance. Watch for notifications in our upcoming newsletters for these workshops.

The partners are also organizing an educational field

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

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

Wassookeag Continued

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ciation for their amazing volunteers, and their generous gift of \$250 towards this project. The project could not have been completed without the help of the Town of Dexter, and Dexter Utilities



Retha Crawford and Judy Doore, Dexter Town Manager, planting Daylilies

who volunteered labor and the use of equipment. The Town of Dexter volunteered hauling of the stone, the use of a tractor the day of the planting, as well as labor before and during the planting. Randy Webber from Dexter Utilities volunteered time and labor tilling the area and digging fence post holes with his machinery. Thank you all!!

The buffer is designed to perform many essential tasks on the lakeshore that protect and improve water quality. By helping to replace the natural vegetation that is often removed with human development, buffers slow down water flowing over the ground, letting sediment settle out and allowing plants to take up nutrients before they reach the lake. At the same time, the leaf canopy of this vegetation slow down powerful raindrops as they fall from the sky, and root systems of the plants hold the soil, reducing erosion of sediment into the lake. Sediment carries with it nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen that can lead to harmful algae blooms, which can upset the natural balance of life in the lake and negatively impact aquatic life such as cold-water fish species, not to mention negatively effecting

recreation and property values.

This buffer planting is an example of one way that lakefront landowners can protect water quality on Lake Wassookeag. Much of the shore-front property of the lake is currently lawn which is mowed to the water's edge. This type of plant growth does not provide adequate buffering for water quality protection. The demonstration buffer highlights three different practices that landowners can employ to help protect water quality. The first section is a "no-mow" zone, where the area will be allowed to grow back with vegetation naturally by simply not mowing. This is the most inexpensive way to establish a buffer. The second section is the "natural planting" buffer, where native trees and shrubs are spot-planted along the shore. The third section is a "formal planting" buffer, which uses ornamental plants and shrubs, mulch, and a



Kirsten directing the crew on the next step of installation.

stone pathway as a buffer. All of these options help to improve and maintain water quality.

Please take some time to check out the buffer, and consider installing one if your land borders a water body (rivers and streams need buffers, too). Buffers not only add value and beauty to your property, but help to protect your investment in our natural resources. The Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District provides technical assistance to individuals interested in these types of projects. If you would

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like to receive technical assistance with a buffer project, or if you have any questions about this project, please contact Sara McCabe at 207-990-3676 or by email at sara.mccabe@penobscotswcd.org.

Many Thanks to the Buffer Planting Volunteers:

Dexter Lakes Assn.: Jack Brown, Jeanne Carcieri, Lois, Neil and Vern Crane, Bob and Retha Crawford, Ed and Sandy Graham, Kay Gray, Peggy Kaufman, John Maher, Bill Scholl, Marilyn Scribner.

Town of Dexter: Judith Doore, Duke Leighton, Bill Murphy.

Dexter Utilities: Randy Webber.

Somerset County Soil and Water Conservation District: Jeff McCabe.

Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District: Chris Brewer, Sara McCabe & Volunteer Josh Brewer.

Landscape Designer: Kirsten Reberg-Horton, Kalmia Landscape Design, Old Town.

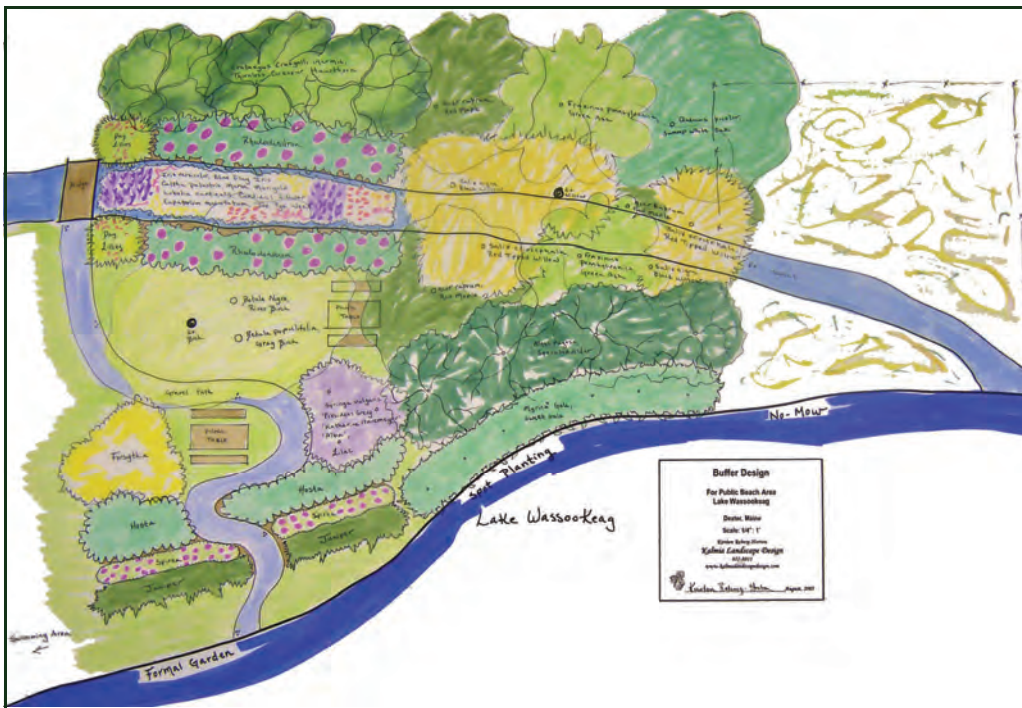
Pushaw Continued

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day that will be held in July 2006 in conjunction with the GPLA's Annual Boat Regatta. This field day will feature the Maine Lakes Conservancy Institute's "floating classroom" the *Melinda Ann*. She is a custom-outfitted 30' pontoon boat with an impressive array of lake science technology engaging students of all ages in hands-on field-based learning. For more information on the *Melinda Ann* visit MLCI's website at www.mlci.org. Other events during the day will include presentations on buffers, camp roads, water quality, and there will be many activities for children.

This year Maine DEP received 23 requests for funding totaling over \$1.3 million. DEP was only able to fund 14 of these requests totaling just over \$770,000. The District would like to thank Kerry Sack, GPLA President and Laura Wilson from UMCE for assisting Chris with their successful grant request.

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



Kirsten's design for the buffer, for more detail visit the Dexter Lakes page on our website.

Sebasticook Lake Watershed Project Update

Sara McCabe

Work on the Sebasticook Lake Watershed 319 Project has been busy through this summer season, with work in progress on 12 camp roads, and 7 buffer and shoreline stabilization projects. With the wet spring, many contractors were pushed back several weeks and as a result, much of our road work is slated for completion this fall.

Several dedicated individuals and road associations have taken an interest in remedying problem areas on their roads because of their concern for water quality. In this very real way, education efforts of many years have begun to pay off, with neighbors educating neighbors, and individuals seeking resources, information and technical assistance from the Conservation District.

We continue to have more and more interest in buffer plantings on the shorefront of Sebasticook. Thanks to help from programs such as the University of Maine Cooperative Extension "Buffer Brigade", which assists landowners in the installation of vegetative buffers, and the Department of Environmental Protection "Lake Smart" program, which recognizes individuals who are working to reduce their impact on lakes, lakefront landowners are excited about helping to improve lake water quality.

We Are Looking for Volunteers for the Survey of the East Branch of the Sebasticook

As part of the 319 work on Sebasticook Lake, the Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District will be conducting a non-point

source survey of the East Branch of the Sebasticook River from Corinna to Sebasticook Lake on Saturday, October 1, 2005. The day will consist of non-point source training in the morning, with field work in the afternoon. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Sara McCabe.

The District has an Aerway Aerator available for rent at a reasonable rate of \$3.00 per acre. The aerator can be used anywhere soil compaction is resulting in reduced growth in pastures or hay ground. For more information contact the District and speak with Chris.



Mike Vining recently installed a vegetative buffer on his property with the "Buffer Brigade"



The site before the buffer installation.



The site after the buffer installation.

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It's Not Too Late to Support the Maine Agricultural License Plate!

If you missed the September 1, deadline to sign up for the Agricultural License plate there is still time. We missed our goal of 2,000 signatures and have received an extension to get signatures.

The license plate initiative is being spearheaded by the Maine Agriculture in the Classroom Association (MAITCA). They are a partner of the Maine Conservation Districts who's mission is to promote understanding of agriculture and natural resources among students, educators and the general public.

You can help us make this license

plate a reality by signing up to reserve your own set(s) of this colorful & attractive plate. \$20 per set of plates must accompany your sign-up. Once we attain the minimum number of plate orders (2,000), the license plate will become a reality (we will try for 2006, and in a worst case scenario, the \$20 will be refunded to everyone). Of the subsequent \$15 annual fee, \$10 will be transferred to a special fund for agricultural education programs administered by the MAITCA. The remaining \$5 (per set of plates) will be used for administration and production costs of the plate. For even more information, visit the AG Tag Initiative website at www.maineagtag.com or call MAITCA at 287-5522. You can also sign up at the District Office.

Remember \$10 from the annual fees goes to the MAITCA education fund. This fund will help to support the Maine Envirothon and other District Education Programs!



Information for supporters who intend to purchase the Agricultural Specialty License Plate

I understand by signing this form and paying the \$20 fee per set of license plates, that I agree to purchase the agricultural specialty license plate. A voucher will be issued to me by the Secretary of State's Office when the plates are available.

Print Name: _____ Mailing Address: _____
Signature _____ Town & Zip: _____
Current Plate #: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Please mail with check made payable to Maine Agriculture in the Classroom Assn. (MAITCA) 28 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333. For more information call the MAITCA office at (207) 287-5522 or e-mail maitca@maine.gov

Attention Sebasticook Lake and Pushaw Lake Certified FrontRunner Operators. Penobscot County SWCD has a FrontRunner that you can rent and it is kept in Bangor. The FrontRunner is available to you at a rental rate of \$50/week. If you are interested please contact Chris.

Sebasticook River Restoration Project Now Complete

Chris Brewer

It's been a long time coming, this summer saw the completion of the "Sebasticook River Fisheries Habitat Restoration Project," with the stabilization of the stream banks in the Town of Newport. This aggressive project began in the summer of 2002. The project was funded primarily by the Natural Resources Conservation Service through the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program. Funds from this program totaled over \$667,000. Much of the planning and contract work was overseen by Jim Ricker, Newport's Town Manager.

The Sebasticook River is the largest tributary in the Kennebec River Watershed and historically supported large runs of nine different sea-run (anadromous) fish species. The main goal of the project was to restore the river's habitat for these fish. The survival of these migratory species is dependant upon our ability to provide adequate, essential habitat. Anadromous fish are an important food source in our lakes, rivers and oceans providing forage for a number of aquatic and terrestrial species.

We took three major steps to improve the river's habitat in Newport. The first major project was the removal of the Guilford Dam. This dam was right next to Route 2 in town and was built more than 80 years ago. This dam was a valuable asset to the town as well as Guilford Industries as it fed a fire protection pond. But it was also an impenetrable obstacle for migrating fish. The town has since established other sources of water for fire protection, so it was determined that the dam was no longer needed.

The second major project was to install a fish passage on Sebasticook

Lake's outlet dam. Sebasticook Lake offers a large habitat important to the spawning process of alewives. The passage was designed with a concrete pool and chute structure that creates still-water pools that are ideal for public viewing. Public access to the pools is at



This is just one example of the severely eroded river banks on the East Branch Sebasticook River directly below Sebasticook Lake.

the Newport Public Beach.

The final step in the restoration project was to restore the riverbed to its original course. This area was flooded due to the Guilford Dam which altered the stream banks. The stream channel has been restored to its original meandering flow and is designed to handle the large flow when the lake is drawn down at the end of the summer.



Here is the same section of the river bank shown above with several stabilization practices installed including rock rip-rap and excelsior matting with grass seed.

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Annual Wreath Sale Now Underway



Order a Handmade Maine Balsam Christmas Wreath from the Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District. Your wreath is handmade by Maine Wreath Artisans.

It is: 22" in diameter decorated with Austrian pine cones, reindeer moss, red berries and a red velvet waterproof bow.

Price: \$27.00 Includes packaging and UPS shipping in the continental United States. Wreaths will be shipped right from the factory to the address on your order. Add \$7.50 for shipments to Hawaii, Alaska, and Puerto Rico. State of Maine Sales Tax will be applicable on wreathes shipped within the state. You may also order online at our website www.penobscotswcd.org.

All proceeds from this fundraiser will benefit education programs for all the Districts in Maine.

Christmas Wreath Order Form

Total Qty _____ \$27each Subtotal: _____
5% Maine Sales Tax (if applicable) _____
Additional Shipping _____
Total Enclosed: _____

Method of Payment Check/Money Order Cash

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
E-mail: _____

Ordering deadline November 15, 2005. All orders will be shipped on November 25, please allow 2 weeks for delivery.

Return this form with payment to:
Penobscot County SWCD
28 Gilman Plaza, Suite #2, Bangor, ME 04401

Order #1 Please use UPS street addresses only no P.O. Box numbers.

Quantity: _____ Please check if #1 is for yourself _____
Ship To: _____
Address: _____
Your message for gift orders: _____

Order #2 Please use UPS street addresses only no P.O. Box numbers.

Quantity: _____
Ship To: _____
Address: _____
Your message for gift orders: _____

If additional space for orders is needed please send order information on a separate sheet of paper.

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Upcoming Events

- **September 23-25—The Common Ground Country Fair will be held in Unity. For more information contact the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association at 568-4142 or www.mofga.org**
- **October 1—Sebasticook River East Branch Watershed Survey. Volunteers are need to assist us with the survey. We will be looking at the river's watershed from Sebasticook Lake upstream to the outlet dam on Corrundel Bog in Corinna. For more information or to volunteer, give Sara a call.**
- **October 6—Fall Trout Sale Pickup—12:00 p.m. in the USDA Service Center Parking Lot.**
- **October 6 & 7—Fall Bulb Sale Pickup between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.**
- **November 15—Wreath Sale orders due, more information on this sale is enclosed.**

To contact us for Additional Information on our programs:

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