
So NOTED



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Grant Highlight

Presumpscot Watershed Initiative—“Implementing Water Quality Improvements to Support Vital Fisheries”

USM Principal Investigator: Karen Young, Muskie School of Public Service

Funder: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Project Period: February 2006 through January 2008

Overview: Building on significant improvements in the Presumpscot River over the last decade, the Presumpscot Watershed Initiative (PWI) will implement a suite of projects to improve water quality, enhance riparian habitat, reduce contaminant loading, and foster increased stewardship and awareness among watershed inhabitants.

Demonstration projects will model land stewardship practices to watershed landowners and land users. Project partners will monitor bacteria, nutrients, and other water quality parameters to provide an indication of measurable progress. The project’s educational outreach elements will serve to actively engage multiple watershed stakeholder groups.

Goal: Lower overall loading of sediment, bacteria, nutrient, and toxics to the Presumpscot River and tributaries.

Tasks:

- ✓ Stabilize stream banks and improve culverts at 46 road crossings over streams to reduce erosion;
- ✓ Re-establish forested riparian buffers by planting 2,000 trees and shrubs along river and stream banks;
- ✓ Work with agricultural land owners through a cost-sharing program to install fencing and alternative watering systems to keep cows off riverbanks and out of streams;
- ✓ Support six watershed golf courses in seeking

Audubon International Cooperative Sanctuary Certification Program certification as environmentally sustainable, including the installation of three equipment wash pads and other best management practices;

- ✓ Establish a Presumpscot River Youth Conservation Corps to engage area youth in direct stewardship of their watershed through hands-on implementation of projects;
- ✓ Conduct outreach to homeowners to reduce pesticide and fertilizer use through the Yardscaping program;
- ✓ Monitor water quality for critical water quality parameters including temperature and dissolved oxygen;
- ✓ Develop an interactive website with watershed maps and data from the project and initiate a “Maps for Schools” program.

Grant Partners:

- ▶ Presumpscot River Watershed Coalition
- ▶ Casco Bay Estuary Partnership
- ▶ Presumpscot River Watch
- ▶ Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District
- ▶ Friends of Casco Bay
- ▶ Friends of the Presumpscot River
- ▶ Maine Department of Environmental Protection