

**Presumpscot River Watershed Coalition**  
**January 26, 2006**  
**4:00- 6:00 p.m.**  
**@ MDEP, Canco Road, Portland**

**Next Meetings of the PRWC Board**

**Thursday      March 23 3:00 – 5:00 PM**  
**Thursday      May 25 3:00 – 5:00 PM**

**In attendance (at all or part of the meeting):** Forrest Bell-PRW, Jeff Varricchione-DEP, Don Kale-DEP, Betty Williams-CCSWCD, Diane Gould-EPA, Matt Craig- CBEP, Merrie Cartwright- NOAA Fisheries, Erin Crowley- Americorps, Karen Young- CBEP, Will Plumley- FOPR, Fred Dillon- FOPR, John MacKinnon -Windham Town Council, Mary Cerullo –FOCB, Tom Tero - CCA, Bob Heyner – Cumberland Lands and Conservation Association, Nan Cummings- Portland Trails, Brooks Moore - Westbrook

**I. Introductions**

Will welcomed John MacKinnon (Windham Town Council) as a new member of the Board.

**II. Presumpscot Watershed Initiative (PWI) Grant Award**

All present enjoyed cake and sparkling cider to celebrate the \$739,942 Targeted Watershed grant award.

Matt noted that the joint PRWC/CBEP project was one of 12 selected nationally from a total of 72 applicants. Matt Craig and Will Plumley will be attending a national kick-off conference for the project on February 13-15 in Albuquerque, NM. Project participants gave a brief summary of the tasks, as follows:

Task 1 – Yardscaping - Mary C. – FOCB, CCSWCD, Maine DEP and the Maine Board of Pesticide Control will pilot the Yardscaping program, holding “socials” in targeted neighborhoods to educate homeowners and raise awareness in order to decrease loads of lawn chemicals to the Presumpscot.

Task 2 –Agricultural Management Improvements – Betty – CCSWCD will provide agricultural landowners with technical assistance and cost-sharing to reduce streambank erosion and pollution problems associated with livestock use of tributaries as a water source.

Task 3 – Stream Crossing Erosion Control and Culvert Replacement – Betty – Following up on the survey that Forrest conducted in 2002, seven municipalities will work with CCSWCD, providing match through cash, labor and materials to stabilize stream crossings.

Task 4 – Presumpscot River Youth Conservation Corps (PRWYCC) and Riparian Buffer Enhancement – Matt – Working through the Maine Conservation Corps, CBEP will host an Americorps position to serve as Technical Advisor to the new PRYCC. The PRYCC

will focus on riparian buffer enhancement and restoration projects. Hopefully, the YCC will be established as a long-term effort.

Task 5 – Golf Course Environmental Certification and Equipment Wash Pads – Forrest – This task will target six golf courses on the shoreline of the Presumpscot River and its tributaries:

- Riverside (Portland Municipal Golf Course)
- Valhalla (on the East Branch of the Piscataqua)
- Falmouth Country Club (on the East Branch of the Piscataqua)
- Woodlands (Falmouth near the Presumpscot)
- Sunset Ridge (Westbrook near Inkhorn Brook)
- River Meadow (Westbrook on the Presumpscot)

PRW staff will work with the golf courses towards Audubon International Cooperative Sanctuary certification (to reduce soil erosion and nonpoint source pollution from fertilizer and pesticide runoff). The project will also provide matching funds for three equipment wash pads to reduce polluted runoff.

Task 6 – Education and Outreach – Matt – PRWC and CBEP will work with other project partners to establish a project website which will also serve as the PRWC homepage. The internet mapping component will provide access to information developed through the PWI project. CCSWCD will develop and implement an educational program (“Maps for Schools”) in middle and high-schools focused on the Presumpscot River. Maps and CDs will be developed to accompany the curriculum materials. Task 6 will also include tours, presentations to municipalities and to other watersheds and managers.

Task 7 – Water Quality Monitoring – Forrest- PRW and FOCB will monitor upstream and downstream before and after BMP installation. There may not be measurable changes over the two-year life of this project, but this is step one in a long-term monitoring program for PRW and FOCB. Contaminants in the river will be monitored with 4 in-stream datasondes. All the data will go into EPA’s STORET database.

Matt noted that the name of the project will be the Presumpscot Watershed Initiative. The official time-frame will be February 1, 2006 through January 31, 2008. Bob Heyner suggested that the Volunteer Lake Management Association may be a good source of monitoring volunteers. John asked if there will be any activities in the headwater lakes for this grant. Forrest noted that the emphasis for this grant is the river rather than the lakes.

Will noted that Matt is the Project Manager for the grant. He pointed out the value of the PRWC/CBEP combined effort and the value of the coalition in implementing the Plan for the River. CBEP will administer the project. Structurally, the PRWC currently has three committees: Cumulative Impacts, Open Space, and Fisheries. This grant will deal primarily with Cumulative Impacts issues. The PWI Project Team will comprise the Cumulative Impacts Committee of the PRWC for the next two years. Some project decisions may come to the PRWC. Will Plumley will wear the PRWC hat on the Project Team. PRWC will be the keeper of the long-term vision once the grant funds run out.

Hopefully the activities of this grant will ignite the other committees' work as well. Will asked everyone to think about their current committee membership and invited anyone who is not currently on the Cumulative Impacts Committee to participate if they want to be involved in the PWI.

### **III. Gorham Bypass Project Update**

Forrest noted that PRWC has been involved in negotiations to select a restoration site for approximately 25 acres of wetlands impacted by the Gorham Bypass project. He estimates that the funding available for restoration is between 1 and 2 million dollars. At the last meeting of the PRWC, it was agreed that PRWC should strongly support using the available funding towards the removal of Cumberland Mills Dam. Karen, Dusti and Forrest subsequently attended an interagency site walk to look at potential sites and explained the PRWC's support of the Cumberland Mills site. Other possible sites discussed were protection and restoration work at the RWS property in Gorham and permanent protection of 1 ¼ miles of riparian land near the RWS site. Forrest recently spoke with Dean Van Dusen from Maine DOT and provided a summary update as follows:

#### **Gorham Bypass Project Update**

**Conversation with Deane Van Dusen, MDOT mitigation director 1/24/06**

##### **January interagency meeting**

*Cumberland Mills discussed. Dana Murch is supporting this option and addressed questions from agencies as to whether SAPPI is committed to project. Dana expressed that within a year there should be an answer to this question. Group discussed that there could be a "reverter clause" in the mitigation agreement that would allow \$ to be spent on dam removal if it occurred within 5 years. Still on table but there is not a lot of agreement between agencies. There is a concern from the Army Corps that this type of option is unique in their "404 rules" in that it would not directly replicate functions and values being lost – in other words, they haven't done this before.*

*Another option that was not mentioned previously to the PRWC by the agencies but has resurfaced – this involves the possible construction of wetlands at two borrow pits – one in Gorham (Presumpscot watershed) and one in Scarborough (Nonesuch watershed). Both pits owned by Grondin. Test results relating to hydrologic functions from these pits are currently being analyzed and presented to agencies. One roadblock to this option is that there needs to be a land purchase finalized before the design work can commence.*

*The RWS project is still on the table but was not seen as a favorable option by the agencies, particularly EPA and Army Corps. It is possible that there could still be some protection on this parcel of the lower Presumpscot floodplain.*

*The Rines property (part of the riparian protection option) is still on the table and is seen as a priority as it is a good functional match for the mitigation, according to the agencies. This option alone, however, would not satisfy the mitigation needs for the project.*

*Deane said that the Gorham bypass mitigation project is on a “fast track” but he could not explain why at this point. He is waiting to hear back from Jay Clement of the Army Corps who is trying to gain some consensus among the agencies. He will contact me as soon as they have some information which could be very soon.*

*I offered that we would like to help however we can and to not hesitate to contact me for more information or assistance.*

#### **IV. Westbrook Resource Protection Zone Change**

Brooks Moore reorted that Westbrook Conservation Commission is working on amending shoreland zoning to protect the Presumpscot, focusing mainly on tributaries. On Mill Brook they would widen the existing protection zone from 75 feet to perhaps 100 feet and they would add a protection zone along Minnow Brook (near Falmouth). They intend to redo the zoning map, write up the proposed changes and present them to the Planning Board in late February. Here will be 2 meetings before the Planning Board, then 2 meetings before the City Council. A decision would be made in mid to late spring. They asked if the PRWC would review the changes and send someone to the Planning Board meeting. Brooks thought a presentation to the Planning Board focused on riverine biology would be helpful (It might also be a good time to give a very brief presentation on the PWI). Brooks will e-mail the document to the PRWC. The Conservation Commission will meet on Monday night (1/30) to firm up the details. Don and Jeff expressed an interest in representing the PRWC. Forrest will act as point person on communication. Don will coordinate the comments. Merrie agreed to provide baseline level knowledge of riverine biology and will provide slides to Don. John noted that Windham is looking for model land use ordinances and may look to Westbrook. Brooks noted that members with experience in shoreland zoning are welcome to come Monday night at 5:30 to Westbrook City Hall to the Conservation Commission meeting. Jeff and Don were interested in attending on Monday. Karen noted that the Open Space White Paper in the Plan has good information on buffers to share with the Conservation Commission.

Will suggested we rearrange the agenda now and move to VIII.

#### **VIII. Schedule Annual Meeting and This Year’s Meetings**

Will noted that the regular schedule has been the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of every other month. He suggested that we change the meeting time to 3:00 to 5:00 PM. No one objected. The dates agreed upon were:

March 23 – This meeting will also serve as the Annual Meeting. At the beginning of the regular general meeting, we will hold the Annual Meeting, addressing the addition of new Board members and Executive Committee members (we have 5, can have as many

as 9). A suggested presentation for the Annual Meeting was the Real School in Windham's canoe trek along the Presumpscot River.

May 25

July 27

September 28

December 7 (to avoid the holiday crunch)

## **VI. Project Proposal – Westbrook Jr. High water quality probe**

Forrest discussed a request from Wescott Junior High in Westbrook for \$2,200 for two sets of field and classroom kits which would include a test kit for dissolved oxygen, pH, nitrate-nitrogen and phosphate, as well as a USB link, a data loggers, 2 flow rate/temperature probes, conductivity probes, turbidity, and GPS units. After discussion, the following was agreed to by consensus:

1. Fund the school up to \$2,200 for monitoring equipment, but not the phosphate and nitrogen analysis kits (not accurate enough to be useable). Forrest should work with Jeff to determine the best equipment to recommend.
2. The service learning monitoring project should have a hypothesis which the students should try to answer using the data they collect. A good one may be "we believe that the Presumpscot River (or a tributary) near the school can/cannot support brook trout".
3. We would like the students to present their findings to the PRWC.
4. We would like to see some of the work correspond with our project work at the River Meadow Golf Course near the school (i.e., use their time for match to the PWI grant)

It was also agreed that PRWC should not fund more than one school project per year.

## **V. Project Updates**

### Signs

Portland trails- Nan- The interpretive sign at the former dam site is all but done. We are waiting for a manufacturer to make it and install it. Should be up in the spring.

Betty noted that the signs for the Little River and Tannery Brook (Gorham) will be up likely in the spring. The Piscataqua and Pleasant River signs are already up.

Forrest reported that the GSLRLT historical and water quality signs for the Gambo Dam area where the gunpowder mill was located are also waiting for manufacture and should be up in the spring.

### Presumpscot River Guide

Erin reported that the formatting is done, editing is under way, and the monitoring chapter needs work. She hopes for summer availability. FOPR offered to review the draft. Others are invited to review it if interested.

Gravel Pit – Fred noted that Irwin is gone from March – July but his students Chris Jones and Justin Rich have a presentation ready, mapping a time series of gravel pits from 1998

to 2004, mostly in Gorham. It was agreed that they should be invited to the March 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting to give their presentation.

### **IX. Other Business and News**

It was noted that on February 21<sup>st</sup>, the Supreme Court will take up the case S.D. Warren vs. Maine DEP.

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