

Presumpscot River Watershed Coalition
December 7, 2006
3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
@ MDEP, Canco Road, Portland

2007 Upcoming Meetings of the PRWC Board

Thursday	January 25th 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Thursday	March 22nd
Thursday	May 24th
Thursday	July 26th
Thursday	September 27th
Thursday	December 6th

In attendance: Forrest Bell-PRW, Jeff Varricchione-DEP, Betty Williams-CCSWCD, Diane Gould-EPA, Matt Craig- CBEP, Will Plumley- FOPR, Mary Cerullo – FOCB, Betty Williams - CCSWCD, Lee Doggett – DEP, Don Kale – DEP, Bob Heyner, Cumberland Con Com, John MacKinnon, Windham Town Council, Lois Winter, USF&W

I. Introductions – Will led a round of introductions.

II. Cumulative Impacts Committee Update

➤ **Presumpscot Watershed Initiative (PWI)**

- Rosemary Mosher has been in contact with the Maine Dept. of Education about providing our PWI data on CD to 7th and 8th graders with State-provided laptops already loaded with GIS software. The State is excited about this opportunity to teach kids to use GIS with real data.
- Also, Rosemary and Kirsten have developed maps. Sarah Plummer is working with kids at several schools. They are learning to read topos and using playdough to understand the watershed concept. Matt Craig is going to visit one of the schools next week.
- Partners in the PWI project are meeting next week to discuss quality assurance of monitoring data (identifying and dealing with outliers).
- The Youth Conservation Corps is starting to gear up for the new season. Kim Barletta, CBEP intern, is looking for buffer projects. Betty, Kim and Matt have been doing site visits. Kim is working with CBEP, looking at ATV outreach efforts (e.g., Mill Brook). Kim is with CBEP until the end of the month.
- Betty, Rosemary, Will, Tamara, and Matt will make a presentation on the PWI to the CBEP Board next week.
- Betty reported on the Laskey Rd. stream crossing in Windham. The original plan was an open bottom culvert but it was too expensive for the Road Association . The new design is an oversized bottom-buried culvert. It is more cost-effective (\$11K vs \$35K). The success of this approach will be tracked. If successful, it may be worth giving a presentation at the Maine Water Conference. Betty noted that she hoped to work more with NRCS, partner with David Chiapetta. She is looking at opportunities at a llama farm.
- Forrest noted that Riverside Golf Course signed on to the PWI project in mid-Oct. A total of 120 trees and plants were planted in mid-Oct (5-10 foot trees along

the river, plantings along the stream that bisects the course and drains into a pond and ultimately into the river). A no-mow zone has been established that includes 1000 ft of stream and 6000 feet along the river.

➤ **Suva site**

-The Executive Committee has been discussing the Suva site on the Pleasant River. It is near Pope Rd. crossing. There is a steep clay bank with extensive erosion into the river. It is private property and the driveway area is threatened. Curtis Bohlen, Trout Unlimited looked at site and did an assessment. NRCS feels the site is not eligible for their funds. The Suvas understand that it would cost \$20K to do a study and design a solution. Will arranged to do a site visit soon with Barry Scheff from Woodward and Curran, and Doug Fortier from Windham. John MacKinnon noted that at this point the town is not involved. By way of follow-up, Forrest will talk to NRCS and Don agreed to talk to Maine Geological Survey (how close is the river to equilibrium?).

III. Fisheries Committee Update

-Will reported that in October, FOPR and American Rivers field a request with the Commissioner of Inland Fish and Wildlife for a hearing on fish passage at Cumberland Mills dam. This would be the first time that the Commissioner has used his legal right to require fish passage. Without passage at Cumberland Mills, the requirement in the FERC license for passage at the upstream dams will never be implemented, because the fish won't make it to the dams. Will asked for letters to Commissioner Martin. He noted that DEP, DMR and the Atlantic Salmon Commission have supported the request. The Commissioner has 60 days to respond. Dusti has developed a 4-page guidance memo to help with writing letters which will be e-mailed to the group. Will noted that FOPR is not asking the towns for letters at this point since some may be conflicted. Will agreed to send the PRWC the request that went to the Commissioner.

.IV. Open Space Update

➤ **Local and Regional Land Trust Collaboration**

- Westbrook has approached Richard, Forrest and Will about collaborating with the Sebago Lake Regional Land Trust. Brooks Moore attends meetings as well. There are 37 ½ acres along Mill Brook that need protection. Will said the message is that Westbrook is on board with the Trust and that connecting the missions of land trusts will add strength. PRWC acted as the catalyst for this.

-Will also noted that the Exec. Committee went to the Portland Trails Boat launch ceremony on the river last week. The efforts of the Land Trust working in and north of Westbrook and the efforts of Portland Trails are helping to implement our plan.

-Will read a letter regarding Windham Land Trust acquisition of Clark Farm Preserve (500 acres). PRWC agreed to support this acquisition. Will will pursue opportunities to collaborate. Lois described the Casco Bay Habitat Protection Funds (Trust has applied for these funds. Another funding source is the Small

North American Waterfowl Management Fund for projects with valuable waterbird habitat.

Bob noted that a good way to keep future town councils from building on property they acquire is to work with a land trust to establish a no-build easement.

-Will asked if a request to downgrade tributaries was a feasible idea. Lee discussed the 303(d) list and explained why downgrading is not something we would want to pursue.

-Portland Trails has purchased the 14 acre Brickyard property, a stop on the Island Trail. Also, they bought 3.8 acres in Westbrook, where the trail will connect with trails not now maintained. The City bought the Lucas Tree property and they are now negotiating easements.

V. Funded Project Updates

- **Mill Brook Shoreline Stabilization** – Betty provided handouts on this potential project. After the 1997 dam breach, Mill Brook cut a new channel heading for the property owner's house. Betty wants to implement the recommendations of NRCS, perhaps under the PWI grant. This would require help from the PRWC and the YCC to physically implement the recommendations. Betty will go through the permit process. Landowner will cost share 50:50. We will use Xmas trees to stabilize the bank. Jeff suggested talking to Dan Baumert, statewide NRCS engineer. Cost of trees, cabling, planting in the \$1500 – 2500 range. Betty will talk further with Matt to see if PWI or PWRC funds are appropriate. Several members of PRWC agreed to help on site.
- **Presumpscot Watershed Guide Revision** – Forrest noted that the section updates are underway. Rosemary Mosher will provide a map. The printer estimates \$500 for black and white guides, \$2200 for full color. We have allocated \$4,000.
- **Funding** – Matt reported that PRWC has \$2200 for 2007. We need to discuss how to fund our projects after the PWI grant ends (e.g., 319 funds). This should be a major topic at an upcoming meeting.
- **Website** – Matt, Erin Crowley and Will are putting a PWI-funded website together. PWI will have a subsite on a larger PWRC website. Matt, Erin and Will are meeting tomorrow. The site will have a map and Will is developing a logo.

VI. Other

- John discussed the plan for connecting to the Little Falls Wastewater Conveyance System, a positive move for the water quality of the river. Gorham has already approved this. If Windham approves, it will eliminate a wet water discharge into the river, making the first real discharge to the river in Westbrook. The Correctional Center would also go on this system. A developer wants to demolish the mill building and would encourage high density development in South Windham. The Town Council is meeting Tuesday night. Will agreed to attend on behalf of the PRWC.

VII. Dates of 2007 meetings: See the box at the top of these minutes.