

Presumpscot River Watershed Coalition
July 26, 2007
3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
@USM Law Building, Rm 506, Portland

2007 Upcoming Meetings of the PRWC Board

Wednesday September 26th

*******NOTE DATE CHANGE!!*******

Thursday December 6th

In attendance: Forrest Bell-PRW, Jeff Varricchione-DEP, Betty Williams-CCSWCD, Diane Gould-EPA, Matt Craig- CBEP, Will Plumley- FOPR, Betty Williams - CCSWCD, Lee Doggett – DEP, Don Kale – DEP, Lois Winter, USF&W, Dusti Faucher- FOPR, Fred Dillon- PRW, Bill Hancock -Maine Audubon, Sandra Cort, FOPR, Jennie Bridge – EPA, Don Kretchmer – ENSR, Wendy Gendron – ENSR, Merrie Cartwright – NOAA, Karen Young – CBEP, Nan Cummings – Portland Trails, Megan Wooster – Americorps, Melissa Evers, DEP

I. Introductions – Will led a round of introductions.

II. Presentation on Presumpscot River Bacterial TMDL – Don Kretchmer gave a power point presentation on the Presumpscot pilot as part of an approach to a bacterial TMDL for Maine rivers. Bacterially impaired segments are distributed all over the state. Many are in urban areas, a few are in the northern part of the state. Along the coast there are a lot of impairments. For example, downstream of the Presumpscot there are closed shellfish areas.

A TMDL or Total Maximum Daily Load is the amount of bacterially load that you can put into a water body and still meet water quality standards and designated uses. You allocate that loading number among all the sources (e.g., NPDES permits, stormwater).

TMDL = Loading Capacity = the sum of WLA (Waste Load Allocation, i.e., NPDES permits, regulated stormwater) + the sum of Load Allocation (natural, nonpoint source, unregulated stormwater) + MOS (Margin of Safety, the uncertainty factor, which could be 10 – 15%)

Concentration standards must be met even during storms. Everything coming in has to meet water quality standards. This insures that the standards are met everywhere. Conservatively assuming no die-off, no dilution and no settling, you can set the margin of safety at zero.

There are around 20 watersheds in Maine. Of these, 10 – 15 need watershed-based plans.

The TMDL uses water quality standards for the Waste Load Allocation and the Load Allocation. It is based on monitoring data.

The Presumpscot watershed in this case is defined to include the Saco watershed and the upper Sebago watershed. The segment of interest to the PRWC is actually the most impaired.

The document provides some guidance on dealing with bacterial loading. An appendix is provided for each of the watersheds. Local data and input can be included in the document.

Advantages of this Watershed TMDL Approach:

- ✓ Units can be added or subtracted as impairment status changes.
- ✓ Existing data is used; more can be added
- ✓ Flow data is not needed
- ✓ Activities in the watershed (watershed-based groups) can be included
- ✓ The focus is on implementation
- ✓ It is cost-effective; cost is low per segment
- ✓ A watershed-based TMDL for the Charles River in Massachusetts has already been approved

Disadvantages of the Watershed Approach

- ✓ May not be source specific
- ✓ May not separate human/animal/anthropogenic sources
- ✓ Does not allow for dilution/mixing at end of pipe
- ✓ Concentration based
- ✓ Must be expressed as daily load
- ✓ Difficult for NPDES stormwater permittee to meet
- ✓ Requires large reductions

Freshwater pathogen standards use *E. coli*, estuarine standards use *Enterococcus*, shellfish standards use fecal coliforms. This watershed TMDL method still works despite the different standards.

The Appendix includes:

- ✓ Multiple impaired segments
- ✓ Water Quality classification
- ✓ Maps
- ✓ Monitoring data available
- ✓ Land use data
- ✓ Local organization data

A GIS map shows impaired segments. Advisories/closure data for beaches is included (from the Healthy Beaches Program). A shellfish closure map is included. PRW monitoring data is included.

The percent reduction needed to meet the water quality standard can be calculated. For example, site PI020 (Piscataqua) would require a 45 -97% reduction based on 2006 data.

Percent reduction = (Sample concentration – 64) / Sample concentration X 100

Dry and wet weather data would be useful for implementation. PRW data doesn't differentiate wet vs. dry. The point is to watch the numbers over time and reduce bacteria from all sources.

DEP can use our help learning where the local sources are. Forrest noted that infiltration-based BMPs are most effective for bacteria according to the UNH Center for Stormwater.

Fred noted that the extent to which humans versus wildlife contribute to pollution varies in different areas based on microbial source tracking.

Lee noted that a state goal is to upgrade classifications, which can be accomplished by raising the bar and reducing sources. The state would like the lower Presumpscot to be a B.

Melissa asked the group to look at the Appendix document and tell DEP what would be helpful to add to make our implementation plans more effective, e.g., how to work with towns, contact information. Karen noted that source identification is key. Jennie pointed out that that level of detail is really part of a TMDL. The TMDL sets the target and the communities need to develop an implementation plan. It was suggested that the PRWC Plan be referenced in a link. Lee noted that addressing nutrients is a next step and that the state is starting to approach that.

Please get back to Melissa at DEP with questions and comments.

III. Cumberland Mills Agreement – Dusti reported that there is a preliminary agreement with SAPPI and that the hope is to have it signed by the end of the year. Basically, SAPPI will remove the dam and spillway and regrade for fish passage. Alterations to make both channels passable will go to beyond the bridge. They have until 2011 to make it passable. All parties will sign off on the work and the engineering (American Rivers, FOPR, DMR, USFW, SAPPI). American Rivers has an experienced river restoration engineer who will be involved. Kleinschmidt is doing the engineering. The next step in the agreement is the installation of fish lifts at Sacarappa by May 2016. There will be a counting facility and trap and truck facility at Sacarappa. As numbers increase, DMR and SAPPI can move the fish upstream.

SAPPI approached the state and Maine brought the NGOs to the table. Dana Murch from ME DEP and Pat Kelliher from DMR played a major role in getting all parties together and reaching agreement quickly with backing from the Commissioner and the Governor.

If the issue had gone to court, there would only be one fish ladder at Cumberland Mills. By removing the dam, we sacrifice time for upriver fish passage but insure that the fish can make it up the river. Getting the fish upriver with one fish ladder at Cumberland would have meant 40 -50 years to get the fish upriver. Mallison is scheduled for a fish lift in 2026 (Phase 2 of the FERC license). Dundee is off the table.

This was a compromise. SAPPI is happy with the outcome. They have clear title to their dams and clear costs. They will have to put in downstream passage and pay big penalties if they default. Lee asked if silt behind Cumberland Mills is a concern. Dusti has seen it drawn all the way down and didn't see any.

Dusti noted that eel passage was already part of the FERC license.

The group applauded this exciting success story!

IV. **Active Projects** (only those projects with progress to report are included)

Guide to the Presumpscot – Forrest noted that he expects to finish by the end of September.

Canoe Trip – Bill noted October may be a good time frame. He asked who is the audience? Don suggested that municipal officials may be a good target group. Diane agreed to send Bill some past minutes with the list of people on the Canoe Trip Subcommittee.

Website – Matt reported that Erin finished her work and is now education coordinator for the Ohio River foundation. CBEP will try to get a USM student to help. Will, Karen, Matt and Rosemary (the contractor) met to look at potential geospatial and mapping components. One approach is to use a Google Earth layer where you click on an icon and pull up a related report. The group will meet with SaraH Plummer and Rob Sanford to see what is most useful to schools. Matt can add meetings to the web page calendar. Also, contact Matt about linking to the web page, which would help with searches and visibility. Matt will contact Google. Minutes of the website meeting are available through Matt.

PWI - Matt noted a need to be more visible, perhaps through outreach to municipalities. The YCC is working through mid-August. A YCC tour will take place August 9th at 12, starting at Dundee, looking at 4 sites the YCC has worked on.

Macroinvertebrates – Jeff noted that the coalition had approved funding for Riverside Golf Course. Artificial substrate samplers will be installed July 27th and picked up next month. The data will be available next spring. Megan discussed Worldwide Monitoring Day (9/18 – 10/18). The website is at www.worldwidemonitoringday.org

Signage – Betty displayed a sample sign (Douglas Brook). We have 16 signs. Four are already at the DPW in Windham, 2 will be installed by Westbrook, 2 going to Public Works in Gorham.

Fundraising – Will reported that the Executive Committee plus Roger Burhle met last week and will next meet Aug. 15th. Anyone else is welcome.

- ✓ The fundraising goal is to build and maintain the group's capacity to implement the Plan.
- ✓ Objectives are to fund implementation of the Action Plan, pay administrative costs, and continue PWI projects (e.g., sonde monitoring, YCC)
- ✓ Important tasks include:
 - Funding YCC, sonde monitoring
 - education and awareness
 - Helping member groups get funding
 - Fill research and information needs
 - Fund staff perhaps

Two approaches are:

- ✓ PRWC applies for funding
- ✓ Support member applications for funding

Short term top priorities:

- ✓ YCC
- ✓ Data sonde monitoring
- ✓ Website and web hosting
- ✓ Education and Outreach (e.g., Riverfest)
- ✓ Staff needs

V. Project Proposals – The Executive Committee supported paying for 1,000 stickers on a white background with no web address (too cluttered, the address is easy to Google). Then group agreed by consensus.

VI. Presumpscot River Access – Forrest noted that Francis Brautigham is developing an access plan in relation to the relicensing of the dams. He wants information on access points, who would use them, facilities. Lee will check with Francis to see exactly what he needs. We will add this to the September agenda. Matt noted that he would talk to Rob Sanford at USM to see what the potential is for research on this issue. Dusti noted that pre- and post- dam removal information would be helpful.

Chinese mitten crab - Karen noted that this invasive crab has made it to the Hudson River. It lives in both salt and fresh water and causes damage by burrowing into river banks. See the related press release. Forrest sent out information.

Next meeting

Group agreed to **change the date to Wednesday September 26th** 3 -5 PM due to conflicts for several members.

The Meeting will be held at ME Audubon - Gilsland Farm in Falmouth