

Presumpscot River Watershed Coalition
December 6, 2007
3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
@Portland DEP, Canco Road

2008 Upcoming Meetings of the PRWC Board

January 24, 2008
March 27, 2008
May 22, 2008
July 24, 2008
September 25, 2008
December 4, 2008

In attendance: Jeff Varricchione-DEP, Betty Williams-CCSWCD, Diane Gould-EPA, Matt Craig- CBEP, Will Plumley- FOPR, Lois Winter, USF&W, Dusti Faucher- FOPR, Sandra Cort, FOPR, Merrie Cartwright –NOAA, Robert Schotts, Falmouth Conservation Commission, Jessica Burton, Portland North Land Trust Collaborative, Kerry McCormick, Chebeague and Cumberland Land Trust, Cathy Ramsdell, FOCB, Richard Curtis, PRLT, Lois Winter, USF&W, Katie and Darren (USM students representing Dr. Lucille Benedict)

I. Introductions – Will led a round of introductions.

II. Cumberland Mills Settlement –Dusti reported that the design and modeling work for the dam removal are on track (Kleinschmidt and Laura Robbins from American Rivers are involved among others). In Dusti’s opinion, the concerns raised by Friends of Sebago Lake (FOSL) will not derail the process. FOSL’s issues can be raised during the public scoping meeting. All of the PRWC members in favor of the dam removal should plan to attend when it is scheduled. At that meeting, the state will have to justify the changes in the state and federal licenses. Basically, FOSL was not included in the negotiations because they were not one of the petitioners for fish passage and had not been part of the process for three years. FOSL raised the objections that trap and truck would not be viable for restocking of fish. USF&W and IF&W both felt it was a viable way to jump-start fish movement until passage is permanent at these dams. There will be up and downstream passage for eels. FOSL was also concerned that the license would be extended to 50 years from 40 years. FOPR asked to sit down with the FOSL Board to address their concerns but they were not taken up on the offer. Anyone with further questions regarding the FOSL letter and George Lapointe’s response should contact Dusti.

III. Updates of 2007 Projects

Website - Matt noted that Rosemary Mosher is adding maps, Google Earth. Contact Matt with new postings, calendar updates for the site. A \$155 payment is due in April for the space. We could get e-mail addresses, too, as part of the price.

Fish Assemblage Study- Diane noted that the researchers have requested an extension to June 30th. While the field work is completed, data analysis is taking longer than expected. Diane also spoke with Barry Mower at Maine DEP and reported that the DEP SWAT program collected fish samples for endocrine disruptors in the Presumpscot this past summer. The study will be repeated next summer. A report of this year’s work should be

ready in May. Dioxin samples were collected in summer 2006. Samples of 5 smallmouth bass taken downstream in Windham had .18 ppt dioxin. When added to the levels of coplanar PCBs, these samples exceed the new proposed action level for dioxin (.4 ppt). Because of this exceedance, the state Board of Health may issue an advisory for the Presumpscot. A decision will be made by the BOH in January.

Guide to the Presumpscot - Matt noted that if Forrest wraps up the updated *Guide* soon, we can use CBEP funds to pay for it. Otherwise, we will have to reprogram other funding. Lois may work with Forrest on the *Guide*.

PWI – Matt noted that we have had some excellent press coverage lately. Greg Williams has been working with CBEP as a graduate assistant. His experience with media issues has been very helpful. Stories include: An interview with Karen in the Press Herald; the Golf Course Certification Program coverage in the Press Herald; Forrest was interviewed on Maine Public Radio; there was coverage in the Forecaster; and the American Journal included a feature story on CCSWCD's PWI work at Rine's Farm. Anyone with a story in mind should contact Greg Williams. CBEP is hosting a media training session on Dec. 7th at Masterton Hall, G-38, 10 Am – Noon at USM. Walk-ins are welcome.

Matt noted that the PWI has received a one-year extension. He will be attending the annual Targeted Watershed Initiative conference in Corpus Christi in late January.

Macroinvertebrates – Jeff reported that PRWC provided funding for macroinvertebrate sampling above and below a tree-planting project at a Portland golf course. Since the channel was dug by a front-end loader, there is not much opportunity for a flood plain, so we may not see much positive benefit from the project. Temperature may improve. The silver-lining is the cooperation of the golf course. There was also one macroinvertebrate school event this season.

Canoe Trip – Bill Hancock took the lead for the September canoe trip. It was a great success, with canoes putting in at the St. Pierre property in Gorham and ending at the tail waters of Malison Falls dam. SAPPI is putting in a portage around Malison Falls this coming summer.

Trail Connectivity – Richard noted that key stakeholders met last Friday and established some next steps. Everyone marked up a map to show where the trail network is. Portland Trails and the Mountain Division Trail need connectivity through Westbrook. The effort is now called “Sebago to the Sea.” Richard secured grants to help with the planning. A water trail is needed as well. Will noted that next week there will be a meeting with the Northern Forrest Canoe Trail to explore connectivity of the Presumpscot with that trail (it goes from Ft. Kent, ME to Old Forge, NY).

Tributary Signage – Betty reported that 16 signs are up in 8 more locations (Windham, Gorham and Westbrook). We now have 16 sites including brooks, streams and the mainstem.

Outreach to Municipalities – This item did not go anywhere in 2007.

Fundraising – Will passed out a handout, which he asked everyone to read and think about. Basically, the idea coming out of the committee was a *Communities for the River* campaign.

Other- Will noted that we now have a logo and stickers available. Robert S. asked if we have done anything regarding the Indian campsites on the river. Lois noted that when the River Reserve came into being, there was archeology done. It was agreed that the campsites should be discussed in the Guide. Will described the book about the Presumpscot that he and Rob Sanford are working on. Dusti and Sandra are doing a chapter on the dams; Nate Hamilton is doing a chapter on archeology; Alan Morrison is doing a chapter on prehistory. Cathy noted that the industrial history of the river is an important piece of the picture.

Skipping ahead to Item V.

Mau River Management Conference – Matt noted that May 12 to 15, there will be a conference in Portland. He will be doing a presentation on the PWI. A Presumpscot field trip is planned. Josh Carol at UNH (Water Recreational Opportunities Spectrum) will lead hands-on learning about the recreational value of the river. Several members thought canoes may be the best approach, although it could be cold on the river in May. Dave Butler was recommended as a contact. Hiking would be a good back up for the field trip.

Milfoil in the Presumpscot – Will noted that there are some serious infestations in the river at North Gorham Pond and Gambo impoundment. In North Gorham, citizens are working with the Maine Center for Invasive Aquatic Plants. Should we be engaged in this issue? Dusti noted that boating and swimming are issues in North Gorham Pond. In lower parts of the river, milfoil is less of a problem. Hand removal and SCUBA are remedies. Jeff will let us know when training will take place.

VI. 2008 Focus Areas

These were our 2007 Focus Areas

- 1-Web Site
- 2-Fish Assemblage
- 3-Guide to the Presumpscot
- 4-PWI and Press Coverage
- 5-Macroinvertebrates
- 6-Canoe Ttrip
- 7-Trail Connectivity (Sebago to the Sea)
- 8 –Tributary Signage
- 9-Outreach to Municipalities
- 10-Fundraising

These are Funding Priorities (as recommended by the Fundraising Committee)

- 11 – Watershed YCC
- 12 – Water Quality Monitoring
- 13 – Education (e.g. Riverfest, maps for schools)
- 14 – Administrative costs
- 15- Staff ??

To create 08 priorities, Will suggested that we brainstorm a list and each person vote on his/her top 3

Proposed 08 List with votes: (*Note the Guide to the Presumpscot and the PWI are ongoing so we didn't vote on them*). Will noted that we should vote based on our areas of focus and interest (i.e. what we would be willing to work on).

- 3** Fish Assemblage Follow-up
- 2** Canoe Trip
- 4** Milfoil (e.g., education, mitigation, fundraising, ID hotspots)
- 7** Sebago to the Sea
- 2** YCC
- 6** Outreach to Municipalities
- 2** More Signage
- Guide to the Presumpscot*
- 5** Riverfest
- 1** Fundraising
- 8** Mill Brook in Westbrook (fish passage and habitat, look at restoration opportunities)
- 3** Culvert assessments in lower watershed
- 3** Water quality monitoring
- 0** Education
- 3** Fish Advisory (follow-up)
- 2** River reclassification
- PWI*
- 3** Joint macroinvertebrate project with USM (USM wants to work with us on correlations between nutrients/macroinvertebrates)

Will suggested that the absence of support for education was due to the fact that education is part of many of the other activities. He noted that those who missed the meeting should look at this list and include their priorities. He will send out the minutes with a request for input from those not present.

Next meeting

Dates for 2008 meetings are listed at the top of these minutes. The next meeting will be January 24th, place to be announced.