

Presumpscot River Watershed Coalition
July 24, 2008, 2008
3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
@Gilsland Farm, Maine Audubon

2008 Upcoming Meetings of the PRWC Board

September 25, 2008
December 4, 2008

In attendance: Forrest Bell- PRW, Diane Gould-EPA, Matt Craig- CBEP, Will Plumley-FOPR, Jeff Varricchione-DEP, Merrie Cartwright-NOAA Fisheries, Lee Carleton - PRWC intern, Elyse Tipton – Maine Audubon, Mary Cerullo –FOCB, Richard Curtis - PRLT, Christopher Dunn – Technical Director YCC, Andy Colvin – Maine Audubon, Molly Just – Westbrook, Betty Williams – CCSWCD

1. Riverfest - Will led a round of introductions and reminded Riverfest participants to turn in their evaluation forms to Lee. Will felt it was a great event. The Riverfest had good pacing with four music acts, each with 40 minute sets, events and speakers. In the main tent, 9 or 10 organizations were represented. There was also a kids' tent with activities. The event was partially staffed by YCC folks. Will led a group discussion of the event and recorded comments on flip charts, transcribed as follows:

What Worked

- Kids setup - Events, personnel, environmental theme, quality fantastic
 - Tent was packed the whole time
- Giveaway and prizes were good
 - Many sponsors stepped up, with big names
- YCC involvement
- Music
- Pacing of the event
- Booths were great – 9 or 10
- YCC saved us by helping with setup
- Lee and Margaret did an excellent job
- Beverly smoothed the process and made it work
- Location was fantastic
- Flashing signs

What Didn't Work

- Guided walks (no attendance)
- Timing – Start later
- No real interaction with the river (except planting)
- Wasn't a raffle (call it what it is)
- Giving out prizes was unorganized, with no clear purpose
- Needs an announcer
- Tents too far apart (a bit)
- YCC planting was too far away
- PA system- Couldn't hear during early part of festival
- Sparse attendance

Jeff didn't announce Will
Wish more PRWC groups had booths
Tables were not available to extent promised
Tight budget (?)
Was "Family" emphasis too strong?
Liability insurance was a hassle
No PRWC signage on stage
Little identity to passersby
Volunteers Food Tent – out in the open [public wandered in]

Ideas for 09

Get people onto the water
Have a sound system for speakers (our own system)
Plan with the YCC and assign roles and why [connect each activity with the river]
Have an organized race/walk along the river
More focus on river and topic – balanced with entertainment
Radio remote and promo (WCLZ)
-Media sponsor
Reconsider partnering with Together Days
Need more volunteers to work the festival
Consider scheduling in June (end of school) – just before Together days
Sponsored paddle
Who is the lead organization for 09?
-Distribute the labor more
Info sheet for self-guided walk
Do more organized approach to publicity
Make sure there is enough parking
Mid-day with food vendors? – Don's Lunch
Involve local farmers – "Local Sprouts"
Need an announcer

The event cost about \$2,000 but with volunteer time contributed. Our goals were to celebrate the river and to raise awareness of the PRWC. Jeff noted that we had good press in the Press Herald. Will added that the people who came enjoyed themselves. He asked if we should do it again. The consensus was that we should do it again if we can resolve the issues. Lee suggested we start earlier to resolve key issues like liability. Molly suggested that partner with Together Days. Jeff passed around a map from the event that showed that people came from all over the watershed.

2. Fish passage at Cumberland Mills

a. Situation – Will reported that SAPPI has pulled out of the preliminary settlement and we are back to square one. The partners USF&W, FOPR, American Rivers and DMR have notified Commission Roland Martin of IF&W to move forward on ordering fish

passage. Public meetings will be scheduled. Sixteen months of work, resources and time have gone down the drain with no explanation offered by SAPPI.

b. PRWC involvement - Will led a discussion of roles the PRWC can play. His flip charts are transcribed as follows:

-Is it all about the money? If so, what can we do?

-Would SAPPI be willing and would they follow through on a different kind of agreement – maybe with funding? [CBEP could look for national funding]

[Will noted that SAPPI has 110 acres of industrially zones property. Under their permit, discharge levels could be increased. If there are fish in the river, this could create a water quality “tension.”]

-Pitch to PRWC organizational Boards? [Betty noted CCSWCD can’t take a position]

-Determine ways each organization in PRWC can uniquely contribute.

-Letter of support signed by [willing] member organizations of the PRWC

-How can PRWC advocate in part or in whole, or offer support without advocating?

-State erosion and sediment control law [Betty asked if that could be helpful?]

Science – What can we do that will make a difference [by providing science to inform policy?]

Question- What impacts do the impoundments have on water quality?

-Leverage Clean Water Act – [Class B waters should support populations of native species.]

-Bring Kreisman and Mahoney to a meeting?

Will agreed to keep us posted on public hearings. He noted that this is a complex situation and that SAPPI remains an unknown. They will likely fight change, follow the letter of the law and look to a single bottom line (profit) as opposed to the triple bottom line of profit, community, and environment.

3. Areas of Focus Updates –

PWI -YCC Update – Chris noted that the season is going well. They have 4 days to fill the 2nd week in August. They are looking for residential sites on the Presumpscot. Matt suggested the Smelt Hill site.

Mill Brook Update - Jeff handed out copies of the Mill Brook Preliminary Plan. The appendices are available on CD. The document will be posted on the PRWC website. He is looking for comments. It was agreed that Mill Brook will be on the September 25th agenda.

4. Land Trust Collaboration – Jessica Burton from Portland N Land Trust Collaborative is launching a project to map protected lands in the Presumpscot watershed. Will noted there is a potential overlap with the Open Space part of our Plan. In September, we should talk more with all the land trusts and Portland Trails at the table.

Will noted that Lands for Maine’s Future has contributed \$518,000 toward the 550 acre Clark Farm in Windham.

5. Marketing Communications – There has been a list swap request from Portland Trails. Will asked the group about sharing lists, messages, etc. He led a discussion of the issue. His flip chart is transcribed as follows:

- Send stuff to Will to send out to the group
- Forward information that Will sends to you
- Post on the PRWC website and link to it
- Maine Eco-Advocacy Tool
 - MLCV – organizations pool lists once a year. Group gets a report back. List used for Action Alert on optional basis. Opt-in for members.
- Every member organization should have a link to the PRWC website.
- Each organization writes a 1 or 2 paragraph summary of what your organization is doing, plus a bit of relevant personal information
- Develop a list serve and become more sophisticated.
- Use the PRWC as a way to get the word out.

6. Fundraising – Will noted there are two main activities we want to find funding for: continued water quality monitoring (keeping the sondes in the water) and the YCC. Forrest has the lead on finding funds for the monitoring, Betty has the lead for the YCC funding. “Big things” that we could use to package a request for funding are Mill Brook and the suitability of watershed habitat for native species of fish. Diane noted that climate change is likely to be a significant source of funding in the near future and that perhaps we can package our project as a climate change study.

7. Returning to Areas of Focus –

PWI –Matt noted that there will be some money left over from the PWI (\$7-8,000). There should be a meeting to provide input from Matt and Will.

Guide to the Presumpscot River – Forrest is looking for review and strategizing. Lee offered to participate.

Milfoil Training – Training was Tuesday. It was well-attended. Fred participated.

Outreach to Municipalities – Betty noted that Falmouth has been rescheduled to 9/22. Hopefully Portland will be next.

Sebago-to-the-Sea Trail – Richard reported that the group has been active with monthly meetings. Three or four grants have been awarded. August 1st is the Executive Committee meeting and August 15th is the next full Committee meeting.

Other

Molly noted that regarding the Parks and Open Space Plan for Westbrook there is a need for people to come to the meeting at Westbrook High School. Something will be e-mailed to you. Those in opposition object to private property being discussed in the Plan.

Meeting Adjourned/ Next meeting

The next meeting will take place on September 25th, 2008 at the CCSWCD office in South Windham on Rt. 202, thanks to Betty’s offer to host the meeting and provide refreshments. The group agreed we should rotate our meeting space.