

Presumpscot River Watershed Coalition
May 29, 2009
3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
@Cumberland Co. SWCD, Windham, ME

2009 Upcoming Meetings of the PRWC Board

July 23, 2009 Location TBD
September 24, 2009 Location TBD

In attendance: Matt Craig - CBEP, Will Plumley - FOPR, Jeff Varricchione - DEP, Lisa Vickers - DEP, Brooks More – Windham Planning Director, Dave Courtemanch- DEP, Amanda Pratt-USM, Karen Wilson-USM, Erik Walling-USM, Andy Colvin-Volunteer, Fred Dillon-PRW, Merrie Cartwright-NOAA, Betty Williams-CCSWCD, Matt Craig-CBEP, Tania Neuschafer-Presumpscot Land Trust

1. Introductions and Purpose of the Meeting: Will led a round of introductions and noted that this meeting would focus on the:

- **River Reclassification – USM ESP student report**
- **Next steps toward reclassification**
- **Land Conservation Vision, Values & Priorities**
- **Outreach & Marketing Communications**

2. Presumpscot River Re-Classification – USM Environmental Science student presentation on the process.

- Goal is to re-classify lower portion of the river from Class C to Class B
- DEP collects data and makes recommendation to Board of Environmental Protection (BEP)
- BEP has final vote
- Then is submitted to the Maine Legislature

Students presented findings as they relate to existing studies and water quality data and provided the following information and recommendations:

- Conduct informal meeting with MDEP
- Utilize existing water quality and monitoring data
- Submit proposal for re-classification
- Outline water quality parameters needed
 - TSS (Total Suspended Solids) or the weight of particulate material in a given sample– is a concern for the lower Presumpscot River
- MDEP will/would conduct any macroinvertebrate testing
 - Samples taken will look at different types and the numbers present
 - And will look at the sensitive species
 - And the higher tolerant species
- DEP macroinvertebrate testing had been done in 1984, 89,94,95,97, 00, and 2005. DEP conducts testing on lakes, rivers and streams on a rotating basis. Dave Courtemanch mentioned that the Presumpscot River is due to have testing done again in 2010 and that the lower Presumpscot River will be the focus for DEP.

The students looked at the raw data from (PRW) from the sondes collected during the Presumpscot Watershed Initiative and conducted only preliminary assessments.

Parameters analyzed include:

- Salinity
- pH
- Dissolved Oxygen
- *E coli*

DEP looks at the minimum values on a daily basis during a 24 hour period and looks at the # of data points. Best data is collected between 5:00 and 9:00 am.

More data is needed to support upgrade in classification:

- Need E. coli, turbidity/TSS, DO and macroinvertebrate data

The key to re-classification is the macro and benthic data to be collected during the months of May thru September in the lower river.

Recommendations:

- ⇒ Meet with MDEP
- ⇒ Follow and develop QAPP
- ⇒ Existing PRWC/PWI QAPP could be tweaked for this purpose and could be worked on to be made ready by the summer of 2010.
- ⇒ Test for E.coli, TSS/turbidity, DO, Macroinvertebrates
- ⇒ Install sondes in three locations to include:
 - Above Sacarappa
 - End of mixing zone-PWD sewage treatment (DEP does not recommend this site)
 - Above and/or below tidewater on Piscataqua

Deployment of sondes will be dependent on several variables and will need to consider flotation type, water depth, walk in retrieval or boat retrieval, etc.

*Dave C. offered that DEP will begin to consider nutrient data for reclassification but only when other parameters are tripped or have failed meeting the standards.

*Algae may be considered at a later date and would need to have the periphyton sampling completed to determine.

DEP is working on a new *River Oxygen Model* and completed the data collection during the summer of 2008. This data report is available on the DEP website and is titled, "*Presumpscot River Data Report Draft, May 2009*" prepared by Donald Albert, P.E.

The primary goal was to document the existing state of water quality on the lower Presumpscot River including trophic state and affects on dissolved oxygen after the removal of the Smelt Hill Dam in 2002 and the cessation of SAPPI pulping operation in 1999. The water quality model used to develop the TMDL will have to be re-calibrated.

This new model should be out in the fall of 2009.

Timeline for DEP Re-classification efforts:

- EPA designates DEP to review every three years
- Legislature only accepts recommendations during its first session
- So this actually means the cycle is every 4 years.
- So, the next cycle for legislative review will be 2013
- 2009 – model year for testing
- 2010 and 2011 sampling years
- January 2012 – accumulation of data - actually due in late 2011
- January 2013 recommendations would go to Legislature

Next Steps:

- PRWC should meet with DEP soon to establish plan
- Identify who is doing what sampling and when
- DEP will do the macroinvertebrate sampling
- Need to determine what parameters are of critical need and when those need to be collected
- Usually sampling done May thru September but actually July and August are most critical
- Need flow data – 2008 was a high flow year - could do trial run in 2009 for “low flow” monitoring data and if not the low flow could re-do in 2010. Basically looking for trends – maybe could use the flow data in the Royal River or the Saco River if not available for the Presumpscot (unclear whether there is an active flow gauge at this time).

Board decided to allocate \$5000 towards sampling in 2009 as recommended by the Executive Committee – likely as a testing period for full sampling in 2010. The caveat was added that if it was determined that we need more funds that we could do an email to the Board to try and get consensus.

3. Land Conservation Vision, Values & Priorities

- Ad hoc Steering/Exploratory Committee has met once since the convening meeting on March 26 and is still working to develop recommendations to bring to the full group
- No person or organization has volunteered take a leadership role yet
- Decided to forego any substantive discussion at today’s PRWC meeting only one land trust and one municipality were able to attend
- PRWC/CBEP submitted a letter of intent to the Environmental Funders Network for a \$35,000 grant for year one of this effort. (*June 4 note from Will: EFN has now invited us to submit a full grant application!*)

4. Outreach and Marketing Communications:

- **Westbrook Together Days** – Betty Williams and Andy Colvin doing morning shift, Will Plumley doing afternoon shift, Diane Gould doing evening shift if needed.
 - Betty/CCSWCD has tables available, chairs and an awning that could be used, just need to arrange for transportation of table and chairs.
- **Windham Summerfest:** Merrie Cartwright and Andy C doing the morning and afternoon shift and Diane Kenty is able to do the evening shift if needed.

- **Brochure draft** was circulated by email and several members made comments or edits. Nice work, looks great.

Meeting Adjourned/Next meeting-The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM
The next PRWC meeting will be July 23, 2009, location TBD and the next Executive Committee meeting is July 14th at the Wishcamper Center at USM in Portland 12-1:30.