



ANDROSCOGGIN VALLEY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

DISTRICT NEWS

"MAKING CONSERVATION WORK FOR YOU"

PEOPLE, PEOPLE, PEOPLE!!!

The Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District (AVSWCD) has been privileged 'making conservation work for you' for sixty years. To continue for another 60 years the Conservation District will be endeavoring to secure new sources of expanded base funding. ***Would you share your stories of the impact the District has had on you and the promotion and stewardship of our natural resources?*** Your testimonials would be used to promote our need and document the commitment of the people—YOU—working with us.

The rewards of working with you to conserve our natural resources in Androscoggin and Sagadahoc Counties cannot be adequately described. We are convinced that in attempting to fulfill our mission, we have had the pleasure of working with very special people.

People who have given financially—
The District appreciates the funds that come from the County Commissioners of both Counties and the annual allotment from the Maine Department of Agriculture. These funds are an important contribution to our base funding needs. Those who participate in the District fundraising sales have been instrumental in allowing the District to provide educational programming. The responses to our contribution campaigns annually serve as a reminder of the great friends we have throughout the Conservation District's area. People, whether part of a government entity, local organization or individual, giving financially are vital to the continuing work of the District in these days when funding for "not-for-profits", like the District, is so scarce.

***People who donate to the
Conservation District—***

With many of the District projects or programs, there have been individuals, local business owners, municipal personnel, and

environmental organizations donating materials, labor and/or equipment. These donations are greatly appreciated.

People who volunteer—

It has been exciting for the District to work with willing volunteers to care for the health of the soil, protect the quality of our water bodies, prevent soil erosion, and strive to make wise land use decisions. In the last 60 years, people from all 24 municipalities have volunteered to do conservation work.

People have volunteered to address issues impacting our natural resources from Livermore all the way down to the coast of Maine in Phippsburg and Georgetown. Many have participated in making wise land use decisions and installed conservation practices. The passion and unrelenting work to protect or improve our natural resources does not go unnoticed. Jeanne Raymond can attest to that fact, since she recently received a "Community Service" award for her contribution to the conservation needs on No Name Pond. Way to go, Jeanne!!

***People interested in learning how to
conserve our natural resources—***

In the last 60 years, people have come to AVSWCD looking for natural resource information, needing one-on-one technical assistance, requesting specialized training and wanting assistance in finding resource providers—both financial and specialists.

People who provide governance—

The Conservation District has had a faithful core of elected and appointed volunteer board of supervisors and associates. The people shown to the right of this page represent approximately 120 years of service promoting the conservation through their governance and council.

PEOPLE, thank you for working with us! It has been a most rewarding journey. We truly want this journey with YOU to continue. ***Send your story to us by January 4, 2008.***

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DISTRICT SUPERVISORS

Arthur Dunlap, Chairman
Paul Roseberry, Vice-Chair
John A. Hemond, Secretary
Shirley Hatch, Treasurer

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISORS

Katie Carville
Ellsworth Chipman
Mark Emmons
Lionel Ferland
Bill Hatch
Richard Thibodeau
William Varney

DISTRICT STAFF

Project Manager
Susan Gammon
Project Coordinator
Megan Wooster
Office Manager
Jane Heikkinen
Conservation Technicians
Scott McLaren
Adam Paul
District Consulting Engineer
Ross Cudlitz, PE

NRCS STAFF

District Conservationist
Autumn Birt
Soil Technician
Paul Carmichael
Agricultural Engineer
Candi Benwitz
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Adam Cattrell
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Brian Stuart
Soil Resource Specialist
Dave Wilkinson
Computer Specialist
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Androscoggin Valley SWCD

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*The mission of the
Androscoggin Valley Soil and
Water Conservation District is
to promote the conservation
and stewardship of soil,
water, and related natural
resources, by providing
leadership, technical
assistance and educational
programming to and with the
citizens of Androscoggin and
Sagadahoc Counties.*

IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORLD

Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District has traditionally attempted to link land owners and land users with a variety of resource providers, whether they service the farmland, forest land, camp owner, private and public road associations, municipalities, developers, contractors, educators, students or environmental groups. In this newsletter we have chosen to highlight some agricultural community resources.

Maine Farmland Trust is making an impact with a new program. They buy farms, permanently preserve the land for agriculture through an easement and sell the protected land to a new farmer. The program keeps farmland in agriculture and helps those farmers about to retire. Maine Farm Link takes another step to assist a database of 125 would-be farmers willing to buy or lease farms to operate for those farmers without a next generation to take over the farm. For more information go to the Maine Farmland Trust at www.maineFarmland.org or call (207)338-7575.

The Carrot Project has the needs of farmers as its primary focus. The goal of "The Carrot Project" is to narrow the financial gaps and increase access to financing for family farms using ecologically friendly production practices. They do this by making loans and guarantees available and by exploring equity solutions. To achieve its goal "The Carrot Project" is conducting a survey or Farmers Financing Needs Assessment. The survey will lead to a better understanding of the funding gaps farmers face, how those funding gaps impact farm operators' abilities to meet business goals and maintain or improve productivity while using ecological methods or conservation measures. The Carrot Project Survey and further information can be found on its website: www.thecarrotproject.org/farmer_survey or you may call Dorothy at 1-617-666-9637.

The Maine State Conservation Center is a website that provides a comprehensive menu of conservation services and support for Maine's private landowners interested in sustainably managing the natural resources and open space on their land. The site contains a wealth of resources including state and federal conservation programs, tax and estate planning information and contacts, conservation professionals and associations, alternative energy retailers, articles to familiarize landowners with the general ideas and concepts of conservation today, and Maine's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. The website also has a GIS mapping application that can help landowners determine the conservation value of their property. The website was just released in November, and continues to grow as more relevant resources are added to the directory of listings. Please visit the Center at www.stateconservation.org/Maine.

The Conservation District knows that **the protection of groundwater**, private wells and public drinking water is critical. This knowledge served as a stepping stone toward applying to the Department of Health and Human Services CDC Drinking Program and successfully being awarded a contract. The objective of this project is to develop and to test tools for sustaining agricultural land uses while providing public water supply protection. This pilot project will test a package of education, outreach and practices that will assist in the preservation of agricultural land uses in public water supply protection areas while maintaining water quality and availability.

In the early stages of the project, the District will conduct research on existing tools, techniques, and resources for ground water and watershed protection resulting in a draft educational document.

Another step in the project is to provide outreach to the agricultural community with the goal of recruiting interest in participating in the program and the selection of farms to implement applicable practices. Another facet of the outreach is to identify funding resources that could play a role in subsidizing farms not eligible for existing NRCS programs. This will lead to working with 2 or 3 farms in public water supply protection areas and providing technical assistance to test the results of improved or implemented conservation practices designed to protect groundwater.

The final step in the project will be to develop a package to present the tools, practices and incentives to assist providers, present it to test its applicability and provide a report of next steps including a possible second phase grant proposal to be implemented throughout the State of Maine. For more information call Project Manager Susan Gammon at (207) 753-9400 ext 404.

The Maine Carbon Credit Program is a pilot Conservation Innovative Grant funded by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and Maine Department of Environmental Protection, with the Time and Tide Resource Conservation and Development serving as the project sponsor. The brainstorm for this grant evolved from a conversation about a supplemental proposal for the Groundwater Protection grant which took a turn when the subject dovetailed into considering the latest buzz words "Carbon Sequestration" within the agricultural community. Far reaching and out of the box thinking—EXACTLY!! Often, great projects are generated from brainstorming sessions like these.

We have inserted a draft brochure listing our partners and describing the program for the Maine Carbon Credit Program for you to review. For more information call Susan Gammon at (207) 753-9400 ext 404.

NATURAL RESOURCES AT THE HEART OF DISTRICT WORK

NEW STAFF MEMBER

Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District (AVSWCD) is pleased to introduce Project Coordinator Megan Wooster. She has most recently served at Maine Department of Environmental Protection through the AmeriCorps/Maine Conservation Corps Program. Megan received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Environmental Conservation and Masters in Environmental Education from the University of New Hampshire in Durham. She was born in Bar Harbor and graduated from the Mount Desert Island High School. Megan will provide technical assistance to landowners requesting help with their natural resource issues and will assist Sue Gammon in implementing our grant projects.

GOVERNING BOARD

In the AVSWCD annual election for Board of Supervisors, John A. Hemond of Minot was re-elected for a three year term. John is no stranger to the Conservation District and has served on the Board of Supervisors for nearly 22 years. Maine Agriculture's Commissioner Seth Bradstreet has appointed Shirley Hatch of Wales to serve a three year term and appointed Mark Emmons of Livermore to fill a vacated position for up to two years. Arthur Dunlap of Poland and Paul Roseberry of Richmond also are serving on the Board of Supervisors. Their duties of providing governance and council for the direction of the Conservation District is no small task. Their efforts are appreciated.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District provides many opportunities for volunteers. Associate Supervisors provide a voice for the public's natural resource concerns in our District. More associates are needed. Could you serve? The District will be updating its customer database this next year. This is a task that could use a volunteer's assistance. As we move towards expanding our funding base, a marketing plan and guru to build our public image leaves room for many volunteers. Fundraising efforts to build the funding base will also provide open doors for volunteers. Having willing people to give testimonials about the value of the District is another need. Interested? Call Jane at the District office at (207)753-9400 ext 400.

WORKING FOR BETTER WATER QUALITY

From the inception of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts back in the "Dust Bowl" days, our focus has been on soil, water and related natural resources.

As AVSWCD works with partners to reduce nonpoint source pollution, conservation practices are installed that reduce erosion, exporting of sediments and phosphorus, and polluted runoff. Common practices could be armoring, installing ditches, turn-outs, sedimentation pools, rip rap, and buffer plantings. The nonpoint source pollution could

be from soil erosion and stormwater runoff from roads, driveways, and roofs. Many of the water quality grant projects are funded with Environmental Protection Agency and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, 319 Clean Water Act budget monies.

With grant funding, the District staff work with watershed groups to generate interest and participation in addressing identified nonpoint source pollution problems. Technical assistance is provided after reviewing the site. Resolutions to the problems, designs for construction, inspections of projects and maintenance plans can be provided. Land owners having candidate sites for construction work sign a Letter of Agreement outlining the responsibilities of the land owner.

Presently the District is administering two 319 Clean Water Act Grants. The Sabattus Pond Implementation Project is in its second year. Those, who have received technical assistance and are interested in becoming a candidate for a construction site, should call Project Manager Sue Gammon as soon as possible. In 2008 we will begin the Nequasset Lake Watershed Implementation Project. To be considered as a candidate construction site or to receive technical assistance in the watershed, call Project Manager Sue Gammon. She can be reached at (207) 753-9400 ext 404.

The Nequasset Lake Stakeholders contacted the Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District asking for assistance in applying for and implementing a nonpoint source pollution survey which was awarded in 2006 and was completed in 2007. During the survey the Nequasset Lake Stakeholders Group worked with Project Manager Susan Gammon generating interest and support to improve the water quality of the Nequasset Lake Watershed.

Partners buying into the importance for addressing the identified contributing problems through another grant project phase were: Towns of Woolwich and Wiscasset, the City of Bath, Bath Water District, Maine Rural Water, Knox-Lincoln and Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Maine Department of Environmental Protection has awarded a Clean Water Act 319 Implementation Grant to AVSWCD proposed to assist Nequasset Lake Stakeholders and other partners address nonpoint source pollution in this threatened watershed.

The passion and unrelenting commitment to the need for pollution reduction in the Nequasset Lake Watershed has resulted in the Nequasset Lake Stakeholders becoming the recipient of the District's Watershed Conservation Award. This group is an example of the great people working with the Conservation District. The work of the Nequasset Lake Stakeholders has not gone unnoticed. Great job, folks!



**ANDROSCOGGIN VALLEY SOIL AND
WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

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"Making Conservation Work for You"

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ORGANIZATION
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Both Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District and Natural Resources Conservation Service are equal opportunity providers and employers.

Donations made to Androscoggin Valley SWCD are used to offset the costs of the Conservation District's educational programming.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

MONTHLY MEETINGS:

Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meet the third Thursday, monthly. Public is welcome. Call the Conservation District to confirm the time and date at (207) 753-9400 #3.

Sowing the Seeds of Agricultural Success in Maine: Cross State Office Building Room 206 December 14, 2007. RSVP needed. Call Marge Kilkelly 737-4717.

Maine Ag Trade Show: Augusta Civic Center January 15-17, 2008. FMI call Dept of Ag 287-3871.

Advanced Septic Installation & Maintenance Workshop: Lewiston Ramada Inn February 13, 2008 from 8 to 4. FMI call Jane at District Office 753-9400 ext 400

Annual Soil Quality Conference: Bangor Motor Inn February 13-14, 2008 FMI call Heart of Maine RC&D 947-6622 ext 5.

GPS Training: Location to be announced March 29, 2008 with a storm date for April 5th. Registration fee is \$7.00 per person. FM call Jane at District Office 753-9400 ext 400.

Mock Envirothon: Beaver Park in Lisbon April 29, 2008. Training session for high school students considering participation in Regional Envirothon competitions. Registration Fee is \$10 per team. Call Jane at District

Office 753-9400 ext 400.

Conservation Expo: University of Maine Farmington, April 23, 2008. A day of many workshops focused on multiple topics. FMI contact Franklin County SWCD at 778-4279.

Recognizing and Dealing with Terrestrial Invasives: Locations in Midcoast and Androscoggin County are in the planning stage for early May. To be notified of details call Jane at District Office 753-9400 ext 400.

Western Maine Regional Envirothon: Lakeview Farm in Wilton, May 15, 2008. A high school competition testing knowledge and problem-solving skills in soils, aquatics, forestry, wildlife and a current issue. See www.maineswcds.org or call tish at 495-2392 to register.

The USDA Farm Bill is yet to be passed in Congress. The health of the American soil, the purity of its water, the biodiversity and the very look of its landscape are buried deep in the programs and formulae of the Farm Bill. The Farm Bill impacts the communities of public health, environment, development, and local economy. Contact your U.S. Representatives and Senators urging them to act on this important piece of legislation.

All the Supervisors, Associates, District staff and NRCS staff extend our Holiday Greetings to you and wish for a great New Year to do even more conservation work!