

**ANDROSCOGGIN VALLEY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
PARTNERING WITH NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**

2009 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

STRATEGY 1: Natural Resources

Promote conservation in Androscoggin and Sagadahoc Counties by addressing priority natural resource concerns and issues

Potential Grant Writing & Fee-For-Service Work

Agriculture and Forestry

Ideas to pursue for Grant Projects

- Pursued writing four National, State or Foundation grant proposals for Carbon Credit Program—succeeded in getting USDA Risk Management Agent grant with Farm Energy Partners Network
- Researched funding opportunities for Farm Emergency Planning –mapping chemicals on farm
- Followed up on potential funding sources to get Farm-A-Syst Assessment fact sheets and worksheets and updates on an interactive online program

Water Quality—Lakes, Ponds

Ideas to pursue for Grant Projects

- Range Pond Phase II (waiting from group to see if they are ready for another round)
- Succeeded in getting grant approval for Sabattus Pond Watershed Implementation—Phase III
- Assisted in successful grant proposal for Thompson Lake Watershed Implementation with Androscoggin Valley and Oxford County SWCD
- Salmon Habitat on Lower Androscoggin River (building partnerships to make this feasible)
- Clam Flats on Merry Meeting Bay (attended meeting and working on developing septic socials to address a major contributing factor in the closing of clam flats)

Continued Work

- Expand Fees-For-Service Program – provided assistance in Poland, Greene and Turner
- Pursue Urban Development ESC Reviews -- provided ESC reviews in Lewiston and Poland
- Assist with Stormwater Management Inspections – have obligated funding for Sabattus
- NPDES Compliance Monitoring, audits and inspections of Phase I and II MS4's
—Lewiston/Auburn, Bath and Topsham (provided workshops covering GPS beginner and advanced, terrestrial invasive plants, farm energy audits, carbon credit exchange potential for forestry; provided educational materials at Recycling Awareness Day, and Maine Farm Days)
- Lake Smart Evaluations – provided inspections in Taylor Pond Watershed
- Contractor Certification Inspections – inspected six sites
- Landowner and Municipal land use or conservation practice assistance requests – Served individuals and Municipalities in Livermore (1), Lewiston (5), Auburn (2), Poland (3), and Minot (1)
- Continued to promote and outreach for 2008 RMA Farm Energy Network Partners grant
- Began the modeling of data for 2007 and 2008 USDA Conservation Innovative Grants for Carbon Credit of Maine program
- Completed the Maine Department of Health and Human Services “Drinking Water Program” Farm-A-Syst Assessment Fact Sheet and Worksheet Updates

Assist and promote where possible

- Hosted and promoted Locally Led Work Group for USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Coordinated, promotion and hosting of the New Farm Bill Informational Meetings for Agriculture and Forestry

USDA programs administered by NRCS in compliance with Locally Led Priorities for following Programs: Environmental Quality Improvement Program, Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program, Wetland Reserve Program, Farmland Protection, Conservation Reserve Program and Conservation Stewardship Program

Planning done and put on the back burner for potential funding to pursue in 2011

- *Water Quality—Rivers, streams*
- Rapid Watershed Assessment –Lower Androscoggin
- Cathance River –follow up steps from Survey
- Kennebec River—follow up steps from Kennebec River Initiative
- *Outreach/Education*
- Find grant funding
- Groundwater Education for Schools
- Capacity Building
- Database Building

STRATEGY 2: Education and Information

Expand educational programs and opportunities.

Youth Education

- Hosted Regional Envirothon and assisted Oxford County with Mock Envirothon
- Promoted Envirothon to non-participating schools

Educational/Informational Handouts for workshops, walk-ins, public relations or outreach events or activities

- Brochures for Carbon Credit and Farm-A-Syst developed, printed and distributed
- Photocopied fact sheets and other materials for booths at Maine Farm Days, Fryeburg Fair, Woolwich Days, Recycling Awareness Day and District Day in Augusta Hall of Flags
- Composed Fee-for-Service Informational brochure describing services available for Municipalities

Agriculture

- Carbon Credit presentation at Ag Trade Show, Delta Institute, Neil Simpson Carbon Credit Conference and at other venues
- Coordinated Maine Farm Days website, press release campaign and developed a booth and coordinated booth staffing for Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Forestry

Forestry Management—Workshop Opportunities

- Beginner GPS-Maine Forest Service
- Advanced GPS- woodlot mapping or geocache-Maine Forest Service
- Terrestrial Invasives-Maine Forest Service
- Pest and Disease Identification-Maine Forest Service

Water Quality

- Septic Installation and Advanced Wastewater Workshop

Soil Erosion Control/Water Quality

- Yardscaping, Gravel Road Maintenance Workshop in conjunction with Nequasset Lake project were held. Front Runner Operation workshop was offered with not reservations.

STRATEGY 3: Public Relations

Continue a positive public relations strategy, in order to effectively provide quality service to our clients

Public Relations/Outreach

- Enlisted new customers (Rainbow Federal Credit Union (Recycling Awareness Day) and City of Lewiston (Hart Brook Watershed Group) to work with and promote conservation land use decisions
- Enlisted federal, state and county government support for District's mission, goals, and program work whenever possible
- Met with County Commissioners and Budget Advisory Committee
- Sent an invitation to potentially new associate supervisors to assist in providing a diverse representation of the District's geographical conservation needs
- Regularly updated website and sent out press releases whenever possible
- Developed displays and PowerPoint presentations to use at
 - Ag Trade Show for farmers primarily
 - District Day at Augusta for Legislators
 - Maine Farm Days at Barker Farm
 - Municipal Offices for general public
 - Grant project related presentations
 - County Commissioners and Budget Advisory Committee meetings
- Posted activities, services or program opportunities for public in other newsletters, websites, or made posters or handouts for municipal offices or through other media venues

STRATEGY 4: Partnerships

To improve and enhance District programs strengthen and expand our conservation partnerships with regional and state groups and to develop and implement a volunteer service program to meet workload, and offer internship program

- Re-established or maintained communications and relationships with local lake and stream associations, public and private road associations, conservation commissions, cooperative extension, land trusts, and other environmental groups
- Cultivated and implemented work plan with Oxford County SWCD
- Continue to seek, expand and find new working partnerships where appropriate
- Worked on improving alliances and joint programming with NACD, MACD, SWCDs, and RC&D
- Worked with local college providing internship or service-related training for clerical, technical and on-the-ground work needs of the District
- Promoted volunteer service opportunities
- Determined who to recognize for voluntary participation and outstanding achievements through our award program

Partners include: Maine Association of Conservation Districts (MACD), Maine Forest Service (MFS), Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP), Maine Department of Agriculture (MDOA), Maine Department of Human and Health Services Drinking Water Program, Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT), USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA-with Farm Energy Partners Network), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Services Agency (FSA), Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D), Southwestern Conservation Alliance (SWCA), Oxford County Soil and Water Conservation District (OCSWCD), Other Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD-Kennebec, Cumberland, York, Hancock, Waldo, three Aroostook Districts) Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG), Maine Envirothon, Maine State Planning Board, Androscoggin Chamber of Commerce, Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP), Farm Energy Partners Network, Maine Farm Bureau, Maine Rural Partners, Merry Meeting Bay, University of Maine Cooperative Extension (UMCE), Kennebec River Initiative, Cathance River Coalition, Lake Auburn Watershed Commission, Sabattus Pond Watershed Partnership, lake associations, conservation commissions, land trusts, and others

STRATEGY 5: Funding

Maintain current funding sources and seek alternative sources of funding to strengthen our level of programming and service to municipalities and the public.

- Collaborated with Cumberland County SWCD to develop resolution for increased base funding effort
- Solicited auction items for MACD education committee funding for both the summer and winter meeting
- Submitted proposals for District projects or programming from government/private foundations
- Solicited corporate and small business donations
- Continued to promote and expand the “Fee-for-Service” opportunities provided
- Conducted fundraising events for 2009
 - Conservation Plant Sale, Compost Bin Package Sale and Rain Barrel Sale
- Budgeted, tracked and reviewed status of projects and operational funding

STRATEGY 6: Board and Staff Development

Maintain a skilled and diverse District board and staff to effectively serve the conservation needs of Androscoggin and Sagadahoc Counties

- Restructured Board meeting agenda bringing in guest speakers, board development training, open discussions
- Discussed the need for a “mentoring buddy program” for new supervisors, associates, and staff
- Completed an annual review of policies and work plan
- Conducted personnel reviews
- Reviewed technical assistance, education, public relations/outreach programming
- Identified supervisor and associate skill sets available and still needed
- Sent recruitment letter for new associate members to promote Conservation District
- Analyzed staffing workload and funding needs for maintaining level of current employees