

Annual Report

2020



CUMBERLAND COUNTY
SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Annual Report Outline

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Message from our Chair

Well, 2020 was certainly an interesting year. The Board and Staff started 2020 with a lot of excitement around our programs and projects. In the midst of planning the Urban Runoff, workshops, classroom education projects, and providing conservation assistance to landowners, the COVID-19 Pandemic changed everything. The Staff rallied to the new challenges of meeting the District's mission to "protect our natural resources through public outreach, education, and working directly with the public," during a pandemic that limited our ability to provide services. Throughout this Annual Report you will see examples of the amazing projects and services we were still able to provide through adaptation to virtual webinars, online education programs, and socially distanced field visits.

As we look forward to 2021, we still face many of the challenges from 2020. However, the Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District will continue to provide resources to address soil and water conservation issues. Please show your support for the District by participating in one or more of the many activities we are planning for 2021. The following are some examples:

- We are excited to be hosting the 10th annual Urban Runoff 5K! The event will be virtual again this year with runners and walkers able to participate anytime in April. Participants can choose their own course or use one of our suggested routes throughout the Casco Bay Watershed. All proceeds from this fundraiser support our Youth Education Program.
- The Maine Stormwater Conference has been postponed until 2022, however we are planning a virtual event in October!
- The Staff are busy preparing our 2021 workshop calendar, focusing on many soil and water conservation topics, including YardScaping, Septic System Installer/Inspector Training, Erosion and Sediment Control, Invasive Forest Pests, Soil Health, Forest Management Planning, and much more.

As always, if you have questions, need assistance, or are looking for information on soil and water conservation issues, please give the District a call.

Be safe,

Carol Ann Doucette, Chair

Year in Review

Agriculture



While all of these projects were constrained to some degree by COVID-19, District staff and community partners were successful in adapting the projects to overcome these challenges.

The pandemic crisis highlighted weak points in our food systems, including lack of local production and vulnerable supply chains. District staff, working on these projects, have addressed community needs for a more resilient food system with stronger local capacity.

3

**Community Agriculture
Projects**

1

**Project Supporting
Commercial Producers**

Gorham Grown 2020

The District began a project in 2019 with local partners in Gorham called “Gorham Grown”. Partners included the Town, Gorham Village Alliance, ReVolution Landscaping, Edgewood Nursery, Gorham Conservation Commission, local Boy and Girl Scouts, and many local businesses and residents. Work begun in 2019 continued in 2020, with an aim to shift projects to local partners to provide long term sustainability.

ELEMENTS INCLUDED:

- ✓ TWO ADULT EDUCATION WEBINARS ON EDIBLE LANDSCAPE DESIGNS
- ✓ YOUTH SUMMER CAMP PROGRAMMING
- ✓ MAINTENANCE OF TWO FOOD FORESTS BUILT IN 2019
- ✓ EXPANSION OF THE EDIBLE MAIN ST. PROGRAM FROM 24 PLANTERS TO 48

Portland Soil Lead Awareness and Testing Project

The District was awarded funds by the EPA to raise awareness about soil lead and conduct targeted soil and plant tissue testing in 4 neighborhoods in Portland's urban core. A key finding of this project was that lead contamination of food depends on the outside texture of the produce in addition to the actual soil contamination. Work on this project will continue in 2021, with additional outreach, testing clinics, soil sampling, and follow up plant tissue sampling.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS INCLUDED:

- ✓ DEVELOPMENT OF THREE FACT SHEETS, TRANSLATED INTO FOUR LOCALLY USED LANGUAGES
- ✓ 80 SOIL SAMPLES AND 14 PLANT TISSUE SAMPLES TAKEN
- ✓ 36% OF SAMPLES COLLECTED INDICATED "HIGH" LEAD LEVELS (>400PPM), 31% INDICATED "MINOR" LEAD LEVELS (100-400PPM), 32% INDICATED "NORMAL BACKGROUND LEVELS" (<100PPM).
- ✓ DETAILED RECOMMENDATIONS PROVIDED FOR SITES BASED ON LEAD RESULTS
- ✓ A SOIL TESTING CLINIC OR "SOILSHOP" PROVIDED WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM EPA AT PORTLAND FARMERS MARKET. 40 SAMPLES WERE COLLECTED AND OVER 70 PEOPLE RECEIVED EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION AND MATERIALS.

Community Agriculture Planning Project

The District received grant funding from the National Association of Conservation Districts to develop community agriculture plans for four communities. This grant program is funded by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Work on this project will continue through 2021 to further develop modules before implementing plans with the participating communities.

ELEMENTS INCLUDE:

- ✓ DEVELOPMENT OF 18 “MODULES” THAT CAN BE USED INTERCHANGEABLY TO CREATE CUSTOM PLANS FOR MUNICIPALITIES IN THE REGION
- ✓ WORKING WITH 4 COMMUNITIES TO DEVELOP PLANS BASED ON THE MODULES

Conservation Innovation Grant

Agrichemical Storage

The District completed a project in June, 2020 to support improved agrichemical storage in the region, with a focus on small producers. We are grateful for project partner contributions from several local farms, Windham municipal staff, NRCS, Cooperative Extension, and Maine Board of Pesticides staff.

PROJECT ELEMENTS INCLUDED:

- ✓ RECOMMENDED UPDATES TO NRCS TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS
- ✓ PRODUCED A STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE DOCUMENT FOR MUNICIPAL FIRST RESPONDER STAFF
- ✓ DESIGNED 3 PILOT PROJECTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF AGRICHEMICAL STORAGE IMPROVEMENTS WITH IMPLEMENTATION AT ONE SITE
- ✓ CREATED A CASE STUDY PRESENTATION OF LESSONS LEARNED



Education

Revamped and Remodeled

Following CDC restrictions, we provided remote learning and educational information campaigns

Youth Education

The District educators reached 819 students for a total of 1,724.5 contact hours in nine communities. District educators developed two remote lessons on the water cycle, stormwater pollutants, and watersheds that teachers can use directly or be led by District educators online. The District also strengthened its partnerships with Portland Water District and Lakes Environmental Association by sharing resources, trainings, and coordinating on regional lessons.

819 STUDENTS



9 COMMUNITIES



1,724.5
CONTACT HOURS



Invasive Forest Pests

For the first time, CCSWCD led the statewide Soil & Water Conservation District invasive forest pest education and outreach program done in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry. To accommodate COVID-19, the program shifted from a majority of public events and meetings to social media outreach, informational signs at popular trailheads and community locations, and online training webinars for the members of the public and forestry professionals.

DON'T MOVE FIREWOOD

BUY IT WHERE YOU BURN IT.

Invasive tree-killing pests can hitchhike in

INVASIVE Forest Pests

Keep these invaders out of Maine!

IMPACTS

89% of Maine is forested and at risk of damage from invasive forest pests

\$8.5B was generated in 2018 by the Maine forest industry

Invasive forest pests threaten over **33,500 jobs** in Maine and threaten our **iconic woods and waters**

Looking for local firewood? Go to www.firewoodscout.org

What YOU can do to help:

- Use Local Firewood - don't help them move
- Use native plants
- Prune trees during the winter
- Check trees regularly for signs of pests and diseases
- Report signs of invasive pests to bugwatch@maine.gov

DON'T LET INVASIVES INTO MAINE

FACT

Millions of oak trees in the U.S. have died of Oak Wilt disease

A NH study found an average of 35% of-state firewood.

rest-destroying

Logos: Maine Association of Conservation Districts, Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry, FIREWOOD SCOUT, MAINE BUG WATCH

URBAN RUNOFF



Events

ONLINE WORKSHOPS AND
VIRTUAL EVENTS



Events

24

WORKSHOPS



732

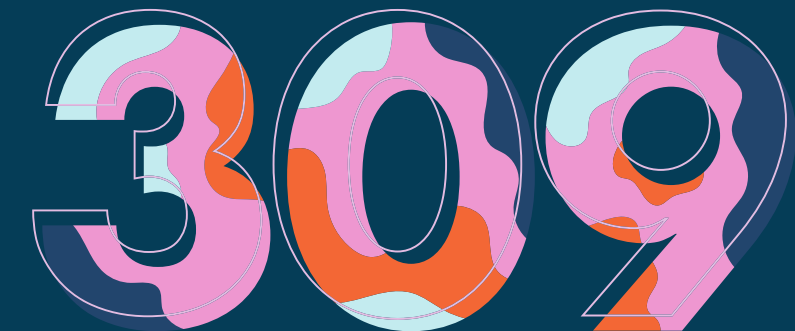
ATTENDEES

Workshops covered topics that include: Healthy Lawn Care, Municipal Trainings, Soil Health/ Agriculture, and Invasive Forest Pests.

REGISTRATION IS NOW
OPEN FOR APRIL 2021!



URBAN RUNOFF
Virtual event in June 2020



REGISTRANTS

Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance



Municipal

The District continued its standing work to coordinate the Interlocal Stormwater Working Group (ISWG), a collaboration of 14 municipalities, USM, and SMCC to efficiently meet water quality protection goals through collective action. Work in 2020 consisted of implementation of existing Clean Water Act “MS4” permit requirements while preparing for additional requirements effective in July, 2022.

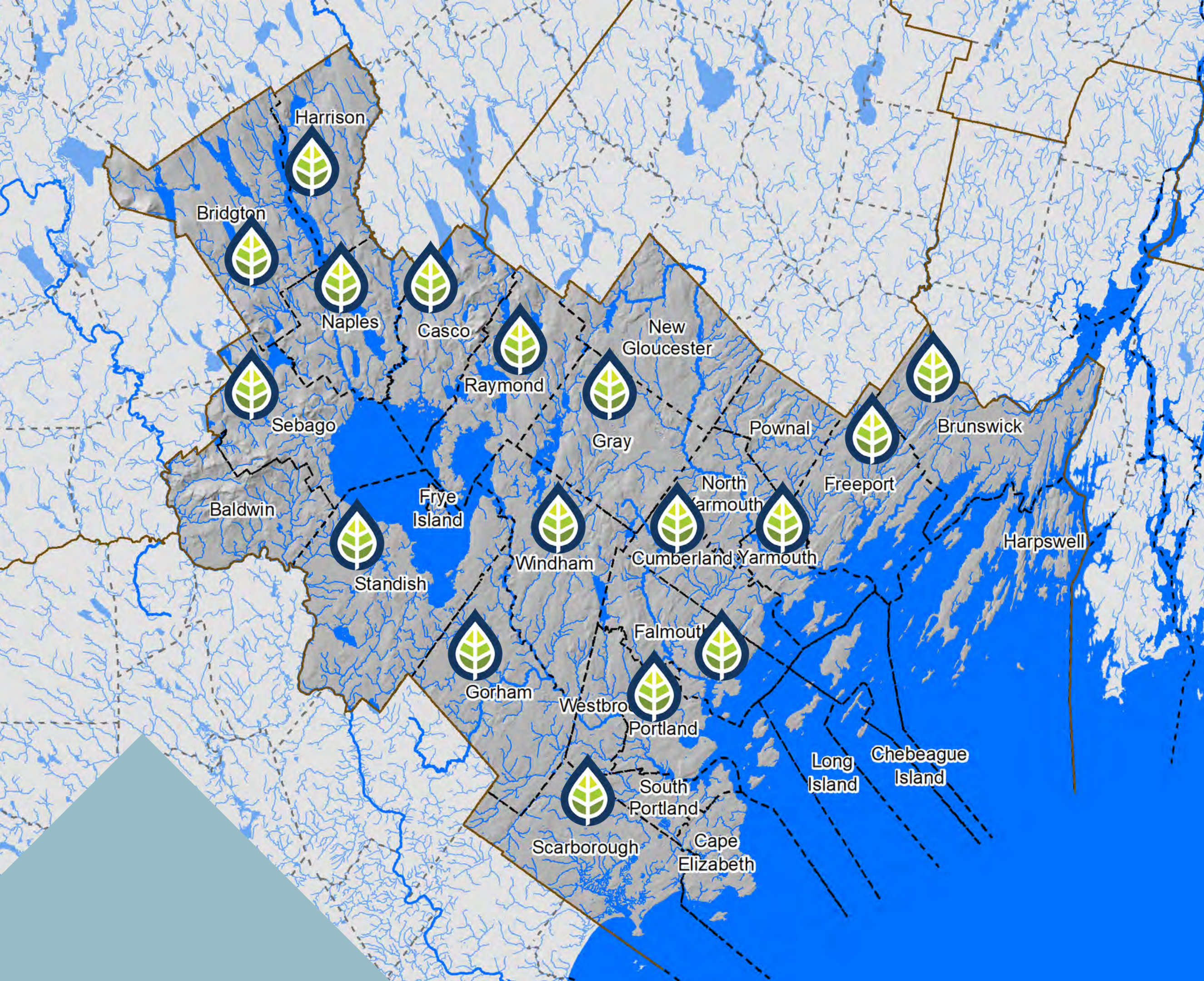
Partnering with the Southern Maine Planning Development Corporation on a grant through the Maine Coastal Program, the District will provide recommendations for improved municipal ordinances regulating erosion and sedimentation control at construction sites.

WINDHAM

Provided support to the town to prioritize the restoration of its impaired waterbodies, based on water quality health indicators and land use practices. This information was presented to the Town's Natural Resource Advisory Committee.

FREEPORT

- GIS support for non-motorized transportation
- Continued work with Bustins Island community to reduce coastal bluff site erosion through a Maine Coastal Program awarded Coastal Communities Grant to improve management of upland runoff.



33 REQUESTS

for individual technical assistance from the following municipalities:

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Brunswick | Yarmouth |
| Westbrook | Gorham |
| Freeport | Falmouth |
| Casco | Cumberland |
| Windham | Scarborough |
| Gray | Standish |
| Raymond | Harrison |
| Portland | Bridgton |
| Sebago | Naples |

Urban Review



Urban Review

Construction in southern Maine showed no signs of slowing down in 2020 and the District's Urban Review Program was no different reviewing stormwater management and erosion and sediment control plans for proposed projects for several municipalities and in support of Stormwater Permit and Site Law application reviews for the MDEP. We also provided third party inspection for erosion and sediment control at numerous active construction sites and performed post-construction inspections of existing stormwater best management practices at sites throughout the County.



Urban Review in 2020

Types and number of projects the District assisted landowners and municipalities with in 2020:

Performed third party inspection for erosion and sediment control for the MDEP at five active construction sites located from Scarborough to Bridgton

Performed third party inspection for erosion and sediment control for the City of South Portland at over 25 active constructions sites

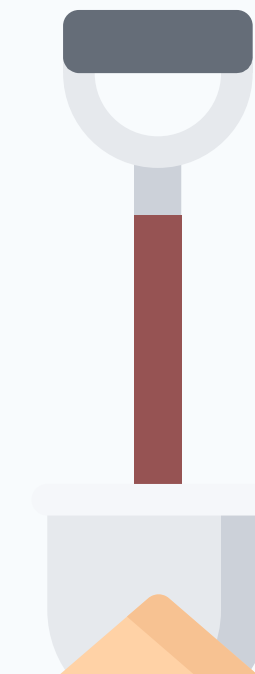
Provided over 20 desktop third party reviews of proposed stormwater management plans on urban development projects

Assisted the Town of Brunswick with ordinance revisions and best management practice templates for stormwater management related to development and construction upon and adjacent to steep slopes on coastal bluffs and stream banks

Designed drainage improvements and stormwater management upgrades for a maintenance road at the Evergreen Cemetery in Portland for the Portland Water District which included buffer planting recommendations

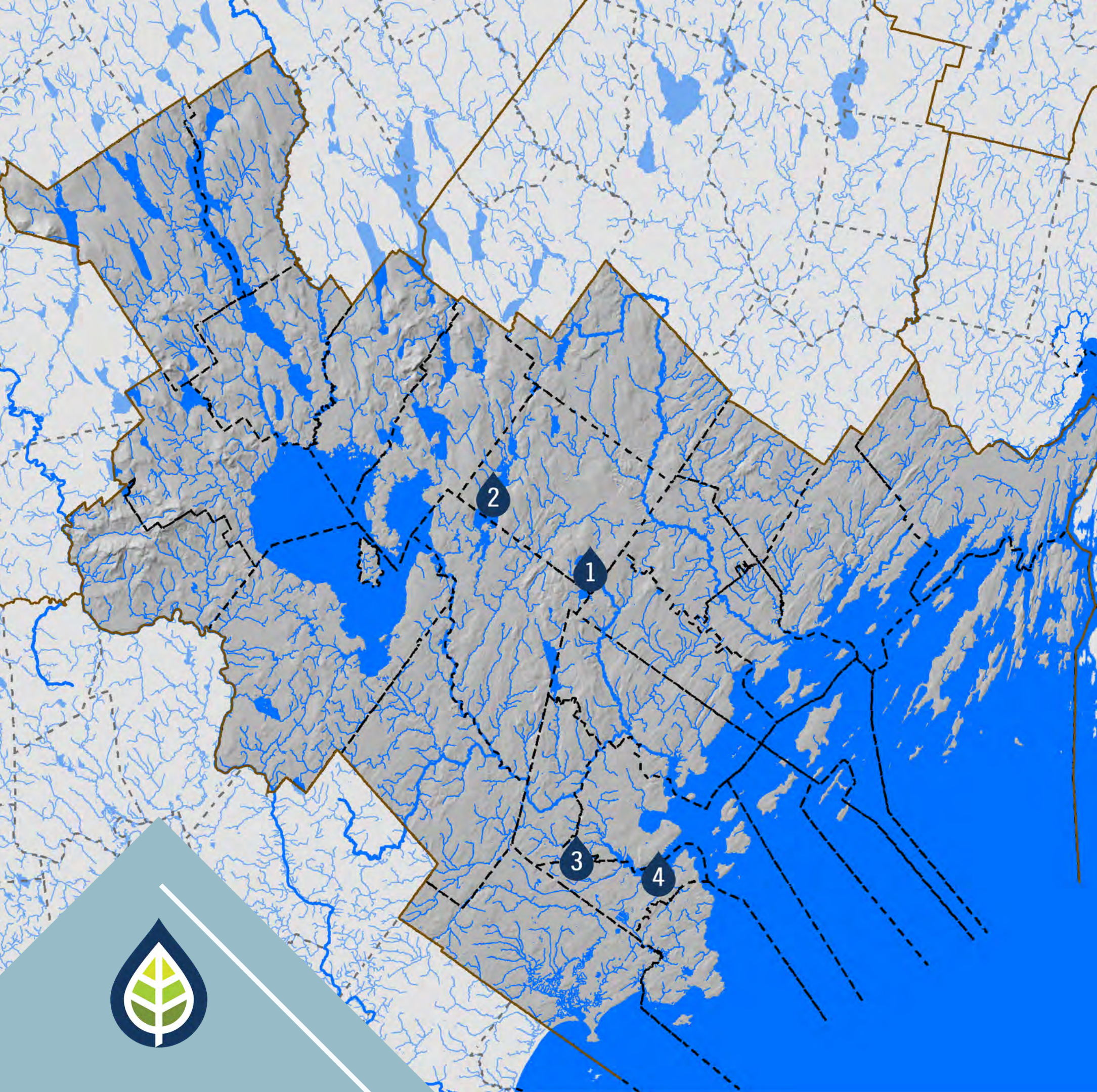
Provided erosion and sediment control inspection at a private residential development/soil extraction project for the Town of Cumberland

Performed field inspection of existing stormwater Best Management Practices at 12 privately owned properties





Water Protection



1. Forest Lake

Following the guidance of the 2018 Forest Lake Watershed Protection Plan, the goal of this two-year project is to reduce phosphorous entering the lake by addressing 25 of the highest priority sites to allow the lake to maintain its Class GPA status. In 2020, the Steering Committee met twice, residential site visits were conducted to eleven sites, four road sites were walked, designs were determined for watershed boundary signs, a “lake watershed living” draft packet was created for discussion, and the grant and its offerings was broadcasted to residents and the public. Additional recommendations and on Partners: Maine DEP, Forest Lake Association, Town of Windham, Town of Gray, Town of Cumberland.

2. Highland Lake

CCSWCD has been providing support to the Town of Falmouth and the Town of Windham in meeting the needs of the Highland Lake Leadership Team (HLLT) since its formation in 2018. HLLT was formed in response to increasing decline in Highland Lake’s water quality along with the presence of a unique algal bloom (picocyanobacterial) for four years in a row. CCSWCD assists the Towns in providing support outside of current grant funds that help protect and improve Highland Lake. This support includes ordinance assistance/mapping, landowner technical assistance, and assistance and resources to HLLT’s committees.

3. Long Creek

The District continued supporting the Long Creek Watershed Management District in their implementation of their watershed management plan tasks which include annual parcel inspections, assistance on best management practices installation projects, and providing technical support to stream restoration projects, sweeping, and catch basin cleanouts.

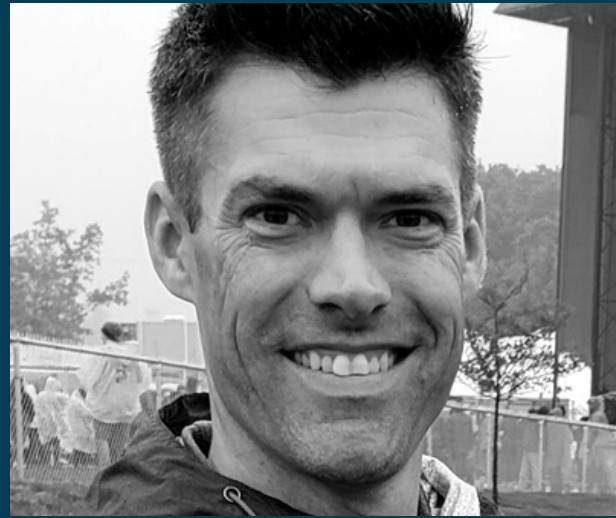
4. Trout Brook

Trout Brook is currently listed by the State of Maine as an impaired stream due to degraded aquatic habitat. The purpose of this project was to continue to achieve the goals of the Trout Brook Watershed Management Plan in reducing nutrient loading to ultimately restore Trout Brook to meet its Class C water quality standards. This Phase III grant project worked to install additional conservation practices at Down Home Farm in Cape Elizabeth including: a swine manure shed to prevent nutrients from washing offsite and into Trout Brook (completed in 2019), an improved outlet control structure on an irrigation pond to increase downstream oxygenation (completed in 2019), and fencing to keep livestock out of Trout Brook and its tributaries (completed in 2020).

DO YOU WANT TO ENSURE CLEAN WATER AND HEALTHY SOILS IN YOUR COMMUNITY FOR GENERATIONS TO COME?

The District Board guides on-the-ground soil and water conservation efforts. We are looking for candidates for future board members who are connected to their community and are looking for a satisfying opportunity to make a difference. **Could you be a good fit?**

Join Our Board



LUCAS BENEDICT
Associate Supervisor
Westbrook



EVAN JOHNSON
Associate Supervisor
Gorham



ROBERT MALLEY
Associate Supervisor
Cape Elizabeth



MARYBETH
RICHARDSON
Associate Supervisor
Cape Elizabeth



ROB WOODMAN
Associate Supervisor
Gorham

Meet our New Board Members

The background features a blue-tinted photograph of a business meeting. Several people are gathered around a table, with one person pointing at a laptop screen. Overlaid on this image are several white line-art icons within hexagonal frames: a scatter plot, a line graph, a bar chart, a magnifying glass, a dollar sign, and a calendar. A large green triangle is positioned in the bottom-left corner, and a light blue triangle is in the top-right corner.

Financial Statement

2020 Financial Statement

OPERATING REVENUES		
Grants		\$ 150,624
County and State Funding		44,000
Project Income		479,874
Fees for Service		79,594
Seminars and Conferences		105,225
Other Revenue		21,904
Total Operating Revenues		881,221
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Salaries and Wages		373,251
Program Expenses		346,435
Project Costs		144,434
Employee Benefits		97,795
Payroll Taxes		34,009
Professional Fees		39,598
Travel Expense		7,506
Supplies		27,087
Telephone		6,675
Other Expenses		28,709
Printing and Postage		2,154
Depreciation		15,959
Dues and Subscriptions		10,231
Meetings		2,937
Utilities		6,272
Maintenance and Repairs		43,311
Insurance		2,326
Property Taxes		8,696
Bad Debt		2,531
Overhead Allocation		(366,333)
Total Operating Expenses		833,582

NET OPERATING INCOME (LOSS)		47,640
NON-OPERATING REVENUES (EXPENSES)		
Interest and Dividends		3,576
Interest Expense		(17,899)
Total Non-Operating Revenues (Expenses)		(14,322)
CHANGE IN NET POSITION	\$	33,318
NET POSITION - JUNE 30, 2019	\$	284,307
NET POSITION - JUNE 30, 2020	\$	317,624

The District particularly thanks the Cumberland County Finance Committee and County Commissioners, as well as the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry for their continuing support, which has made much of our work possible.

Contact



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