

Sunday River Sub-Watershed NPS Project, Phase I

#2002R-06

Waterbody Name: Sunday River
Location: Newry, Bethel, & Riley Twp - Oxford County
Waterbody Status: NPS Priority Watershed
Project Sponsor: Oxford County SWCD
Project Duration: March 2002 - December 2005
319 Grant Amount: \$96,649
Local Match: \$78,914



PROBLEM:

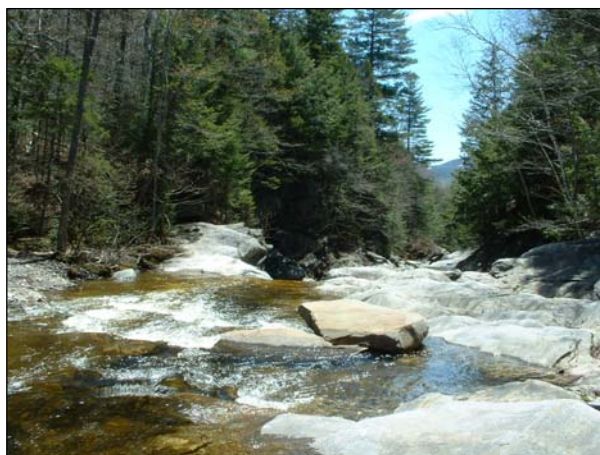
The Sunday River is approximately 13.3 miles long with a direct watershed of 51 square miles. The Sunday River is a valuable ecological and economic resource threatened by increasing residential and recreational development. Watershed residents have been concerned about soil erosion into the Sunday River and its tributaries, extreme flows during runoff events, unstable streambanks, flooding, and the formation of new channels in the river which result in the destruction of riparian property. According to fishery biologists, the large amount of sediment that enters the river due to soil erosion have reduced the river's carrying capacity for fish by smothering fish eggs and filling in pools favored by adult trout.

In 2000, the Oxford County SWCD and local volunteers conducted a watershed survey in the eastern portion of the watershed (approximately 20 square miles). This survey identified 181 nonpoint source (NPS) pollution sites, including roads, parking areas, agricultural fields, areas of past/present logging, residential development, streambanks, and new channel formation.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This project consisted of two major efforts: to complete a watershed survey of soil erosion problems in the remaining (western) half of the Sunday River watershed and to install a number of best management practices throughout the watershed aimed at significantly reducing soil/sediment inputs into the river system.

Additional efforts included steering committee meetings to guide the process and involve local stakeholders, news articles and education events to inform the public about the watershed activities, and technical assistance visits for local residents.



PROJECT OUTCOMES:

- The western half of the Sunday River watershed survey was completed in 2002. This survey documented 178 erosion sites, and findings were summarized in the report, *Western Sunday River Watershed Survey* (March, 2003). Since the eastern half of the watershed was surveyed in 2000, the entire watershed has now been surveyed.
- Erosion problems were fixed at 13 chronic erosion sites, which resultant in pollutant load reduction of an estimated 452 tons per year (Region 5 Method).
- A large fluvial geomorphology study assessment was done on the Sunday River and its tributaries, largely as a result of this project's findings and momentum. The study was funded by the Maine Department of Transportation and carried out by project partners under the direction of a geomorphology consultant. Findings of the study have helped local decision makers and agency staff prioritize areas needing the most immediate attention for erosion control and buffer plantings.
- This grant has developed a solid foundation of local partners and knowledge which, hopefully, will assist with future watershed protection efforts.



PROJECT PARTNERS:

Town of Newry
Local Citizens
Sunday River Ski Company
Androscoggin River Watershed Council
Trout Unlimited

Izaak Walton League of America
Maine State Planning Office
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
Maine Department of Transportation

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Suggested Citation:

Maine Department of Environmental Protection (2006) "Nonpoint Source Management Program 2005 Annual Report," Document# DEPLW0758. Augusta: MDEP.