

Bear Pond Water Quality Improvement Project, Phase I

#2003-07

Waterbody Names: Big and Little Bear Ponds

Location: Hartford and Turner – Oxford and Androscoggin Counties

Waterbody Status: NPS Priority Watershed

Project Sponsor: Oxford County SWCD

Project Duration: April 2003 – December 2005

319 Grant Amount: \$35,758

Local Match: \$23,958



PROBLEM:

The Bear Pond Watershed includes Big and Little Bear Ponds and covers 6.9 square miles. The shorelines of both ponds have been developed with over 225 seasonal and year-round homes and an extensive network of private roads. The watershed has experienced increased development in recent years due to its proximity to the urban center of Lewiston/Auburn.

The Bear Pond Improvement Association (BPIA) has tested water quality in Big Bear Pond for more than 20 years showing a decrease in water clarity. A watershed survey sponsored by the Oxford County SWCD, BPIA and DEP in 2001 identified 173 sites that are currently impacting the water quality in the ponds. Residential sites consisted of 45% of the problems, private roads amounted to nearly 20% of the problems and the remaining sites were associated with the town beach, town roads and commercial areas.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

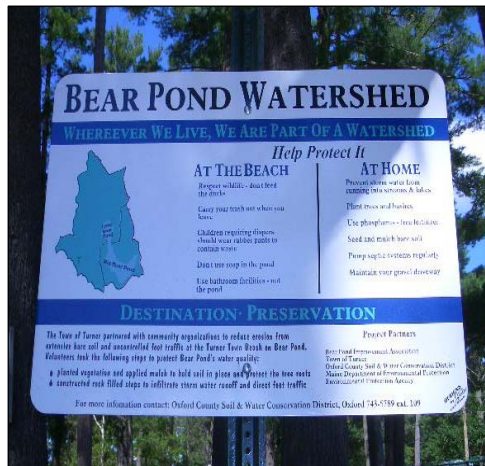
The purpose of the Bear Pond Water Quality Improvement Project was to reduce loading of polluted runoff to the ponds, build local commitment for long-term watershed protection, and improve or stabilize water quality. The project abated erosion and runoff sources at many of the identified NPS problem sites by providing technical assistance, funds and labor for BMP installations.

BMPS were installed at 11 NPS sites and demonstrated a variety of erosion control methods. The towns of Hartford and Turner and watershed landowners were reliable and enthusiastic partners and helped with construction at many of the project sites. Project staff also conducted more than 20 technical assistance visits with watershed landowners. Outreach included press releases, public presentations, news articles, the installation of a storyboard sign at the Turner Town Beach, hands-on workshops, and a final brochure highlighting erosion problems and solutions.



PROJECT OUTCOMES:

- The project fixed erosion problems at 11 erosion sites in the watershed including eight road sites, one residential site, one town beach site and one site at the town beach parking area.
- Although pollutant load reductions were not estimated for these sites, it is clear that these BMP projects have prevented a significant amount of soil from reaching Bear Pond.
- Hawk Mountain Road, which was considered the highest impact erosion problem on the lake, was successfully fixed. The chronic severe erosion on this steep road was deemed partially responsible for a large delta in the pond.
- The Oxford SWCD conducted 27 technical assistance visits with watershed landowners – 7 more the goal in the project workplan. Many of these landowners then took the initiative to install the recommended erosion control measures.



PROJECT PARTNERS:

Oxford County SWCD
Cumberland County SWCD
Androscoggin Valley SWCD
Bear Pond Improvement Association
Town of Hartford
Town of Turner
LaPlante Road Association

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