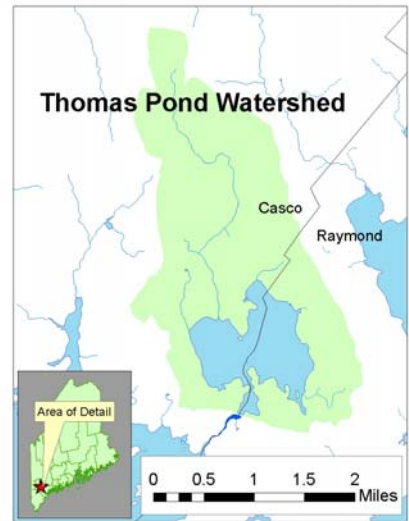


Thomas Pond Improvement Project – Phase I

#2003R-10

Waterbody Name: Thomas Pond
Location: Casco and Raymond, Cumberland County
Waterbody Status: NPS Priority Watershed, Most at Risk
Project Sponsor: Cumberland County SWCD
Project Duration: March 2003 – December 2005
319 Grant Amount: \$46,147
Match: \$84,519



PROBLEM:

Thomas Pond is a 497-acre lake located in the Towns of Raymond and Casco. Its watershed covers 4.5 square miles and is part of the larger Sebago Lake Watershed, which serves as a drinking water source for over 200,000 people in Southern Maine. Raymond Waterways Protective Association (RWPA) and the DEP have monitored Thomas Pond since 1976. According to the monitoring data, the pond is considered to be average based on measures of secchi disk transparency, total phosphorus and chlorophyll a. However, there is high depletion of dissolved oxygen in the bottom waters of the lake in late summer and the threat of internal phosphorus loading is also high.

The Thomas Pond Improvement Association (TPIA), DEP and Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) started lake protection efforts in 2000 when they conducted an independently-funded watershed survey. The survey identified 125 erosion sites in the watershed, the majority of which were associated with residential areas (59%) and private roads (22%).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of the project was to reduce soil erosion and polluted runoff sources to Thomas Pond, foster long-term watershed stewardship and ultimately to improve water quality. Staff and volunteers coordinated and installed conservation practices at 15 town and private road sites and provided technical assistance to 32 landowners. The project also established or enhanced 20 native plant buffers along 500 feet of shoreline through a matching grant program.

The project held successful "Buffer Cruises" in 2003 and 2004. In total, 25 residents toured Thomas Pond on pontoon boats to view natural, landscaped and no-mow buffers around the lake. In addition, a initial fact sheet was distributed to watershed residents to publicize the project; a color booklet was created at the end of the project to showcase project activities; presentations were delivered to the TPIA and Raymond and Casco Selectboards; and numerous articles were printed in local and regional newspapers.



PROJECT OUTCOMES:

- The project fixed 15 large-scale erosion problems in the watershed, thereby keeping an estimated 18 tons of sediment out of the lake each year (EPA Region 5 Method).
- 20 landowners took part in a native plant matching grant program. Approximately 500 feet of shoreline were planted with over 300 native trees, shrubs and groundcover plants.
- Project staff provided technical assistance to 32 landowners through the projects – exceeding the goals of 15 written into the original workplan.
- Local match totaled \$84,519 – \$53,000 over the original project goal.



PROJECT PARTNERS:

Thomas Pond Improvement Association
Town of Casco
Town of Raymond
Portland Water District
Raymond Waterways Protective Association
Roads Associations and Local Residents

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Suggested Citation:

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