

# Weskeag River Watershed Project

#2001-07

Waterbody Name: Weskeag River

Location: Thomaston, Rockland, South Thomaston – Knox County

Waterbody Status: Impaired, NPS Priority Watershed

Project Sponsor: Time and Tide RC&D Area

Project Duration: May 2001 – January 2006

319 Grant Amount: \$31,344

Local Match: \$20,970



## PROBLEM:

The Weskeag River has an 11 square mile watershed that contains several farms and a moderate amount of residential and commercial development including a railroad line, airport and cement plant. The watershed is one of 17 coastal watersheds on Maine's Nonpoint Source Priority (NPS) Watersheds List. It is listed for elevated bacteria counts, low dissolved oxygen levels and medium ecological levels, and for its inclusion as one of the seven tidal rivers considered at risk from new development in Maine's Stormwater Management Rules.

In 1997, a watershed survey was completed for the Weskeag River Estuary. The survey identified 13 NPS problem sites in need of repair. Only one of the identified problem sites had been fixed as of May of 2001. An interested and qualified local coalition of watershed residents was formed to fix the remaining NPS problem sites.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of the project was to implement Best Management Practices (BMP) to repair four high priority sites identified during the 1997 Watershed Survey. The ultimate goal was to improve water quality, restore shellfish habitats, protect aquaculture in the river and educate watershed property owners about nonpoint sources of pollution to the Weskeag River.

The project was carried out by the Time and Tide Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area. Watershed education was accomplished by presentations and displays on the project outlining the BMP applications and results on how it has benefited the Weskeag Watershed ecosystem. A Demonstration Day was held to showcase project sites.



## PROJECT OUTCOMES:

- The project successfully fixed four priority sites identified in the 1997 Watershed Survey. The projects included three road sites and one sites associated with the railroad bed.
- A failing granite culvert was replaced with at pre-cast concrete one. The culvert is located under the railroad tracks in the Pleasant Garden section of Rockland and drains a tributary to the Weskeag River.
- A paved shoulder and parking area and culvert stabilization projects were completed adjacent to the Weskeag Marsh on Buttermilk Lane in South Thomaston. These projects protected the river from the effects of soil erosion.
- On December 6, 2004, a Demonstration Day Educational Forum was held for municipal public works staff, code enforcement officers, contractors, farmers, midcoast area aquaculturists, watershed stakeholders, legislators and area property owners. This event served as a comprehensive and essential public education element of the project.
- Project staff assisted a Rockland High School Science teacher in securing a grant from MBNA to obtain a boat and equipment to monitor the water quality of the Weskeag River. The project manager also assisted in identifying sampling locations and in developing a quality assurance plan.



## PROJECT PARTNERS:

Knox- Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District  
Rockland High School  
Town of South Thomaston  
Town of Thomaston

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

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