

# Dexter Lakes Watershed Survey

#2005R-18

Waterbody Names: Lake Wassookeag and Puffers Pond

Location: Dexter – Penobscot County

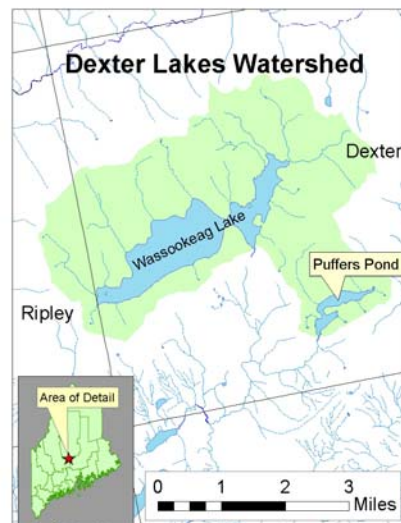
Waterbody Status: NPS Priority Watershed (Lake Wassookeag)

Project Sponsor: Penobscot County SWCD

Project Duration: May 2005 – April 2006

319 Grant Amount: \$17,540

Local Match: \$11,790



## PROBLEM:

Lake Wassookeag and Puffers Pond (also known as the Dexter Lakes) are exceptional waters that are vital economic and recreational resources for the Dexter area. Since it is a public water supply, Lake Wassookeag is a NPS Priority Watershed, and both waterbodies support cold water fisheries that bring valuable dollars into the community. The watershed also consists of many freshwater wetlands, grasslands and upland forests that have been identified as important wildlife areas. Furthermore, the Dexter Lakes are part of the larger Sebasticook River watershed, which supports many “rare and endangered species according to the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

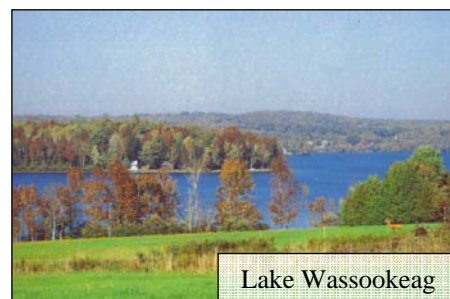
The Maine DEP and Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program have collaborated to collect water quality data for Lake Wassookeag since 1975. Lake Wassookeag’s water quality is considered to be above average, and the potential for nuisance algae blooms is low. However, water quality is threatened by increasing pressure from increasing amounts of impervious areas, exposed soil, vegetative buffer removal and housing developments. Once water quality starts to decline it becomes very difficult to regain excellent water quality.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of the project was to identify and prioritize sources of NPS pollution in the Dexter Lakes watersheds, raise public awareness about NPS issues, and identify actions and sources of funding to carry out remedial actions to maintain or enhance the quality of the Dexter Lakes.

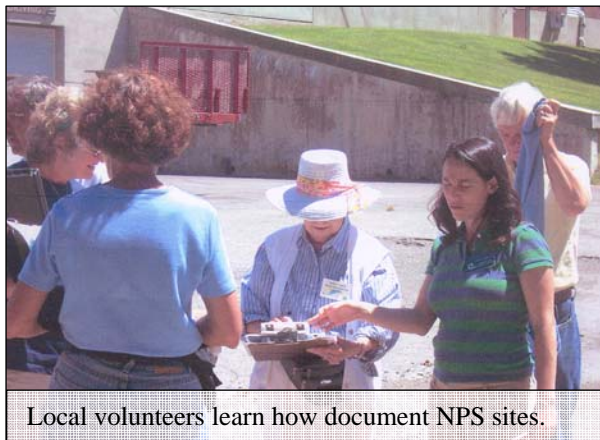
The Penobscot County SWCD managed the watershed survey with guidance from a local steering committee. The watershed survey was conducted in accordance with DEP’s *A Citizen’s Guide to Lake Watershed Surveys*. Volunteers were trained to identify and document NPS sites, and the survey was completed in the summer of 2005.

The project also distributed an educational pamphlet, held workshops at the Dexter Lake Association’s (DLA) annual meetings, publicized the project in partner newsletters and websites and conducted five technical assistance visits. Volunteers also completed a large-scale buffer demonstration at the Dexter Town Beach and Boat Launch.



## PROJECT OUTCOMES:

- Project staff and local volunteers surveyed the entire Dexter Lakes watersheds and documented 68 NPS sites. They also developed preliminary recommendations and rated the impact to the lake and cost required to fix each site.
- The *Dexter Lakes NPS Watershed Survey Final Report* was completed in April, 2006. The report summarizes watershed survey findings, lists specific information on each site and outlines next steps for watershed stewardship.
- Project staff provided five landowners with technical assistance and provided specific recommendations about how to fix erosion problems on their properties.
- 18 volunteers from the DLA, Town of Dexter and larger community planted 297 shrubs to establish a buffer demonstration area at the Dexter Town Beach and Boat Launch.
- A pamphlet, *Where Do You Live in the Watershed*, was created to describe the watershed concept. The pamphlet was distributed to the Dexter community by the Penobscot County SWCD and DLA.



Local volunteers learn how document NPS sites.



Local volunteers and Dexter Town Manager help establish buffers (300 plants) at the Town Beach.

## PROJECT PARTNERS:

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Dexter Lakes Association

Town of Dexter

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Suggested Citation:

Maine Department of Environmental Protection (2007) “Nonpoint Source Management Program 2006 Annual Report,” Document# DEPLW0836 2007. Augusta: MDEP.