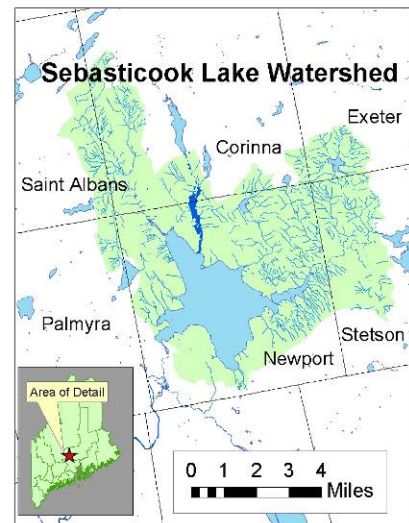


Sebasticook Lake Watershed Project, Phase 3

#2003R-21

Waterbody Name: Sebasticook Lake
Location: Newport – Penobscot County
Waterbody Status: NPS Priority Watershed, Impaired
Project Grantee: Penobscot County SWCD
Project Duration: May 2004 – January 2007
319 Grant Amount: \$76,000
Local Match: \$55,794



PROBLEM:

Sebasticook Lake is located in the town of Newport, approximately 26 miles west of the city of Bangor. The lake covers 4,537 acres and holds the distinction of being the largest Maine lake that lies completely within the boundaries of a single town. In addition to Newport, nine other towns are located within Sebasticook Lake's 85 square mile watershed. Approximately 75% of the watershed is forested. The remaining 25% is developed, of which 64% is in agriculture, 19% is residential and 7% is roads.

Sebasticook Lake was once recognized as one of the most polluted lakes in Maine, and it remains on Maine's list of impaired waters. However, water quality has improved due to concerted efforts by state and local stakeholders to reduce phosphorus loads. Wastewater treatment has been upgraded in Corinna and Dexter; BMPs have been adopted to address residential and agricultural runoff sources; and the lake's outlet dam was reconstructed to allow annual fall drawdowns. The DEP's TMDL Assessment (2001) cited agriculture as the principal source of phosphorus loading to the lake, along with roadways, residential areas, noncultural and atmospheric phosphorus loads and other development.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this project was to educate watershed landowners and reduce soil erosion and polluted runoff by installing water quality best management practices (BMPs) on NPS sites. Conservation practices were installed on 21 sites with cost sharing and technical assistance provided by NRCS and DEP.

The project was well publicized through mailings, newspaper articles and public meetings, resulting in a significant number of landowner inquiries. However, the project faced several challenges and was unable to reach the goal of fixing 30 sites. The turnover in personnel (three different project managers) created delays in the project, and it proved difficult to implement the BMP projects within the allotted timeline. The cost estimates in the project workplan were also affected by inflation and the increased costs of fuel. For this reason, the money available for construction was not adequate to complete 30 sites.



The Veazland Farms project was funded by EQIP and 319. The concrete-lined basin traps solids in the farm runoff, and the liquids are filtered through a vegetative buffer.

PROJECT OUTCOMES:

- BMPs were installed at 21 sites. Work included camp road erosion and sediment controls, an agricultural concrete basin, vegetative buffer plantings and lakeshore stabilization.
- Pollution loading to the lake was reduced by an estimated 120 tons of sediment, 127.7 pounds of phosphorus and 333.3 pounds of nitrogen per year (US EPA Region 5 Method).
- Penobscot County SWCD provided technical assistance to 17 individual landowners, one campground, one farm and two towns.
- Through lake association publicity and outdoor workshops, other landowners learned to solve erosion problems.



PROJECT PARTNERS:

USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
Town of Newport
Town of Corinna
Town of Dexter

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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