

Cape Neddick River Watershed Restoration Project, Phase I

#2017RT02

Waterbody Name: Cape Neddick River

Location: Town of York – York County

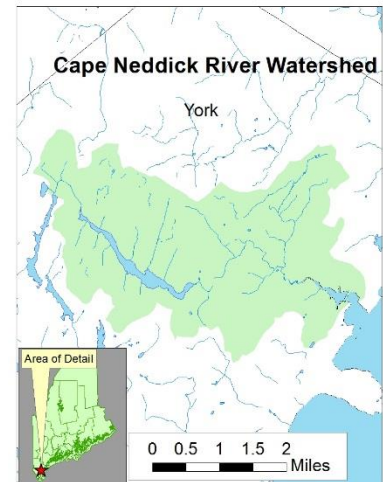
Waterbody Status: NPS Priority Watershed, Tidal Portion Impaired

Project Grantee: Town of York

Project Duration: April 2017 – December 2018

319 Grant Amount: \$20,340

Local Match: \$17,950



PROBLEM:

The Cape Neddick River is a Class B stream and Class SB estuary, whose watershed is entirely in the Town of York. The watershed is approximately nine square miles, starting in the foothills of Mt. Agamenticus and including Chase's Pond, the public water supply for the Town of York. The river flows under Interstate 95 and becomes tidal just east of Route 1. The Cape Neddick River is a significant estuarine resource and supports a diverse array of recreational water-based activities, including swimming at the popular Cape Neddick Beach.

The estuary portion of the river is listed as impaired (Category 4-A "Estuarine and Marine Waters with Impaired Use, TMDL Completed") in the MDEP 2016 Integrated Report, and is included in the *Maine Statewide Bacteria TMDL (August 2009)*. The *Cape Neddick River Watershed Based Plan (June 2014)* identified that septic systems and stormwater runoff are the primary concerns for the watershed. Significant numbers of geese are known to congregate on large open lawns along the river.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The goal of this project was to reduce bacteria inputs, decrease the number of annual beach postings, and garner support for future bacteria reduction efforts in the watershed. The project focused on installing three plantings to deter geese at specific sites where geese are known to congregate; providing outreach regarding septic system maintenance; and proper pet waste disposal. The project was led by the Town, Wells Reserve and an active stakeholder committee. Letters were sent to Cape Neddick River Estuary abutters regarding the impact and preference of geese for open lawns, and the opportunity for grant funds. Nine landowners had site visits, five received a preliminary design and planting plan, and three had buffers installed through the grant. Direct mailings regarding proper septic system maintenance and dog waste disposal were conducted throughout the watershed. Pet waste and trash was collected during the 2018 Earth Day Clean-up Event. The Town hopes to continue supporting the installation of geese-deterrent buffers and community volunteer events.



Suggested Citation:

Maine Department of Environmental Protection (2019) "Nonpoint Source Management Program 2018 Annual Report,". Augusta: MDEP

PROJECT OUTCOMES:

- Volunteers installed 250 native plants along 490 feet of riparian land on the Cape Neddick River, creating buffers and deterring geese at three hotspot locations.
- Project successes include landowners reporting a 60-100% decrease in Canada Geese after the barriers were planted and a reduction of pet waste found at the Mount Agamenticus Conservation area.
- Direct mailings were sent to watershed residents regarding deleterious effects of pet waste, wildlife waste, and failing septic systems. The project hosted an Earth Day Clean Up Event at three locations, information about proper pet waste disposal was distributed at each site.
- The project prevented an estimated 0.7 tons of sediment, 2.4 pounds of phosphorus, and 13.7 pounds of nitrogen from entering the river each year (Region 5 Method). This does not include the likely reduction of bacteria and nutrients from fewer geese on residential lawns.



Geese-deterrent buffer plantings on two residential properties along Cape Neddick River Estuary.

PROJECT PARTNERS:

Cape Neddick River Association
Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve
Maine Healthy Beaches

York Land Trust
York Water District

CONTACT INFORMATION

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