



Jan-Feb
2011

Kennebec & Somerset County Soil & Water Conservation Districts

If you receive more than one newsletter, or the address is wrong, please contact us and we will correct the error. Thanks.

This is the 2011 tree and shrub sale issue

Conservation Times
It may be the “dead of winter” but think spring...

Included in this issue of the **Conservation Times** are the materials for the 2011 tree and shrub sale. Please take a look and place an order.

As noted in the last newsletter, the rising costs of publication and distribution means we need to move towards an electronic publication. We recognized that many of you still prefer to receive the newsletter in a paper format. Without support to cover those costs we need to either cut our costs of production.

If you wish to continue receiving this newsletter in the mail as a paper copy, we ask that you pay a subscription cost of \$10/year. That will help cover our printing and mailing costs. Thanks to those of you who have already sent us money. It all helps.

This edition will be the last edition you receive as a paper copy unless we receive payment.

We recognize and appreciate all the positive feedback

we get from our **Conservation Times** but its publication can no longer be fully supported by the limited discretionary funds we receive.

Again, if you wish to continue receiving a paper copy of the **Conservation Times**, please take the time to send us a \$10/year subscription.

Inside you will also see reference to a Natural Resource Assessment in both Kennebec and Somerset counties. By the time you receive this the Kennebec District will have had its public meeting of February 3rd. Somerset is having a meeting on the 9th.

See tree sale information on pages 5-10. Send us an order by March 17th.

Inside this issue:

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On the web at www.KCSWCD.org



District staff can provide additional information and assistance. We can usually identify other sources of information too. Give us a call at 622-7847 ext. 3

The following are a few items. . .

Another benefit of trees

Edited from The Economist at http://www.economist.com/node/17468409?story_id=17468409

Trees grow in Brooklyn

A natural form of relief for overworked city sewers —

Like other post-industrial areas in the city, New York's Gowanus neighborhood is getting stylish. But those who venture there after a heavy rain-storm might rethink their plans to buy that loft. When the city's ageing sewerage system is overwhelmed, untreated storm-water and sewage flood into local waterways, including the Gowanus Canal. The resulting whiff is sure to keep property prices at a level starving Brooklyn artists can afford.

New York has a serious sewer problem. The city spills more than 27 billion gallons of untreated overflow into its harbor each year, according to Riverkeeper, a local advocacy group. And New York is not alone. Nearly 800 American cities rely on decrepit systems that collect storm-water run-off, industrial waste and human sewage in the same pipes. Usually these pipes take waste water to treatment plants. But any overflow is released into rivers and streams. [this is true for many towns in Maine]

New York recently unveiled a grand plan to clean up its waterways. Instead of spending billions on new tanks and pipes (i.e., "grey infrastructure"), which take years to build and never quite address the problem, the city intends to invest in "green infrastructure", such as roofs covered with vegetation, porous pavements and curbside gardens. The scheme involves a fundamental shift in approach: instead of treating rainfall as waste to be whisked away as quickly as possible, New York will let it sink usefully into the ground: thereby helping to make the city greener, improve air quality, raise property values, increase jobs and lower water and energy costs, according to studies by the EPA and others.

Unlike a sewage works or a new pipeline, which take years to build and which no one wants nearby, green infrastructure projects offer bene-

fits the moment the first tree is planted or a rain barrel is installed. "Isn't it nice?" observes Mr. Strickland as he shows off one of the city's 30 pilot projects, a little roadside garden deep in Brooklyn, with a tree and some flowers. It is indeed, and it can capture nearly 1,000 gallons of storm-water that would otherwise pour into a nearby drain.

Green-infrastructure ideas are also taking root in places as far apart as Kansas City, Milwaukee, Portland and Washington, DC. In California, where droughts make salvaging rainwater especially wise, a new statewide green building code will take effect on January 1st 2011. But the most comprehensive scheme so far comes from Philadelphia, which is seeking EPA approval for its 25-year, \$2 billion approach to "green" at least a third of the city's impervious cover. If approval is granted, this will be the first plan that officially meets federal clean-water guidelines.

The city has gone some way towards meeting its green goals. In 2006 it began regulating the way new constructions manage storm-water on its property. The city's water department has adjusted its rate structure, leveling the highest charges at the biggest polluters (e.g., car parks) instead of the biggest water consumers. The idea is to prod the private sector to improve its environmental record.

Maine Farm Days is coming back to Kennebec County. In 2011 the Maine Farm Days Exposition will be returning to Clinton and the Misty Meadows farm. It will also be returning to the Wednesday—Thursday timeframe. So put it on your calendar now so you don't schedule something else. Plan to join us and the Stoughton family for the two-day event intended to show off one of Maine's dairy farms in addition to the newest products, latest technology and best ideas mixed with some great local hospitality. Check out their website at www.MaineFarmDays.com in order to see what is being planned.

We apologize that some of the resources listed here only have internet connections. If alternative contact information is available we include it.

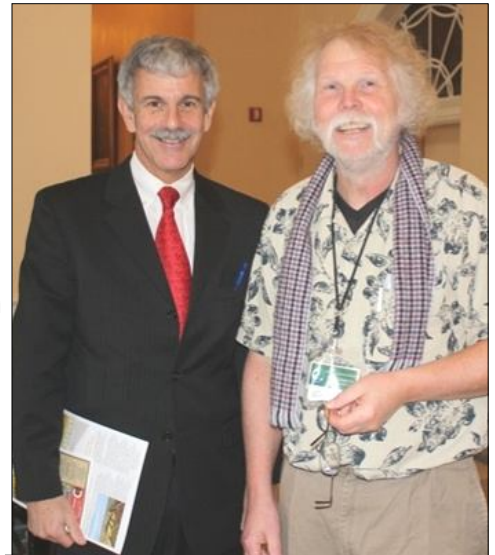
Hall of Flags District Day

On Tuesday, January 25th most of Maine's Soil & Water Conservation Districts had the opportunity to strut our stuff at the Capitol building. As in past years we used the Hall of Flags to set up displays and have the opportunity to talk with our legislators.

It was an excellent chance for us to let House and Senate members learn more about what we do, how we share common goals, and also how each of us are a little different depending upon local priorities establish by our Supervisors.

With so many new legislators this year, it was helpful to have the chance to communicate with them so early in the session. Prior to that Tuesday, the Maine Assoc. of Conservation Districts [MACD] had generated an Annual Report with a brief overview of each districts work in 2010 and what we do with the resources available for conservation work. Most of us had taken the opportunity to contact our legislators and invite them down to the displays.

It seemed to be an effective day to "meet your legislator". At right Dale has taken the opportunity to meet with Senator Katz from Augusta.



In the next issue —

- Spring initiatives
- Project plans for 2011
- Results of Natural Resource Priority work
- .

The **Conservation Times** is edited and produced by the Kennebec and Somerset County Soil & Water Conservation District staff with the assistance of various conservation partners and with the guidance of the Board of Supervisors.

Most writing and editing is done by Dale Finseth and Carol Weymouth unless identified otherwise. Frequently information is used from other publications or media sources.

The districts do not necessarily agree with nor endorse all opinions included in the newsletter. We try and offer a variety of viewpoints on conservation issues.

If you take issue with an article or have suggestions and information for a follow-up or future article, please contact Dale at the Kennebec District. Either call at 622-7847 ext. 3 or e-mail him at Dale@kcsxcd.org

Kennebec District Staff:

Dale Finseth

Josh Platt
Art Grindle

Kennebec District Supervisors:

Linda Leotsakos; Chair

took office 12/2008 (elected starting 1/2009)

Marianne Hubert; Vice-Chair

took office 1/1999 (reappointed starting 1/2011)

Clif Buuck

took office 1/2008 (elected starting 1/2011)

Dan Tibbetts

took office 1/2000 (appointed starting 1/2009)

Tom Doore

took office 1/2010 (elected starting 1/2011—2 yr term)

Associates currently active:

Chad Arms

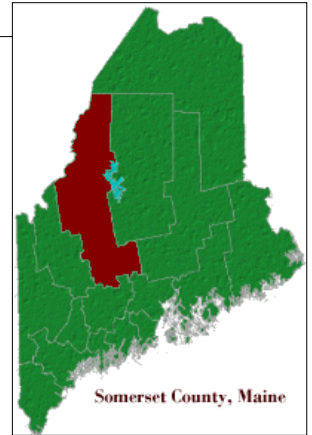
Ted Sparrow

Somerset County Maine Natural Resource Assessment Public Meeting

Wednesday 2-9-2011

3:00 - 5:30 pm

Irving Tanning Community Center
62 Elm Street Hartland ME 04943



This meeting is being held to gain local input for identifying natural resource problems, recommendations for solutions, and ways to work cooperatively to achieve results.

This will be the foundation on which our future plans and programs will be based. We want to hear your recommendations on what the natural resource problems are and how we can cooperatively work together providing solutions. The information gathered at this meeting will be used to obtain conservation cost-share funds in Somerset County over the next 5 years.

For more information, contact Somerset County Soil & Water Conservation District ; (207) 474-8324 x 3 or info@somersetswcd.org



Pauline Pare, NRCS, facilitates the public meeting held earlier in January in Skowhegan as residents identify priorities and concerns in natural resources.

Workshop - Pond Construction and Maintenance Workshop in neighboring County.

The Franklin County SWCD is hosting a pond workshop this spring that may be of interest to people. Many folks have expressed interest in ponds and pond maintenance. SCSWCD plans to host a similar workshop later this year.

When: April 5, 2011 9:00 am Where: Franklin County USDA Service Center 107 Park Street Farmington Maine Cost: \$15.00

Early Registration (until March 15) \$20.00 Late Registration (after March 15)

Get answers to the questions:

—How can I keep my pond healthy?

—What's the best kind of pond for my area?

—What can I do about algae in my pond?

—What uses are there for my pond?

—What should I know before I build a pond?

Speakers: Candi Gilpatrick, NRCS Ag Engineer & Bobby Van Riper, IF&W

To register, access the registration form at the following website: www.franklinswcd.org

Send to: Franklin County SWCD; 107 Park Street Farmington Maine 04938

For more information call Rosetta at 778-4279.

Somerset NRCS highlights

PERSONNEL UPDATES

Soil Conservationist Darol Wilson accepted a position as District Conservationist in the Central Aroostook NRCS Service Center, located in Presque Isle, Maine.

Seth Jones will join our staff as a Soil Conservationist mid-February. Seth has worked with NRCS in the Penobscot County Service Center for a number of years.

Peter Abello, who has worked in the Somerset County Service Center for two years as a Soil Conservationist, will be moving to the Waldo County Service Center in February.

From the Dover Service Center, Carl Bickford will work in the Somerset County Service Center as a Soil Conservationist.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

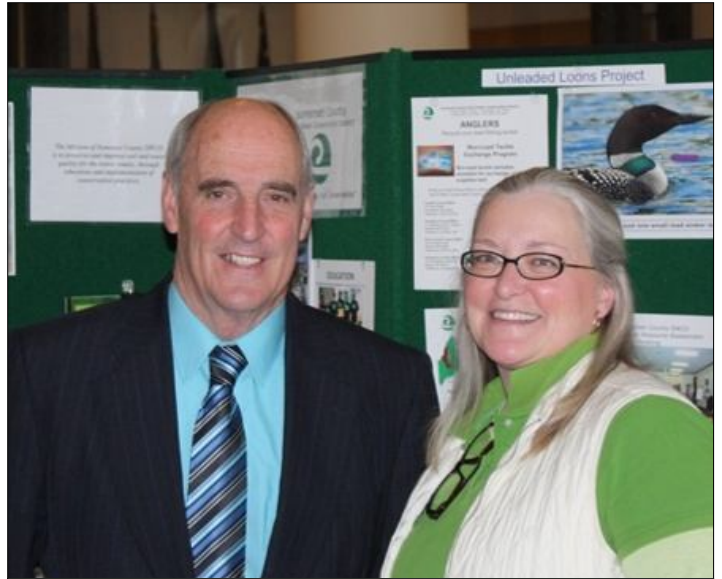
—Conservation Innovation Grants - Up to \$100,000 is available in new grants from NRCS in Maine to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. The deadline for submitting proposals is **February 28, 2011**.

—Maine NRCS has nearly \$1 million available to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands through the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). Applications will be accepted through **March 1, 2011**.

—NRCS has announced that \$2 million in federal funding is available through the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program to assist Maine forest land owners with forest land planning and management under the New England-New York Forestry Initiative. Applications will be accepted through **March 1, 2011**.

—Applications are being accepted from organic producers and those transitioning to organic production to implement resource conservation practices on their agricultural operations. The Organic Initiative is being funded through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. Deadline for applications is **March 4, 2011**.

Learn more about these programs by visiting the Maine NRCS website <http://www.me.nrcs.usda.gov/> or visiting your local USDA Service Center.



Carol taking the opportunity to share some “conservation insights” with one of her legislators at ‘District Day’ in the Hall of Flags. House Majority Leader Representative Phil Curtis (R), District 86 - Madison, Norridgewock and Solon

Somerset County SWCD

Employees—

Carol Weymouth, Executive Director
Laura Suomi-Lecker, Technical Director
Rose Caron, Admin. Assistant
Pam Guerin, Admin. Assistant

Board of Directors—

Kerry Hebert, Chairperson
Alan Haberstock, Vice-Chair
John Ackley, Treasurer
Gabe Clark, Supervisor

Contact Information—

(207) 474-8324 x 102 info@somersetswcd.org www.somersetswcd.org

Some alternative thoughts and ideas.

The following are just a few suggested conservation topics that we have recently heard of. The District does not necessarily endorse or plan to support these. We only provide these ideas as means to help people think “outside the box” . . .



The Kennebec District had a public meeting to discuss the Natural Resource Assessment for Kennebec County on February 3rd. Unfortunately the timing of this newsletter makes it too late to provide notice. However, some of you will have already provided us feedback about Kennebec’s Natural Resource issues and their level of importance by taking a survey.

For the past couple of weeks our website at www.kcswcd.org has provided a link to a survey to help us measure your opinions. If you haven’t already taken the survey, it will be available for a couple more weeks.

As of this date approximately 250 people have completed the survey so I will share a few of the preliminary results. Perhaps most exciting for me is the fact that over 90% of the respondents identified which Kennebec watershed they lived in. Given that many people don’t know what a watershed is, this level of response is reassuring.

- Of those answering about half owned less than 5 acres of land and half owned more than 5 acres.
- 82% said they had year-round homes.
- Over 20% of the respondents have shorefront pieces of property.
- About 10% actively farmed and another 23% indicated they were “hobby farmers”.
- Just under 10% generated income from their forest lands and another 27% used harvested their woodlots for firewood and other products.
- Approximately 1/3 of the respondents had or were using NRCS services.

The point to make is that the respondents were fairly representative of the different types of land owners in Kennebec County.

And their opinions so far????? —

- Clearly the conversion of open space, agricultural and forest lands to commercial and/or residential use is seen as a very high priority. This includes support for supporting sustainable agriculture.
- Managing for invasive species, both aquatic and terrestrial were also identified as high priorities.
- Issues identified as “Most Important Natural Resource issues” included Watershed Management, Wildlife and wildlife habitat protection, & Wetland protections.
- A bit surprising was the fact that Groundwater protection, Renewable energy and pesticide controls were also identified among the “Most Important ...”
- It was also rewarding to see that many of the respondents used Kennebec District services and were very supportive of the technical assistance work we do, even if they themselves had not used it.

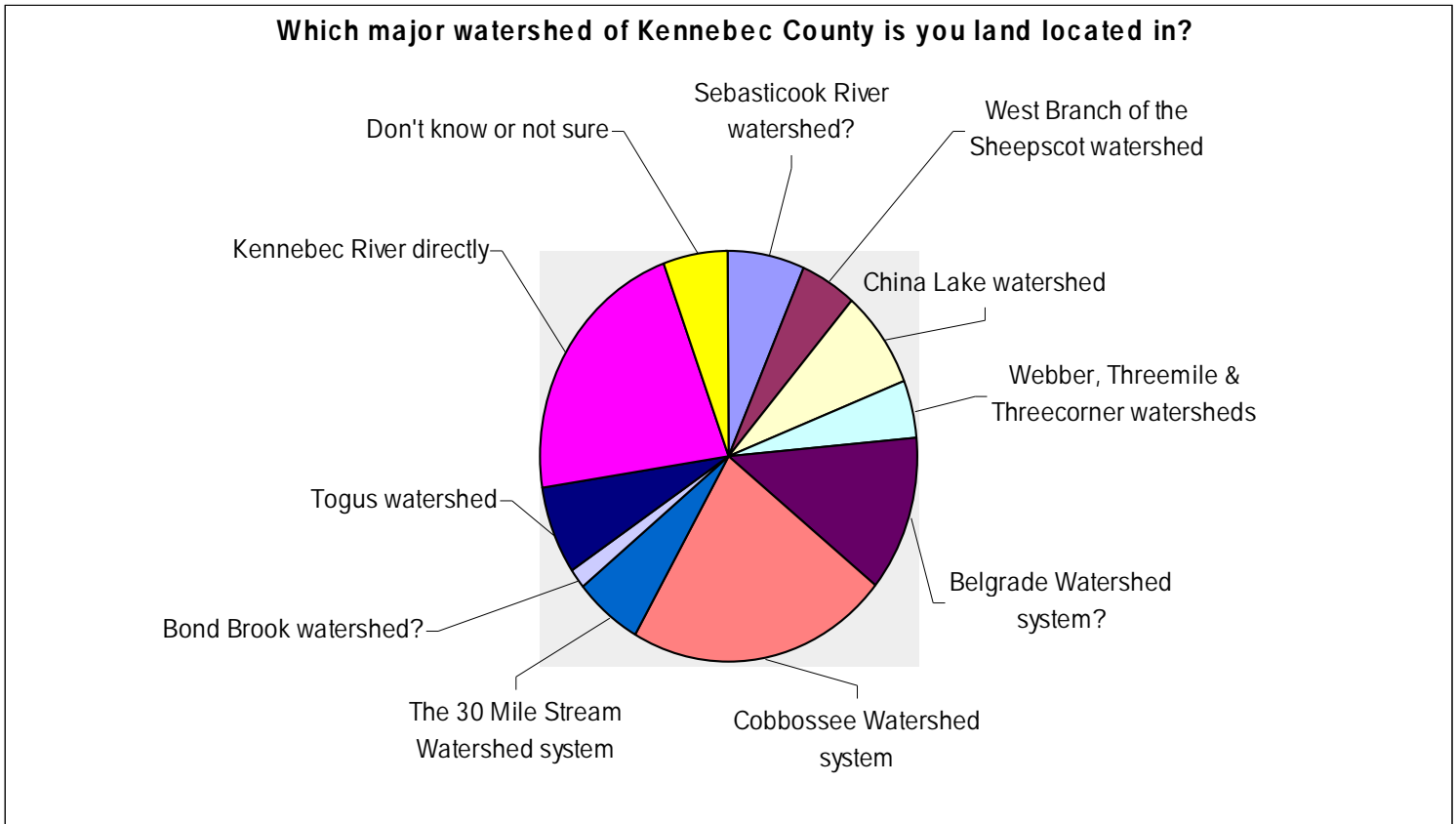
Dale's Energy Use in 2010

I have been reporting on my household energy usage the past number of years. For those following the saga of my energy use and efforts to save, the protection around my back porch has been very effective. My driving was about normal but the miles per gallon improved since I used the pick-up less. The "new" Subaru with over 300,000 miles gets better mileage [27 mpg]. More of my kayaking was close to home so the truck wasn't used so much. To compare annual energy use, I include the Heating Degree Days for the respective heating seasons.

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Htg Deg Days	7470 HDD	6534 HDD	7040 HDD	6873 HDD	7163 HDD	6506 HDD
Htg Oil use	760 gal	600 gal	626 gal	611 gal	546 gal	468 gal
Propane use	102 gal	131 gal	159 gal	132 gal	29 gal	25 gal
Electricity use	2763 KWH	2072 KWH	2054 KWH	1881 KWH	1937 KWH	1693 KWH
Gasoline use	429 gal	445 gal	523 gal	375 gal	546 gal	526 gal
	26.5 mpg	22.5 mpg	25.1 mpg	23.8 gal	24.0 mpg	26.2 mpg

My continued drop in propane use is clearly due to new appliances. While it doesn't show up in these numbers, the added insulation in the attic cut my apartment electricity use by about 10%. I don't have a good explanation for the significant drop in heating oil use. While the 2010 Heating Degree Days were only 89% of the norm, that doesn't explain a 14% decrease in heating oil use. As we talk about whether it is getting colder or warmer, I should point out the HDD norm is currently 7,266 HDD annually. In the six years listed above, five have been warmer and one was colder. Your own believe in "data" can determine how you chose to use the numbers.

This is the distribution of people who answered our Natural Resource Survey



Kennebec County Soil & Water Conservation District
Central Maine Commerce Center; 21 Enterprise
Drive; Suite #1
Augusta, Maine 04330
(207) 622-7847 ext. 3
www.KCSWCD.org

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Another issue of the **Conservation Times**
Brought to you by the Kennebec & Somerset County Soil & Water Conservation Districts

All programs and services of the Soil & Water Conservation Districts are offered on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or familial status.

Upcoming Events

Kennebec District Board meetings—The 2nd Tuesday of each month. Contact the District to confirm the time and place.

If special accommodations are needed at the meeting, please call to arrange them two weeks in advance at 622-7847, extension 3.

Somerset District Board Meetings—The 3rd Thursday of each month. Contact the Somerset District to confirm time and place.

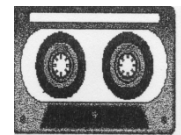
Somerset Natural Resource meeting— Feb 9; 3-5:30 in Hartland. See notice inside. Call Carol at 474-8324.

Septic workshop—March 16th at

Tree order 3/17 deadline—Deadline for getting your tree and shrub orders to the district office.

Pond workshop - April 5 in Farmington at the USDA Service Center. Hosted by the Franklin SWCD. See inside newsletter for more informa-

Alternate format available.
Call the District office to request enlarged type, cassette or computer disk.



tion. Contact Rosetta at 778-4279 for details.
Pick-up of trees you have ordered—
Saturday, April 23rd in Skowhegan, Winslow and Augusta depending on the site you selected.