



NonPoint Source Times

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Lake Camp Road Report Goes to Legislature

On February 3, 2009, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection presented the Legislature's Natural Resources Committee with 11 recommendations for next steps to address run-off problems associated with lake camp roads, driveways and boat ramps. The report, which is available on DEP's web site at: <http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/report/legisreport.htm>, includes several recommendations that would need legislative approval to proceed. These include:

- Providing liability protection to road association directors, commissioners and volunteers;
- Amending the Private Ways Law to clarify language on the law's purpose; meeting procedures and duration of road associations; and the development of drainage easements;
- Clarifying conditions under which municipalities may assist with camp road maintenance and repairs.

Other recommendations in the report outline steps the DEP is proposing to take in order to encourage formation of road associations; to assist municipalities that want to provide assistance for fixing roads (if authorized to do so); to develop technical resources to help individuals identify and fix problems; and to conduct further education and out-



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reach on road issues. The DEP will be proceeding with steps to implement these recommendations throughout this year.

The report was well received by the Natural Resource Committee members, who were in agreement that they would like to consider a legislative bill this session. Because the closure date has passed, however, for submittal of new bills, there is uncertainty as to whether this will happen. If a separate bill is not an option, it might be possible to attach proposed language to another bill that pertains to water quality. This remains unresolved at the time of this writing.



For more information, contact: Don Witherill at 287-7725 (donald.t.witherill@maine.gov) or Wendy Garland at 822-6320 (wendy.garland@maine.gov).

The Buffer Handbook Plant List has recently been updated.

The Buffer Handbook Plant List. This 50-page publication contains a listing of and details about trees, shrubs, and groundcovers that could be used in planting or improving a buffer in Maine. Plant descriptions include scientific and common names, sun and soil requirements, plant hardiness zone, plant characteristics, and native status. This publication was updated in 2009 to include more native species and to remove species that are now known to be or suspected of being invasive. This publication is not available in hardcopy but is available at <http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/docwatershed/bufhand.htm>.

Update: Phosphorus-Free Fertilizer Law

HISTORY

In 1998, the DEP began a campaign to limit the use of phosphorus in lawn fertilizers because of the water quality problems phosphorus causes in lakes and streams. At that time less than 5% of Maine retail stores carried phosphorus-free (P-free) lawn products and only 3,200 pounds of P-free product were sold in Maine. By 1999 with the outreach efforts of DEP, P-free sales increased to 56,445 lbs, and by 2001 it increased to more than 135,000 lbs. Even with continued efforts to promote P-free, sales leveled off. In January 2008, the Maine Legislature passed a law requiring all retailers to post a sign discouraging the use of phosphorus lawn products unless reseeding or starting a new lawn.

FINDINGS

High compliance with requirement to post a sign at the point of sale

In June 2008 a statewide survey of 87 stores (23% of the 386 stores selling fertilizer) showed that 87% of the surveyed stores had posted the required sign. All those found

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out of compliance were handed signs and all agreed to post them.

Phosphorus-free lawn fertilizer is readily available

In the June survey, P-free lawn fertilizer was found in 97% of stores. P-free lawn fertilizer in pesticide blends was found in 77% of stores. Organic P-free lawn fertilizer, although offered by several manufacturers, was found only in 3% of stores.

The law has reduced phosphorus lawn fertilizer use

Distributors and retailers have been reluctant to release their fertilizer numbers despite calls and letters asking for the information. So currently this information is anecdotal based on the surveys that all retailers, with the exception of one chain, carried at least one type of P-free fertilizer and some stores are no longer carrying any phosphorus fertilizer with the exception of starter fertilizers. One chain has given us their numbers; Home Depot sold 142 tons of P-free and 11 tons of starter fertilizer (with phosphorus).

Distributors and Retailers supportive of the law

DEP's outreach to the distributors seems to have had the greatest impact on what is available for consumers to buy, and therefore on the reduction in use of phosphorus fertilizer.

Generally the distributors are quite supportive of the approach Maine has taken. They appreciate that Maine has not banned phosphorus fertilizer but instead is requiring signs. The large retailers, Home Depot and Wal-Mart, are carrying all P-free products with the exception of Scotts Starter fertilizer. Both stores expressed support for the way the State has proceeded with the legislation and feel that it is not an inconvenience to them. Aubuchon and some True Value stores do not plan to carry phosphorus lawn products except starters in 2009. Lowes, the other large retailer in the State, has more variety in the product that they offer. The only complaints we have heard are a few from the organic retailers who have fewer P-free products.

Consumers supportive of the law

Based on interviews with retail store staff, customers are supportive of the law. The major consumer questions have concerned the use of phosphorus on gardens (which is ok) and would the P-free product be as effective in greening lawns as the other products (generally yes, if other good management practices are followed – mow high and leave clippings).

The law has not increased consumer cost

In a comparison of similar lawn fertilizer products in two neighboring states, the cost of P-free lawn fertilizer was found to be the same as lawn fertilizer which contain maintenance levels of phosphorus.



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GETTING THE WORD OUT

To get the word out on the new law, in fall and early winter 2007, DEP sent 2 letters regarding the upcoming law to a mailing list of 391 retailers and 10 distributors. Draft signs were enclosed and we asked for feedback on the design. We tested several designs with homeowners as well as retailers to see what would resonate best. We conferred with the Dept. of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension, and officers at the Congress of Lake Associations as we developed materials. In February 2008, we mailed another letter explaining the new law, the required signs with plastic protective sleeves, and tip sheets to the retailers and distributors.

To inform homeowners, we sent out 2 press releases, one in the spring and another in the summer, as well as 3 *In Our Backyard* columns that DEP distributes to local papers over the spring and summer.

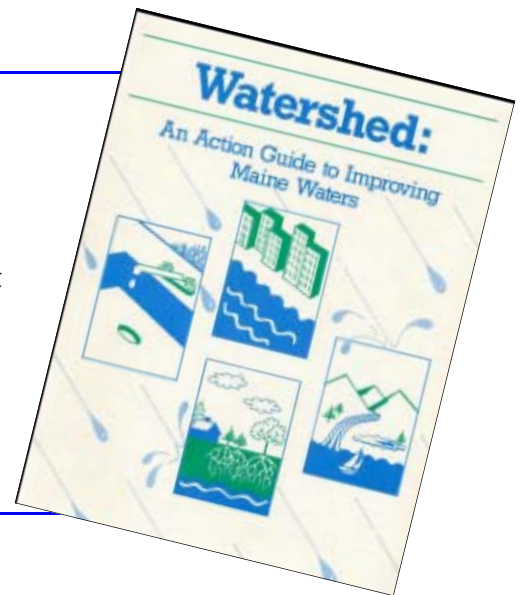
NEXT STEPS

This spring we will again mail signs and explanatory letters and continue personal outreach to distributors and retailers. We will collaborate with Board of Pesticides Control (YardScaping) and Cooperative Extension to improve the program and increase our outreach. We will look at options for press coverage on changes in fertilizer practices next spring and summer. We expect this continued effort will reduce the amount of phosphorus getting to Maine waters and help to improve water quality.

For more information contact Barb Welch at Maine DEP 207-287-7682 or barb.welch@maine.gov.

Watershed: An Action Guide to Improving Maine Waters

Thanks to the hard work of a few DEP staff, Watershed: An Action Guide to Improving Maine Waters (1990) is now available on line. "Watershed" is an introductory booklet discussing what actions you can take around home and in your community, threats to specific kinds of waterbodies, and sources for more information. This publication is out of print and is not currently available in hardcopy. The booklet can be found at: <http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/docwatershed/materials.htm>



Free Water Educational Materials from EPA

EPA's WaterSense program recently released a set of free water educational materials for kids and teachers. "A Day in the Life of a Drop" teaches students about the connections between the sources of the water they use and how that use affects human health and the environment. For more information, visit <http://www.1105newsletters.com/t.do?id=1946640:10510816>

2009 MAINE BEACHES CONFERENCE

Valuing Maine's Beaches: Assets, Challenges, and Actions for Today and Tomorrow

Friday, July 10th, 2009 at Southern Maine Community College

The Maine Beaches Conference provides continuing opportunities for communication and exchange of the most current information among beach stakeholders with diverse interests and presents findings from the state's beach monitoring programs.

Sponsors

Southern Maine Community College
Maine Coastal Program
Maine Sea Grant and University of Maine Cooperative Extension
SOS Maine
Maine Geological Survey
Surfriders Northern New England Chapter
Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve

For more information, please contact kngrant@maine.edu

LID Resources Available

Three New LID Guidebooks

3 new excellent, short LID guidebooks are now on EPA's Green Infrastructure Website: Retrofit Policies, Green Streets, and Rainwater Harvesting. The LID Center did the lion's share of the drafting under contract to EPA.

<http://cfpub2.epa.gov/npdes/greeninfrastructure/munichandbook.cfm>

9-Minute Video

EPA and the U.S. Botanic Garden produced an on-line 9-minute video, "Reduce Runoff: Slow It Down, Spread It Out, Soak It In," that highlights green techniques such as rain gardens, green roofs and rain barrels to help manage stormwater runoff. The video highlights green techniques on display in 2008 at the U.S. Botanic Garden's "One Planet - Ours!" Exhibit" and at the EPA in Washington, D.C., including recently completed cisterns.

To watch the video go to: <http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/lid/video.html>

Maine VLMP 2009 Annual Lake Monitoring Conference

Maine VLMP's 2009 Annual Lake Monitoring Conference is Saturday, July 11. The event will take place at The Great Outdoors on Pleasant Pond in Turner.

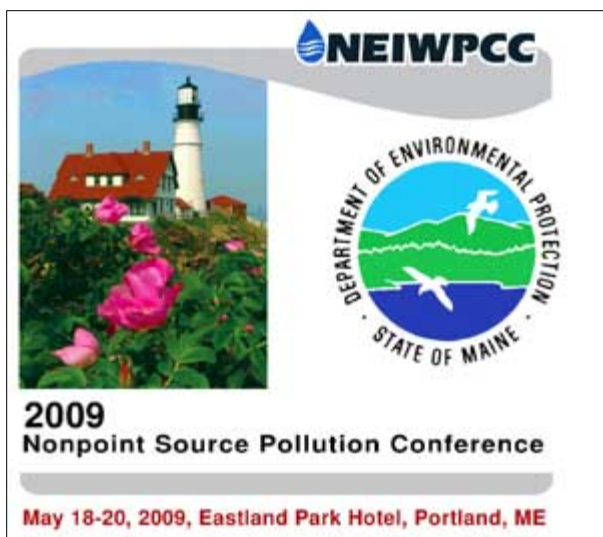
The conference time will be from 8:30 through lunch (about 1-1:30), followed by on-the-water recertification sessions for volunteers, and possibly additional field workshops.

FMI <http://www.mainevolunteerlakemonitors.org/>



Annual NPS Conference - Portland, Maine

20th Annual NPS Conference to be held on May 18-20, 2009, in Portland, Maine.



Overview

Since 1990, New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPC), in partnership with its member states, has been coordinating the Annual Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution Conference, the premier forum in our region for sharing information and improving communication on NPS pollution issues and projects. The three-day conference brings together all those in New England and New York State involved in NPS & stormwater pollution management, including participants from state, federal, and municipal governments, private sector, academia, and watershed organizations.

Conference agenda can be found at: http://www.neiwpc.org/npsconference/nps_pdfs/nps-agenda.pdf

For more information, contact Beth Card, NEIWPC's director of water quality programs. NEIWPC, 116 John Street, Boott Mills South, Lowell, MA 01852-1124 or (978) 323-7929, bcard@neiwpc.org . Or <http://www.neiwpc.org/npsconference/>

2009 Maine Water Conference

Tuesday, March 24, 2009
Holiday Inn, Portland, Maine

The 2009 Maine Water Conference will be a combined meeting with the Northeast Geological Society of America (NEGSA). The NEGSA meeting is a three-day meeting scheduled for March 22-24 at the Holiday Inn in Portland. One day of the meeting - Tuesday, March 24 - will be geared towards Maine Water Conference sessions.

If you have questions or need additional information please contact [Ruth Hallsworth](mailto:Ruth.Hallsworth@umaine.edu) at 207/581-3196. or <http://www.umaine.edu/WaterResearch/mwc/>

Grants For Environmental Protection & Animal Welfare

Grants for Environmental Protection & Animal Welfare—new digital edition. This new, digital *Grant Guide* reveals the scope of current foundation giving in the field. There are descriptions of over 940 grants worth almost \$2.3 billion from nearly 1,000 foundations. Along with details on recent grants, the *Guide* includes helpful indexes, key statistics, and lists of top funders in these areas.

The *Guide* also includes links to Foundation Finder, a free web tool for even more details. New "find and retrieve" navigation tools provide keyword-search convenience to get you on the fast track to the facts you need!

FMI http://foundationcenter.org/marketplace/catalog/product_downloadable.jhtml?id=prod2360010

Request for Proposals

FY 2010 Grants for Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Projects

Maine DEP plans to issue a Request For Proposals for Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Projects in April 2009. NPS Projects help restore or protect lakes, streams, or coastal waters that are polluted or considered threatened. DEP anticipates issuing grants for NPS Projects with FY 2010 monies provided to Maine by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Section 319(h) of the Federal Clean Water Act. Maine public organizations such as state agencies, soil and water conservation districts, regional planning agencies, watershed districts, municipalities, and nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations are eligible recipients.

Two types of projects will be invited: NPS Watershed Projects and NPS Watershed Surveys. DEP plans to devote about 80% of the funds for NPS Watershed Projects. A NPS Watershed Project focuses on implementing actions within a watershed to improve or protect a waterbody. Projects need to be designed to implement conservation practices in the watershed to help achieve a significant reduction in NPS pollutant load to a waterbody. A portion of funds will be allocated for projects to help restore primarily NPS impaired waters.

There is considerable opportunity to obtain a NPS grant help restore or protect lakes, streams, or coastal waters that are polluted or considered threatened. Under last years RFP issued in April 2008, DEP received 23 proposals. This spring, DEP will award about \$501,000 for 10 projects that will continue or start NPS Watershed Projects.

The RFP will be posted at - <http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/docgrant/319.htm>
FMI contact: Norm Marcotte, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Watershed Management, 17 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333,
norm.g.marcotte@maine.gov or 207-287-7727.

5th National Conference on NPS/Stormwater Outreach

Registration is now open for the Fifth National Conference on Nonpoint Source and Stormwater Outreach May 11-14 in Portland, Oregon. The theme for this conference is "Achieving Results with Tight Budgets." Learn more about the conference, jointly sponsored by EPA and USDA CSREES, at: www.epa.gov/nps/outreach2009



The first 150 registrants will receive a \$100 discount. The registration page is online at: www.epa.gov/nps/outreach2009/registration.html

Monday, May 11, is reserved for pre-conference workshops. There are 3 full-day workshops:

- 1) Changing Public Behavior Workshop - Learn to Apply Social Assessment to Water Management Strategies
- 2) Getting in Step - A Workshop on Conducting Effective Stormwater/NPS Outreach Campaigns

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- 3) Eyes on the Prize - Morning Session: An Evaluation Primer for NPS and Stormwater Programs. Afternoon Session: Overview of Social Indicators Evaluation System & Applied Survey Development Skills and 1 half-day workshop: Onsite Wastewater Education - Research-based Outreach Strategies to Help Minimize NPS Pollution Risks

On Wednesday evening, May 13, the conference will host the People's Choice Awards to spotlight the best new radio and TV public service announcements. The deadline for submitting PSAs has been extended from March 2 to March 13. More information on the People's Choice Awards is available at:

www.epa.gov/nps/outreach2009/pca.html



Think Spring



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