



PRESS RELEASE

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Work Begins at Back Cove YardScaping Demonstration Site!

PORTLAND—On June 13, after several years of planning and fundraising, the Maine YardScaping Partnership will be breaking ground on the first phase of the Back Cove YardScaping Demonstration Site. The two-and-a-half-acre site, donated by partner City of Portland, will be developed into a series of gardens showcasing plantings and landscaping that are low-maintenance and ecologically sound. Interconnecting garden paths will merge with the existing Back Cove Trail near the Preble Street soccer field.

The gardens, specifically designed with the homeowner in mind, will demonstrate how easy it can be to have beautiful yards and gardens that reduce the need for insecticides, herbicides, fertilizer, and water. The need for a “greener” approach to gardening was underscored when water sampling by Friends of Casco Bay and the Maine Board of Pesticides Control determined that yard care chemicals and fertilizer were turning up in the waters surrounding Portland.

According to Friends of Casco Bay Executive Director Cathy Ramsdell, “Part of the reason this site has been selected is that all of Casco Bay, and particularly Back Cove, receives the runoff from thousands of yards and lawns in Greater Portland, and we’re convinced that YardScaping principles applied neighborhood by neighborhood can make an immediate difference in the cleanliness of stormwater that flows into our coastal waters.”

Work in 2007 will focus on creating new paths and the rain garden base, with the following schedule:

- Ongoing during June and July, Shaw Brothers Construction will be trucking in fill and preparing the site.
- June 13–20, the Maine Conservation Corps and Portland’s Parks & Recreation Department will be preparing the site, laying out trails, preparing the rain garden area, and removing tailings and excess materials to a central area.
- June 22–23, 9:00 am–3:00 pm, master gardeners and volunteers from the public join in to finish off trail work, put down gravel, stone dust, and super humus, and clean up any area debris.

For more information on the Back Cove project and YardScaping, including a detailed plan of the demonstration site, go to www.yardscaping.org and www.yardscaping.org/press.

This project is funded in part by a Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency.

YardScaping hopes to inspire Maine people to create and maintain healthy landscapes through ecologically based practices that minimize reliance on water, fertilizer, and pesticides. The Maine YardScaping Partnership was formed out of the rising concern among statewide businesses, organizations, and agencies over the possible pollution caused by yard care chemicals washing away into water bodies, as well as the risks of pesticide exposure to people, pets, and wildlife.

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