



Kennebec & Somerset County Soil & Water Conservation Districts

January
2008

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

Mid-Winter Edition with the 2008 Tree & Shrub Sale

Conservation Times
Winter, the season to begin planning for spring....

Included in this issue of the **Conservation Times** is the 2008 tree and shrub sale offerings. Once again we are offering plants from Fedco. While their prices continue to rise for most plants, their quality has also improved every year. We are also proud to offer products that are grown here in Maine whenever possible. It is all part of the philosophy of buying local.

We are offering a number of new plants again this year. Due to a northern shift in some of the 'hardiness zones' we have offered a couple plants that would normally need warmer climates. Given the past ten years of winter temperature data, more parts of Kennebec County seem to have shifted into a Zone 5.

We should take advantage of the winter we are having. People may want to check out local workshops and presentations like those offered at the Pine Tree Arboretum. They frequently offer Saturday activities including a guided outdoor experience following warm indoor instruction. Or plan to attend the Maine Land-

scape & Nursery Association show at the Augusta Civic Center on January 22nd. www.melna.org Or the Portland Flower Show is scheduled for March 5th—9th.

As Peter and I recently discussed, the current January thaw provides us the opportunity to find all those items we failed to pick up and put away before the first snow storm.... Whether or not we will go to the trouble or simply wait for the next snow-storm is being decided as I sit and write this!

2008 tree and shrub sale information enclosed. We appreciate early orders....

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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. . .

Two of the Kennebec District grant projects will be sponsoring workshops over the winter. In the East Pond area we will hold a "Road Association Development" workshop. In the Cobbossee Lake area we will hold presentations on Low Impact Development i.e. LID. Call John Blais or check the Kennebec website later in the winter for specific times and locations.

Maine Sales Tax exemption on electricity used for agricultural production. - The Maine Sales Tax Law offers an exemption on the purchase of electricity used for commercial agricultural production. Additional information can be found in the Maine State Revenue Services Bulletin #45, section B. Here is a link to that bulletin describing the exemption (go to bulletin #45)

<http://www.maine.gov/revenue/salesuse/salestax/bulletinssales.htm>

The qualifying sales tax exemption requires a Permanent Exemption Certificate from the Maine Dept of Revenue. Sales tax paid for previous year apparently can also be recovered. That collection can be retroactive back three years from the date of filing. We understand that Dennis Hopkins at the Maine Revenue service to be helpful and a good source of information on sale tax matters relating to agricultural activities. His phone number is 624-9751

Wild Turkey Federation - As you will note elsewhere in this edition, we have identified plants from our tree and plant sale which are popular with wild turkeys. If interested in getting involved with the local chapter of the Wild Turkey Federation we have the following information:

Central Maine Chapter NWTFF
PO Box 1768
Waterville, ME 04903-1768

They meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month in Waterville. If you are interested in attending, call Larry Pike at 858-4263

Conservation Innovation Grant - The CIG project offered to farmers in Kennebec County is moving along. On January 14th a workshop at the Augusta Civic Center was held to provide technical training for energy auditors and others. If you are a dairy farmer in Kennebec County and

interested in applying to have an energy audit performed, contact John Blais at the Kennebec District or talk to your NRCS person.



Just a few of the folks who attended the January 14th workshop.

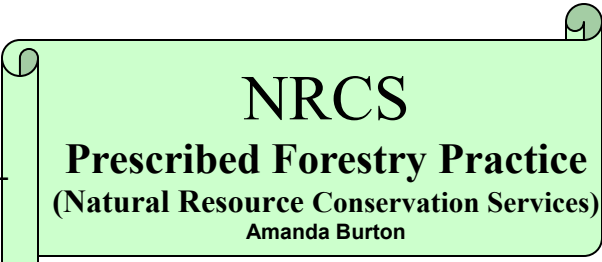
Maine Forest Service - NRCS and the Maine Forest Service are now partnering to provide cost-share assistance to family forest and private woodlot owners.

Please check with your Midcoast District Forester Mort Moesswilde (549-9003) or the Central Maine Forester Patty Cormier (474-3499) in Norridgewock. You can also call Andy Shultz, Maine Forest Service's Landowner Outreach Forester, at 287-8430, or e-mail him at andrew.h.shultz@maine.gov

Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed are offering a 3-day Winter Vacation Camp from Feb 19-21 in West Gardiner. The camp, for third through fifth graders is focused on nature studies in the watershed. Contact Tamara Whitmore at the Friends for more information (621-4100) or tamara@watershedfriends.com

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

NRCS is now offering incentive payments for land owners to develop forest management plans under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Prescribed Forestry practice! To be eligible for this practice, applicants must:



- Own at least 10 contiguous acres of forestland
- Not have a current management plan, or have one that is more than 10 years old.

In addition, to be eligible for the EQIP program, applicants must have at least one of the following:

- A prior record of timber harvest or revenue from timber sales
- Proof of capital investment on forest practices
- Other agro forestry practices
- Other agricultural commodities
- Other crops used for subsistence

The Prescribed Forestry practice pays \$19.78/acre for woodlots 10-50 acres, and \$12.05/acre for woodlots greater than 50 acres. If the application is funded, the participant would have one year to have a Forest Management Plan written by a Licensed Maine Forester. Once the plan is developed, the participant may be eligible for further cost sharing assistance to implement the practices in the plan. For more information, contact:

Amanda Burton (Kennebec County NRCS) (207) 622-7847
Kevin White (Somerset County NRCS) (207) 474-8324

In the next issue —

- Spring schedule of events
- The Annual Report about 2007 accomplishments.
- More topics regarding conservation

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
John Blais	Jeff Fredenburg

Kennebec District Supervisors:

Rob Mohlar; Chair	took office 4/2001 (re-elected starting 1/2006)
Marianne Hubert; Vice-Chair	took office 1/1999 (appointed starting 1/2005)
Clif Buuck	took office 1/2008 (elected starting 1/2008)
Peter Hanley	took office 1/2007 (elected starting 1/2004)
Dan Tibbetts	took office 1/2000 (appointed starting 1/2003)

Associates currently active:

Chad Arms	Linda Leotsakos	Tom Doore
Judd Thompson	Melissa Laser	Ted Sparrow

Conservation Education *Simple Tips to Consider*

In her book, *1001 Ways to Save the Earth*, author Joanna Yarrow lists practical ideas to conserve resources and protect the environment. Small changes can lead to big results, Yarrow says, and her ideas range from easy to adopt changes in daily living to significant alterations in choices and behavior. Some tips are simple reminders of what conservation minded folks already know, some tips are innovative and new. Over the next several months, Somerset County SWCD will list selections from the book for our subscribers to consider. If you have a Conservation Education Tip you'd like to share, email your submission to: info@somersetswcd.org or mail to SCSWCD 12 High Street Skowhegan ME 04976.

Simple Conservation Tips – In The Office

Staple Diet – If all the country's 75 million white collar workers used one fewer staple each day, they'd make a daily saving of 5,500 lbs. of steel – that's about 900 tons a year. Scale down your staple habit, and use (and reuse) paper clips instead.

Screensaver – Make a point of switching off your computer screen each time you leave your desk, especially for longer periods such as your lunch break. A computer in 'screensaver' mode uses almost as much energy as it does when it's being used – and, frankly, even the most profound (or profane) of scrolling messages doesn't add that much to the office.

Crumb-free keyboard – When you're at work and need to go out to buy lunch, relax and eat your food in a café instead of taking it back to your desk – you won't need to use any packaging, and you'll be more relaxed when you get back to the office.

Thrive in an urban jungle – Modern furniture and electronic equipment can emit enough chemicals to make the air in our homes and offices more hazardous than the air outdoors. Some plants are particularly effective absorbers of these harmful pollutants – clean up the air indoors and brighten your work and living space by surrounding yourself with spider plants, Boston ferns, rubber plants, and palms.

Two sides to every story – Whether printing a long formal report at work or doodling while you chat on the phone, try to use both sides of the paper. You'll get through half the volume of wood and other resources used to make it and cut CO2 emissions by 2 1/2 lbs. for every pound of paper you save.

Kennebec's completed and new conservation projects.

This fall and early winter has been a very busy time for the Kennebec District. During 2007 we were managing seven of our own DEP conservation projects and providing most of the technical assistance for another DEP-319 project. Four of those projects were completed and required all the 'end of grant' reporting. Those included projects in the following watersheds: Salmon-Mcgrath, 2 projects in Webber Pond and the West Branch of the Sheepscot River. The Pleasant Pond project is completed except for work with the Maine DOT which will be completed in the spring. [if you want to look at the final reports for any of these projects, check our website]. Other projects included the East Pond and Cobbossee Lake watersheds and technical assistance for projects in China Lake and the Annabessicook Lake watersheds. New projects starting in the spring of 2008 include a Phase 2 project in Pleasant Pond and the technical assistance for the China Regional Lakes Association and the City of Augusta/Togus Pond.

A full report on 2007 accomplishments and plans for 2008 is being prepared. The next newsletter will include more specifics.

Somerset County SWCD News

Somerset County SWCD Annual Meeting and Awards

Somerset County Soil and Water Conservation District honored The Astbury Family of Windy Ridge Farm in St. Albans as 2007 Outstanding Farmers of the Year, and Carlton Hebert of Starks as 2007 Outstanding Woodlot Owner of the Year at its 2007 Annual Meeting and banquet.

Guest speaker Andrew Shultz, Landowner Outreach Forester, discussed options and updates for forestry planning and ways local agencies can coordinate, working together to best serve Somerset County landowners. Rick Kersbergen, guest speaker from the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, discussed cover crops and how to adapt them to later chopping dates and still get a good stand, along with Somerset County farmer, Lowell Piper of Piper Farms, who has first hand experience in seeding for outstanding cover crop, plus the benefits of this process.

In addition to the staff and board members from SCSWCD, Natural Resources Conservation Service Field Office representatives attending the annual meeting were Kevin White, District Conservationist, Bianca Soto-Gomez, Soil Conservationist, Chuck Penney, Soil Technician, and Alice Goodwin, Civil Engineering Technician. Also in attendance from the NRCS State Office were Joyce Swartzendruber, State Conservationist, and Pauline Pare, Assistant State Conservationist for Operations Management.

Somerset County Soil and Water Conservation District Renews Cooperative Working Agreement

With USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Kerry Hebert, Somerset County Soil and Water Conservation District Board Chairperson, and Joyce Swartzendruber, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, formally signed a Cooperative Working Agreement at the Somerset County SWCD Annual Meeting in St. Albans recently. The purpose of the document is to supplement the Mutual Agreement between the USDA, the State of Maine, and the Somerset County SWCD. The customers of the parties served are individual landowners, land users, Federal and State land management agencies, individuals, and groups.



2007 Outstanding Woodlot Owner
Carlton Hebert and Beula Hebert



Guest Speaker
Andrew Shultz



(L) Kerry Hebert, Board Chairperson,
Somerset County SWCD
(R) Joyce Swartzendruber, State Conservationist, Natural Resource Conservation Services

Somerset County SWCD

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Laura Suomi-Lecker, Technical Director
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Jeff McCabe, Education Coordinator

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Kerry Hebert, Chairperson
Alan Haberstock, Vice-Chair
John Ackley, Treasurer
Gabe Clark, Supervisor
Rob Rowbottom, 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” . . .

We’ve been talking a lot about the benefits of buying and eating local. One of the benefits we cite is the fact local production is more energy efficient. Well... one of our readers suggested a recent NY Times article which raises valid questions about those assumptions. Research from the University of California, Davis suggests that the carbon footprint (the greenhouse gas generated by a particular activity) may be higher for some “local foods”. The carbon footprint is generated by more than the distance the food travels. How is it processed, packaged, grown and transported? Is that local farmer transporting her relatively small amount of produce 30 miles roundtrip in the back of an old '76 GMC more efficient than a full rail car of produce coming from California? Or is driving around to 4 or 5 farmers’ markets during a two week period more efficient than one trip to a grocery store?

None of the answers come easily. I guess the point is that we need to think more broadly about the impact of our consumption.

Recently heard on a public radio broadcast - Some of our more technological gizmos, while being relatively energy efficient, are still large energy users since they are products less used in the past. For example, a new large screen TV, given the amount of use in an average household, can use as much energy per year as a refrigerator.

This year I figured out my basic energy use statistics a bit earlier. See the table below to see how I’m doing over the past couple years. Nate Sylvester used to tell me I should get a pick-up so I stopped using the Subaru as a truck. He made the argument that I’d probably not drive any further but would be more efficient.

I am now a two vehicle household. Adding the pick-up makes my travel more efficient. But... it does mean I consume more natural resources. Having the pick-up meant that I was willing to travel further in order to do my kayaking over the summer. And so... I burned more gas.

Oh yes, and the porch still isn’t weatherized!!!!!! While the garage was added to in order to cover the pick-up, the back porch wasn’t fully enclosed to save on heating oil. That priority may not have been so smart.

Dale’s energy use in 2007
I’m early analyzing my energy consumption for the year. I have 3 years of information to compare.

	<u>2004-05 winter</u>	<u>2005-06 winter</u>	<u>2006-07 winter</u>
Htg Deg Days	7470 HDD	6214 HDD	6720 HDD
Htg Oil use	760 gal	600 gal	626 gal
Propane use	102 gal	131 gal	159 gal
Electricity use	2763 KWH	2072 KWH	2054 KWH
Gasoline use	429 gal @ 26.5mpg	445 gal @ 22.5mpg	522.6 gal @ 25.1mpg

Most of this information is easy to track. 2006-07 was colder than the previous [8% more Heating Degree Days] but my heating oil consumption was a small improvement given the colder weather. My electricity use seems like a great improvement (less laundry was dried in the dryer).

2007 MACD Winter Meeting

The Maine Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) recently held its Annual Winter Meeting and Auction at the Black Bear Inn in Orono, and raised over \$3,500 this year for natural resource education for children. This is the most ever raised at the auction thanks to the generosity of our Maine citizens who donated merchandise, handmade gifts and other unique items. In attendance at the meeting and auction were the 16 conservation districts that serve as the bridge between the citizens of Maine and local, state and federal agencies. They provide conservation leadership, teach the value of natural resources, and help plan and implement voluntary programs to prevent and solve local environmental problems. They work with many partners to provide assistance to the public for their use of land, water, wildlife, forest, plants and other resources.

Meeting participants had the opportunity to hear from representatives of some of their partners on key topics.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection provided an update on their programs and district partnerships, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service educated the group on Soils, Nonpoint Source Education for Municipal Officials spoke on Storm Water and Erosion Control programs, and Maine Rural Partners spoke on their Harvesting Clean Energy Program. Representative John Piotti of Maine Farmland Trust was the guest speaker at the evening banquet. The conservation districts also had a working session on developing an MACD strategic plan, a long range plan that will give the Association guidance in protecting Maine's natural resources.



Representatives from Washington, Knox-Lincoln and Franklin County Soil & Water Conservation Districts at the 2007 MACD Winter Meeting

Plant selection from our 2008 tree and shrub sale

As people look through the various trees, shrubs and other plants we offer this year, here is a bit of assistance.

The Wild Turkey Federation recommends the following plants in order to entice and keep the wild turkeys in your area happy.

Crabapples	Snowberry	American Cranberry Bush
Washington Hawthorne	Red Chokeberry	Coralberry (Indian Current)
American Mountain Ash	Serviceberry	Winterberry
American Filbert (Hazelnut)	Sand Cherry	Common Juniper

This is useful information regardless of your attitude about Wild Turkeys. If you want to attract them, use these plants. If you want to minimize them in your area, stay away from these plants. Or use this information to plant areas on the other side of town.... In a similar vein, some of the other soil & water conservation districts have created plant packages for people to purchase. We may look at that idea for the coming years. They suggest a 'Native Shoreland Package' which includes lowbush blueberry, sweet-fern, white birch, bayberry and snowberry. Another package is 'Native Wildlife' which includes viburnum, winterberry, highbush blueberry, bayberry and snowberry. Another is a 'Butterfly Package' with lilac, clethra (Ruby Spice), butterfly bush, bee balm, phlox and aster. These collections are a great way for people to start their plant selection.

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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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 County SWCD Board Meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month. Please contact the office at 474-8324 for details on time and location.

Septic Workshops sponsored by JETCC.
February 22 - Workshop at the Fire Marshall's Office in Augusts off Civic Center Dr (Rt. 27). See information below for registration information.

February 28 - Septic System Installation Inspection workshop for Local Plumbing Inspectors.

April 10 - Basic Onsite Wastewater System Installation Course. The location for these last two workshops will be the John E Dority Safety and

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



Performance Training Center, formerly the MDOT Training Site, on RT 201 in Fairfield. Call the Joint Environmental Training Coordinating Committee (JETCC) at 253-8020 for registration information.

Maine Water Conference - Wednesday, March 19, 2008. 7:30am-4:00pm at the Augusta Civic Center. For more info check their website <http://www.umaine.edu/waterresearch/mwc> or contact Kim Raymond at 581-3244 or kim.raymond@umit.maine.edu

Deadline for tree orders (March 21) - see tree order information inside.

District Day in Augusta March 28 - State Soil and Water Conservation Districts will be at the Hall of Flags to meet with Legislators and publicize projects and events.