

Upstream & Downstream

Newsletter of the Sebasticook River Watershed Association

Spring 2006



Current Projects

Mullens Woods

The Mullens Woods preserve is a 117-acre parcel located in North Newport. The Nature Conservancy received this abandoned farmstead in 1967 as a donation from the Hartwell family heirs. Their intent was to preserve a stand of old growth Eastern White Pine (*Pinus strobus*) and Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), which are located on the property. The buildings have since been razed and the fields are reverting to early successional mixed growth. In addition to the pine/hemlock, a plot of English Oak (*Quercus robur*) planted by University of Maine students is located on the property.

The SRWA is currently working in conjunction with MSAD 48 to acquire

Mullens Woods from the Nature Conservancy

Under the agreement MSAD 48 will hold the fee title while the SRWA holds a conservation easement. The two groups will collaborate to develop a utilization plan that will allow the area to be used as an outdoor lab while maintaining the unique characteristics of the property. Suggested ideas for the area include habitat restoration for grassland birds, develop singing lanes for American woodcock (*Philohela minor*), and maintaining a diversity of successional stages.



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SRWA Calendar

SRWA Board

Meeting ~ June 6, 2006
6:00 pm
Kleinschmidt - Pittsfield

Spring Running

Festival ~ May 20, 2006
9:00 am to 4:00 pm
Edwards Mill Park - Augusta

Sebasticook Canoe

Trip ~ June 4, 2006
9:00 am to 12:00 pm
Route 100/Troy Rd - Burnham

Great Moose Lake LMF Project

The SRWA applied for and won \$500,000 of potential funding from the Land for Maine's Future (LMF) Program for the Great Moose Lake Project in Harmony as part of the funding associated with the 1999 land bond. This 700 acre property, owned by Bill and Lorna Trauth, is ecologically significant in several respects. This parcel is located on the north shore of Great Moose Lake and is part of a large, contiguous habitat block. The parcel provides habitat to several rare, threatened and endangered species including black tern and bald eagle, and

harbors exemplary hardwood floodplain forest habitat that was documented by Maine's Natural Areas Program and the SRWA. The Trauths have been excellent stewards of this property for many decades, operating a boy's camp on the site until recently. The ecological integrity and undeveloped character of the land is much the same as when they acquired it.

Last month, the SRWA formally requested a withdrawal without prejudice as the owners explored all of their options for this property. However, the SRWA remains interested in land conservation in the

watershed and remain optimistic that the ultimate outcome of this site still holds some potential for conservation. We see numerous positive aspects of the LMF process we went through including learning a great deal about pursuing large land conservation projects, and getting to know this gem in the heart of our watershed.

LMF Director Tim Glidden: *"I'd like to add my thanks for your persistence, patience and VISION. While I know this outcome is disappointing for you, there will be more opportunities. I really appreciate all of the energy (and money) you have invested."*

The Presidents Corner Changes for SRWA by Paul Mitnik

At the Board meeting held on Feb 1, 2006; new officers were elected. I was elected president to replace Matt Bernier who has been the only President that SRWA has known since its formation in 1999. Matt has indeed left big shoes to fill, but I am ready to step up to the challenge of continuing the good leadership that Matt provided in his tenure as President.

Kelly Maloney was elected Secretary and Matt Bernier will now serve as Treasurer. In addition, the Board elected to appoint new officers every two years. A President-elect will be nominated one year prior to the date that the President's term expires.



Board Meetings will be held the first Tuesday of every other month starting June 6th of this year. SRWA is looking for volunteer members to join our board.

Four committees were also formed to undertake the various tasks of SRWA. The four committees are Education and Special Events, Outreach (newsletter and website), Conservation, and Fundraising and Membership. These Committees provided an update of tasks and initiatives at the last Board meeting on April 5.

The annual SRWA meeting will be scheduled in the fall – date to be announced.

Events

Spring Running Festival May 20, 2006

Perhaps the most newsworthy fish in the Sebasticook River these days is the alewife, an migratory river herring that emerges from the sea in huge schools to spawn in lakes throughout our watershed. Did you know that most of the alewife nursery grounds in the entire Kennebec River basin are in the lakes of the Sebasticook watershed? Did you know that the Sebasticook alewife run is the most-harvested of any in Maine?

Because alewives are linked to our watershed, the SRWA participates in the annual Alewife (Spring Running) Festival.

The Spring Running celebrates many aspects of the reborn Kennebec and Sebasticook rivers. The festival celebrates and promotes the historic, cultural and economic connections of Augusta to the spring herring run.

This year's festival will take place May 20th, from 9:00 AM until 4:00 PM. The festival will be held at Edwards Mill Park in Downtown Augusta. Some of the activities will include:

- Cooperage and Barreled Fish
- Fish Prints (Gyotaku)
- Fish Smoking Demonstrations
- Fly Tying Instruction
- Fly Casting Instruction
- Net Repair & Construction
- Movie: "Completing The Circle" a film about herring migration
- Touch Tank: sea creatures available for viewing and touching

***For more information, check out:
<http://www.springrunning.com>***

Volunteer Opportunities

Alewife Migration Monitoring

Adult alewives swim up the Sebasticook River throughout the month of May and in some years through early June. This year, these fish will have free-swim access to their historic spawning grounds for the first time in nearly 170 years, due to fish passage improvements on dams in Benton Falls and Burnham! The Maine Department of Marine Resources will be monitoring the upstream progress of the run with the assistance of the SRWA.

If you would like to get involved, contact Brandon Kulik via email at info@sebasticookriver.org.

Board/Committee Members

The SRWA Board of Directors has a few vacancies that we wish to fill with bright, energetic people who love the Sebasticook River Watershed. All that is required is a dedication to the mission of the SRWA and attendance at our meetings. Directors also have opportunities to serve as committee members to champion the issues they really care about.

Nominations for directors can be made at any time and board members have a 3 year term. If you know of good candidates or would like to join, please contact Paul Mitnik, SRWA President, via email at info@sebasticookriver.org.

***For more information, check out:
www.sebasticookriver.org***

Watershed Almanac

The Sebasticook River watershed has yielded archaeological finds that are older than the pyramids of ancient Egypt.



Sebasticook
River
Watershed
Association

First-class
Postage
Required

Sebasticook River Watershed Association
PO Box 486
Unity, Maine 04988-0486

**Dedicated to the Stewardship of
the Sebasticook River Watershed**

Membership Application:

- Student/Senior Citizen - \$5/yr.
- Individual - \$10/yr.
- Family - \$15/yr.*
- Business - \$50/yr.*
- Lifetime (Individual) - \$200
- Lifetime (Family) - \$300*

*I would like to contribute an
additional \$_____*

Please make checks payable to the
**Sebasticook River
Watershed Association**
and mail to the address below.

Sebasticook River
Watershed Association
P.O. Box 486
Unity, Maine
04988-0486

**Check out our New Web Page!
www.sebasticookriver.org**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-Mail: _____

*If you would like to vote at our annual meetings, please provide the name of a representative for your business or family: _____

If you are interested in volunteering for any of our Committees, please indicate below:

- Conservation Committee
- Education and Special Events
- Fundraising and Membership
- Outreach Committee

All contributions are tax deductible under IRS 501 (c) (3) guidelines. We welcome inquiries about donations of goods, services and land.