



August 4, 2022

2022 Annual Accomplishments for Androscoggin County

1) Arbor Day Presentation – Lisbon

The District worked with local Master Naturalists to create a custom full day event for Lisbon Community School to celebrate Arbor Day. Each class got to spend time outside observing the forests surrounding the school and discussed the life of a tree, the importance of trees both within their ecosystem and in our lives as humans. Afterwards each class helped plant a tree on campus. Seven White Pine trees (donated by Lisbon Parks and Rec) were planted by students. 600 students participated in this exciting event.

2) Read ME Agriculture - Maine Agriculture in the Classroom Program - Auburn

Read ME Agriculture is a program created by MAITC to teach children about farming and agriculture, give them hands on experience in these areas, and connect them with Maine farms and growers. The program supplies and materials for readers who go into classrooms across the state, and read a story and an activity. This year we read Tomatoes for Neela by Padma Lakshmi and planted tomato seeds with students. We read to three classes at the Park Avenue Elementary School in Auburn totaling 63 students. Every classroom that participated received a hardcover copy of the book and follow up lessons and activities. Students watched their tomato seeds grow and had the choice to plant them in their school garden or take them home at the end of the year.

3) Bat Conservation and Bat House Building Workshop - Auburn

The District partnered with NRCS to provide this successful program to the community. State Biologist Jeremy Markuson had a presentation on bats found in Maine, challenges the bat populations are facing due to White Nose Syndrome and ways landowners can create and support bat habitat. Following the presentation, attendees built their own bat house with materials provided by the District. 21 adults and 2 youths built 12 bat houses that they brought to their respective houses to put up all over the County.

4) Contractor Certification Trainings- Auburn

Maine DEP offers a Voluntary Contractor Certification Program in advanced erosion and sediment control practices. This course covers best management practices to prevent nonpoint source pollution from construction activity which is critical to protecting the quality of Maine waters. The District hosts these trainings every year. This year two were held in Auburn with 28 people in attendance.

5) Soil and Water Lecture Series – Lewiston, Auburn, Lisbon

This District partnered with the Lake Auburn Watershed Protection Commission to provide this four-part lecture series for Androscoggin County. These workshops were free for the public. Each lecture focused on a different aspect of soil health and how it related to water quality. We were able to secure presenters from Wild Seed Project, NRCS, Living Soil Network and UMaine Extension. Topics included soil microbes, cover crops, soil testing, erosion, runoff, and infiltration, and creating biodiverse gardens in place of lawns.

6) Stormwater Compensation Fund- Maine DEP

AVSWCD works with Maine DEP to administer the Stormwater Compensation Fund. This is done in collaboration with other organizations to implement practices that reduce phosphorus input into surface waters. Sixteen lakes in Androscoggin County are eligible to receive this funding for projects or practices that mitigate erosion and pollution

7) Watershed School Demonstration - Sabattus

This District provided an interactive demonstration on watersheds to every seventh grade class at Oak Hill Middle School. Students practiced reading topographic maps, and discussed erosion, runoff, and infiltration. Afterwards students were able to interact with a watershed demonstration model that helps to visualize the concepts discussed earlier, especially in relation to non-point source pollution. 80 students had fun engaging with the material for the day.

8) Plant Sale- Auburn

For the first time in several years Androscoggin Valley SWCD held a spring plant sale. We had a great success in revamping the program and selections. The plant sale was open to anyone and could choose from a variety of native perennials and pollinator promoting plants, veggies and herbs, and annual flowers. We supported a local nursery in Auburn, encouraging community members to pick up there and explore their extended selection.

9) Technical Assistance Program

The District continues to offer fee-for-service technical assistance. Services offered include erosion and sediment control plans, bank stabilization guidance, permitting assistance, gravel road maintenance guidance, fish passage barrier improvement, event and workshop planning assistance, education/outreach plans. Recent projects include creating revegetation plans to mitigate erosion and revegetate wetland/shoreland buffer zones.

10) Local Working Group Meeting - Durham

Annually the District hosts the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Local Working Group meeting. This is a meeting open to NRCS program participants and all interested residents and landowners. This meeting provides an opportunity for those who attend to comment and vote on where local NRCS funds should be allocated. It provides a forum where local priorities are voiced on what practices should have more emphasis. At this year's meeting the priority resource concerns that were decided upon were water quality degradation, soil erosion and soil quality degradation and degraded plant conditions. Inadequate habitat for fish and wildlife and livestock production limitation were also listed as important concerns for the year.