2019 Accomplishments

(updated in 2020)

**STEERING COMMITTEE** meets a minimum of four (4) times each year, on roughly a quarterly basis. The final meeting of the year is the Annual Meeting, where accomplishments are reviewed/recognized and priorities for the coming year are identified/ranked.

* **2/26/2019 Steering Committee Conference Call**
	+ Broadened team/added Project Manager
	+ Prepared SWOT Analysis
	+ Initiated Committee structure/identified Champions
* **3/22/2019** **Steering Committee Meeting at UNE**
	+ Implemented Committee structure
		- Data + Analysis Committee
		- Education + Outreach Committee
	+ Revised Action Plan
		- Conducted strategic alignment of actions with partners
		- Identified only ONE (1) orphaned activity: REPORT CARD to reflect health of Saco River Watershed
		- Allowed Saco River to become Federal priority for USDA + USEPA
	+ Attended by:
		- NRCS-ME State Conservationist, Juan Hernandez
		- Senator King’s Office, Bonnie Pothier (Environmental Liaison)
* **6/25/2019 Steering Committee Meeting at North Conway Water Precinct**
	+ Convened Data + Analysis Committee
	+ Presented **Summary of Committees** (see handout for details)
	+ Attended by NRCS-NH State Conservationist, Rick Ellsmore
* **9/5/2019 Steering Committee Meeting at Saco River Corridor Commission**
	+ Updated by USEPA’s Ted Lavery on ME+NH water quality data merge
	+ Updated by NRCS on conservation outreach effort in Maine
	+ Presented draft “realistic budget” with “ownership tasks”
	+ Attended by acting NRCS-ME State Conservationist, Edwin Martinez-Martinez
* **12/5/2019 Annual Meeting of the SWC Steering Committee at UNE-Biddeford**
	+ Updated Steering Committee on:
		- Committee-led actions in progress and pending (see SUMMARY OF COMMITTEES on separate document/file)
		- Involvement in the Regional Conservation Partnership (RCP) network
	+ Provided presentations from key partners within the watershed
	+ Recognized Chris Feurt, Emily Greene + other key individuals from UNE, MWC, Poland Spring, SRCC, USEPA for their continued efforts
	+ Attended by:
		- NRCS-ME State Conservationist, Juan Hernandez
		- UNE’s new Dean of the College of Arts + Sciences, Jonathan Millen
		- Senator King’s Office, Bonnie Pothier (Environmental Liaison)

**ADDITIONAL EVENTS** attended by Staff + Steering Committee members are also tracked and included in the following accomplishments in 2019.

* **3/28/2019 Maine Sustainability + Water Conference**
	+ Developed/delivered Saco Watershed track
		- Raised visibility of the watershed within Maine
		- Provided staff + presenting steering committee members an opportunity to network with other watershed groups
	+ Began discussions with NRCS-Maine re: outreach opportunity
		- Conservation/stewardship to landowners in watershed
		- Discretionary funds from Maine NRCS
* **4/11/2019 Androscoggin River Watershed Council**
	+ Attended annual meeting through scholarship/grant from Poland Spring
	+ Collected information and ideas to grow Saco Watershed Collaborative
		- Website
		- Bylaws
		- Marketing Materials
		- Annual Meeting
		- Sponsors
* Other events attended by staff to raise the visibility and leverage network opportunities for the Saco Watershed Collaborative (SWC) include the following list of conferences and sessions. Events where a SWC-specific information/presentation was provided are indicated in bold font.
	+ **3/15/2019 NH Water + Watershed Conference**
	+ 5/16/2019 NHDES Drinking Water Source Protection Conference
	+ **9/18/2019 Collaborative Leadership training at Harvard Forest**
	+ **11/13/2019 RCP Network Gathering at UMass-Amherst**

**ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES** accomplished by Staff + Steering Committee members are also tracked and include the following accomplishments in 2019.

* **“Realistic budget” developed**
	+ Basefunding tasks identified
	+ Prioritized list of additional tasks provided:
		- with order-of-magnitude estimates for partners to consider sponsoring, executing, etc.
		- to Sustainability Committee
* **Additional partner support committed**
	+ MaineDEP (Rob Mohlar) provided **guidance on database management**:
		- An update (3/22) and training (5/22) to Development + Anaysis Committee for WRDB, a non-proprietary database
		- Assistance to USEPA throughout summer 2019 to manage the data merger described below
	+ USEPA assisted with **merger of ME + NH water quality data**
		- Project estimated at $10K+ in consultant or staff time
		- Project contained 90,000+ lines of data to manage
		- Data + Analysis Committee
	+ USDA NRCS-ME offered roughly $20K in discretionary funds for **landowner outreach campaign re: conservation**
		- To be included in 2020 fiscal year/budget
		- To launch the Stewardship Committee
	+ Poland Spring sponsored **informational poster + brochure**
		- To completed in early 2020 by Bill Duffy/Northern Geomantics
		- To target students/teachers (poster) + landowners (brochure)
		- To be overseen by EOC
	+ Maine Water Company interested in working new GIS professor/grad student to **expand resiliency study**
		- Included 1-mile corridor along Saco River identifying threats
		- Initially completed by SMPDC + GPCOG
	+ USEPA/DEP awarded Technical Assistance for **emergency exercises/training/meetings with first responder communities**
		- Delayed by Government shutdown in late 2018
		- Picked up by New England Environmental Finance Center (included in NOAA grant)
	+ New England Environmental Finance Center + Center for Blue Economy embarking on **community resiliency study to translate climate uncertainty to climate risk for water resources infrastructure in Saco Estuary/Bay communities**
		- NOAA-sponsored grant led by Charlie Colgan + Martha Shiels at USM
		- Several members participating in this effort
	+ Grant award from Harvard Forest/New England Landscapes to **develop a municipal outreach tool + schedule** using their NELF Explorer model in early 2020
		- Developing visual graphics + science-based messages
		- Engaging + inspiring municipal audiences within the watershed
		- Protecting water quality + ecosystem services
	+ Maine Brewshed Alliance continues to be interested in **collaborating with SWC to reach member + non-member breweries** on our common goals (i.e., maintaining water quality to brew good beer)
		- Met with Kristin Jackson several times throughout 2019
		- Developed a list of breweries within the watershed (in ME + NH – no NH equivalent at this time)
		- Forged relationships with local breweries:
			* 8/15/2019: Run of the Mill (Saco) attended UNE boat tour and hosted brewery tour boat trip
			* 12/12/2019: Banded Brewing (Biddeford) hosted a meet-and-greet event with Maine Brewshed Alliance ambassadors and representatives from The Ecology School
	+ UNE Leadership being consulted on how we can maximize SWC’s:
		- place on campus (“maintaining UNE student/professor involvement” = number one priority from Steering Committee at Annual Meeting on 12/5/2019)
		- visibility using UNE’s resources (Communication’s liaison, etc.)
		- partnership with UNE (repository for newly aggregated database)
* **Outreach to watershed groups and organizations**
	+ Green Mountain Conservation Group
	+ Upper Saco Valley Land Trust
	+ Androscoggin River Watershed Council
	+ Penobscot Indian Nation
	+ Natural Resources Council of Maine – Maine Brewshed Alliance
	+ Eastern Trail Alliance
	+ SMPDC + GPCOG
	+ Additional RCPs in Maine + throughout the Northeast
		- Downeast Conservation network (Bob DeForrest, Maine Coast Heritage Trust)
		- Upland Headwaters Alliance
		- Mt. Agamenticus to the Sea
		- Sebago Clean Waters initiative
* SWC = Member of Regional Conservation Partnership (RCP) Network
	+ Invited to participate in regular Coordinator calls + committees
	+ Received scholarship to attend training 9/18-9/20 in Harvard Forest in MA
	+ Attended/presented at RCP Network Gathering 11/12-11/13 at UMass-Amherst
	+ Connected to large landscape-scale initiative, North East Bird Habitat Initiative, headed up by Maine Audobon and Highstead Foundation
* Saco River Corridor Commission support
	+ Attend meetings regularly (at Dayton)
	+ Outreach to City contacts re: LR 2204
* Four (4) Committees supported
	+ Larger group = **Steering Committee** (see SUMMARY above)
		- All convening partners, members, and stakeholders
		- Synonymous with “the Collaborative”
	+ 3 active subcommittees (see SUMMARY OF COMMITTEES in separate document/file)
		- **Sustainability Committee** ensures long-term viability/sustainability of the Collaborative
		- **Data + Analysis Committee** provides recommendations for new, and maintains an inventory of existing, data sets to properly inform the Collaborative’s actions + stakeholders
		- **Education + Outreach Committee** develops/compiles consistent messages + branding for the watershed + the Collaborative
	+ 1 inactive subcommittee = **Stewardship Committee** (to be launched in early 2020)