

Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Program

South Municipal Wellfield, New Hampshire

The Problem

The South Municipal Wellfield Superfund Site is located in Peterborough, New Hampshire. The site includes the New Hampshire Ball Bearings, Inc. (NHBB) manufacturing facility and surrounding upland and wetland habitats. In 1983, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency designated the area a Superfund Site after discovering a plume of contaminated groundwater extending from under the NHBB facility. Subsequent sampling revealed that approximately one acre of wetland adjacent to the NHBB facility was contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and metals. Wetland-based migratory birds were adversely affected due to the loss of prey resulting from contamination.

Restoring the Resources

In a 1995 settlement with NHBB, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) received \$95,000 to implement wetland habitat restoration. The USFWS chose to help the Town purchase 40 acres of imminently-threatened upland habitat bordering the Contoocook River and adjacent wetlands. Protection of this land prevented construction of a 12-lot subdivision, including the loss of 0.25 acre of wetland resulting from road construction activities. Furthermore, the effort protected the river and more than 36 acres of adjacent wetlands from adverse effects associated with upland development.

A Partnership for Success

In addition to awarding the Town of Peterborough nearly \$90,000 towards protection of the Contoocook River upland, the USFWS joined the Town in an effort to raise the additional funds (\$110,000) needed to complete the project. Overwhelming local support resulted in donations totaling nearly \$70,000. A \$40,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation allowed the purchase to move forward.

Highlights

Protected 40 acres of upland habitat in perpetuity.

Total Project Cost: \$200,000

USFWS Restoration Program share: \$90,000

Partners: USFWS, Town of Peterborough, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Goyette Memorial Fund, Private Donors

Status: Land protection was completed in 2001.



USFWS

New England Field Office Supervisor Mike Bartlett and Biologist Molly Sperduto presented the Town of Peterborough with nearly \$90,000 to help with the land protection effort.



USFWS

Numerous vernal pools on the protected property provide habitat for amphibians and reptiles.



S. Corwin

More than 40 acres of habitat bordering the Contoocook River were protected as part of the restoration effort.

For more information, contact:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
New England Field Office
70 Commercial Street, Suite 300
Concord, NH 03301-5087
603/223 2541

Federal Relay Service
for the deaf and hard-of-hearing
1 800/877 8339

<http://www.fws.gov>

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