



2001 Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

Program Focus —

The NRCS District Conservationist in Somerset County was recognized by the Sebasticook River Watershed Association for his success in coordinating the partnership efforts for the White's Pond Black Tern Nesting Habitat Restoration Project. White's Pond, located in Palmyra and a part of the Sebasticook River Watershed, is a 149-acre pond.

The dam was first constructed in the 1800's, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers restored the structure during the 1970's. Around 1999 it was determined that the dam was seriously degraded, threatening Black Tern habitat in areas behind the dam. The Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife identified the northern end of the pond as significant wildlife habitat which was being threatened by the fluctuating water levels.

Federal, state and local agencies and organizations--such as the Town, the Soil and Water Conservation District, the Maine Department of Marine Resources, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and NRCS--partnered to restore and enhance the 95 acres of Black Tern (endangered species) nesting habitat. NRCS provided financial (\$55,000) and technical assistance through the WHIP program.

Construction of the dam insures a more constant water level in the pond which is essential for the nesting habitat of the Black Tern. Fish passage was also provided in the dam to allow for upstream and downstream migration of various fish species.



Maine Summary

Overview

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program that helps landowners develop and improve wildlife habitat on private lands. Interested landowners seek natural resource planning assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Service and other federal, state, and private organizations to develop conservation plans that improve wildlife habitat. WHIP funds help implement the actions identified in the plan by providing financial assistance up to 75 percent of the cost for their projects.

The WHIP program in Maine is being used to address priority wildlife and fishery resources throughout the state. A state-approved WHIP plan along with locally identified needs is the basis for delivering this program. Key wildlife and fishery issues are early successional habitat management for neo-tropical songbirds, upland game habitat management and anadromous fish passage.

Accomplishments

Fiscal Year (FY) 2001 saw a sharp increase in the number of landowners and groups participating in WHIP. Proposals and applications for WHIP funds in FY 2001 totaled more than \$1 million. A total of 44 contracts were approved and funded for \$514,335. These contracts enrolled nearly 1,600 acres of land into the program. In addition, four of these projects will restore 48 miles of aquatic habitat for anadromous fish species. One WHIP contract was approved for Penobscot Indian Nation tribal lands. This project is designed to manage early successional habitat in support of upland wildlife species important to the tribe's cultural heritage.

Aquatic and riparian habitat restoration was completed on two projects in FY2001. These projects will benefit the endangered Atlantic Salmon in the Machias River watershed in Washington County and the endangered Black Tern around White's Pond located in Somerset County.

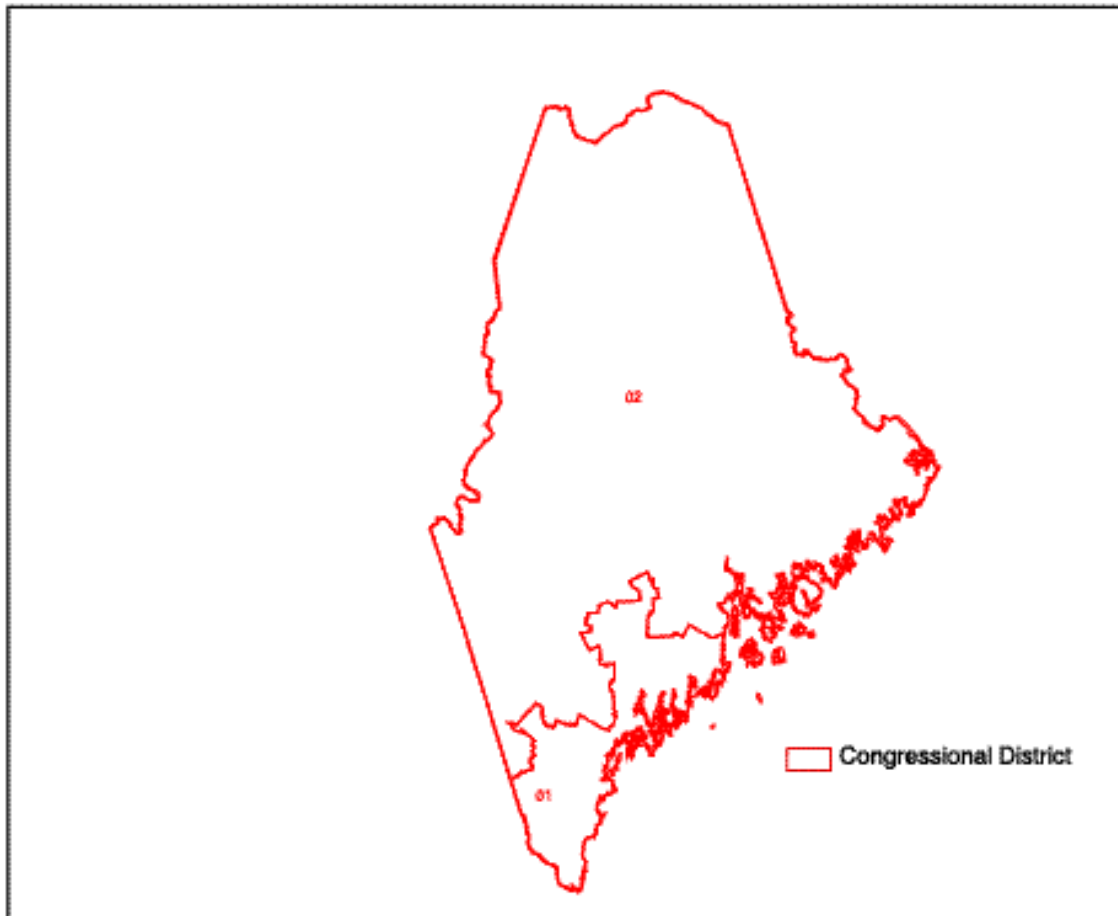
Program Benefits

Important restoration work being carried out with the assistance of the WHIP program in Atlantic Salmon watersheds is a key component of Maine's effort to protect and restore the endangered Atlantic Salmon. WHIP is also providing many landowners with an opportunity to enhance habitat for upland bird species on lands which otherwise would be left idle.

State contact

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Maine Dollars and Contracts by Congressional District



Maine Dollars and Contracts

Congressional Districts	Fiscal Year 2001		Cumulative Total (98-01)	
	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 1	\$127,092	4	\$357,460	10
District 2	\$387,243	40	\$976,544	66
State Totals	\$514,335	44	\$1,334,004	76

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