

Goosefare Brook Watershed Restoration Activity Summary

The Goosefare Brook Watershed (GFW) is located in the City of Saco and in the Town of Old Orchard Beach and covers approximately 5,902 acres (9.2 sq. mi.) of land. Goosefare Brook begins just north of Interstate 95 near Boothbay Lane in Saco and flows southeast across U.S. Routes 95 and 195 through a small forested area and joins with Bear Brook at the Boston and Maine Springfield Terminal Railroad. The brook continues through a wetland area and meets with Branch Brook before emptying into the Saco Bay, just downstream of U.S. Route 9 between Old Orchard Beach and Ferry Beach State Park. The Goosefare Brook is a Class B stream but has been assessed by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP) as not meeting Class B water quality standards for metals, aquatic life use, and bacteria. As a result, it has been listed on the State's 303(d) list of impaired waters.

In 2016, the City of Saco in partnership with the Town of Old Orchard Beach and several stake holders, wrote a watershed-based management plan for the GFW. In 2017 the City of Saco was awarded an implementation grant for Phase I of the GFW Restoration Project. All work associated with Phase I was completed from 2017 to 2019 in partnership with the York County Soil and Water Conservation District (YCSWCD) and the Town of Old Orchard Beach. Phase I was guided by the Goosefare Brook Restoration Committee and focused on the construction of stormwater treatment projects in Saco and Old Orchard Beach, erosion issues in Saco and the improvement of riparian buffers in Saco. In 2018, the Town of Old Orchard Beach was awarded a grant for Phase II, in partnership with the City of Saco and the YCSWCD. Funding for this project, in part, was provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act.

The primary focus of Phase II is on projects located in Old Orchard Beach. To date, several projects have been performed at Loranger Memorial School and Jameson Elementary to treat stormwater runoff and erosion issues. These projects include a vegetated buffer planted behind Jameson Elementary, regrading of a drainage swale near Jameson Elementary and a bioretention basin adjacent to the Loranger Memorial School parking lot. Additionally, a buffer workshop was conducted by the YCSWCD with 6th grade middle school students in the beginning of October 2019. Students planted several native species to treat stormwater runoff and reduce erosion behind Jameson Elementary and participated in workshops that focused on the significance of vegetative buffers and how they can reduce pollution to the watershed.



Students planted a buffer swale behind Jameson Elementary.

Community outreach is an important component of this restoration project. A Goosefare Brook Cleanup Day was held in Saco and in Old Orchard Beach in 2019 and two more cleanup days will be held in 2020. This partnership between restoration project stakeholders and local schools is an important one - imparting the value of conservation and water protection to the next generation.

For more information about the Goosefare Brook Restoration Project please contact Jennifer Harris, Project Coordinator at York County Soil & Water Conservation District: jharris@yorkswcd.org or (207) 324-0888 x208.