

A Case of Changing Identity: New Hampshire's NROC



NEMO U 007

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Portland Regency Hotel

Portland, ME



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What?

Multi-agency/organization coalition since 1999.

Why?

Assist communities facing growth to protect natural resources while they grow. Has worked with 22 out of 42 watershed towns.

How?

Education about natural resources, impacts of development, tools for protection

Facilitation of group process toward action

NROC

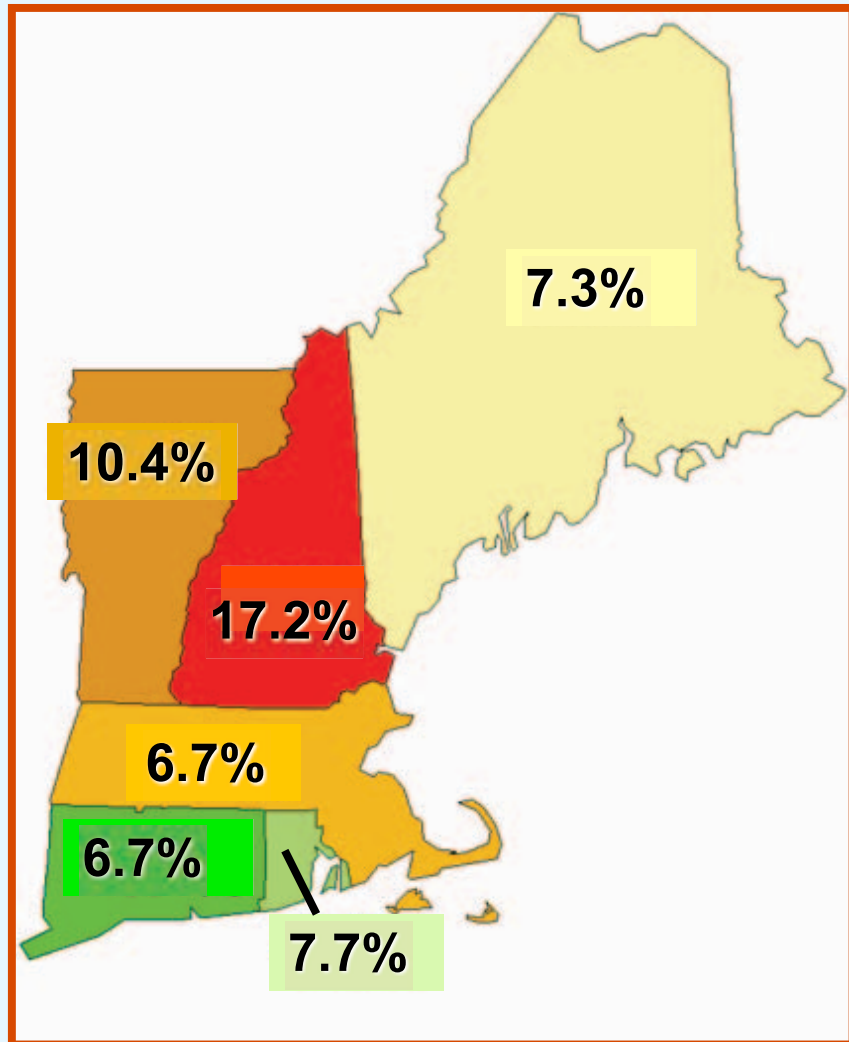
Natural Resources Outreach Coalition



NH Population Growth

**Past Growth
1990 - 2004**

NH has been the fastest growing state in New England for the last 40 years!

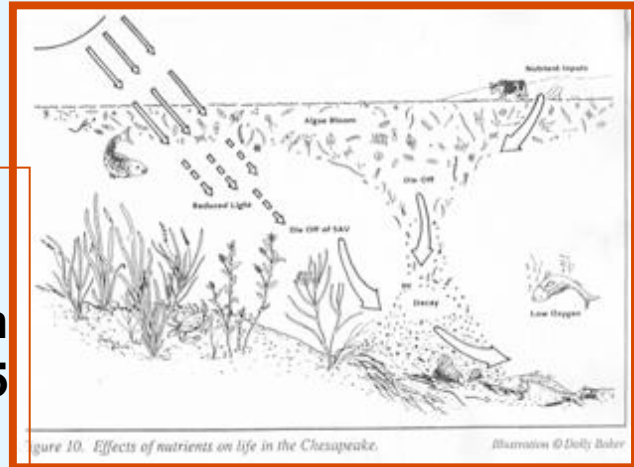


State of the Estuaries - 2006



IS is increasing at an average rate > 1000 acres/year

N has increased by 59 % in the last 25 years



DO conc fail to meet state standards in tidal tributaries



Eelgrass coverage has declined by 17% between '96-'04

Community Outcomes

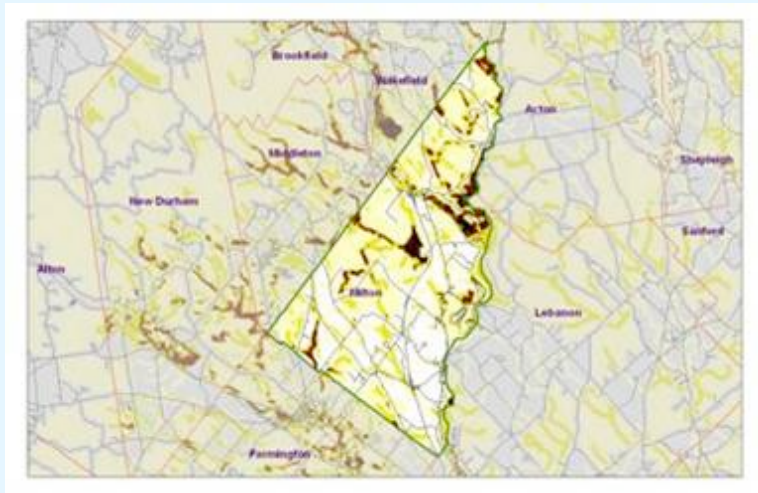


1. Greater Community Capacity
2. Better Information Gathering
3. Improved Planning
4. Enhanced Policies and Regulation
5. Progress from Decisions to Actions

Methods:

Dealing with Growth Presentation

- I. Projected Growth and Effects of Growth
- II. Natural Resource Information and Conservation Planning
- III. Improved Development Practices



The NROC Model

**Customized program for
each community**

**Program designed and
delivered via Coalition
members**

**Twelve to 18 month
engagement with
communities**

**Community-driven
outcomes**

Outcomes are tracked



Why Change?



State of the Estuaries 2009



Impervious cover is increasing at an average rate > 1500 acres/year

Total N load has increased by 42 % in the last 5 years

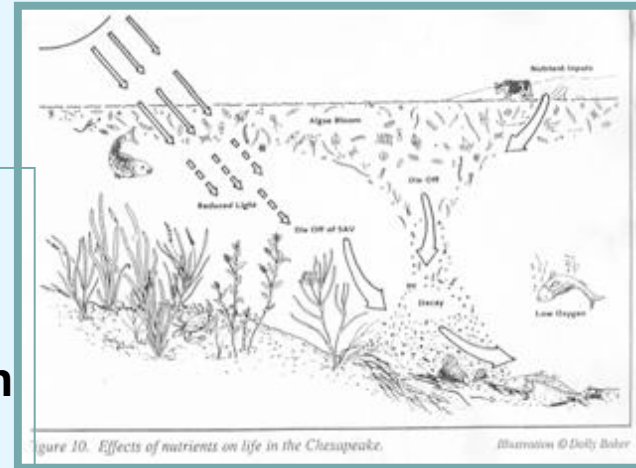


Figure 10. Effects of nutrients on life in the Chesapeake.

Illustration © Dolly Baker

DO conc fail to meet state standards in tidal tributaries



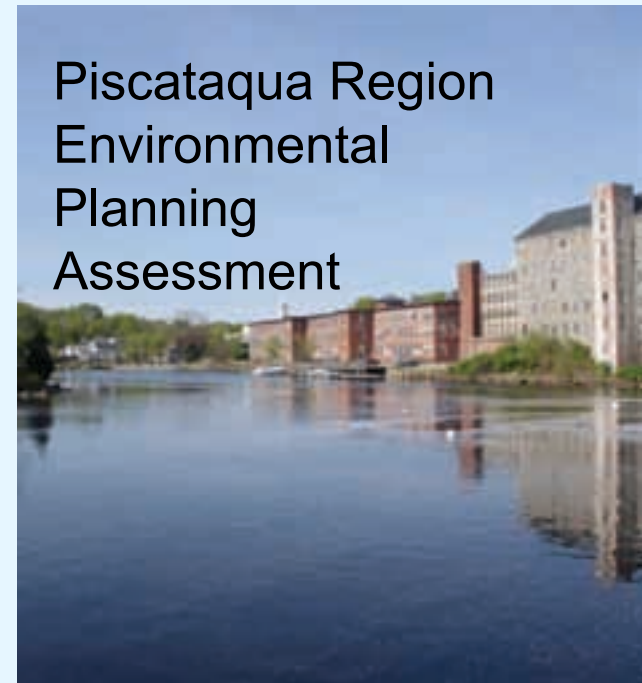
Eelgrass coverage has declined by 37% between '90-'08

State of NH Coastal Communities?



How NROC Changed in 2009-2010

- Single project focus vs. “big picture”
- Capitalize on other team members’ efforts



Piscataqua Region Environmental Planning Assessment

Purpose:

Determine the existing status of environmental planning and regulation in the **52 towns** that comprise the watershed for the Great Bay and Hampton-Seabrook estuaries.

Piscataqua Region Environmental Planning Assessment

Outcomes:

- Identify gaps and inconsistencies
- Inform regional planning efforts
- Help target assistance to municipalities in making improvements over next 10 years

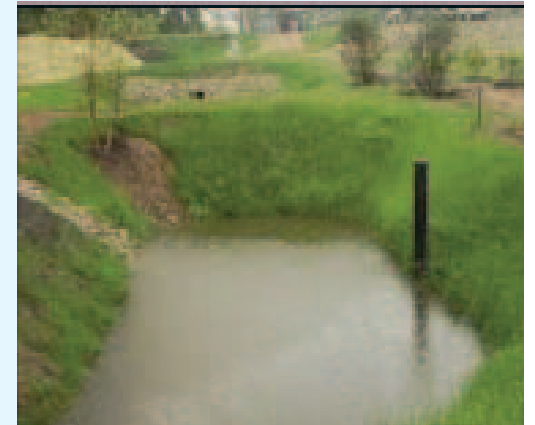
Topics Included in Assessment:

- Conservation Fundamentals
- Wildlife Habitat Protection
- Wetland Protection
- Shoreland Protection
- **Stormwater Management**
- Erosion & Sediment Control
- Drinking Water Protection
- Floodplain/Hazard Planning
- Impervious Surface Limits
- Non-Regulatory Conservation Efforts

Stormwater Management

Key Questions:

- Where are stormwater management regulations found in each town?
- How do the standards for each town compare with current state recommendations and innovative new practices?



Location of Stormwater Regulations Within Municipal Documents

Question	Stormwater Ordinance	Site Plan Regulations	Subdivision Regulations	Soil Disturbance Threshold For Regulations
Number of Towns in Region (52 Total)	3 yes	34 yes	42 yes	35 ND
% of Towns in Region	6%	65%	81%	67% ND

ND = not defined

Stormwater Management Requirements of Municipal Regulations

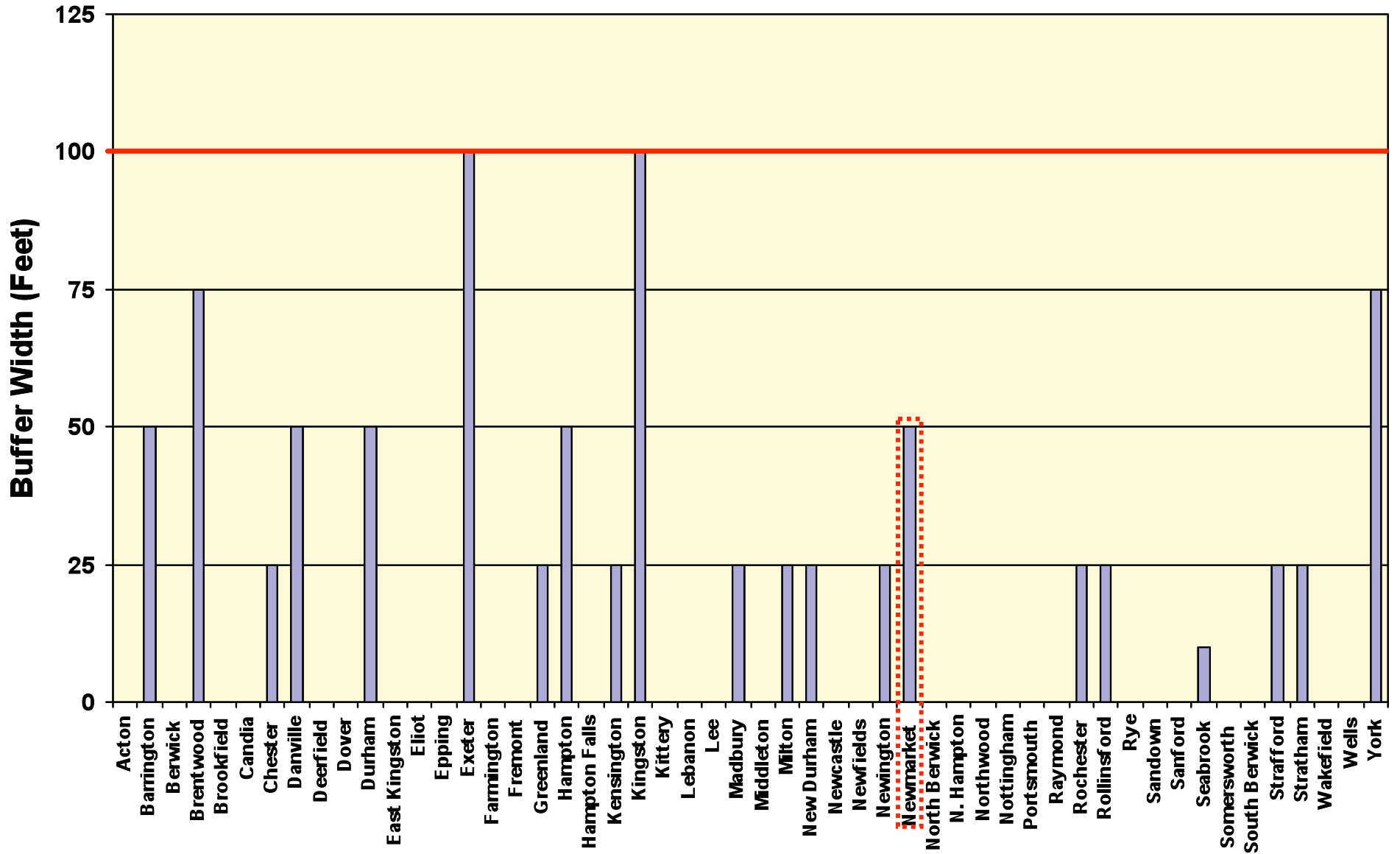
Question	Clean Water Act Phase II Community?	Low Impact Development Required?	Mimick Pre Development Hydrology?	Maximize On-Site Infiltration?	Surety Required From Developer?	Does Town Have A Stormwater Utility (Fee)?
Number of Towns in Region (52 Total)	30 yes	5 yes	18 yes	14 yes	29 yes	0 yes
% of Towns in Region	58%	10%	35%	27%	56%	0%

Stormwater Performance Standards of Municipal Regulations Relative to Model Ordinance Standards

Question	Effective Impervious Cover < 10% of Site?	Stormwater Ponds Designed for 50 yr 24 hr Storm?	Infiltration Devices Designed for 10yr 24 hr Storm?	Post Dev. Match Pre Dev. Peak Flow for 10 and 50 yr 24 hr Storm?	Post Development Runoff Volume = 90-110% Pre Development?
Number of Towns in Region (52 Total)	2 yes	13 yes	20 yes	21 yes	4 yes
% of Towns in Region	4%	25%	38%	40%	8%

No Soil or Vegetation Disturbance Buffer Widths for Wetlands in the Piscataqua Region Watershed by Municipality

— = 100' Suggested Protective Standard



Clear Priorities for Work:

- Integrate mandatory **low impact development** techniques and standards (including consideration of wildlife habitat) into development permitting processes.
- Update **stormwater** and erosion/sediment control regulations and oversight.
- Seek to implement consistently protective **wetland and shoreland buffer** and setback standards across the watershed.

Clear Priorities for Work:

- Develop comprehensive strategies to **protect** both private and public drinking **water supplies**.
- Continue emphasis on **voluntary permanent land protection** efforts
- Build **stronger regional planning** mechanisms that acknowledge watershed connectivity.

Lessons Learned

- Compare town regulations to a **science-based standard** – especially if good standards exist already in model ordinances.
- Conduct a **training session with all planners** who will do assessments to answer questions and ensure consistency in interpretation of questions. (particularly with respect to riparian buffers and setbacks)
- Try to **conduct assessments** immediately after town meetings so that results don't change for at least a year.



**Effective Stormwater Management
Newmarket, NH
May 24, 2010**

What NROC Did to Follow Up

- Showed towns their results
- Discussed strengths and gaps
- Facilitated prioritization process for next steps
- Assisted with locating technical assistance and funding for next steps

What Newmarket Did with Results

Decided to focus on improving stormwater management.

Applied for a grant to hire technical assistance to incorporate stormwater regulations into subdivision and site plan processes.

Did the New Approach with PREP Assessment Work for NROC?

- Allowed NROC to jump start the municipal planning process.
- Helped municipal leaders select project focus.
- Gave NROC a second bite at the apple in municipalities they've worked with.
- However, one other town did not follow through.....

What's Up for NROC 2011-2012?

- More use of PREP Assessment?
- Respond to needs of Southeast Watershed Alliance?
- Address climate change with communities?
- Facilitate regional and watershed based collaborations?

Thank you!

