

## Groups use federal grant to pay for Pembroke work aimed at reducing pollution

By Dennis Tatz

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PEMBROKE — The goal was to improve the environment and reduce pollution. And that's what several local groups accomplished outside town hall and at the Oldham Pond boat ramp with the help of a \$160,000 federal grant.

The North and South Rivers Watershed Association worked with the Pembroke Watershed Association, Pembroke's public works department, the Massachusetts Bays Program, the Mattakeesett Garden Club and Boy Scout Troop 43 to create rain gardens and use other methods to eliminate pollution and replenish groundwater and surface waters.

The project took three years to complete.

"We had a great group of people in Pembroke who gave their time," Samantha Woods, executive director of the North and South Rivers Watershed Association, said Monday during a walking tour. "It took quite an effort to make these things happen."

Five new rain gardens at town hall and one next door at the police station filter rainwater before it soaks into the ground.

"It's something a homeowner can do," Woods said. "It's very low-maintenance. These are perennial plants. They can tolerate all kinds of conditions. They don't need a lot of care and feeding."

Comprehensive Environmental Inc. of Milford did the engineering and helped write the grant application for the project, the cost of which totaled \$271,924.

The work included installation of porous pavement at town hall and the nearby tennis courts to control water runoff.

Rocks strategically placed at the bottom of a slope behind town hall collect water to prevent contaminants from getting into a catch basin.

“We want to keep the water on site,” said Stephanie Hanson, project manager for Comprehensive Environmental. “It captures the sediment and any bacteria.”

Similar pavement improvements were made to the boat ramp at the Pembroke Town Landing to stop pollutants from seeping into Oldham Pond.

“The issue of reducing stormwater pollution is paramount to improving the health of our ponds,” said Dottie MacInnes, a spokeswoman for the Pembroke Ponds Watershed Association.

Boy Scout-built kiosks at town hall and the Oldham boat ramp explain the projects.

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