



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 1

5 POST OFFICE SQUARE, SUITE 100
BOSTON, MA 02109-3912

The Date: *Dated as shown on electronic signature(s)*

Subj: Inspection Report
Clean Water Act Section 404
Sandy River, South Branch
Phillips, ME

From: Raymond Putnam, Inspector
RAYMOND PUTNAM Digitally signed by RAYMOND PUTNAM
Date: 2024.07.15 08:25:33 -04'00'

Thru: Stephanie Tougas, Inspector

To: File

I. Facility Information

- A. *Facility Name:* Town of Phillips, ME
- B. *Facility Location:* Town Office
124 Maine Street
- C. *Facility Contacts:* Maureen Haley, Town Manager
- D. *ID No(s)* N/A

II. Background Information

- A. *Date(s) of inspection:* July 9, 2024
- B. *Weather Conditions:* Sunny, 82 degrees F. See APT output.
- C. *US EPA Representative(s):*
Ray Putnam
- D. *Facility Representative(s):*
Maureen Haley, Town Manager

III. Type and Purpose of Inspection

Heather Stukas from the Army Corps ME Office contacted EPA on 6/21/2024 about potential CWA 404 violations within the Sandy River and adjacent floodplain. The Corps suggested EPA join the initial site walk on July 9, 2024 along with other state and federal agencies regarding Town of Phillips work impacting the Sandy River. EPA was subsequently contacted by ME DEP (Mark Stebbins) on July 3, 2024 regarding the site walk.

IV. Inspection/Site Walk

I arrived at the town office a few minutes before 10 am. The group (see Attendance sign-in sheet) met in the town office. The town employees had put together some photographs and a video documenting the flood, some of the damage caused by the flood, and some of the work the town did to mitigate the impacts. The video was looping on a laptop. Ms. Haley stated that these would be made available to everyone in attendance.

Ms. Haley and 2 town employees (the Town) lead the group to the first inspection site off Number 6 Road, which was approximately 6 miles from the town offices.

The town explained that a berm of sediment and rocks built up naturally during the December floods and the river was diverted from the original channel into the flood plain. Two houses and Number 6 Road were subsequently flooded as a result. To remedy the flooding, the Town scraped (excavated) the natural berm and lowered the river channel. The material was used to create a berm approx. 15 feet high and 275 feet long (see photos 1-11) within the channel and below the ordinary high water mark (OHWM). Paul Christman (Maine DMR) stated that salmon and two redds (nests) were observed in this river section last year.

The group then proceeded downstream to the second inspection site (photos 12-35). A berm (photos 12 and 13) was constructed here with the same techniques (scraping the bed and bank material from left to right). This berm is also within the OHWM and is preventing stream flow from entering several side channels (photos 27, 32 -35). This section of the river was highly braided, now the flow is directed only through the main channel by a series of constructed berms. According to Paul Christman, four redds were documented in this side channel last year. I followed ME DEP staff up the dried up stream channel back to the vehicles. The group had broken up at that point, and only myself, the Corps, and ME DEP staff were back at the car. There was no closing conference. I left at approximately 1 pm.

Unless otherwise noted, this report describes conditions at the facility/property as observed by EPA inspector(s), and/or through records provided to and/or information reported to EPA inspector(s) by facility representatives and as understood by the inspector(s). This report may not capture all operations or activities ongoing at the time of the inspection. This report does not make final determinations on potential areas of concern. Nothing in this report affects EPA's authorities under federal statutes and regulations to pursue further investigation or action.

Attachments:

- Photo Log
- Attendance sign-in sheet
- APT Output