

2000 Environmental Quality Incentives Program



Customer Focus—

Outreach is important to NRCS's goal to offer assistance to all groups. An advantage of EQIP is that conservation planning assistance is offered to diverse customers, including limited resource farmers.

Onelio and Virginia Lopez have operated a 50-cow dairy farm in Smithfield since 1979. Onelio came to the United States from Cuba in 1965 and worked in Massachusetts where he met and married Virginia, who is from Costa Rica. Onelio laughs when relating a story that he was offered \$45 to take an English course, but felt he did not have the time and could do a much better job teaching himself, which he has successfully done.

With assistance from NRCS, the Lopez's signed up for EQIP 2000 under the Dairy Belt of Maine priority area. They now have a contract to control barnyard runoff and construct a waste storage facility. Along with that, they will also be doing a nutrient management plan and pasture and hayland management programs. All of these practices will assist the Lopez family to meet new State environmental laws.

Previously, the Lopez's participated in the ACP program and, in 1998, received GLCI funding for rotational grazing. Onelio states that with the grazing program in place his herd average has increased 15 to 20 pounds per cow of milk production. He now plans to do more pastures on his own after the success from the original fields.

Onelio and Virginia are committed to conserving natural resources and have realized that EQIP is a means to do just that along with making their farm operation more viable.

Maine Summary

Overview

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) in Maine is assisting landowners address a wide variety of critical resource concerns. The key issues that EQIP is helping address are water quality related to livestock agriculture, nonpoint source pollution in Atlantic Salmon watersheds, grazing lands management, erosion control associated with forestry operations, soil health, and agricultural sustainability. In FY 2000, NRCS received 200 EQIP applications for a total of \$2.37 million.

Accomplishments

NRCS assisted landowners to develop 133 contracts, which obligated \$1,385,000.

Outlook

The demand for both technical and financial assistance under EQIP is limitless in Maine. The State recently passed nutrient management legislation that is compelling livestock producers to manage agricultural waste more carefully. This should keep demand for waste management facilities very high. The potential listing of the Atlantic Salmon in eight downeast rivers will also increase demand for NRCS assistance as landowners cope with impacts on critical habitat. Substantial increases in funding will be needed to meet the real demand in both of these areas.

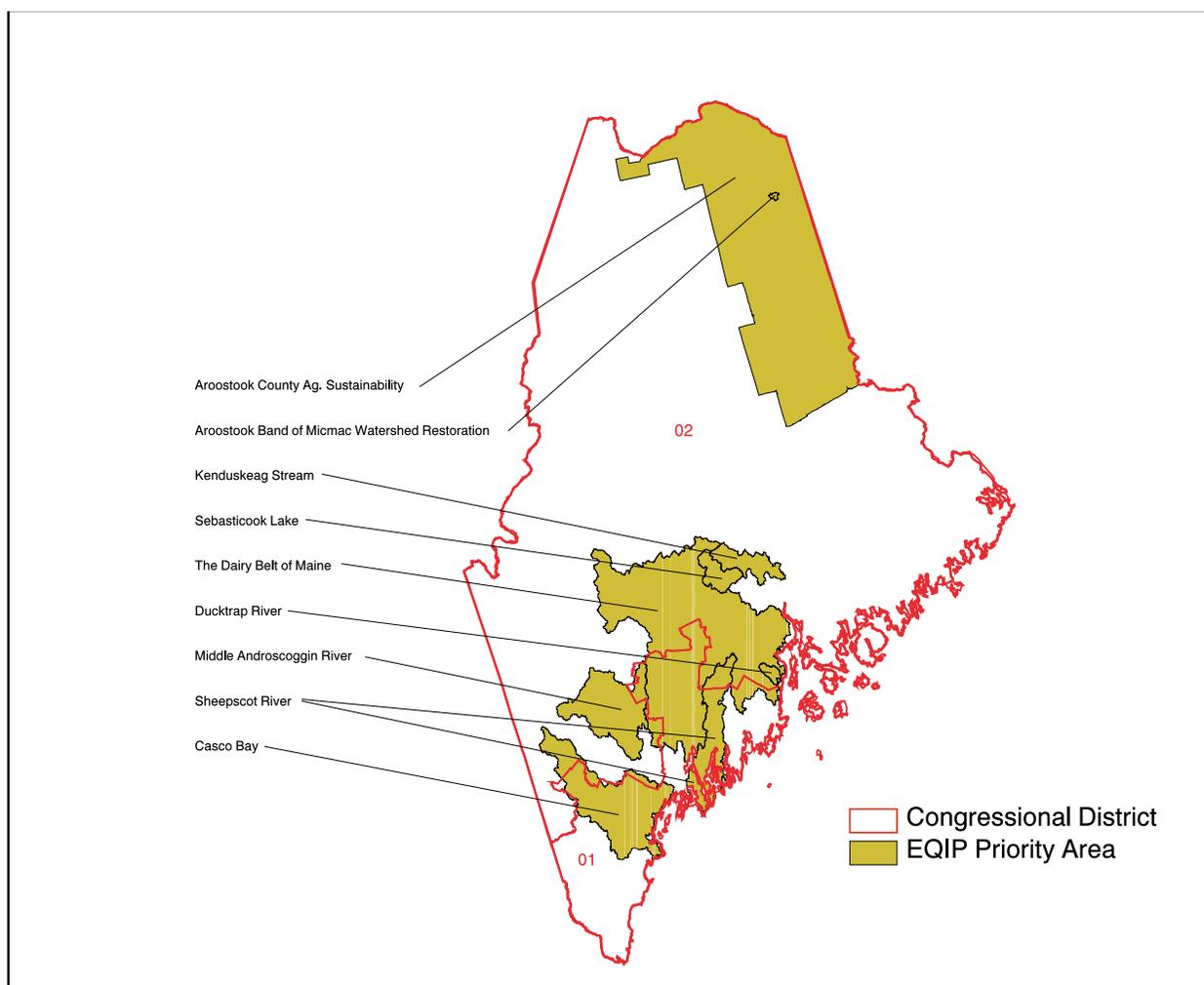
State Contact

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Maine EQIP Priority Areas Within Congressional Districts



Maine EQIP Dollars and Contracts by Congressional District

Congressional Districts	Fiscal Year 2000		Cumulative Total (97-00)	
	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 0	\$286,817	82	\$1,767,149	440
District 1	226,122	23	1,055,661	100
District 2	879,672	62	4,745,475	280
State Totals	\$1,392,611	167	\$7,568,285	820

Note: EQIP contracts for each Congressional District are estimated from Conservation Priority Areas, which may include more than one district. Congressional District 0 = EQIP Contracts for Statewide Natural Resource Concerns, which can be in any /Congressional District in the state.

Source: FSA Recordset type01, data through 4th quarter FY2000

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