

# Connecticut River Watershed Council

## Bissell Brook bio-engineering project, North Statford, NH



*Large wood additions provide habitat and stabilize the eroding bank.*



*Post construction plantings; 291 willow stakes and speckled alders.*

**Site description:** Bissell Brook, which is 3.73 miles long, empties into the Connecticut River after passing under the recreational trail used for river access, ATV's, snowmobiling etc. According to NH DES, the sharp bend located here interrupts sediment transport and erodes the recreation trail given that the force of flow at high water is directed into the bank.

**Problems/History:** In 2013 CRWC was contacted by the Connecticut River Joint Commission's Headwaters subcommittee regarding the trail erosion. CRWC enlisted help from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and Fish & Game Department as well as Trout Unlimited for assessments, water temperature monitoring, and fish population surveys. The results showed that conditions existed in Bissell Brook as a cold water refuge and spawning habitat for brook trout and other aquatic organisms.

**Objective/Method:** CRWC began grant writing and fundraising, hired an engineer to design plans (which called for the installation of root wads to help absorb the energy of high flow events as well as provide additional fish habitat for native Brook trout populations) and hired a contractor to implement the project in 2016. Post construction buffer plantings were installed to increase wildlife habitat and help stabilize the newly sloped stream bank.

**Partners/Roles and Funders:** CRWC (River Steward Ron Rhodes, project manager) partnered with the private landowner, the snowmobile and ATV clubs responsible for trail maintenance, CRJC, TransCanada/Portland Gas Pipeline, NH DES, NH F&G, TU, Headwaters Hydrology, Beattie Enterprises, Beck Pond LLC and Intervale Conservation Nursery. Thanks to all for helping make this project happen!

CRWC received funding for this project from; NH DES (\$30,000), the Dextra Baldwin McGonagle Foundation (\$15,000), the Davis Conservation Foundation (\$10,000), and the NH Natural Resource Conservation Service (\$5,000).

**Total Cost:** For engineering, permitting, construction and restoration = **\$60,000.**

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