

Dam Removal Projects

2014-2025



Total Impact:

26 
Dams Removed

6 
Culvert Upgrades

431 
Miles of Habitat Restored

2025

Dams: 2
Miles: 4

Valley Street Dam

The Mount Ascutney Regional Commission (MARC) and Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC), in partnership with the Town of Springfield, removed an obsolete dam on Valley Street in Springfield, VT. The removal of the 14' high by 33' wide concrete structure will improve flood safety, water quality, and fish passage on a tributary (locally known as Mile Brook) of the Black

River. CRC and MARC began working with the Town and State of Vermont on this project in 2018, and after 8 years of grant writing, engineering design, and permitting, the removal of the old dam was completed in September 2025.



Funding for design, permitting and construction has been provided by the State of Vermont Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP), a Dam Removal Design and Implementation Block Grant (DRDIBG) administered by Watersheds United Vermont (WUV) and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Fish Passage Program. Local contractors hired for this project include Ripple Natural Resources LLC of Randolph, VT, Paula Sagerman, a historic preservation consultant based out of Brattleboro, VT, and Crown Point Excavation LLC of Springfield, VT.

Jack's Brook Dam

A concrete dam built in 1913 on Jack's Brook—a tributary of the North Branch of the Deerfield River—was removed in June/July 2025 through a collaborative effort to restore natural stream flow and improve aquatic habitat in southern Vermont. The Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC), in partnership with the private dam owner and

Trout Unlimited, and with funding from The Nature Conservancy of Vermont and the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department's Watershed Grant (through Vermont conservation license plates), led the project to return Jack's Brook to a free-flowing stream. Strategic wood additions were also installed to slow the flow of sediment and provide habitat. The small but ecologically significant structure, measuring 6' high by 25' wide, once served as a water source for a nearby home but no longer had any functional use after filling up with sediment and not being maintained for many years. The removal of Jack's Brook dam has expanded critical cold-water habitat for brook trout and other native aquatic species in Windham County.



2024

Dams: 3
Culverts: 1
Miles: 13

Blake Higgins Dam

The remnant 90-foot-long and 7-foot-high concrete Blake Higgins dam on the Saxtons River in Bellows Falls/Westminster Vermont was removed to increase sea lamprey spawning habitat, improve water quality and flood resiliency. The project also includes a new river access for recreational use. Our project partners/funders included the dam owner and neighbors, State of Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Vermont River Conservancy, The Conservation Alliance, Fidelity, American Rivers, and Bingham Trust.

Before removal



After removal



Kimball Brook



This long-abandoned dam in North Statford, NH was on a direct tributary to the mainstem Connecticut River which supports native, wild brook trout and other cold water species. Removal of the old concrete dam and trapped sediment has had immediate positive impacts for the fish and other aquatic organisms in Kimball Brook.

CRC's project partners include the private dam owner, US Fish and Wildlife Service, NH Charitable Foundation, Fidelity, American Rivers, and Bingham Trust as well as a local engineering firm, construction company, and trucking contractors.

Dudleyville Pond Dam



Dudleyville Pond Dam, dating back to the 1800s, was removed. Known locally in Shutesbury MA as Brown's Dam, it had been a family fixture since 1951. Despite decades of care by the Brown family, it was deemed a safety hazard due to modern standards and environmental changes. The dam's removal,

expedited by an emergency order, will transform the pond into a stream, benefiting local wildlife and improving safety. Partners who were involved with this project were MA Division of Ecological Restoration, SumCo Eco-Contracting, Stantec Engineering Shutesbury Conservation Commission, USFWS, Trout Unlimited, and Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Association.

Nulhegan River Culvert



CRC and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services collaborated to complete the Yellow Branch culvert replacement and bridge installation project on the Nulhegan River in Brunswick, VT. The objective was to remove the undersized old culvert which had been blocking aquatic organism passage and natural stream function within the Conte Refuge's native brook trout habitat. The new bridge connects road access while restoring the natural stream and fish habitat, and improving flood resiliency.

2023

Dams: 1
Culverts: 1
Miles: 3

Beaver Brook Dam

Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC) worked with a private dam owner, the Town of Wilmington, the State of Vermont, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to remove an old mill dam and upgrade a town owned culvert to a new bridge. This project will restore water quality, reconnect native Brook trout habitat, and improve flood resiliency in Beaver Brook (a tributary to the Deerfield River in the town of Wilmington).



2022

Dams: 3

Miles: 19

Montague Dam

In 2022, we removed 3 dams, including two remnant dams on the mainstem of the Connecticut in Guildhall, VT and Colebrook, NH and one obsolete dam on the Ompompanoosuc River in Post Mills/Thetford, VT.



2021

Dams: 3

Miles: 29

Broad Brook Dam



In 2021 we removed three dams — on Broad Brook in Guilford, VT; on Turkey Hollow Brook in Windham, VT; and on the Sutton River in West Burke, VT. These projects opened 27 miles of aquatic habitat to fish passage for native Brook trout and other organisms. Thanks to all of our project partners and funders including CRC donors, deCoizart Foundation, New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Fish & Wildlife Service, and Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

2020

Dams: 2

Culverts: 1

Miles: 32

Magic Mountain Dam



In 2020 we removed two old dams and one perched culvert that were blocking brook trout and other critters from getting upstream to spawn and find much needed cold water during what was a rather hot and dry summer. These restoration projects in Londonderry and Weathersfield (VT), were funded by several sources including the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Partners Program & Fisheries and Aquatic Conservation), the State of Vermont (Watershed grant & Ecosystem Restoration Program), and funding CRC received from individual donors and foundations.

2019



Pine Mill Dam

Dams: 3

Miles: 90



CRC worked with the dam owner, Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, and local contractors to remove the dam off Kidder Hill Rd. in Grafton, VT. The concrete dam, built in 1960, was heavily damaged by Tropical Storm Irene and identified by the State as a priority river restoration project eligible for State of Vermont Clean Water Block Grant funding. The same year, Windham Regional Commission and CRC worked with landowners in Dummerston, VT to remove a dam on private property on Crosby Brook. The Pine Mill Dam in Haverhill, NH was CRC's final dam removal in 2019.

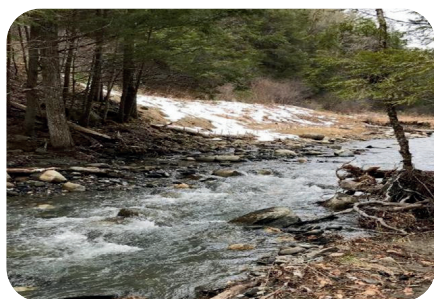
2018



Norwich Dam

Dams: 4

Miles: 75



CRC worked with the Norwich Fire District to remove the old Norwich Reservoir dam on Charles Brown Brook in Norwich, VT. The concrete dam was built in 1928 as a water source but became obsolete in 1981. The project – which included removing the concrete dam, 758 truckloads of accumulated sediment, and in-stream habitat reconstruction – was funded by the Vermont Ecosystem Restoration Grant, the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, Vermont Fish & Wildlife, Patagonia, Trout Unlimited, American Rivers, and the Norwich Conservation Commission. CRC partnered with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) Connecticut River Coordinator's Office to

remove a small, privately owned dam on Cold Brook in Wilmington, VT.

CRC also helped the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission remove a dam on Mill Brook in West Windsor, VT. Removing the dam opened 26 miles of habitat to fish, improved water quality, and reduced water temperatures.

CRC's dam removal and river restoration work wrapped up with a dam on Clark Brook in Haverhill, NH. Crews worked through the snowy, cold fall to remove this privately owned dam.

2017



East Burke Dam

Dams: 3

Miles: 99



The Connecticut River Conservancy partnered with the Passumpsic Valley Land Trust to remove the East Burke dam on the East Branch of the Passumpsic River in East Burke, VT. The concrete dam was built in 1931 at the same location as previous timber crib dams (the first was built in 1825). A total of 623 truckloads (or nearly 9,500 cubic yards) of sediment were removed from upstream of the dam, which lowered the flood elevation level in town by four feet. With the dam gone, native brook trout and other aquatic organisms can freely move throughout the entire river system (99 miles). CRC and our project partners returned to East Burke in spring 2018 to

plant 2,500 trees and shrubs along the newly shaped riverbank to add additional wildlife habitat and reduce erosion.

CRC worked with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to remove a small, privately owned dam located on an unnamed tributary to the West River in Dummerston, VT.

CRC worked with another private landowner to remove a former small hydro dam on the Ompompanoosuc River in West Fairlee, VT. This dam was originally built in 1983 to generate hydro-electric power for the farm, but only produced electricity for 10 years.

2016



Oliverian Brook

Culverts: 2

Miles: 20

CRC worked with the Town of Haverhill and other partners in 2016 to replace two aging, undersized and perched culverts that were blocking fish passage. The projects on Page Rd. and Stonecrest Dr. open more than twenty miles of stream habitat, benefiting brook trout and other aquatic species. Replacing these culverts has also reduced the risk of flooding and infrastructure damage.



2015

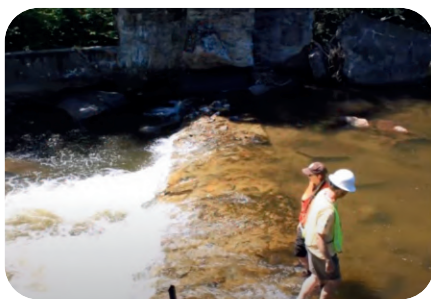


Groton Dam

Dams: 1

Culverts: 1

Miles: 39



CRC and our partners removed this deadbeat dam in summer 2015. This dam was built in the early 1900's for hydro power, but was wiped out by the 1927 flood and never used again. So, for nearly 90 years, this old dam was blocking fish passage and sediment transfer, as well as being a safety hazard for river users (fishers, paddlers and swimmers). This project opened up 34 miles of river habitat for fish.



In 2015 CRC also replaced a culvert on Abbott Brook in Strafford, VT which will improve flood resiliency and allow for fish passage into the Podunk State Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

2014



Franconia Paper Mill Dam

Dams: 1

Miles: 8



Removing the partially breached Franconia Paper Mill dam restored the natural river habitat to free-flowing conditions, improved water quality and sediment transport, restored the river channel, increased and improved fish and wildlife access to spawning habitat and cold water refuge for resident Eastern brook trout. Removal of this dam in 2014 has opened roughly 8 miles of stream. Our partners included the State of Vermont, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Town of Groton. Funding was provided by grants from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, the State of Vermont, USFWS, Patagonia, Trout Unlimited, and American Rivers/Keurig Green Mountain Coffee.



Learn more at ctriver.org

The Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC) restores and advocates for clean water, healthy habitats, and resilient communities to support a diverse and thriving watershed. Through collaborative partnerships in New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, CRC leads and supports science-based efforts for natural and life-filled rivers from source to sea.



Connecticut River
Conservancy