

# WATER: DEADBEAT DAMS & BROKEN STREAMS



**Vermont waterways are broken.** With over 1000 dams obstructing our rivers and 90% of our culverts blocking fish passage, our river habitats are compromised. We must dive deeper to reconnect our rivers and streams for fish populations, public access and improved flood resiliency.

## OUR SCIENCE HAS TAUGHT US:

- ▶ At least 200 dams on our rivers are derelict or “deadbeat” dams serving no purpose
- ▶ Deadbeat dams do not produce power, manage flood water or support drinking water supplies
- ▶ Deadbeat dams pose safety hazards, block fish passage, raise water temperatures, compromise stream habitat, increase floods upstream and negatively impact recreation such as paddling and fishing
- ▶ 90% of surveyed culverts are improperly sited or obstruct fish passage
- ▶ Over 50% of surveyed culverts are unable to manage extreme weather events and are susceptible to failure and expensive road damage

We are working with communities, dam operators, town planners, partners, and policy makers to make connected waterways a priority in Vermont.

## SCIENTIFIC DATA DRIVES OUR DECISIONS

Our scientists continually create tools that help us identify the projects that make the biggest conservation impacts with your dollars.

We have created the **Dam Prioritization Web Tool** which screens over 1,000 Vermont dams for their ecological impacts and ranks priority removals.

Our **Culvert Assessment Study**, surveyed thousands of culverts in the Lake Champlain watershed and is used to inform culvert re-design strategies in Vermont communities.

We work in an open source environment. These resources are available to all state agencies, partners and communities to help build a healthy and climate resilient Vermont.



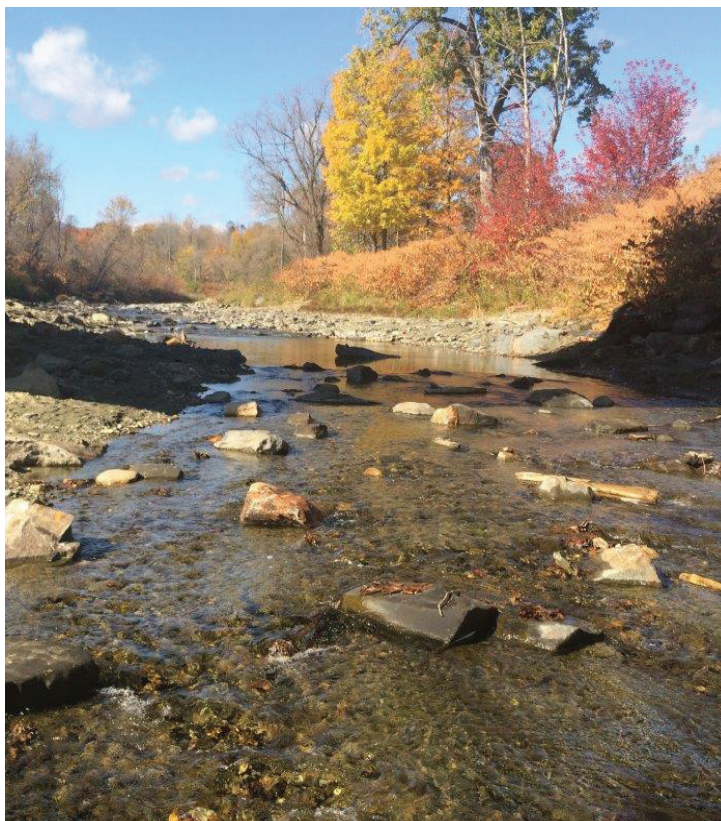
## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: **TO FREE A RIVER**

We helped remove the Randolph Dam and reconnected 98 river miles.

The deadbeat dam has blocked the Third Branch of the White River since the 1940's, and was a complete barrier for spawning trout.

By the time we identified the dam as a high priority for removal due to its ecological impact, no owner could be linked to the structure. This is the typical Vermont dam story—dams with little or no benefit remain in rivers uninspected, unattended, blocking fish passage, and posing safety hazards.

After a feasibility study and careful project assessment, the dam was strategically removed to limit any impacts from built-up sediment or toxins that could be carried downstream. After more than seven decades, the river can now flow freely.



Randolph Dam: before removal (top right), removal (bottom right), freed river (above)

### With Your Help We are Connecting the Drops

The White River ecosystem is expected to rebound quickly even after 75 years of obstruction but these types of projects require significant resources. Our goal is to raise \$6 million dollars for our freshwater priorities, such as reconnecting our waterways, removing four more dams, and supporting culvert replacements.

Contact our Director of Philanthropy,  
**Catherine Newman** 802 229 4425 x120

Help us lead the way.

The Nature  
Conservancy   
Vermont