

# The Childs River Restoration Project

## The Problem

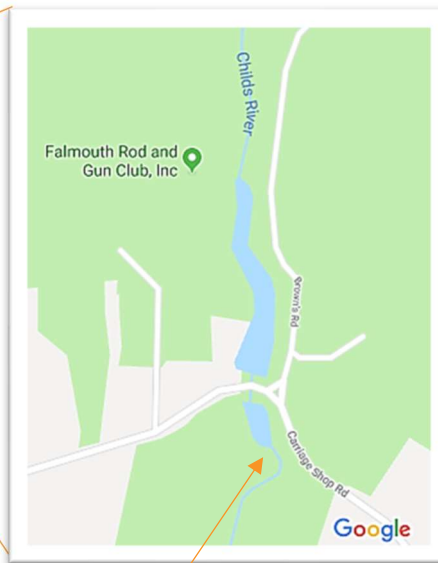
The Childs River flows south through the Garner and Farley bogs passing through Mashpee and East Falmouth, through Eel Pond, Waquoit Bay and into the Vineyard Sound. An earthen berm, failed fish ladder and undersized culvert under Carriage Shop Road are preventing fish from

traveling upstream. What was once a route for brook trout, American eel and herring is now blocked and too warm and shallow to allow for migration and spawning. No brook trout have been detected north of the dam since 2012.

The cranberry bogs have been abandoned and are no longer farmed. Invasive plants have begun to spread



### Dam and Impoundment



### Dam (to be removed)

and take over the landscape.

Water control structures and

ditches used for flooding the bogs for farming prevent fish passage and alter water flow through the area compounding the problem of warming stream temperature. Meanwhile, several feet of sand from the farming activities sits atop the natural peat soil, smothering the opportunity for native wetland plants to thrive and allowing upland species to take over.



## The Solution



The Falmouth Rod and Gun Club, which owns much the surrounding land, is working together with partners and associates to rehabilitate the upper Childs River. Restoration will include:

1. Removing the berm that creates two shallow ponds on the Childs River and replacing the culvert under Carriage Shop Road.

2. Recreating the stream channel through the ponds and bogs, filling in the old fish ladder, removing old farming water control structures that are barriers to fish passage and restoring the natural stream flow and floodplain.



3. Restoring the cranberry bogs to natural wetlands by removing sand and ditches, adding native plantings and woody material for wildlife habitat and creating nearby ponds for waterfowl within the bog complexes.

## The Benefits

- Re-creating cold water fish habitat in the upper Childs River to foster the **return of brook trout**.
- Removing barriers to fish passage to provide **brook trout, American eel, river herring and other fish access to habitat** upstream of the existing berm and failed fish ladder.
- Restoration of the cranberry bogs to wetlands to **create habitat for migratory birds, songbirds, and other wildlife**.
- The wetlands, which act as a **natural filtration system for water resources in both towns**, may help to meet **nutrient reduction goals in estuaries downstream**.
- Land is protected through Conservation Restrictions to ensure the **area will remain undeveloped**.
- **Continued and improved public access** will be provided to the area for hiking, hunting and enjoying nature. Schools and scouts could use the project as an **educational opportunity to study the value of river and wetland restoration**.

**Project Cost and Timeline:** Estimated cost is nearly \$3.0 million including installation of a new culvert under Carriage Shop Road. Design and permitting was completed in 2020 with construction anticipated to be finished in 2021.

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