

CUTTINGS PLANTED AS "WATTLES" BRASS HELPS NRCS

BRASS cooperated with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS, formerly known by the name Soil Conservation Service) to plant small cuttings in the "wattle" method. A heaped truck-load of bush species cuttings (red osier dogwood, streamco willow, bankers dwarf willow, and sand bar willow) were delivered to NRCS's Rich Redman by John Dickerson, the regional NRCS plant material specialist.

"Wattles" are tied bundles of small cuttings, planted in trenches near the water's edge. The tops of cuttings are left sticking out over the stream, and the trenches are dug at a downstream angle to reduce possibilities of erosion.

Although NRCS and BRASS had little success with "wattles" when previously planted at the base of an eight foot AuSable River streambank in Keene Valley, the ones planted along the Boquet were set into a low bank slope in relatively slow-moving water. They should help stabilize the downstream end of an oxbow and provide riparian vegetation with some shading to cool the water. Two hundred twenty-five feet of streambank were planted by Rich Redman, Chris Creelman, and BRASS' Robin Ulmer.

The planted oxbow area is a dairy farm. As seen by the picture, cows like tender shrub shoots. (Their species of choice appears to be red osier dogwood.) Thanks to funds from the Finlandia vodka Clean Water Fund, BRASS provided the landowner with electric fencing (charger, posts, ground rods, clamps, and over two miles of wire) to secure the area from marauding cows.



