

# LANDOWNERS GET ASSISTANCE THROUGH "PARTNERS FOR WILDLIFE" AND FINLANDIA VODKA

The Lake Champlain Region office of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) provided assistance for work between Lewis and Wadhams at the end of May. Streambanks owned by George Hainer and Vernon Pierce were shaped at a 2:1 slope, live black willow posts were planted, and the banks seeded and mulched. Next spring, shrub seedlings will be interplanted between the black willows.

Through the "Partners for Wildlife" program, landowners enter into an agreement with FWS to contribute a minimum 35% cash or matching service to a project that restores streambanks and riparian areas. (In this case, BRASS used its Finlandia grant funds to cover landowner expense.) Partners for Wildlife is a program designed to restore man-altered habitats like drained wetlands or over-grazed streambanks. On riparian projects, the purpose is to re-establish original (native) vegetation and hydrology, satisfy the needs of wildlife populations, and/or benefit anadromous fish spawning habitat.

Streambanks receiving treatment were: two areas just upstream of the Loukes Road bridge, a severely eroded bank near the fishermen parking area on Loukes Road, and an oxbow section behind Vernon Pierce's barn. Hay bales were staked at the toe of the banks to keep any soil loosened during the bank shaping from entering the river. A back-hoe with a 6-foot steel ram bolted to the bucket pierced deep holes close to the water's edge. Live posts were planted into the holes, and the banks were seeded and mulched.

Cooperators in these restorations include:

- Rich Redman and Chris Creelman from NRCS,
- the Ansons in Essex for access to black willows,
- Greg Smith who cut and delivered the live posts,
- Kevin Lawson who operated the back-hoe,
- Allen-Rogers Company for hardwood stakes,
- Robert Perry for mulch hay, and
- Moriah Shock.

The 6' steel ram punches another hole close to a live [black willow](#) post already planted.

