

## Fluvial Geomorphic and Habitat Assessment of the South River Watershed Project is Underway – July 2011



The South River watershed encompasses 26.1 square miles and includes portions of the towns of Ashfield and Conway. The river banks and important agricultural lands along the South River are being lost to the widespread problem of erosion. Roads, bridges, and homes have been damaged or are threatened by the major bank erosion occurring in the watershed. Considerable amounts of local, state and federal money have already been spent to repair damaged infrastructure and these repairs are not always successful. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

(MA DEP) awarded the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) a \$74,900 604b Water Quality Management Planning Grant to conduct a Fluvial Geomorphic and Habitat Assessment of the South River Watershed. The Franklin Regional Council of Governments is partnering with the Deerfield River Watershed Association (DRWA) to conduct the habitat assessment of the watershed. The FRCOG has hired a qualified fluvial geomorphology consultant to conduct the geomorphic

assessment of the South River, which will provide information on the causes of erosion, channel instability and habitat degradation. Field work has begun this month. Once these factors are understood, long-term cost-effective solutions can be identified that will minimize the need for further costly repairs and improve aquatic habitat. This project will provide conceptual restoration designs for 4 reaches and a final engineering design for the highest priority restoration site.



The FRCOG is also partnering with the Friends of the South River and DRWA to implement a Public Education and Outreach program to inform residents who live in the South River Watershed about the relationship between river channel dynamics, land use activities, and water quality to generate community cooperation and support for future restoration and river bank stabilization projects. [A Project Kick-off Meeting will be scheduled soon so if you'd like to have your name added to the project mailing list or you'd like further information about the project, please contact:](#)

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