

Thirty-Five Foot Bridge Built in Success

By Larry Gomes, Trail Master
Milan Trail Huggers

November 5, 2022

A combined effort between the NH Bureau of Trails, the Androscoggin Valley ATV Club and the Milan Trail Huggers resulted in the removal of an old bridge and the building of a replacement bridge. The old bridge was 30' long and built with 12" square wooden beams and 10-foot wood ramps on each side. The replacement bridge has four 35' long steel beams with dirt ramps on each side. The old bridge was not able to handle heavy construction equipment and the new bridge has the capacity to support a fully loaded dump truck.

On Friday, November 4th, a total of three volunteers worked to dismantle the old bridge and set new cement abutment blocks and new steel beams in place. The volunteers were Clint Savage and Kevin Wyman from the NH Bureau of Trails and excavator operator Don Doucette who works for Romik Developers.

The crew arrived early in the morning and removed the decking of the old bridge using the excavator. They were able to salvage 2 of the three 30' long beams that are 12" x 12" square. The two salvaged beams are going to be re-used by the Presidential Range Riders in Gorham to build a temporary bridge where a large culvert recently washed out.

Late in the day, volunteers Steve Kellet and Larry Gomes showed up to make sure everything was ready for the bridge build on Saturday. Larry brought his trailer which was quickly loaded with old bridge material and brought to the recycling center in Berlin.

On Saturday a total of nine volunteers showed up to install the bridge deck and railings. Volunteers included Steve Kellet, John Beaudoin, Mike Jutras, Dave and Dawn Macomber, Leo Couture, Mike Doucette, Gary Lonergan and Larry Gomes.

The first job of the day was to set up the stringers that would hold the deck in place. Once these were set, the crew lifted each 12-foot long 4" x 4" deck board into place on the bridge. Four volunteers stayed on the bridge and fastened each deck board into place using battery operated drills to drive in the 6" Timberlok screws.

Once the deck was in place, the crew cut rail posts and fastened them to the sides of the bridge. Then they used nail guns to attach the railings and the top cap. Finally they installed 2" x 8" runners across the entire top of the bridge.

The entire job took about five hours. Once the bridge was done, excavator operator Mike Doucette built dirt ramps up to each side of the bridge and then loaded trailers brought by Leo Couture and Larry Gomes with the remaining lumber from the old bridge. The day ended at the recycling center in Berlin with the old lumber being unloaded into the wood pile.

We send out our sincere thanks to these volunteers for their help on Friday and Saturday. Here are some pictures taken during these work days:



Excavator provided by Romik Builders that was used to dismantle the old bridge. Then it was used to unload the steel and cement blocks from the delivery trucks. Finally it was used to set the cement blocks and steel for the new bridge and to build the dirt ramps leading up to the bridge.



Steel beams set on top of cement abutment blocks ready for decking.



The Friday crew responsible for dismantling the old bridge and getting the abutments and steel in place for the new bridge. (Left) Clint Savage District 1 Supervisor from the NH Bureau of Trails, (Middle) Don Doucette excavator operator from Romik Developers and (Right) Kevin Wyman from the NH Bureau of Trails.



First load of old lumber headed for the recycle center in Berlin. There were three loads in total that were hauled out for recycling.



Two of the three wood beams from the old bridge are being recycled by the Presidential Range Riders snowmobile club to build a temporary bridge over a large washout in Gorham. The third beam was broken in half and could not be used.



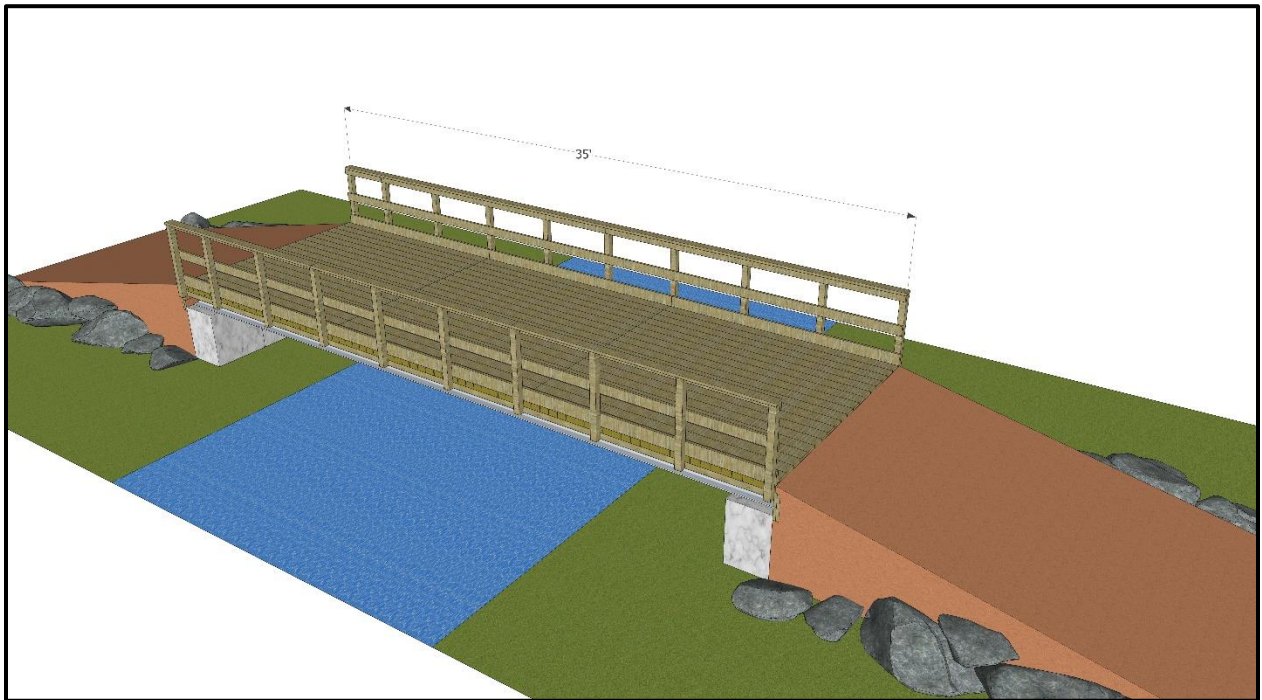
The crew just finished installing the stringers next to the steel beams and are just starting to install decking.



Some of the crew transferred the heavy deck boards from the lumber pile to the bridge while other crew members used cordless drills to fasten the deck boards to the stringers using Timberlok screws.



After the decking was completed, runners were installed across the entire width of the bridge followed by railings. The crew take a minute during the cleanup to stop for a picture in front of the completed bridge.



3D design created in Sketchup to help with the planning of materials and workflow for the bridge build.