

Lake Champlain Aquatic Habitat Connectivity: Ausable River Watershed

Rome Dam Removal, West Branch Ausable River, Essex County, Jay, NY

Longitude: -73.700918 Latitude: 44.439995



Left: A view of dam prior to removal (AsRA). **Right** After removal looking downstream through dam site (USFWS).

Site description: The Rome Dam (38' tall x 103' long) was 1.5 miles upstream of the confluence of the East and West Branches of the Ausable River near the hamlet of Au Sable Forks in Adirondack Park, New York. It was built in 1894, rebuilt in 1936 and has not been maintained since 1971.

Problems / history: The Rome Dam deteriorated and was in danger of failure with a high hazard classification associated with potential loss of life and property damage downstream of structure. The dam blocked natural sediment and wood transport as well as migration of brook trout and other aquatic species, preventing access into 9.2 miles of upstream coldwater habitat during warmer summer months.

Objective and Method: The objective was to remove the dam to re-connect the river's biotic community by restoring the stream's natural processes and providing fish refuge from warmer main stem temperatures. The methods involved breaking and removal of all cement, rebar, and wood cribbing currently found below ordinary high water and re-establishing the stream channel.

Partners and Funding: Funding and support for this project came from the Ausable River Association (project management, permits), State of New York (funding) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (technical assistance, funding).

Budget:

NY	USFWS	TOTAL
\$2,475,345	\$3,500	\$2,478,845