



Photo courtesy of Mill City Park

Mill City Park at Franklin Falls

Franklin, New Hampshire

VHB worked closely with the City of Franklin, the Mill City Park non-profit organization, and Colorado-based design firm Recreation Engineering and Planning (REP) to build **New England's first whitewater park**. The project overcame many challenges to enhance a 1.25-mile stretch of Class III and IV rapids, including construction of 1,600 feet of river with engineered features allowing year-round river recreational use. VHB led an **unprecedented environmental review process** to prove the feasibility of the river construction, designed the first phase of a complementary land-based park, and supported the construction of the first phase of the project in 2021-2022.

VHB's scientists, engineers, and cultural resources team applied their deep understanding of the environmental implications of the project, and incorporated methods for preserving natural ecosystems and creating a sustainable design. Mill City Park serves as a framework for urban river park development here in the Northeast. The project demonstrates how a sustainable and ecological approach to restoring a community's natural assets can support economic and social vitality.



Steel sheeting cofferdam used for excavation and construction of the whitewater standing wave structure 3.



Foundation and reinforcement placing within cofferdam prior to pouring the concrete slab for the "performance face" of whitewater structure 3.

Whitewater structure 3 and the adjacent terrace seating almost completed.



CLIENT



City of Franklin, NH

SUBMITTED BY



Mill City Park



Bedford, NH

