



## New Hampshire Keene River Local Protection Project

The Keene Local Protection Project is located along the Ashuelot River in Keene and Swanzey.

The project increases the Ashuelot River's channel capacity, allowing the reservoir behind the dam at Surry Mountain Lake, located five miles upstream, to empty more rapidly. This increased channel capacity improves the river's flow conditions, which in turn reduces local flooding in Keene, improves the efficiency of drains and sewers in Keene during high water periods, and helps reduce flooding on farm fields situated along the river.

Construction was accomplished between June - August 1954 at a cost of \$44,100. The project is maintained by Keene.

The project involved snagging and clearing approximately 22,800 feet of the Ashuelot River, beginning at the railroad bridge in Keene and extending to the covered bridge at Swanzey Station in Swanzey. The work included removing trees, brush, and other debris in the river.

The work also involved the excavation of two cutoff or "short cut" channels. The Ashuelot River flows in a north-south direction. However, two sections of the river in Keene and Swanzey meandered back and forth in an east-west direction for several thousand feet. The cutoff channels bypass these winding, roving sections of channel and provide a "short cut" route for the river, allowing a more direct north-south flow. Where once the river meandered east-west for a total of 5,600 feet, the two cutoff channels now permit the river to flow in a north-south direction for approximately 1,800 feet. One cutoff channel is located in the vicinity of the mouth of the South Branch in Swanzey, and the second is 500 feet above the mouth of White Brook in Keene.



Aerial view of Keene Local Protection Project, located along the Ashuelot River in Keene and Swanzey, New Hampshire. (Click photos for high-resolution version)

