



## Beaver Brook Watershed Quest

### **Brownsville, Vermont**

Physical Difficulty: Easy

Special Features: Natural

Walking Conditions: Trail

Duration: 0:45

Bring: compass

**To get there:** *This Quest begins at the Albert Bridge School in Brownsville, VT. From Hartland, follow the Brownsville-Hartland Rd for nine miles. The school will be on your left just before the junction with 44. Coming from Windsor, take 44 W for six miles to Brownsville, then turn right on Brownsville-Hartland Rd. The school will be on your right. The Quest begins in the parking lot.*

### **Clues:**

Welcome to our Quest.  
It's going to be the best!

It takes you to the Beaver Brook.  
Come on down and take a look.

To the left of the flagpole at Albert Bridge School,  
Go up the path between the road and the field to see something cool.

At the top of the hill, turn right.  
But watch out for the hole or you might

Fall in and not get to the black mailbox  
Where you enter the woods and could see a fox.

Follow the path. You'll see a bridge you should not cross.  
Pass the benches, the lean-to, and the weaving covered with lichens  
and moss.

Downhill go we,  
To the stream you will see.

The leaves from the trees fall into the river.  
The temperature of the water might make you shiver.

This is where we learned about the food web  
In which trout, the consumers, are fed.

The trees are producers, food for the fish.  
Because macroinvertebrates (stream insects) think leaves are a good dish.

Decomposers break down the tree  
Along the stream you'll see.

Mushrooms (fungi) grow along the banks.  
And for this, we give our thanks.

Go back up the trail you came.  
Orange markers mark the lane.

Go past the benches and continue northwest.  
Avoiding the bridge is always best!

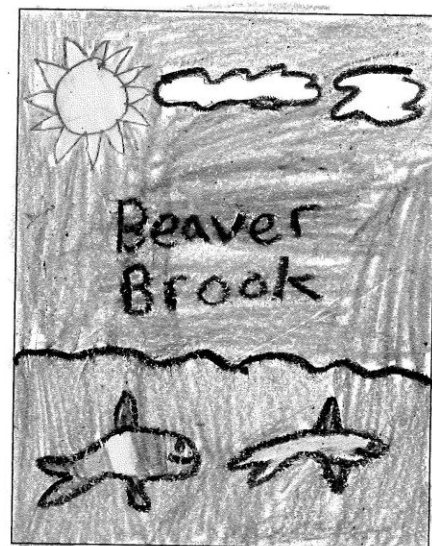
An orange marker will show the way  
To the Cady Trail, and don't delay.

Don't fright, turn to your right.  
Now walk until there's a nine-trunked  
tree in sight.

Continue 86 steps to the spot where you  
see  
On your left a cemetery beyond the  
trees.

Then look around and on your right  
You'll see a magnificent sight.

This is where we learned about river  
morphology,  
The science that shows where pools, riffles, and erosion can be.



Look down in the Beaver Brook where the water flows fast  
Over rocks and down a small waterfall, making foam as it goes past.

This is called a riffle, where the water moves quick.  
It's shallow here and not very thick.

Beyond the riffle you'll find a pool  
Where the water is slow, deep, and very cool.

On the opposite bank, when the water rose  
It eroded the soil and left the roots exposed.

Now starting at the rock that looks like a giant tooth,  
With the river on your right, follow the trail like a sleuth.

Make a right after the fallen tree.  
A birch with mushrooms you will see.

Look down to the river for the ledges.  
The water rumbles over their square edges.

There were 17 mills on the Beaver and Mill Brooks in the past.  
Most of these mills did not last.

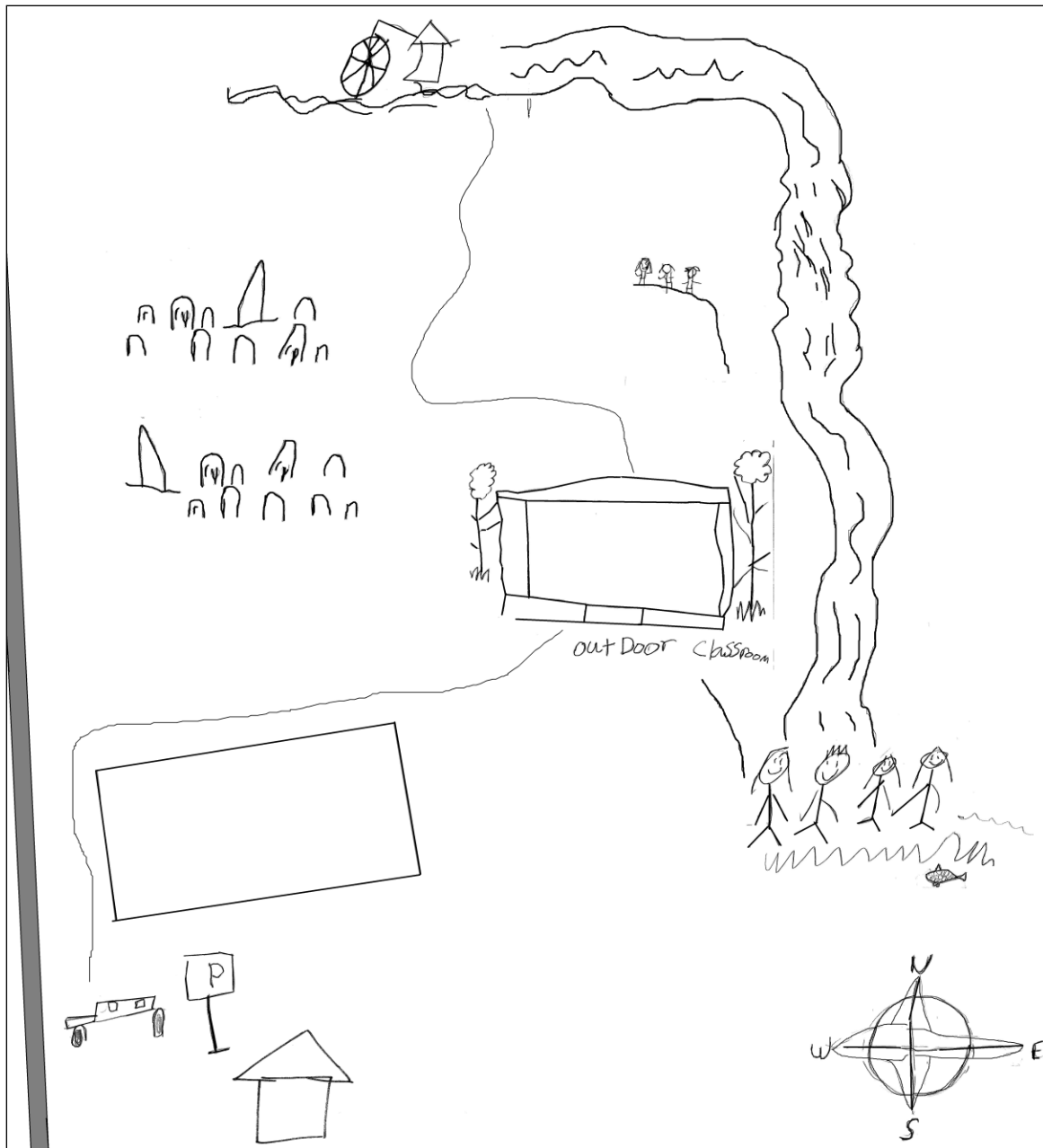
In the old days water used to power the mills.  
Wood was sawn to pay the bills.

The rocks here would make a platform for a dam.  
A water wheel helped turn the gears and cams.

Turn back to the two benches you passed.  
Take a seat to rest, you've done this Quest so fast!

Reach under the bench and find your treasure.  
There's no rush, open the box at your leisure.

Sign our book and make an impression of our stamp  
Then return the box and close the door to keep out the damp.



**Other things to do nearby:** Hike Mt. Ascutney!

**Please be a good steward of the land: leave it better than you found it and pack out any trash you find.**



Valley Quest is a collection of treasure hunts that share and teach the natural gems and cultural heritage of the Upper Valley with children, families, adults, and visitors. It is a program of Vital Communities, a regional nonprofit working to engage citizens, organizations, and communities in creating solutions to our region's challenges. Learn more at [vitalcommunities.org](http://vitalcommunities.org)