

Northern Virginia NTRAK "How-To" Article

JUST ADD WATER
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Modules built by former NVNTRAK member **Marc Sisk** feature meandering rivers (Nn3 *Thomson Creek* and *Silver Springs* modules and **Dale Rinker's Pipestone Pass** NTRAK modules). At the National Narrow Gauge Convention in Kansas City in 2014, two clinics described how water can be added to a scene in any model railroad: *Rivers, Rapids, and Rushing Water*, by **Cameron Bryars**, and *Realistic Water made Easy* by **Jon Addison**.

The key to any water feature is the prep work on the river bed or pond bottom. Jon Addison (of Silverton Central and Sundance Central sectional layout fame) handed out a single page, *REALISTIC WATER MADE EASY* that covers the key ingredients to add water to a scene and told attendees to freely share what he wrote. It is reproduced below:

RIVERS & HARBORS

Using acrylic bottled paints (Evergreen, Tan, Prussian Blue, Black, etc.) start brushing from the shore line and go from light to darker colors to create depth. Blend while wet to eliminate paint color lines. You want one color to fade into another.

Next make sure your painted river bottom and scenery is dry. Then spread a liberal amount of DAP Crystal Clear Caulk on the water surface. Use a one inch brush in a stippling action to spread evenly and create water movement or wave action. (More caulking makes waves bigger) When the caulking is completely dry, seal with a coat of gloss medium using your fingers to spread. Around docks and boats use a small brush to apply.

ROCK FACE WATERFALLS

Spread Crystal Clear Caulk down the face of the rock where you want your falls to go. Be sure not to put on too thick. Apply to bottom area also. When completely dry, apply Gloss Medium with fingers or brush to the waterfall. While this is still wet, add SMALL bits of Poly fiber to create frothing action. Now add more Gloss Medium. You can also use *Envirotex* to seal the water surface. When this step is dry, see if you need to add more poly fiber to enhance your waterfall.

RAPIDS

Rapids around rocks, logs, etc. are done in a similar fashion to the Rock Face Waterfalls. SMALL bits of poly fiber pushed into Gloss Medium should do the trick. When dry, you can see if you need to add more.

WATERFALLS FREE FALLING OUT FROM ROCK FACE

Put two long drywall screws into a board. How far apart?...Well for example, if your waterfall is to be a foot long, put screws 14 inches apart. Now tie off some Sulky Thread (Jo-Ann Fabrics) to one screw and wrap around the other back and forth until you have enough to apply Crystal Clear caulk to thread. Using a piece of cardstock, start on one side and spread the caulk down lengthwise on the thread. Be sure and pull one direction and do the same to the other side. When dry, seal with Gloss Medium, using your fingers. Cut off at screw edges and glue in place with super glue or caulking.

Make sure it is straight and over-lapping at the top of the falls. Add Caulk at bottom and when dry, seal with Gloss Medium. Now you can add SMALL bits of poly fiber. Let dry again and see if more is needed. Gloss White paint can also be used to create frothing/foaming action. Stipple on small amounts at a time.

HAPPY MODELING... NOW GO BUILD SOME REALISTIC WATER!!"

Cameron Bryars published his approach to adding water in *Rivers, Rapids, & Rushing Water* available from BHI Publications P.O. Box 247 Cottleville, MO 63338 This 49 page book is full of photos showing how he creates the water features described in the book.

Marc Sisk used Envirotex on the modules he built. A key is to use fresh material. Old resin never cures, meaning you will have to rip out all of the old river bed and start over. Also, if you use Envirotex you need to be sure there are no holes in your riverbed as the liquid Envirotex will find those holes and end up on the floor. Whatever medium you choose to use on your module, now you have some helpful information if you want to add water.

