

Modeling with Future Floor Wax

by Mike Schwarze

I've found numerous uses for Future brand floor wax, some of which I've learned from the model press or newsgroups, others just by trial & error.

Future floor wax is a clear liquid acrylic manufactured by Johnson Wax. Its intended use is for shining no-wax linoleum floors. It is sold in 27oz-size jugs at grocery stores, discount stores like Target & Wal*Mart, large drug stores, etc. I'm sure there are generic brands available as well – all I'm familiar with is the name-brand Future, though.

Below is a simple list of modeling applications I've tried, as well as a few I haven't:

- As a gloss coat on models before adding decals – spray full strength through your airbrush.
- As window glazing on portholes on F & E units; glazing on portholes in PA-B/FT units. * Bend a paperclip into a small loop and scoop up some Future with it, like a spoon. Gently dab the "spoon" around the porthole opening until it "films" across to fill it up. Allow this to dry for several hours – overnight is better – and add a second & third coat if desired *
- For a satiny finish on locomotive models, spray a coat of Future and allow it to dry overnight. Follow with a light spray of Dullcote.
- Simulating water spills, melted ice, mud puddles, water in gutters or curbside – just brush it on.
- Creek beds – I've got a small creek on my layout with at least 25 coats of Future – it's no more 1/16" deep but looks deeper due to coloring on the creekbed itself.

More in-depth – from the [SMRF archive](#) :

From:
Mike Schwarze
To:
SMRF@LISTSERV.DARTMOUTH.EDU
Subject:
Re: [SMRF] Modeling murky water with ... FUTURE!!
Date:
Mon, 6 Mar 2000 13:33:10 PST

I've not yet tried modeling water, but want to do one of those slow-moving, murky brown creeks typical of Alabama. Unlike water moving past greater degrees of elevation, these creeks have gentle swirls instead of rapids much of the time. Have any of you attempted this kind of murky southern water and the swirls of a slow-moving creek. How did you achieve the right color for the water?

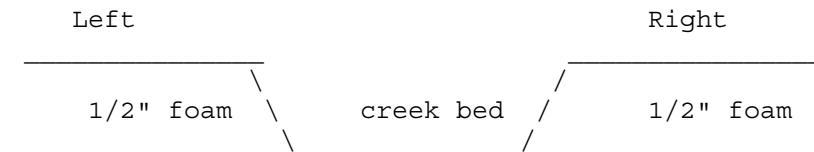
I would use -[drumroll, please]- FUTURE FLOOR WAX! I'd fill an old Ragu spaghetti sauce jar about 2/3rds full, get some CHEAP acrylic craft paint from Wal*Mart, etc., in appropriate colors (browns, blacks & dark greens) and add it a drop at a time to the Future. *Don't stir or shake it - you DON'T want it to mix*. Instead, with a toothpick or sprue, gently stir the thick paint around in the jar just to make waves, etc., like a lava lamp.

You'll see what I mean if/when you try it.

[I'm going to assume the creek is going into an area with no other finished scenery around it - so you'll first have to draw it on the layout. I use foam as a scenery base, so I'll further assume that you are, too, but some of these things shouldn't be hard to do if you're using hardshell scenery. I'm also assuming HO scale - if another, add or subtract to the size of the bank accordingly.]

Now prepare the creekbed. Make sure it's at least 1/2" (REAL size) below the banks - build up the banks if you have to with foam, plaster, etc. and feather them into the sub-base like so:

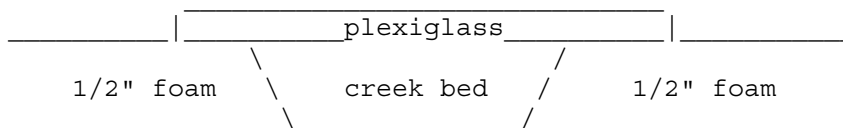
Cross section of banks:



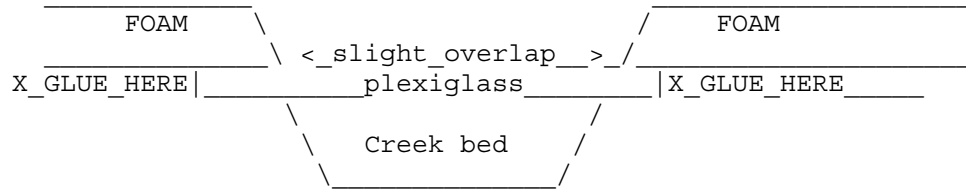
Start with your earth color and paint a heavy-ish coat on the banks and a heavy thin line of dark brown or black down the center of your creek - again, use the el-cheapo acrylic craft paints from a craft store rather than your loco-painting ones. Feather these two colors together with a 1" brush (2" is better), letting them mix & mingle in an irregular pattern where they meet and being sure they don't leave a straight line anywhere. While that's still wet, sprinkle on a light coating of dark green, tan, brown & yellow foams, keeping the lighter colors toward the banks with an occasional splash of a really dark green to simulate the slime that accumulates close to the shore. Add some twigs, weeds growing on the sides, trash, whatever you want on the bottom and hit it with wet water from a spray bottle & some 50-50 dilute white glue.

While that's drying, head on over to Home Depot, Lowe's, etc., and get a piece of plexiglass big enough to fit the area - if you have to cut & paste a smaller pane of plexiglass to fit, that's okay. Now lay the plexiglass over your creek bed - cut & paste it to fit; it should only overlay your banks by about an inch or so - just enough to keep it in place while the next step comes in -

Now it looks like this:



Now, on either side, cut & fit a piece of foam to be the remainder of the bank - feather these out as steep or as sloping as you want - and lay them on top of the plexiglass so they *slightly* overhang the bottom layer of foam like this:



Still with me? Okay, now with the Future/paint mixture you made to start out with, slop it on top of the plexiglass in a random way. The colors should mix & meld into a colorful glop. Let that dry at least overnight, and then add a second & third coat - or more, if you want - I have a creek on my layout with about 25 coats of brushed on Future that is about 1/16" thick. Finally, add a bit of foam, texture, etc. along the edge of the bank to disguise the seam - plant a dude with a straw hat and a cane pole, and your SE bog is complete!

Mike
