

Pond levelers:

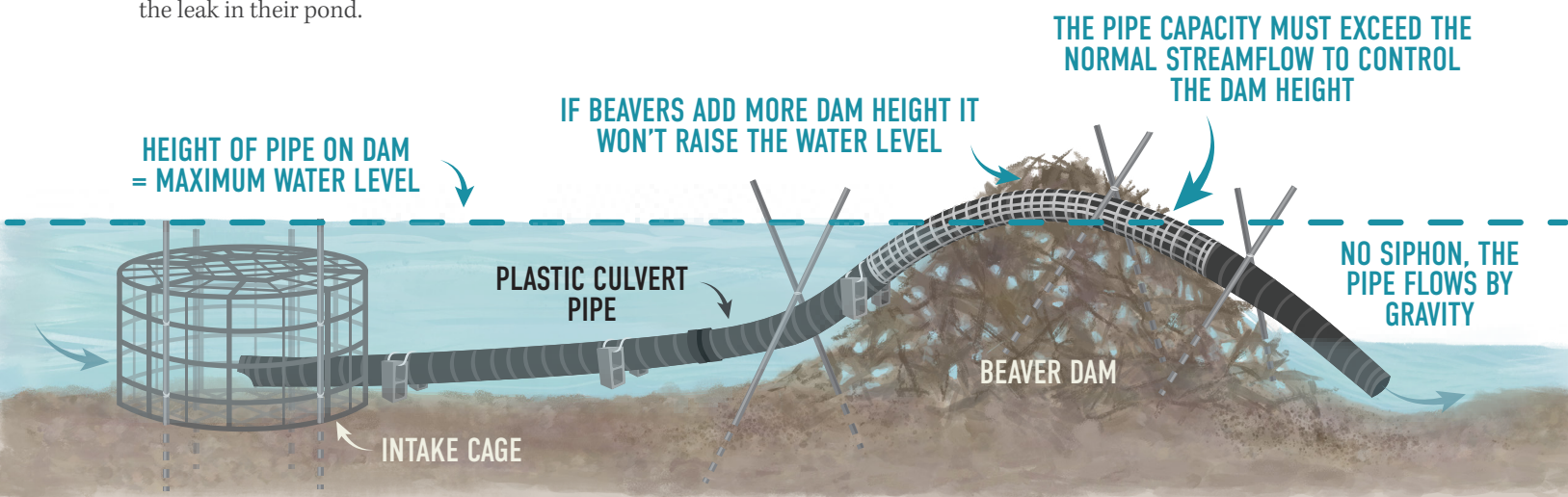
A beaver coexistence tool

The many benefits of beaver ecosystems are harder to appreciate while their dams are flooding roads, crops, homes, or other infrastructure. With coexistence tools, human property can be protected while allowing beavers to remain on the landscape. Pond levelers are an immediate and cost-effective solution that prevent flooding by controlling the maximum water height of the beaver pond. During high flows, excess water moves downstream but during low flows or drought, water is stored in the pond.

The goal of a pond leveler is to set a maximum water height for the pond while minimizing disruption to the beaver family and their habitat. Pond leveling devices use a plastic culvert pipe to create a permanent leak in the dam. The pipe is linked to a caged intake located upstream within the beaver pond. A cage around the intake of this pipe keeps beavers at arm's length, so they do not sense the leak in their pond.

Why use a pond leveler?

- ▣ **Cost:** The installation and maintenance of a pond leveler can be less expensive than repeatedly removing dams and trapping beavers.
- ▣ **Ecosystem benefits:** Beavers and their dams improve watershed health and are important for numerous other species including many fish and birds.
- ▣ **Longevity:** Pond levelers can last 5-10 years or longer if properly maintained.



Will a pond leveler work for you?

Every site with beaver activity is unique. Pond leveler designs can be adapted for different situations, including shallow or narrow sites. However, in all situations, pond levers are most effective when every effort is made to keep the beaver pond as big as possible. Capping the water level too low will force the beavers to move out and create a new beaver dam. For more information, access the *Best Management Practices for Pond Levelers and Culvert Protection Systems: A guide for using flow devices to coexist with beavers* on the Project Beaver website.