



Strategic Action Plan for Project Beaver

February 2024



Introduction

Project Beaver is focused on accountability through outputs, and this plan is intended to ensure that we prioritize the work that we can be the best in the world at, leaving everything else to others.

This plan should be considered and revised at least once a year.

Guiding Statements

Mission

We empower humans to partner with beavers and value their works.

Purpose

We exist to help humans defer to the stewardship of beavers in managing our waterways.

Vision

We work to nourish a world where humans partner with beavers for the resilience of our planet.

Values

Humility We are but students of complex systems and old wisdom, committed to doing our best.

Excellence We are dedicated to craft and skill in all that we do.

Action We are here together, now, acting out of love for the earth and future generations.

Respect We treat all people with dignity and respect, even and especially when we may disagree.

Truth We are committed to sincerity and honesty as we stand together for a common purpose.



Programs

Empowering Humans: Resources for Living with Beavers

Maintain an online resource hub via a user-friendly website, optimized to provide knowledge resources that empower visitors to partner with beavers and advocate for the good work that they do.

- Develop and promote one-page info-sheets that empower people to share key concepts about beaver coexistence, beaver-based restoration, and the positive ecological impacts of beavers with others.
- Keep our Best Management Practices (BMPs) documents up-to-date with the latest advances in beaver coexistence techniques.

Pond levelers: A beaver coexistence tool

The many benefits of beaver coexistence are harder to appreciate while their dams are flooding roads, crops, homes, or local infrastructure. With coexistence tools, humans' property can be protected while allowing beavers to remain on the landscape. Pond levelers are one way to manage beaver flooding by controlling the maximum water height of the beaver pond. During high flows, excess water is diverted through a siphon system, which allows the pipe to keep beavers at a safe distance. As long as the pipe is set at a height that is higher than the beaver's reach, they do not sense the tank in their pond.

The goal of a pond leveler is to set a maximum water height for the pond while minimizing disruptions to the beaver's natural habitat. Pond levelers can be made from a plastic culvert pipe to create a permanent leak in the dam. The pipe is fitted to a nearby static location upstream within the beaver pond. A siphon system inside the pipe keeps beavers at a safe distance, as they do not sense the tank in their pond.

IF BEAVERS ADD MORE DAM HEIGHT IT WON'T RAISE THE WATER LEVEL. THE PIPE FLOWS BY GRAVITY.

Will a pond leveler work for you?

Every site with beaver activity is unique. Pond leveler designs can be adapted for different situations and locations. However, in all instances, pond levelers are most effective when every effort is made to keep the beaver pond as big as possible. Keeping the water level as high as possible is the best way to ensure a new beaver pond. For more information, access the Best Management Practices for Pond Levelers and Culvert Protection System: A guide for using flow devices to coexist with beavers on the Project Beaver website.

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.

Tree Protection: A beaver coexistence tool

Beavers provide many ecological benefits, but it can be frustrating when they cut trees that are special to us. Tree wrapping with wire mesh cages is an immediate and cost-effective solution that can protect mature trees along waterways while allowing beavers to remain in their habitat.

The specifications for wire mesh cages can vary but all involve wrapping a heavy gauge wire around mature trees to prevent beavers from accessing the bark. Wrapping trees too tightly can kill them, so it is important to leave a gap between the tree and the cage to allow air to circulate and should not be used to protect trees from taking any food at all. Wrapping trees too many times can deprive beavers of enough food to survive the winter. Wire mesh cages are generally less reliable, though they can be effective. They are usually made of metal or plastic or polyethylene that aren't safe to eat.

Innovative new approaches

Tree wrapping is not the only tree protection method available. Alternative approaches involve coating the lower portion of a tree with a thick, waterproof paint and sand paint to sand adhesive. Although these methods are generally less reliable, they can be effective. They are usually made of metal or plastic or polyethylene that aren't safe to eat.

Best Management Practices for Pond Levelers and Culvert Protection Systems

A guide for using flow devices to coexist with beavers

For more information and references visit projectbeaver.org

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Beavered land: Partnering with Beavers for Ecological Wealth

Create a program that empowers people who love beavers to protect the ecological wealth they build and maintain through both short-term “beavered easements” and a long-term “beavered land trust”

- a. Develop a mechanism for donor funds to directly support protecting square meters of land “under beaver management” via both leased easements and land acquisition.
- b. Innovate a technological monitoring program that is responsive to real-time environmental conditions to create a standards body and verification program for beaver-managed wetlands (i.e. solve for how do we determine the area “under beaver management”).
- c. Pilot this program with a select group of adventuresome land holders and philanthropists, capturing footage along the way for telling the story of this approach.





Beaver Boardwalk: A Place to Learn from the Beavers

Plan and build the first destination in the Pacific Northwest where the public can experience beaver-created habitat in an accessible way.

- a. Design, permit and construct visitor facilities, including boardwalk, parking area, public bathrooms and caretaker's quarters.
- b. Secure long-term conservation protection for this beaver wetland and adjacent habitat.

Recovering the Sbink: Helping Beavers in Southwest Oregon

Lead a strategic approach to planning and implementing basin-scale beaver-based restoration and coexistence in Southwestern Oregon. Conduct high-profile projects across a diversity of ecologies, land-use practices and human partners.

- a. Consider the landscape; develop an interactive online map highlighting the beaver habitat modeling and regional planning, where public and regional restoration practitioners can track the real-time results of this program to help beavers in the Rogue Basin and Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument.
- b. Consider the beavers; facilitate a community science monitoring “scavenger hunt” project with regional partners for beaver presence and activity that will directly inform beaver-based restoration planning and collect genetics data on the beaver population through opportunistic hair sampling, in collaboration with local academia.
- c. Consider the people; work with those who kill beavers (often regional nuisance wildlife removal companies and irrigation districts) to understand their needs to support beaver coexistence and non-lethal solutions,

give invited “beaver talks” to community groups, organizations, schools and clubs, and provide technical and strategic support to those who are creating better beaver policies.

- d. Help beavers stay; strengthen and maintain a “help desk” and “first responder” program to connect landowners with beavers questions and coexistence struggles with trained people that can help.
- e. Help beavers fix it; conduct and support process-based restoration projects with the goal of restoring beavers to degraded streams.
- f. Help beavers find it; strengthen and maintain a refugee program to relocate beavers that would otherwise be killed.



