

MIDWEST BEAVER NEWS



JUNE 2026

A roundup of recent regional, national, and international beaver news curated for you!

Upcoming Events

[BeaverCON 2026 Registration Is Open](#): You won't want to miss BeaverCON 2026, the premier gathering of practitioners, researchers, land managers, students, and community leaders working at the forefront of beaver-based restoration and human-beaver coexistence. This year's conference will be held September 28 to 30 in Minneapolis. This year's keynotes feature visionary voices like Mickki Garrity, Emily Fairfax, and Cherie Westbrook. We hope to see you there! [Register here](#).

The Latest: Midwest and Beyond

[Chicago Beaver Festival Attracts Hundreds of Kids and Adults](#): Children coloring animals, families examining beaver pelts, and dozens of nature groups lined the winding paths of Nichols Park in Hyde Park on Saturday, May 2, for Chicago's first Beaver Festival. The event drew hundreds of people from across the city and region, with more than 50 tables featuring pamphlets, hands-on exhibits, and information about the natural world. Organized by Nina Khan, a major goal of the event was to educate urban residents about the animal's ecological benefits. More than 40 organizations sponsored and/or exhibited at the festival, including the Griffin Museum of Science and Industry, the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, the University of Illinois Extension, Beaver Institute, the Illinois Beaver Alliance, the Illinois Environmental Council, and more. [Read more here](#).



[Michigan Grad Students Publish Capstone Project on Beaver Coexistence in Washtenaw County](#): Grad students at the University of Michigan studied how beaver conflicts in Washtenaw County could be resolved nonlethally using science-based coexistence strategies to maintain the benefits that beavers provide while also preventing conflicts. Students used the Beaver Restoration Assessment Tool (BRAT) to predict where beavers are likely to recolonize and construct dams, performed a policy analysis to assess current beaver regulations, and engaged with land managers to understand current challenges and provide coexistence strategies. [Check out their research here!](#)

[Wisconsin Beaver Advisory Committee Split on Whether Beavers Are “Friends or Foes”](#): Researchers have identified Wisconsin as being among the top 10 states for biodiversity loss, largely due to climate change and animal overexploitation. But a vocal minority serving on a beaver advisory committee that is drafting recommendations for the state’s Department of Natural Resources believes it’s time for a change: Beavers should cease to be framed as a nuisance species and instead as an ecosystem engineer that creates wetlands that can help reduce some of the worst effects of climate change: droughts, floods and fire. [Find out more.](#)

[Sierra Club Wisconsin Chapter Update](#): The Sierra Club Wisconsin Chapter continues to try to effect change.

[Find out more here.](#) Recent activities include:

- Advocating for science-based natural resource management, with team member Amy Mueller sitting on the WDNR Beaver Management Plan Committee.
- Commenting on the USDA’s analysis of the “Beaver Damage and Conflict Management in Wisconsin,” urging a pause on the program that kills beavers for the stated purpose of protecting coldwater fisheries, since extensive scientific research

demonstrates that beaver ponds enhance habitat and survival for juvenile brook trout, and no public entity supports this program.

- Advocating for beavers on social media to celebrate International Beaver Day.
- Writing letters to the editor all over the state, spreading the word about the importance of beavers.



Beavers swim across a pond on the property of Jim Hoffman, CEO of Hoffman Construction, as the sun sets on Oct. 23, 2024, in Alton Center, Wis. (Joe Timmerman / Wisconsin Watch)

Minnesota Would Benefit from More Beavers to Stop

Wildfires: Beaver ponds help stop wildfires because they both slow down and spread out water, giving it time to sink into the soil. “We get a lot of precipitation here in Minnesota, but more and more it's coming in these big, flashy events, a storm, and then that water rushes through and it's gone,” Dr. Emily Fairfax, assistant professor of geography at the University of Minnesota, said. “So, instead of just having this quick-moving blast of water, you get this great big sponge that is the earth filling up with water and staying too wet to burn.” Those wet beaver complexes are natural fire breaks.

According to Dr. Fairfax, while there's a good number of beavers in Minnesota, they're not evenly distributed and are less common nearer to the Twin Cities compared to their abundance in the Boundary Waters. [Read more here.](#)

Pennsylvania Beaver Conflict Pits Civil War Historians Against

Birders: A new battle is being fought at Gettysburg National Military Park. Beaver ponds, which have been present since 2020 and located along the park's Plum Run creek, were recently drained by directive from the Department of Interior. The directive came despite GNMP staff adhering to beaver management best practices that safeguard monuments from flooding damage. On one side, a few vocal civil war historians, angered at how beavers' activities altered a landscape meant to preserve the look and feel of the battle days, celebrate the pond draining. Good riddance to an eyesore caused by messy rodents vandalizing sacred ground! On the other

hand, local birders are horrified by the negative environmental impacts. [Check out the story.](#)

[Water Quality Enforcement Penalties Boost One California County's Beaver Renaissance](#): Funding from a 2021 settlement agreement between the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board and Pacific Gas and Electric Co. is supporting the Drinkable Rivers Program in San Luis Obispo County, a program that puts elected officials, students and others on the water to witness the benefits of beaver dams and ponds. Funding from the agreement allows the SLO Beaver Brigade to offer free, one-day educational tours in English and Spanish that teach community members to identify signs of beaver activity and how the dams can reduce common aquatic pollutants such as nitrates, phosphates, metals and excess sediments. [Read more here.](#)



[Legislative Update in Colorado](#): Proposed policies and legislation are moving through the legislature in Colorado, with different stakeholder groups' support or opposition, as the state grapples with drought, wildfire, and lack of habitat connectivity on public and private lands. [Read more here.](#)

[Beaver Bash Held in Washougal in Southwest Washington](#): The first annual Beaver Bash was held in Washougal on Saturday, April 18. And the event is a collaboration between Cascade Forest Conservancy, Good Year Farms, and the Washougal Arts & Culture Alliance, with speakers and exhibitors from the Chinook Indian Nation, the Cowlitz Tribe, Project Beaver, and music performances from the Washougal High School Jazz Band and local singer Brenna Larsen. It was followed by a trivia contest at a local establishment. [Check it out!](#)



Beaver Restoration

Beavers and Wildfire Through an Indigenous Lens:

Britney Supernault, a member of the Métis community in Canada, reflects on the role of the beaver, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and colonialism: “Hearing our stories and knowledge around beavers – their roles and where they live – helps inform where beaver populations should be restored and where they shouldn’t. Indigenous people are scientists whose catalogue of observations has been collected and refined over millennia, passed down generation to generation through oral storytelling practices.” [Read the article here.](#)

Beaver Restoration in Kentucky: The “Beaver Brigade” at Bernheim Forest in north-central Kentucky performs a variety of tasks to make the woodland more beaver-friendly. Tasks include counting beavers to see how many are around; planting shrubs or trees the critters eat or use as building materials; scouting for new dams or signs of new lodges; and installing beaver dam analogs to jump start the process of river restoration. [Read more here.](#)

PBS Shared Planet Features Beaver Restoration and Healthy Riverscapes: PBS’s new series Shared Planet explores hopeful stories of how people and wildlife can thrive together. The final episode, “Waters,” aired on May 20 and will be available to stream free for 30 days. The episode features stories from freshwater and marine systems around the world — including an Idaho ranch where

beavers are helping hold water on a drought-stressed landscape.
[Learn more here.](#)

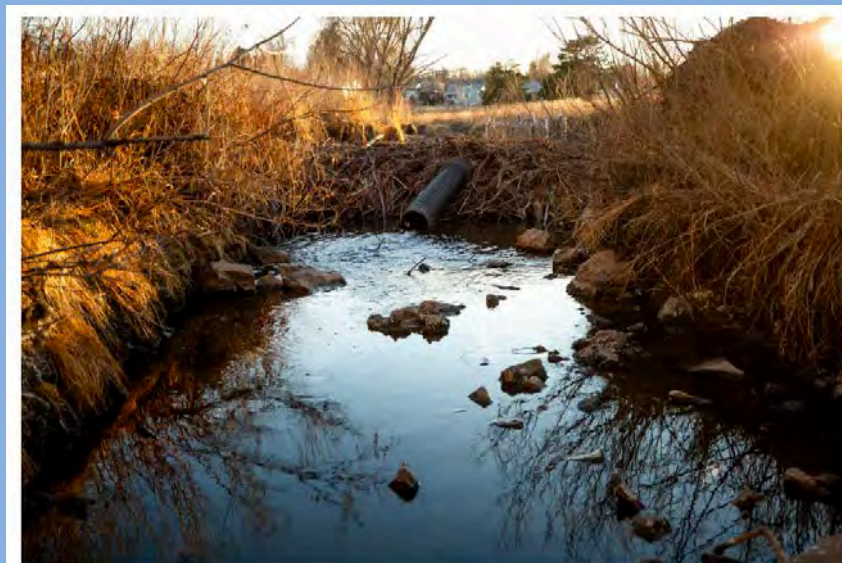
BDAs in British Columbia: The B.C. Wildlife Federation (BCWF) is working to maintain existing and build new beaver dam analogues and post-assisted log structures as part of wetland conservation efforts in the Thompson-Nicola region. “We’re identifying streams that are degraded either by cattle impacts, industrial impacts or fires that have gone through,” says Neil Fletcher, the BCWF’s director of conservation and stewardship. [Read more here.](#)



Beaver Coexistence

City of Corvallis in Oregon Chooses Coexistence: When flooding from a beaver dam threatened the popular Bald Hill Multi-Use path, groups ranging from governmental entities like the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the City of Corvallis, to nonprofits like Marys River Watershed Council and Greenbelt, worked together on a solution--a notch exclusion fence. [Read more here](#).

Coexistence Efforts in Denver Focus on Tree Protection: Beavers are present throughout Denver's many bodies of water. "You'll see them in Cherry Creek, South Platte River, Sanderson Gulch, Goldsmith Gulch, Bear Creek," said Vicki Vargas-Madrid, a wildlife program manager at Denver Parks and Recreation. Vargas-Madrid says of the beavers, "They provide a lot of value to creating an ecological balance to our landscape. So I try to help people understand that." The typical conflict is tree-related. Recently, the city is trying a different approach. Last week, neighbors and parks workers came to Sanderson Gulch to plant dozens of new tree saplings. The new trees both fortify the shoreline and provide vital tree canopy in Denver's urban heat island. Cages and sand paint are used to protect the saplings. [Find out more here](#).



A beaver dam blocks Sanderson Gulch, save for a pipe installed by Denver Parks and Rec that allows water to pass through it. March 2, 2026.
Kevin J. Beaty/Denverite

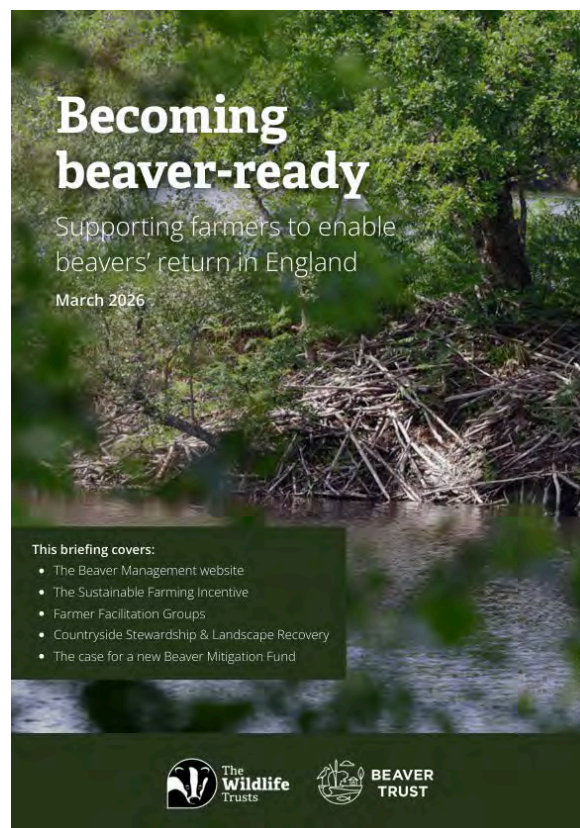
Texas Beaver Shows Tenacity: A beaver has made its home at the Rio Bosque Wetlands Park, an El Paso sanctuary at the top for wildlife, birds and so forth. While there are other beavers in the area, this beaver has stuck around despite the challenges from the channelization of the Rio Grande river, development, agriculture, and increased militarization of the border. Park managers have installed a pond leveler to prevent flooding. [Read more here](#).



Bobcat crosses the gap in a mini beaver dam in the cattails in Rio Bosque Wetlands Park, Jan. 5, 2023. (Courtesy of John Sproul)

Across the Pond (UK News)

- [The Wildlife Trusts and Beaver Trust Have Created Guidance and Incentives for Coexistence in Agricultural Settings](#)
- [Beavers to Be Reintroduced in East Sussex After a 400 Year Absence](#)
- [96% of Residents Back Introducing Beavers to Croydon](#)
- [Bedfordshire Beavers Boosting Biodiversity](#)
- [Gloucestershire Preps for Possible Beaver Release](#)
- [Dorset Looks to Minimize Conflicts As Plans Develop for Beaver Releases](#)
- [Leicestershire County Is Interested in Beavers as a Solution to Flooding](#)
- [Cumbria Has Been Approved for Beaver Releases](#)



The Global Scene

- Poland: A beaver has been spotted for the second time at the highest lake in Poland's Tatra Mountains, exciting naturalists and confirming the presence of the species in the area. [See it for yourself!](#)
- Switzerland: A special exhibition marks the 50-year anniversary of the release of five beavers into the wild in the canton of Thurgau. [Read more here.](#) Elsewhere in Switzerland, the population has grown and faces culling, although conservation organizations argue that the culling rules are too vague. [Check out the story here.](#)

Illinois Beaver Alliance

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