

Road culverts are the most common beaver damming problem we encounter. Beavers often dam in culverts because with a little bit of work the entire roadbed becomes a large dam. To a beaver, a road bed with a culvert probably looks like a dam with a hole that must be repaired.

Preventing beavers from blocking road culverts improves safety and saves time and money. A Beaver Diversion Fence[™] (BDF) inexpensively protects road culverts from beaver damming by diverting the beaver from damming inside the culvert to damming immediately upstream of the culvert instead. It helps us control where beavers dam and is ideal if ponding upstream of the road is tolerable.

The BDF is constructed 10 to 15 feet upstream of the culvert so when the beavers dam upon it the inlet of the culvert is not blocked. It can be made from any variety of materials, with the goal of creating what looks like the beginnings of a dam to the beavers. It works best if it holds back a little water and creates a noisy waterfall that will attract the beaver's attention.

Fig. 1 – Undammed Div. Fence

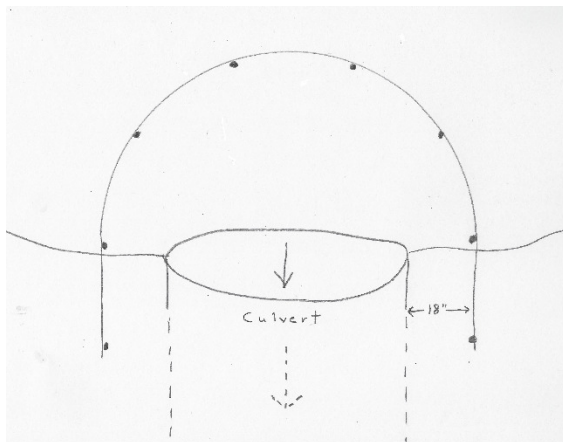
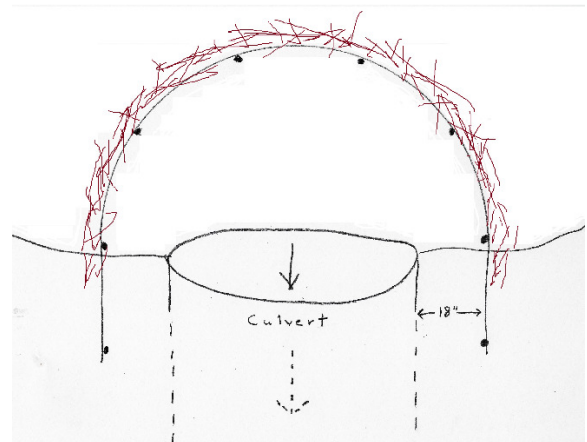


Fig. 2 – Dammed Div. Fence



The BDF encloses the culvert inlet or goes straight across the stream channel. In either case, both ends of the fence should terminate on high ground, at least 18 inches from the culvert so large turtles and other wildlife can continue to use the culvert for passage. Interestingly, beavers usually will not go up on dry land then back down into the culvert with damming materials, so the wildlife passage does not usually result in a dammed culvert. However, if beavers use the wildlife passage to dam inside the culvert, then the passage may need to be closed off for a month or more.

At low flow sites with plenty of large rocks, in lieu of a fence, a rock berm can be built across the stream to create the small impoundment which the beavers will likely dam upon rather than the culvert. However, at most locations a simple fence is used to direct the beavers where to dam.

When the height of the beaver dam must be limited to prevent flooding damage, a Flexible Pond Leveler[™] pipe may be installed through the BDF. If no ponding is tolerable near the culvert, a Keystone Culvert Fence[™] may be a better choice than a BDF.