

MIDWEST BEAVER NEWS

JANUARY 2025



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

Beaverland Author Praises California in LA Times Opinion Piece

The Los Angeles Times recently published an opinion piece by *New York Times* Bestselling Author of *Beaverland*, Leila Philip, lauding California's adoption of nature-based solutions such as beaver restoration. Of particular note, the California Legislature voted this past summer to pass Assembly Bill 2196, which codifies the state's Beaver Restoration Program at the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The law gives the program, which implements beaver-assisted environmental projects, protection from state budget cuts and political upheaval.



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Minnesota's Long History with the Beaver Discussed on Podcast

Northern Minnesota's KAXE's Tuesday Morning Show is running a series, "The Iconic Beaver," which investigates the influence of this keystone species in Minnesota. In the first two episodes, producer Mark Jacobs and hosts Heidi Holtan and John Latimer spoke with Bill Berg, a retired wildlife biologist for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, about the history of beaver in Minnesota. In the third episode, they spoke with University of Minnesota researcher Thomas Gabel about his research on ecosystem interactions between wolves and beavers in Minnesota.

[Listen here](#)

Ohio Park District Celebrates Its Beavers

Darke County Park District Outreach Coordinator Mitchell Pence recently asked local residents, "Have you taken a walk at Shawnee Prairie Preserve lately? If not, I recommend hiking out across the mud creek bridge towards the Beaver Wetlands. Once you cross the bridge, you will be on the "Beaver Path," aptly named for the amount of beaver activity you can see along the trail. Keep your eyes peeled for beaver chews and mud slides as you make your way to the Beaver Wetland observation area." Pence goes on to discuss the positive impact the preserve's beavers are having on the area's biodiversity and water storage capacity, and then discusses the history of beavers in Ohio.

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BDA Project Moves Forward in Wisconsin

Eleven Beaver Dam Analogs (BDAs) were installed on a wetlands restoration project site in Wisconsin in October after an arduous permitting process that took a year and cost landowner Jim Hoffman \$20,000. The BDAs span an unnamed, man-made channel that drains overflow from a reservoir on Hoffman's cranberry farm, north of Alma Center in Jackson County. Hoffman hopes the BDAs, which could pool up to 1.7 acre-feet of water during floods, improve water quality, stabilize eroded stream banks, and enhance wildlife habitat. Most of all, he seeks to trailblaze a path through the state's onerous dam-permitting process so other Wisconsin landowners can follow in his footsteps.



Employees weave sticks and tree branches while working on building a series of artificial beaver dams on Jim Hoffman's wooded property on Oct. 25, 2024, in Alma Center, Wis.

Credit: Joe Timmerman, Wisconsin Watch

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Beaver Restoration Project Coming to Pikes Peak

Thanks to a grant from the Colorado Water Conservation Board as part of their Wildfire Ready Watersheds/Colorado Watershed Restoration Program, Colorado Springs Utilities will move forward on a project to restore beaver habitat on Pikes Peak. This beaver-based, low-tech solution will supplement other ongoing efforts to protect the area from wildfire. Not only do wildland fires result in

catastrophic losses to life and landscapes, but they also have long-term impacts to water quality, ranging from erosion and flood control issues to increased sediment contamination in reservoirs. The project will include the installation of Beaver Dam Analogs to jump start natural processes that will impound water and reconnect streams to floodplains, with the hope that beavers themselves will eventually move in.

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Beaver: A Medicine of Possibility

Co-produced by Indigenous Led and Beaver Institute, *Beaver: A Medicine of Possibility* is a short film that explores how Beaver--nature's master builders--offers us invaluable lessons in connection, rebuilding, and healing. Through their behaviors and roles in ecosystem engineering, Beaver inspire us to reconnect with nature, rebuild our communities, and heal the fractured relationships between humans and the natural world. The film will be available to screen on a sliding scale, with proceeds supporting the development of an InterTribal Beaver Council.

[Find out more](#)

Beaver Spotted in Brussels for the First Time Since the 19th Century

In Brussels, the River Senne runs largely underground, including through the city center. The river was covered in 1871 due to hygiene concerns, but led by the Bruxelles Environnement agency, parts of it north of Brussels were uncovered starting in 2021 to encourage biodiversity and ecosystem function. And now a beaver has taken up residence on the banks of the Senne, near the Docks Brussel shopping center. According to Benjamin Thiebaut, from the 'Blue Network' department, "By cutting down trees and creating water reserves to feed and build its lodge and dams, this four-legged engineer can create openings in forests." Thiebaut also expressed appreciation for the creation of beaver wetlands, which are conducive to the development of species such as salamanders, amphibians and dragonflies. At the Senne,

Bruxelles Environnement's staff is monitoring the beaver's presence and being vigilant about any nuisance its arrival may bring.



Beaver caught on camera on the banks of the Senne River. This is the first time a European beaver has made its home on the river in nearly 200 years. Credit: Brussels Environment

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Research to Be Done on Environmental Impact of New Beavers in Hampshire

Eurasian beavers Willow and Wilson were introduced to the South Downs National Park, near Petersfield in Hampshire, in November 2024. The impact they have on their new environment, where beavers were extirpated at least 600 years ago, will be tracked by a team of academics following their arrival from Scotland. David Sear, a professor of physical geography at the University of Southampton, said his team expected to see changes in how much water is stored. "We're going to find out a lot more than we ever would have done because of the way in which the techniques for documenting environmental change have advanced over the years," Sear explained. The team will also be studying the beavers' impacts on water quality and biodiversity.



Wilson the beaver was released in South Downs National Park and quickly made his way into the water. Credit: Alexis Green, BBC News

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