

MIDWEST BEAVER NEWS



DECEMBER 2025

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

Beavers' Ecosystem Services

Many Ecosystem Services in Montana: The World Wildlife Fund is working with ranchers across the Great Plains to install Beaver Dam Analogs to increase water storage.

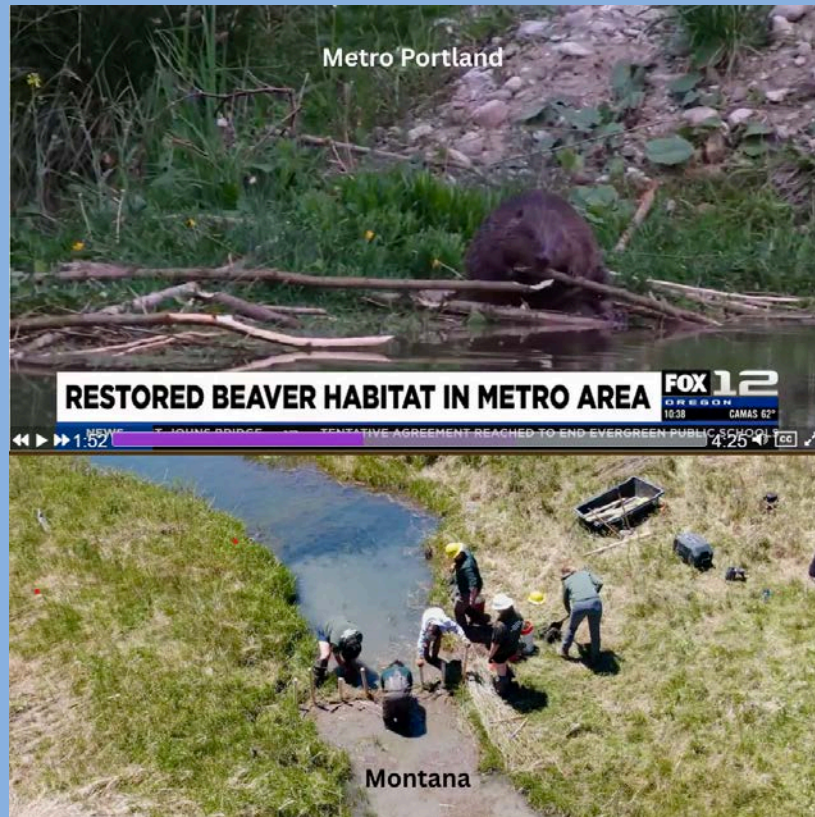
Groundwater Impacts in Colorado and New England: According to University of Connecticut Department of Earth Sciences researcher Lijing Wang, “Our work here develops one of the first hydrologic models that helps us understand what happens from the beaver inundation to the subsurface system under different subsurface structures.” Spoiler alert: Wang’s team found that beaver ponds increased groundwater recharge 10 times compared to a dry period.

Pollinators in British Beaver Ponds: New research from the University of Stirling has revealed that beaver-created wetlands support higher numbers of hoverflies and butterflies compared to human-made ponds, offering a natural boost to pollinators and wider biodiversity.

Oregon Seeks Beaver Benefits in Metro Areas: In the Willamette Valley and Portland metro area, several local soil and water conservation districts are welcoming beavers to restored areas. Habitat conservation specialist Mike Conroy with the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District says, “We saw it as an opportunity to kind of invite (the beavers) back in,” Conroy said. “And then we get all the benefits from the beaver dams, like, creating all that wildlife habitat in that pond behind us. Storing water up on the floodplain, making the water filter through their dams and then, really interact with

the soil before it moves on its way out to the Willamette and the Columbia.”

Urban North Carolina Beavers Boost Biodiversity: Author Rob Dunn tells a tale of the beavers’ return to North Carolina State University’s campus.



Beaver Restoration

Free Virtual Program on Restoration of Prairie Streams: The December 18 Riverscape Restoration Network quarterly meeting will feature a program about the Restoration of Prairie Streams. Niall Clancy, Salish Kootenai College in western Montana and Jonathan Proctor and Aaron Clausen with World Wildlife Fund will talk about their work to restore prairie steam systems, including LTPBR methods, grazing BMPs, and riparian plantings. They will discuss the challenges of working in stream corridors that often lack the natural structural riverscape diversity provided by wood (riparian trees and shrubs) and beaver that have long been absent, and share lessons learned. The meeting will take place between 2 and 3:30 p.m. MST and can be accessed through this [Zoom link](#).

Beavers Are Building Ecosystems in Lake Powell’s Newly Uncovered Canyons: As drought continues to dry up the Colorado River, Lake Powell has shrunk to record lows, revealing a sprawling web of canyons that haven’t seen the light

of day since the Lake Powell reservoir was formed in 1963. Our favorite keystone species is taking the opportunity to move in and create habitat for other species.

BDAs on the Rio Grande River: The Rio Grande flows nearly 1,900 miles from southern Colorado through New Mexico and along the Texas-Mexico border, providing freshwater for 16 million people and countless species of wildlife. Due to prolonged drought, rising temperatures, and extensive agricultural irrigation, the river's water levels often reach critically low levels. Rio Grande Return, in partnership with landowners, tribes, and conservation organizations, are restoring the Rio Grande and its tributaries using low-tech, process-based river restoration.

Conservation Group Welcomes Beavers to Its Floodplain Restoration Site in South Carolina: At Conserving Carolina's Pleasant Grove floodplain restoration site, beavers have started to colonize the BDAs installed by the group. As Natural Resources Director David Lee summarized, "The beavers are continuing what we started out there.... They are improving floodplain connectivity along Little Willow Creek, providing water storage, and supporting diverse aquatic habitat." This project helped store 1.25 billion gallons of water during Hurricane Helene last year and acted as a sponge to help mitigate flooding to the surrounding area.

BDAs in the Adirondacks: The Boquet River Association (BRASS) pulled permits and constructed BDAs, meant to slow waters, reduce erosion and reconnect the stream to its floodplain, at a restoration site Westport, NY.



Patrick Hurley, a Vermont-based restoration consultant, explains how to make beaver dam analogues in a small stream.
Photo by Eric Teed



Beaver Relocation

Proposed Program in Montana: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is considering a new program that provides guidance on how beavers could be transplanted to different areas and ecosystems across the state and is asking for public comment.

Relocations for Stream Restoration in Utah: The Beaver Ecology and Relocation Collaborative at Utah State University works with the U.S. Forest Service to live-capture nuisance beaver and quarantine them for release. Research is being conducted to improve outcomes.

Utah Zoo Fundraises for New Enclosure: Zootah's "Building a Dam Good Future" fundraiser gala this fall raised money to construct a beaver enclosure at the zoo, in partnership with The Beaver Ecology and Relocation Collaborative. The enclosure will be used to house and rehabilitate beavers slated to be relocated.

Grad Students Learn How to Relocate Beavers (and Much More) in Colorado: One of the students reports, "Due to

conflicts over public infrastructure and Colorado water law, reintroducing beavers is not as easy as it may seem.”

First Beaver Relocation Site in California Sees Beneficial Impacts: “Once deeply incised by snowmelt channels that sent water rushing downslope, the meadow now holds water longer into the summer. Melt from the ridges slows and spreads, clear streams meander out from the pond, and a mosaic of habitats has begun to return.”



At the beginning of the 20th century, the North American beaver was on the verge of extinction because of 19th-century fashions that required the under fur of beaver pelts.
(Photo: Amanda Opp)

The Global Scene

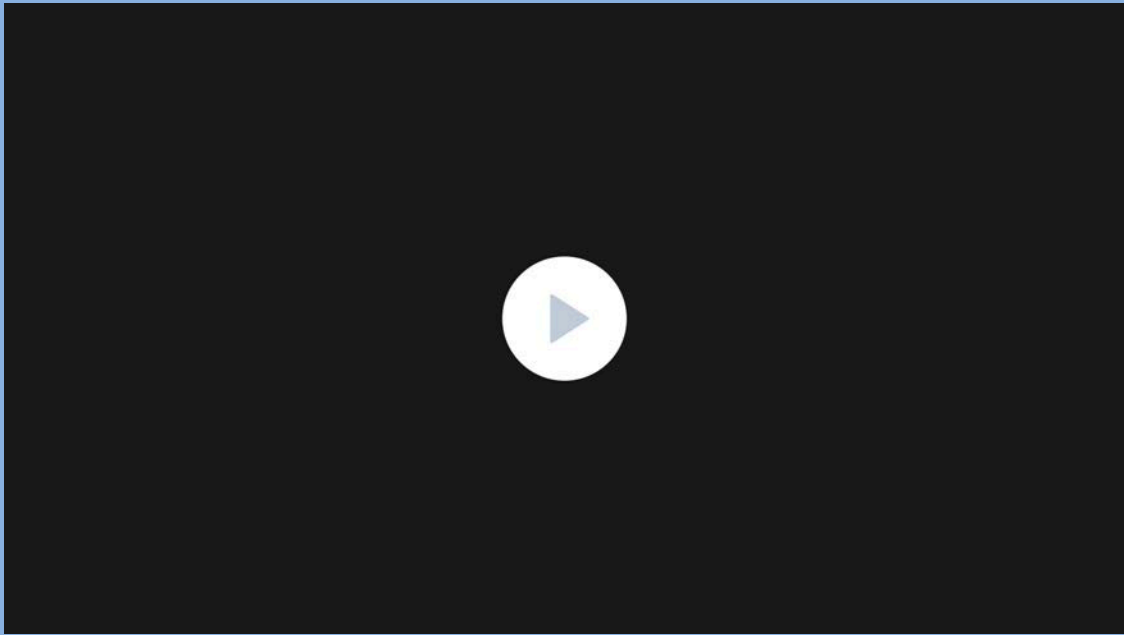
- Beavers to become a protected species in Wales.
- A beaver observatory will be built at Cors Dyfi Nature Reserve at Derwenlas, near Machynlleth, following an application by Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust.
- Derbyshire Wildlife Trust in Derbyshire, England, celebrates the success of its beaver reintroduction program.
- Beavers have been released in Glen Affric, Scotland.
- A documentary about the return of bison and beavers to Romania's Făgăraș Mountains explores how both species play a vital role in regenerating forests, maintaining biodiversity, and creating new habitats for other wildlife.



Bo the Ring Beaver



Canadian White Beaver



Illinois Beaver Alliance

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