C. BEAVER CONSERVATION, RESTORATION & REGULATIONS

Joe Wheaton

UWCC Workshop

UNDISCRIMINATING RODENT?

Beaver Habitat Requirements
• Water, Trees
BEAVER CONSERVATION EFFORTS NOT NEW

- 1940’s: Idaho Department of Fish & Game
- 1936 – Grey Owl

CONSERVATION & RESTORATION

- Nuisance Beaver
  - Living with Beaver – Perception problems
  - Living with Beaver – Pond Levelers / Pond
  - Live-Trap & Relocation
- Beaver Reintroductions
- Protecting Important Habitats
- Promoting Beaver Expansion
  - Increasing forage & building material
  - Reduce grazing pressure or predation
  - Limiting trapping
  - Structural Intervention
One Hairdresser

WORKING WITH BEAVER
FOR BETTER HABITAT NATURALLY!
WORKING WITH NATURE. TEACHING ABOUT THE ECOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF BEAVER,
BUILDING FUN BEAVER-LIKE TRAPS AND TRAPPING AND RECLAMATION, AND MORE.

BY SHELLY TYPIC
DIRECTOR OF WILDLIFE ISSUES
CAGING TREES

Removing tight chicken wire

Leaving at least a foot space; heavier gauge wire
BEAVER DECEIVERS

ROUND WILLOW BOTTOM RESERVOIR OUTLET
WHEN THE POND GETS TOO BIG:
FLEXIBLE POND LEVELER - “CASTOR MASTER”

PANGUITCH IRRIGATION DITCH, APRIL 2012
REGULATORY FRAMEWORK RELEVANT TO BEAVER

• Relevant Federal & State Legislation
  - Federal
    • Not T&E or even Sensitive
  - States manage wildlife
    • Pests
    • Revenue

• Examples
  - Oregon
  - Massachusetts
  - Washington/Idaho/California

USDA/ APHIS/ NWRC

• Human – wildlife conflicts
  - “Assassins”
  - Non-lethal techniques
    • Develop and improve
  - Aviation safety and invasive spp.
UTAH BEAVER MANAGEMENT PLAN

Developed in consultation with
BEAVER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
DWR Publication 09-29
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
Approved by the Wildlife Board January 6, 2010

BEAVER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

• Utah Trappers Association
• U.S. Forest Service
• Natural Resource Conservation Service
• Utah Cattlemen’s Association
• Utah Farm Bureau
• Grand Canyon Trust
• Bureau of Land Management
• USDA, Wildlife Services
• 5 Division of Wildlife Resources Representatives
PLAN GOAL & PURPOSE

GOAL:
• “Maintain healthy, functional beaver populations in ecological balance with available habitat, human needs, and associated species.”

PURPOSE
• “The purpose of the Utah Beaver Management Plan is to provide direction for management of American beaver (Castor canadensis) in Utah and where appropriate expand the current distribution to historic range.”

POPULATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

• Develop a statewide baseline beaver distribution map to document current status within two years by working with UDWR regions, universities, governmental and NGOs
• Identify zones on the map for management strategies, i.e. existing populations, unoccupied historical range, and areas where the potential for conflict is high.
• Actively pursue funding and partnerships to conduct beaver population and habitat suitability surveys to and, when possible, density estimates.
WATERSHED RESTORATION OBJECTIVE

- Work to improve riparian habitats, associated streams and wetlands in a minimum of 10 tributaries through translocating beaver into unoccupied suitable habitat on public and/or private land by 2020.

RANCHER PERCEPTION... CHANGING

With Trouble on the Range, Ranchers Wish They Could Leave It to Beavers

Critters, Once Reviled, Gain Popularity With ‘Believers’; a Good Rodent Is Hard to Find

By: Joel Millman

Mr. Woolsey’s ranch on Beaver Creek outside Kimme, Wyo., has been beaver-free for decades, but he could sure use their help now. A small beaver colony, he says, would engineer dams that raise the water table under his pastures, opening up drinking holes for his cattle.

So the 64-year-old rancher put himself on a waiting list this year hoping state officers would bring him a beaver or two. Wyoming’s Game and Fish Commission periodically plucks the rodents from drainage culverts.

It’s a bit of a turnaround in these parts, where beavers have long been considered something of a nuisance — blamed for everything from damming irrigation canals and gravelling out orchards to just generally wreaking havoc with agriculture. In many states, it’s legal to shoot a beaver on private land. In Oregon, the Beaver State, the nocturnal creatures can be designated as “predators.”

But their slick skill set is what many landscapes now need, says a cadre of pro-beaver ranchers and environmentalists who work on behalf of people like Mr. Woolsey.
SUPERBOWL COMMERCIALS?

PUBLIC PERCEPTION... CHANGING

Landowner Incentives and Tolerances for Managing Beaver Impacts in Oregon

Final Report

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Conducted for and in cooperation with:
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
Bonneville Power Administration

2011
Figure 1. Average emotions of total landowners in response to increased beaver damage

Figure 2. Average attribution of responsibility of total landowners in response to increased beaver damage
Figure 4. Average landowner acceptance of non-structural management responses to increased beaver damage

Figure 7. Average landowner acceptance of structural management responses to increased beaver damage
Figure 10. Average landowner likelihood of taking advantage of possible incentives to keep beavers living on their property or neighboring properties.