WHY LIVE WITH BEAVERS

Beaver Ponds Benefit Wildlife

Beaver ponds provide habitat that is directly beneficial to many native wildlife species. These include:

**Salmon and Trout:** Beaver ponds provide fish protection from strong winter flows. They increase the storage of water resulting in a more stable water supply and maintenance of higher flows downstream for a longer period of time. By providing plenty of woody debris in which juvenile fish can hide from predators, beaver dams help young trout and salmon survive their first vulnerable year. They also provide winter pool habitat that is important for fish such as cutthroat trout and coho; summer benefits have also been documented1. Beaver ponds help store leaf litter in the water and in turn support aquatic insect production, an important food for fish (as well as amphibians, waterfowl, bats and songbirds). Because of these benefits, the numbers of salmon produced in beaver ponds far exceeds that in other parts of the stream.

**Waterfowl:** species that use beaver ponds for nesting/rearing in the mid-Coast area of the Oregon coast would be Wood Ducks, Mallards, Hooded Mergansers, possibly Common Mergansers. Non-breeding users include many more species, but Ring-necked Ducks are particularly attracted to Beaver ponds and other ponds in wooded landscapes.

**Songbirds:** The following species tend to concentrate activity around beaver ponds if they are present: Willow Flycatcher, Tree Swallow, Violet-green Swallow, possibly Rough-winged Swallow (need cut banks for nesting) Cedar Waxwing, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, possibly Lincoln's Sparrow. Numerous other species use ponds for bathing.

**Cavity nesting birds:** Pileated Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Black-capped Chickadee, Western Screech-Owl, Tree and V-G swallows, possibly Purple Martin.

**Amphibians:** Beaver ponds provide important breeding habitat to Northwestern Salamander, Rough-skinned Newt (Long-toed Salamander but probably not on west slope of Coast Range), Treefrog (Pacific Chorus Frog), Red-legged Frog. (Pacific Giant Salamanders use ponds somewhat, but are more stream dwellers).

**Reptiles:** western pond turtles, common garter snakes

**Mammals:** mink, river otter, muskrats, bats

In addition to these direct benefits, beaver ponds are also used by many other birds and mammals as sites for drinking, bathing, and foraging.

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1 See for example: [http://duff.ess.washington.edu/grg/publications/pdfs/Pollock.pdf](http://duff.ess.washington.edu/grg/publications/pdfs/Pollock.pdf)

Information Provided By Dr. Wayne Hoffman, MidCoast Watersheds Council, 541-265-9195 and ODFW’s Living with Beaver publication, see: [http://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/living_with/docs/beaver.pdf](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/living_with/docs/beaver.pdf)
HOW TO LIVE WITH BEAVERS

PROTECT YOUR TREES OR GARDEN

ABRAISIVE PAINTING

Materials:
Exterior latex paint; color to match bark
Mason Sand 30 mil - 70 mil

Mix 5 oz sand per quart of paint
Mix in small batches, or press sand on by hand after painting.

CAGE TREES OR FENCE GARDENS

Use woven wire mesh or 2”-4” welded wire fencing at least 4’ high. Keep fence 6” from tree. Keep fence flush to ground. Drive meta rods in the ground to secure it in place.

CULVERT PROTECTION

NO PERMIT NEEDED if work is done without motorized equipment and installs fewer than 100 stakes

Keep beavers from clogging culverts:
Create alternate location for dam above culvert

Drive 4’ high, 3”-5” non-treated posted or live willow posts into the streambed, every 18-24 inches, at least 30’ above the culvert

Place the stakes with a slight curve in the middle facing downstream and make sure to continue stakes up into the streambank

Place sticks removed from the clogged culvert upstream of posts for beavers to start new dam on.

SOLUTIONS BELOW REQUIRE MAY REQUIRE FISH PASSAGE PERMITS contact ODFW

CULVERT PROTECTION using screens or fencing need constant maintenance to avoid plugging and are only suitable for areas where regular clearing is feasible; otherwise can create flooding or passage problems or cause erosion around the culvert.

CONTROLLING POND LEVEL – devices which control the level of water in the pond can create problems for both adult and juvenile fish as the fish normally make use of surface or side flows to move upstream and down. Waivers may be obtained in special circumstances from ODFW.