

MONTANA WETLAND COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday April 14, 2016, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

DEQ Director's Conference Room 111

1520 East 6th Ave., Helena

8:45 a.m. Gather for Coffee and Conversation with Colleagues

9:00 a.m. Welcome and Round-Robin Introductions

Jordan Tollefson, DEQ Wetland Program Coordinator/Wetland Council Chair

Beaver Management: What Do We Know, Where Are We Now, And What Does The Future Hold?

Exploring the Need and Feasibility of Alternative Beaver Management Strategies in Montana

9:30 am Accessing Information on Montana's Animals, Plants, and Biological Communities through the Montana Natural Heritage Program's Web Applications

Bryce Maxell, Program Coordinator, Montana Natural Heritage Program

Bryce Maxell with the Montana Natural Heritage Program will provide an overview of how biologists and natural resource managers can access information via the program's websites. He will focus on recent updates to the Species Snapshot and Montana Field Guide applications that allow users to create custom species summaries and field guides using spatial, taxonomy, and conservation status filters and the program's vision for the development of an environmental review tool that can be used by agency resource managers, planners, and consultants to speed environmental reviews.

11:00 am Break

11:15 am How a State Beaver Management Plan would Benefit Montana

Amy Chadwick, Senior Ecologist, Great West Engineering

Amy Chadwick, chair of the Wetland Council's Beaver Working Group, will start our discussion on beaver management, by outlining the need for looking at alternative beaver management strategies in Montana, the environmental benefits of these alternative strategies, and what these may look like based on examples from states that have adopted them.

Noon Lunch Break (On-your-own or bring your lunch and join colleagues in the meeting room)

1:00 pm Settlement Site Selection and Dispersal Characteristics of Juvenile Beavers in Southwest Montana

Torrey Ritter, Graduate Student, Montana State University

Torrey Ritter, a graduate student at Montana State University, will present discoveries from the scientific literature on beaver dispersal and habitat selection, and will outline his upcoming research directed towards increasing the efficiency and success of beaver reintroduction and restoration projects. The research will also examine the types of habitats beavers use while dispersing and possible barriers to survival during the dispersal process.

1:20 pm Benefits Realized from Wildlife Conservation Society's Work with Beaver

Jeff Burrell, Northern Rockies Program Coordinator, Wildlife Conservation Society

Jeff Burrell from the Wildlife Conservation Society will discuss current and historic work that the Wildlife Conservation Society has conducted in Montana and the intermountain west with mimicking beaver structures and using them to replace lost ecosystem functions.

- 1:40 pm** **In-stream and Upland Sediment Capture along California Creek**
Pedro Marques, Restoration Programs Manager, Big Hole Watershed Committee
- Pedro Marques with the Big Hole Watershed Committee will be presenting sediment capture data from several beaver mimicry structures installed along California Creek.
- 2:00 pm** **Break**
- 2:15 pm** **The Benefits of Developing a Statewide Beaver Management Plan**
Justin Dolling, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources.
- Justin Dolling from Utah's Wildlife Resources Division will be presenting on why Utah took the approach of developing the statewide Utah Beaver Management Plan, how they were successful in building partnerships to accomplish this, and the benefits they have seen as a result of having a management plan.
- 3:00 pm** **The Future of Beaver Management in Montana**
Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks (invited)
- A representative from Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks has been invited to discuss current beaver management in Montana and what FWP would see as an acceptable means of incorporating alternative forms of beaver management into their current strategies.
- 3:15 p.m.** **Moving Forward – Next Steps for Developing Alternative Beaver Management Strategies**
Jordan Tollefson and Steve Carpenedo, discussion leaders
- A discussion among Wetland Council partners on the next steps necessary to develop and move forward with alternative beaver management strategies in Montana.
- 4:00 p.m.** **Adjourn**

The Montana Wetland Council meets three times a year and is an active network of diverse interests who work cooperatively to conserve and restore Montana's wetland and riparian ecosystems by implementing Montana's Wetland Strategy. Everyone is welcome to attend. For additional information contact Jordan Tollefson, Montana DEQ (406) 444-6652 or jtollefson@mt.gov. Website: [Montana Wetland Clearinghouse](http://MontanaWetlandClearinghouse.org)
