2026 On-the-Ground Project Application Form

General Information

Project Name: Montana Beaver Conflict Resolution Program

Applicant Name: National Wildlife Federation

Is your organization registered with the Montana Secretary of State? Y

Explanation: Each applicant must be registered with the Montana Secretary of State to do business in the state of Montana. Registration with the Secretary of State may be completed via the following website: https://sosmt.gov/business/

Is your organization registered with the federal System for Award Management (SAM)? Y

Explanation: Each applicant is required to register with SAM. To register or check your organization's status, go to https://sam.gov/content/home. If you get an "Unsupported Browser" error, copy, and paste the link into a Google Chrome browser window.

Primary Contact: Shelby | Title: Weigand

Address: PO Box 7465 | City: Missoula | State: MT | Zip Code: 59807

Phone Number: (406) 203-3426 | Email: weigands@nwf.org

Signature: Shelby Weigand

Explanation: This is the person who DEQ would routinely contact to discuss project progress, billing, etc.

Signatory: Ismael Savadogo | Title: Chief Financial Officer

Address: 11100 Wildlife Center Drive | City: Reston | State: VA | Zip Code: 20190

Phone Number: 703-438-6398 | Email: savadogoi@nwf.org

Signature: Ismael Savadogo (Mar 12, 2026 16:07:30 EDT)

Explanation: This is the person who can legally sign contracts and other binding documents on behalf of the applicant (e.g., a board chair)
Note: The primary contact, signatory and landowner must sign the application. Signatures must be either signed electronically, or wet-signed, scanned and sent electronically.

Landowner Name: Montana Department of Transportation (Patrick Cross)

Landowner Signature: PR Cross

Landowner Name:

Landowner Signature

Landowner Name:

Landowner Signature

Explanation: Landowner signatures are required. **Signing the application does not obligate the landowner to implement a project.** Instead, it is an indication that the landowner has read the application and agrees, in principle, with the project concept and goals.

Your organization's Unique Entity Identifier number (UEI #) | GEJMTLKRLVF4

Explanation: Each applicant is required to have a current UEI number. The UEI number replaces the old DUNS number. If your organization had a DUNS number, you should have received a notification from the federal government indicating that your DUNS number has been changed to a UEI number. If you did not receive this notification, or if you never had a DUNS number, you will need to go to the federal government's System for Award Management (SAM - https://sam.gov/content/home) to obtain your UEI number. DEQ recommends starting this process early as it is very time-consuming, requires providing documentation-sometimes with follow-up requests for additional information, and can take up to 2 months to complete. If you need assistance, you may contact the federal help desk at 866-606-8220 Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. through 8:00 p.m. EST.

Does your organization have adequate liability insurance for the risks associated with your project? | Y

Explanation: Each applicant must have or obtain liability insurance coverage meeting the requirements stated in the Draft Sample Contract and/or requirements negotiated based on the appropriate level of risk associated with the project.

Describe the technical and administrative skills your organization will use to effectively and efficiently complete your proposed project(s).

Shelby Weigand, National Wildlife Federation Riparian Connectivity Manager – Shelby earned their B.S. in Wildlife Biology and Geographic Information Systems at University of Montana. Their career has been focused on land management, restoration, collaborative conservation and applied research. Shelby leads NWF's riparian connectivity program focusing on beaver restoration and watershed resilience in the Northern Prairies and Pacific Region. Project Role: Project management, reporting, and strategic partnership.
Elissa Chott, National Wildlife Federation Beaver Conflict Resolution Team Lead – Elissa is the team lead with the Montana Beaver Conflict Resolution Program. She brings years of experience addressing human-bear conflicts, first working with the Great Bear Foundation and transitioning to find places where beavers are causing problems in western Montana. She works with landowners, county road crews, state parks and wildlife managers, and conservation partners to show how beaver damage can be minimized by installing a few simple devices. Project Role: Technical assistance and staff supervision.
Beaver Conflict Resolution Technicians: NWF will hire and train seasonal technicians each year to facilitate on-the-ground work.

Budget Form

Please fill out the On-the-Ground Project Budget Template (Excel file). Cells highlighted in yellow may be edited to fit the needs of your particular project. DEQ uses a template to construct nonpoint source grant contracts. The Budget Template contains tasks and typical deliverables that match up with the grant contract template. Please see the Example Contract and Scope of Work Template for a more detailed look at typical task requirements and deliverables.

Project Form

A separate Project Form (including providing separate attachments) must be submitted for each project included in your application. Use the following examples to help determine when to lump and when to split projects.

Splitting Examples (fill out multiple Project Forms)

- Stream restoration work occurring on two separate streams..
- Two projects with significantly different sets of project partners
- Two projects that address substantially different pollution sources (e.g., one project move a corral off of a streambank, and another removes mine tailings, with both projects being on the same property).

Lumping Examples

- Contiguous stream restoration work spanning multiple land parcels
- Three projects that address similar sources of pollution on a single land parcel (e.g., moving a corral off a stream, implementing a grazing management plan, and relocating a manure storage facility out of the floodplain, all on the same ranch)

Project Form

A separate Project Form (including providing separate attachments) must be submitted for each project included in your application

Project Name: Montana Beaver Conflict Resolution Program

Required Attachments in Addition to This Form

- [ ] Letter of support from the organization that created or sponsored the creation of the DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plan or the Tribe that created the EPA-approved Tribal Nonpoint Source Management Plan (*if applicable).*
- [ ] Letter of support from EACH landowner associated with the proposed project area (*if applicable).*
- [x] Budget Table (see Microsoft Excel Template).
- [x] **Detailed Project site map(s)** Attach a map or set of maps showing the location and size of proposed activity if a site has been predetermined. The map scale must be between 1:1,000 and 1:12,500. The map(s) must have an aerial photo background (e.g., USDA NAIP photography, Google Earth imagery, etc.). The map(s) must show the latitude, longitude, site name, and landowner for the activity site. The map(s) should also identify waterbodies affected by the pollution that the activity is designed to address. (*This is in addition to adding points of the project location to the website on page 4*).

Optional Attachments

Attach additional items and information that could help reviewers better understand your project. Information could describe public health risks, opportunities to leverage other funding sources, etc. However, application reviewers may have limited time available, and excessively long, optional attachments might not get reviewed. Do not attach copies of TMDL documents, TMDL implementation evaluations, Watershed Restoration Plans, Tribal Nonpoint Source Plans, or large comprehensive studies. The following attachments may be included. Please no more than 20 pages.

- [ ] Project Design Plans/Drawings
- [ ] Preliminary Engineering Reports / Site Evaluations
- [ ] Landowner Agreements / Construction Permits / Floodplain Permits
- [ ] Site photos
- [x] Additional Letters of Support
- [x] Other: Example completed projects
- [x] Other: Flow device educational handouts
- [ ] Other:

Project Area

Please provide as detailed a description of the project area as possible.

List the counties in which the project will be located.

Lincoln, Flathead, Glacier, Toole, Liberty, Chouteau, Pondera, Teton, Lake, Sanders, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, Beaverhead, Granite, Powell, Lewis and Clark, Cascade, Judith Basin, Meagher, Broadwater, Jefferson, Silver Bow, Deer Lodge, Madison, Gallatin, Park, Sweet Grass

List the 12-digit Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUCs), sometimes referred to as Sixth Code HUCS, in which the project will take place. Use the following link to help assist you in determining the HUCs: https://apps.nationalmap.gov/viewer/

Examples of where our program has received conflict calls and/or installed past projects: Seeley Lake-Clearwater River 170102031107; Whitefish River-Whitefish 170102100508; Spring Creek-Teton River 100302050405; Mill Creek 170102051101; Rocky Creek 100200080902; Wall Creek-Madison River 100200070802; California Creek 100200040701

Project Location Map

In addition to providing your own project site map, please go to the following website and follow the instructions to add your project location to the map.

https://gis.mtdeq.us/portal/apps/storymaps/stories/42f4a668285c4ef6aa94b1623f10df57

Connection to a Previous or Ongoing Project

Is this project tied to a previous or ongoing project? If so, please describe the connection.

Yes, this proposal is part of multiple ongoing projects within the Montana Beaver Conflict Resolution Program. Beavers and the habitat they create are a vital component to healthy riparian ecosystems in a rapidly changing climate. Riparian ecosystems comprise just 1-2% of the landscape in the western U.S. Yet more than 80% of all wildlife species depend on them. As the impacts of climate change become more apparent, the role of beavers as partners to drought, wildfire, and flood resilience has become apparent. And yet, we are still seeing the impacts of historic land use and intensive trapping which decimated beaver populations to merely 10% of their pre-settlement numbers, fundamentally altering watershed dynamics and ecosystem resilience. The urgent need for a dedicated Beaver Conflict Resolution Program stems from increasing water scarcity and watershed instability. By providing targeted, non-lethal strategies for human-beaver coexistence and targeted action planning, NWF's program offers a scientifically informed approach to restoring ecosystem balance that state agencies are not currently equipped to implement. While Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) lacks the internal capacity and support to address complex beaver-human interactions comprehensively, the National Wildlife Federation's Beaver Conflict Resolution Program (collaborating with partners from Big Hole Watershed Committee, Montana Conservation Corps, Montana Watershed Coordination Council, Montana Trout Unlimited, Clark Fork Coalition, and Blackfoot Challenge among many others) fill a crucial gap in coordinating a statewide effort to inform beaver management, education, and building watershed resiliency in Montana. Western states have traditionally viewed beavers as a nuisance species, promoting eradication rather than coexistence and restoration. This perspective fails to recognize beavers' critical ecological functions: slowing water discharge, replenishing groundwater, reducing lateral erosion and nonpoint source pollution, and creating critical habitat refuges for wildlife during extreme weather events. As climate change intensifies, expanding beaver habitat becomes vital for building cost-effective, sustainable watershed resilience. Restoring these richly diverse ecosystems through strategic restoration and proactive coexistence strategies is essential for maintaining ecological health.

Project Purpose

Select the watershed restoration plan or tribal nonpoint source plan that your project will help implement (please type in if missing from list) (*Not required for HAB reduction projects)*

Blackfoot River - Blackfoot Challenge

NA — Letter of support from author, or if the author was contracted, the author sponsor, attached? *(If no, explain why below.)*

In 2017, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), researchers, practitioners, and Tribes interested in promoting the role beavers play in watershed health hosted the first Montana state Beaver Working Group meeting in Helena, Montana. The biggest takeaway of this state-level meeting was the need to address human-beaver conflicts and build tolerance for beavers on the landscape. As a result, in 2019, the National Wildlife Federation and partners launched a pilot project to address human-beaver conflicts using non-lethal mitigation methods. Now, with 8 seasons of success, the Program has now expanded to include FWP Regions 1,2, 3 and 4 - covering half the state of Montana (over 11,000 stream miles). From 2023 to 2025, the Program has received a 213.33% increase in conflict calls, expanding our need for increased capacity from 15 per year to almost 30 per year.

IMPAIRMENT LISTINGS: Projects that address water quality impairments on Montana's 2020 List of Impaired Waters are preferred though not a requirement. Funding may be used for projects that protect waterbodies that are demonstrated to be healthy.

Waterbody name from the 2020 List of Impaired Waters	Middle Blackfoot
Probable causes of impairment to be addressed	sedimentation
Waterbody name from the 2020 List of Impaired Waters	Madison
Probable causes of impairment to be addressed	sedimentation

HEALTHY WATERSHEDS: While project funding is prioritized to addressing known impairments, funding can be used to protect healthy waters from becoming impaired.

Name of healthy waterbody to be protected	Rock Creek
Description of identified threat	We have installed two beaver conflict resolution projects along Rock Creek with the potential for more. Their dams help trap sediment and raise the water table to increase late-season flows during drought years.
Name of healthy waterbody to be protected	
Description of identified threat	

Project Partners

Identify each of the project partners and describe their contribution to the project Include landowners, land managers, project designers, funders, and your own organization. Indicate whether each partner, other than your organization, has provided a letter of support. (*Note: each landowner must provide a letter of support if project site(s) have been predetermined.*)

Landowner	Contributions to Project	Letter of Support Attached?
		☐
		☐
		☐
		☐

Project Partner	Contributions to Project	Letter of Support Attached?
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Technical support, connecting the program to landowners with beaver conflicts	☑
Montana Freshwater Partners	Technical and logistical support, volunteer support, connecting the program to landowners with beaver conflicts	☑
Flathead Conservation District	permitting entity, technical support, connecting the program to landowners with beaver conflicts	☑
Blackfoot Challenge	technical and volunteer support, connecting the program to landowners with beaver conflicts	☑
		☐

Project Coordination and Planning Task

This task would include completion of all applicable planning tasks from the list below, as well as coordination and oversight of the efforts of all project partners.

Identify the status of the following project planning tasks, where applicable.

	Completed?	Copy Attached?	To Be Completed Pre-Contract (Oct 2026)?	To Be Completed as Contract Deliverable?
*Draft Project Designs	☐	☐	☐	☑
*Final Project Designs	☐	☐	☐	☑
Consultation With Potential Regulators	☐	☐	☐	☑
Necessary Permits	☐	☐	☐	☑
Cultural Resources Inventory *(if relevant)*	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other: site assessments	☐	☐	☐	☑
Other: purchasing materials and supplies	☐	☐	☐	☑
Other: mobilizing volunteers	☐	☐	☐	☑

***See Call for Applications Section 5.1 for minimum design standards.*

Describe any additional project planning that *will have been completed prior* to execution of a contract (October 2026).

NWF will be receiving conflict calls from our partner agencies and organizations through the spring and summer 2026. NWF will be conducting site assessments, drafting device designs, submitting permit applications, sending landowner agreements for signature to install coexistence devices as requested by landowners.

Through human-beaver coexistence, our program ensures that beavers are not removed from already suitable habitats, ultimately allowing for their continued existence and future expansion within the watersheds we are working within. If a project is located within an irrigation ditch, or somewhere where a conflict cannot be resolved, we recommend lethal removal as the only alternative option available currently in Montana.

Describe any additional project planning and coordination that will need to be completed after the execution of a contract (October 2026).

As NWF receives new conflict complaints of beaver activity, we will be conducting site assessments, drafting device designs, submitting permit applications, and sending landowner agreements for signature to install coexistence devices as requested by landowners. We will monitor these projects in accordance with the monitoring protocols outlined below. These project coordination tasks will be carried out throughout the duration of the contract.

The proposed project will not include a 35 foot riparian buffer since implementation does not involve the direct creation of new riparian areas. The proposed project maintains beavers and beaver habitat, allowing for beavers to promote natural restoration while increasing water tables will expand riparian areas and vegetation.

Landowner Agreement Task

DEQ includes the following language in every nonpoint source contract involving on-the-ground activities:

Contractor shall submit signed landowner agreement(s) verifying that Contractor and DEQ staff may access the project site, at reasonable times and with prior notification, for the purposes of project planning, implementation, and post-implementation monitoring. The agreement(s) must ensure appropriate operation and maintenance of all structures, vegetation, and management measures for the life of the project (typically 10 years). If grazing will be allowed within the project area, the agreement(s) must include a sustainable management plan for livestock grazing, designed to protect and enhance riparian function. If a signed landowner agreement does not meet the above-stated minimum requirements, Contractor shall negotiate an amended agreement with the landowner that ensures appropriate operation and maintenance of all structures, vegetation, management measures, and includes a sustainable management plan for any livestock grazing for the life of the project (typically 10 years).

Identify the status of the following landowner agreement tasks, where applicable.

	Completed?	Copy Attached?	To Be Completed Pre-Contract (Oct 2026)?	To Be Completed as Contract Deliverable?
Draft Landowner Agreement(s)	☐	☐	☐	☑
Final Landowner Agreement(s)	☐	☐	☐	☑
Grazing Management Plan	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other: _____	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other: _____	☐	☐	☐	☐

Project Effectiveness Monitoring Task

If you will be conducting any on-the-ground implementation work, you will be required to complete the monitoring activities described in the task language below, as applicable. Describe below how you plan to determine the effectiveness of your project. Project effectiveness success criteria should be time-bound and assess each project objective quantitatively. Success criteria should clearly define adaptive management thresholds. Examples may include: a minimum 25% decrease in sediment/nitrogen/phosphorus load within 2 years; a 70% survival rate of containerized plantings after one year.

If you are applying for nonpoint source grant funding for project design only, and not for project implementation, you may either skip this task, or describe below which parts of this task you intend to complete:

We will conduct photo point monitoring using the "Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Guide to Photo Monitoring" methodologies, or similar photo monitoring protocols identified as acceptable by DEQ to determine wetland habitat expansion and increased surface water.

We will also use fresh beaver cuttings and fresh mud on structures to determine if beaver complexes remain occupied and maintained. NWF will monitor for new dam building that will also contribute to slowing flows, reducing nonpoint source pollution (sediment), and increasing wetland area and habitat.

There are no current sediment load reduction estimation approaches within the Load Reduction Guide that capture our project monitoring needs. NWF will work with DEQ to determine an appropriate method for estimating sediment load reductions. Possible options may include using BEHI(s) to monitor sediment for Stream Flow Alternations, however, this is not an exact 1:1 match for our monitoring needs.

Example Task Language

Contractor shall, in consultation with the DEQ Project Manager, develop a reasonable method or set of methods for evaluating and reporting on the effectiveness of the project in addressing water quality issues. Contractor shall complete a monitoring plan to guide monitoring activities. Contractor shall complete the following monitoring activities:

- *Estimate the sediment load reductions (tons/year) achieved through implementation of the proposed restoration activities and management practices.*
- *Estimate the nitrogen load reductions (pounds/year) achieved through implementation of the proposed restoration activities and management practices.*
- *Estimate the phosphorus load reductions (pounds/year) achieved through implementation of the proposed restoration activities and management practices.*
- *For projects designed to address pollution from pollutants other than nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment, evaluate and report on the effectiveness of the project in addressing water quality issues.*
- *Contractor shall collect data, as directed by the DEQ Project Manager, to be used in estimating sediment, nitrogen, and phosphorus load reductions (and for harmful algal bloom reduction projects, carbon sequestration/emissions reductions) achieved through implementation of restoration activities and management practices designed to address these pollutants.*
- *Use the following measures to evaluate the sustainability of restoration activities and management practices:*
    - *[Vegetation mortality rate.]*
    - *Pre- and post-construction photo point monitoring consistent with the "Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Guide to Photo Monitoring" methodologies, or a similar published photo point monitoring method accepted by DEQ. The U.S. Forest Service provides additional photo point monitoring guidance in the "United Stated Forest Service Photo Point Monitoring Handbook".*
    - *[Riparian survey.]*
    - *[Other.]*

Please describe any additional monitoring you intend to do as part of the project.

NWF will monitor the condition of the flow devices installed to determine the lifespan of devices in Montana watersheds before replacement is needed. Visual inspection of device integrity (including but not limited to corrosion, structural soundness, and how flows and ice build up may impact function) will determine effectiveness of designs and materials in different hydrological conditions. This monitoring is something the program currently conducts on a handful of devices and, with increased funding from DEQ, could expand to monitor all devices installed within the grant agreement time frame.

Project Implementation Task

Provide a d**etailed description of the solution you are proposing** to implement to address a nonpoint source pollution problem.

- Describe the practices you intend to design and/or implement to solve the problem (what, where, when, how much or how many).
- Describe the anticipated maintenance needs (what, where, who, how long).
- Refer to the minimum design standards in the Call for Applications.
    - *Please fill out this section to the best of your ability, even if you are only seeking funding for project design.*

The need for adaptive and diverse climate and ecosystem resiliency solutions is a key driver of NWF's programmatic work. Through taking an ecosystems approach, the Western Water program centers watershed health and resiliency to combat growing issues around drought, wildfire, and water quality and quantity. Riparian systems, including lotic, lentic, and mesic environments, are disproportionately important for providing mircroclimate refugia, filtering and storing water resources, and providing buffers and resiliency in the face of increased wildfire intensity (Seavy et al. 2009; Fairfax, E. and Whittle, A. 2020). Though, most of these systems are degraded below pre-settlement conditions, one simple and cost effective solution has become apparent. Beaver complexes (including side channels and damming) are proven to provide hydrologic, geologic, and biologic complexity that many of our systems are currently starved of from centuries of altered fluvial geomorphic regimes. By reducing flow velocity, beaver dams can effectively retain NPS pollutants under certain conditions (Murray et al. 2021; Payne 2024). In addition to NPS pollutions, beaver dams effectively capture sediment, reducing turbidity and sediment loads downstream, creating better conditions for species negatively affected by turbidity. Among many other ecosystem services beaver provide, beaver damming behavior near human infrastructure often results in the removal of beavers and dams, reducing the positive impacts beaver complexes have on stream systems at scale. NWF's Beaver Conflict Resolution Program (BCRP) provides resources and expertise for installing nonlethal devices as well as hands-on training opportunities for agencies and NGOs to alleviate flooding issues and keep beavers in place. We assist landowners with site assessments, device design, permitting, installation, and cost-share funding for materials. The BCRP has four goals: 1) Increase tolerance for beavers on the landscape; 2.) Reduce beaver conflicts using nonlethal methods; 3.) Train partner organizations to implement nonlethal methods; 4.) Increase awareness of the benefits beavers provide to riparian and aquatic health

We achieve these goals by installing coexistence devices such as pond levelers to reduce flooding, exclusion fences to prevent culvert plugging, and tree protection to prevent tree felling to build tolerance and awareness of the benefits beavers provide while addressing the very real issues landowner and managers face around human-beaver conflicts (see attached diagrams for device information). NWF works closely with MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks to identify conflicts sites and connect with landowners needing assistance to keep beavers in place, allowing them to continue their natural damming behaviors.

The BCRP has installed 114 coexistence projects, including 63 in-stream projects (pond levelers and exclusion fences) to directly reduce infrastructure flooding concerns. NWF is seeking additional funding from DEQ to increase on-the-ground project implementation over the next three years, focusing efforts on impaired water bodies with sedimentation issues. For example, 10 out of 12 projects the BCRP has already completed in the Blackfoot drainage were in-stream projects, with two tree protection projects. 11 of 19 projects in the Upper Clark Fork are in-stream projects, and 3 out of 6 projects in the Lower Gallatin are in-stream projects. Each installation allows beavers to stay in place, reducing the flooding or tree felling concerns which maintains natural conditions and process, increases wetlands and wetland function, and promotes growth of native riparian vegetation.

NWF fills out permits on behalf of landowners and has been using the following permits since the program's inception in 2019. Required permits for flow devices are 310 for private landowners/applicants and SPA 124 for public landowners/applicants. At the regional FWP fish biologist's discretion, they may issue a 318 permit for the temporary turbidity caused by removing or notching beaver dams.

Maintenance needs for flow devices are 3-4 times per year and will be conducted by NWF staff and/or the landowners. Clearing debris off fence perimeters and ensuring water levels are maintained at desired levels is critical to ensuring the success of each project, in addition to the monitoring expectations as outlined in the monitoring section of this application.

Education, Outreach and Training Task

To get good projects on the ground, trained staff and board members and educated, enthusiastic landowners are required. To promote the development of future projects, DEQ encourages project sponsors to use up to $5,000 per project of funding to support training and conduct education and outreach. Example training topics might include: project management, public procurement, technical writing, GIS, water quality monitoring, web design, public speaking, human resource management, photo journalism, UAV (drone) piloting, financial management, and restoration techniques. Education and outreach activities might include targeted landowner outreach, conducting project site tours for local landowners, tabling at community events, holding a watershed festival, providing stipends and travel reimbursements for speakers and participants to attend a nonpoint source pollution prevention workshop, or generating articles for social media. The primary requirement for training and outreach is clearly explaining how the activity generates behavior change to address nonpoint source pollution. Funding may not be used to pay for food and beverages, or for honorariums and gifts.

Describe the education and outreach activities or training you will complete to promote behaviors or facilitate future efforts to reduce nonpoint source pollution. Additionally, identify the goals of the training/education and outreach activities.

NWF will host at least one workshop per year in each of FWP Regions 1, 2, 3, and 4, with a goal of hosting 12 workshops throughout the 3-year grant period, to provide learning opportunities for a variety of audiences. Workshops may include both classroom and field components. These educational opportunities, whether online or in-person, are to spread awareness of the benefits beavers bring to watershed health, including reducing NPS pollution, water storage, and creating wildlife habitat. Our goals with these workshops will be to educate the public and increase program participation in using nonlethal techniques to keep beaver complexes in place for the watershed benefits they provide.

One of the program's foundational goals is to train partners to assess sites and install flow devices. NWF will host hands-on installation trainings in each of the FWP regions we work within to provide our partner agencies and NGOs with the skills needed to assess sites and install flow devices.

NWF will also continually seek and participate in outreach opportunities as they arise such as tabling events, joining watershed tours as guest presenters to provide education on beavers, and speaking at conferences in Montana and nationally. Conferences we have presented at include: MT Association of Floodplain Administrators, MT Watershed Symposium, and American Fisheries Society - (Montana and Western Chapters), Sustaining Colorado's Watersheds Conference, and BeaverCon.

Identify the specific target audience and method of delivery. Additionally, describe how the proposed training and/or education and outreach will increase local capacity and interest for addressing/promoting behavior change to reduce nonpoint source pollution.

Some workshops will be general audiences, aimed at providing education about beaver biology and ecology, conflict resolution techniques, how beaver complexes reduce nonpoint source pollution and other benefits beavers bring to watersheds and landowners, NGOs, and agencies. Other workshops will be targeted to specific audiences, such as road departments, landowners, and land managers, to give more in-depth training and information to agency personnel dealing with negative impacts of beaver activity on infrastructure by combining both classroom session and trainings to resolve agency-identified conflicts. By using nonlethal conflict resolution methods, agencies can keep beavers in place and reduce infrastructure damage and maintenance associated with damming activities.

These trainings aim to empower public and private landowners across Montana with the skills necessary to find nonlethal solutions to beaver conflicts. Reducing conflicts will increase tolerance for beavers on the landscape by protecting infrastructure, promoting the shift from removing beavers and their wetlands, to keeping beavers in place maintaining dams that reduce nonpoint source pollution and promote ecosystem resilience.

Describe how you will evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed activities.

NWF will evaluate the effectiveness of these activities based on increased landowner participation with our program, number of people reached, and number of trainings provided for agencies. While we value established relationships with our long-term partners, our program always looks at building new connections and reaching a larger audience across Montana.

Project Administration Task

Please use the task description below as a guide when calculating your budget for project administration. DEQ typically includes these requirements in every nonpoint source grant contract, with only minor variation. Funding applied to the Project Administration Task on each project must not exceed 10% of the total amount of funding requested, or $12,000, whichever is lower.

Example Task Language

Contractor shall oversee and be accountable for the completion of all tasks. Contractor shall maintain regular contact with the DEQ project manager. Contractor shall prepare and submit Status Reports, Final Reports and Attachment B Billing Statements according to the format and schedule described below.

Report Format

- *Contractor shall submit each Attachment B Billing Statement, Status Report and Final Report using the most current reporting guidance and templates provided by the DEQ project manager.*
- *Contractor shall ensure each Status Report and Final Report contains adequate documentation to justify accompanying reimbursement requests and match reporting, to the satisfaction of the DEQ project manager.*
- *Contractor shall ensure that the Final Report is a standalone document describing all contract activities and containing copies of all contract deliverables (even if the deliverables were previously submitted).*

Reporting Schedule

- *Status Reports: Due June 15th and December 15th of each year the Contract is in effect, and each time an Attachment B Billing Statement is submitted.*
- *Draft Final Report: Contractor shall submit a complete draft Final Report for DEQ review and comment at least 15 days prior to the contract expiration date.*
- *Final Report: Contractor shall submit a Final Report, addressing DEQ comments on the draft Final Report, on or before the Contract expiration date.*
- *Attachment B Billing Statements: Contractor shall submit an Attachment B Billing Statement with each Status Report, or Final Report submitted to DEQ while the Contract is in effect. To maintain cashflow, Contractor may submit interim Attachment B Billing Statements asfrequently as monthly during the term of the Contract. However, each interim Attachment B Billing Statement must be accompanied by an Interim Report.*

Project Timeline

	4Q 2026	1Q 2027	2Q 2027	3Q 2027	4Q 2027	1Q 2028	2Q 2028	3Q 2028	4Q 2028	1Q 2029	2Q 2029	3Q 2029
Project Coordination and Planning Task	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	
Landowner Agreement Task		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Project Effectiveness Monitoring Task			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓
Project Implementation Task	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Education, Outreach and Training Task			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓
Project Administration Task	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	

Co-Benefit Considerations

DEQ is committed to carrying out nonpoint source pollution reduction projects within engaged communities where the impact stretches beyond improving water quality. DEQ will award additional points in the scoring form where co-benefits extend beyond the project. Below are a few examples of how projects might exemplify co-benefits.

- Project will reduce economic hardship such as from livestock mortalities, cost and energy needs to treat municipal drinking and wastewater treatment, or loss of income from recreation
- Project will benefit underserved markets
- Project will improve or create equitable access to a clean and healthy environment
- Project planning included consultation with Tribal Nations
- Project will improve flood and drought resilience of the landscape
- Project impacts will benefit a downstream community and other natural systems (e.g., drinking water sources, human health, wildlife habitat, etc)

Please use this section to highlight co-benefits your project may have.

Co-benefits of keeping beaver wetland complexes intact, reducing nonpoint source pollution, and finding nonlethal alternatives for human-beaver conflicts include: slowing flow velocity and increasing water table: improved soil moisture (microclimate refugia) over time and seasonally, extending later seasonal flows, and enhancing water storage ultimately increasing drought resiliency (Puttock et. al 2020); benefit additional flora and fauna: Over 80% of Montana's wildlife species depend on beaver-created wetlands at some point during their lifecycle, making beaver habitat critical for many species' survival (J. D. Maestas et al. 2023); beaver wetlands are listed in the draft update of MT's SWAP as Habitat of Greatest Conservation Need for the critical role they play for Species of Greatest Conservation Need; flood attenuation as beaver complexes spread out and act as "speed bumps" in stream systems for high flows (Puttock et. al 2020); reducing conflicts means dispersing beavers have more opportunities to reach unoccupied habitat and create new wetlands instead of being lethally removed due to conflicts; decreased need for road departments to repeatedly unplug culverts, saving time, resources, and reducing safety hazards; reduce NPS as described in Murphey et. al 2021: Results from this study suggest that beaver ponds can attenuate heavy metals at a rate 2 to 4 times greater than a riffle reach ($p < 0.05$). Nuance is captured in different successional stages; maintain and expand future beaver populations. Currently, the only two beaver conflict management options in Montana are to either implement the Beaver Conflict Resolution Program or lethally remove beavers.

NWF Proposal to DEQ

Final Audit Report 2026-03-12

Created:	2026-03-12
By:	Denise Mieszkowski (MieszkowskiD@nwf.org)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAs_r4Hl1bxz-PxNg70jfK8CSRNXB_8OUr

"NWF Proposal to DEQ" History

Document created by Denise Mieszkowski (MieszkowskiD@nwf.org)
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2026-03-12 - 6:43:10 PM GMT

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Signer pacross@mt.gov entered name at signing as Patrick Cross
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Document e-signed by Ismael Savadogo (SavadogoI@nwf.org)
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Agreement completed.

2026-03-12 - 8:07:30 PM GMT

BUDGET

2025 Nonpoint Source Pollution Reduction Application - On-the-Ground Project Budget Template

Project Title:								
Instructions	**Tasks and Potential Deliverables**	**319 Funding Request***	**Non-Federal Match****	**Other Funding*****	**Match Source**	**Match Secured? (Y/N)**	**Total Project Cost**	**Additional Information********
This task includes completion of all planning tasks and coordination and oversight of the efforts of all project partners. Provide a detailed budget and add a row if needed.	**Project Planning**							
	Preliminary site investigation data and site maps	$ 10,000.00	$ 8,218.31		High Stakes Foundation	Y	$ 18,218.31	Staff time
	Required Permits	$ 1,000.00					$ 1,000.00	Staff time to complete permits
	Draft Project Designs (Staff)	$ 1,684.00					$ 1,684.00	Staff time to draft project design
	Final Project Designs	$ 5,000.00					$ 5,000.00	Staff time
	Travel	$ 11,644.00					$ 11,644.00	3 trips per projects for 12 projects over 3 years (conservation district meetings and two site visits for permitting and with landowner)
							$ -	
	Total	$ 29,328.00	$ 8,218.31	$ -			$ 37,546.31	
This task includes costs for developing and managing landowner agreements and developing grazing management plans as applicable. Provide a detailed budget and add a row if needed.	**Landowner Agreements**							
	Draft Landowner Agreement	$ 500.00					$ 500.00	Staff time
	Final Landowner Agreement	$ 500.00					$ 500.00	Staff time
							$ -	
							$ -	
							$ -	
	Total	$ 1,000.00	$ -	$ -			$ 1,000.00	
This task includes costs for developing and implementing a monitoring plan to evaluate effectiveness to reduce nonpoint source pollution. See example contract template or application instructions for required monitoring activities. Provide a detailed budget and add a row if needed.	**Effectiveness Monitoring**							
	Draft Monitoring Plan	$ 200.00					$ 200.00	Staff time
	Final Monitoring Plan	$ 350.00					$ 350.00	Staff time
	Written Summary of all Monitoring Activities	$ 700.00					$ 700.00	Staff time
	Travel	$ 7,763.00					$ 7,763.00	2 trips per project for 12 project sites over 3 years (visit each site twice a year)
							$ -	
							$ -	
	Total	$ 9,013.00	$ -	$ -			$ 9,013.00	
This tasks includes all costs for implementation of the plans developed in the Project Planning task. If you are requesting funding for design only, leave this task blank. Provide a detailed budget and add a row if needed.	**Project Implementation**							
	Materials	$ 9,273.00	$ 1,700.00		Landowner materials Cost Sharing	N	$ 10,973.00	Cost of materials to cost share the installation of coexistance devices for 3 years from landowners
	Labor						$ -	
	Equipment costs						$ -	
	Construction oversight	$ 15,000.00					$ 15,000.00	Staff time
	As-built surveys	$ 1,000.00					$ 1,000.00	Staff time
	Photo documentation	$ 2,500.00					$ 2,500.00	Staff time
	Landowner recommendation letter						$ -	
	Travel	$ 3,881.00					$ 3,881.00	1 trip per project for 12 project sites over 3 years
							$ -	
							$ -	
	Total	$ 31,654.00	$ 1,700.00	$ -			$ 33,354.00	
This task includes costs to develop and improve organizational capacity and to incorporate education and outreach into on-the ground projects. Provide a detailed budget and add a row if needed.	**Education and Outreach**							
	Volunteer Coordination	$ 2,000.00					$ 2,000.00	Staff time
	Event/Tour Planning	$ 2,500.00					$ 2,500.00	Staff time
	Outreach/Publication materials						$ -	
	Travel	$ 8,556.00					$ 8,556.00	4 workshops per year
							$ -	
	Total	$ 13,056.00	$ -	$ -			$ 13,056.00	
319 Funding applied to Project Administration must not exceed 10% of the total amount of 319 funding requested, or $12,000, whichever is lower. Project includes normal business expenses and reporting requirements.	**Administration**							
	National Wildlife Federation Indirect 10%	$ 8,405.00					$ 8,405.00	
	Match Indirect	$ -	$ 2,479.58		High Stakes Foundation	Y	$ 2,479.58	
							$ -	
							$ -	
							$ -	
	Total	$ 8,405.00	$ 2,479.58	$ -			$ 10,884.58	
		319 Funding Request*	**Non-Federal Match****	**Other Funding*****			**Total Project Cost**	
	Grand Totals	$ 92,456.00	$ 12,397.89	$ -			**$ 104,853.89**	

*319 Request - Must not exceed $300,000
**Non-Federal Match - Can include in-kind materials.
***Other Funding -Use this space for funding that will be used to support creation of task deliverables, but will not be reported as match.
****Additional Information - Use to justify cost if needed. (Hourly rates, rental costs, etc.)

OTHER ATTACHMENTS

National Wildlife Federation
Northern Rockies ▪ Prairies ▪ Pacific

National Wildlife Federation 2026 Nonpoint Source Pollution Reduction Application: Supplemental Materials

The following information is intended to provide further context for the National Wildlife Federation's 2026 Application for DEQ's Nonpoint Source Pollution Reduction funding opportunity for on-the-ground projects. Below is an overview of the total program reach, where project implementation has occurred, an example of a project we are currently planning that meets DEQ project standards/priorities, and project design standards.

Program and Project Maps:

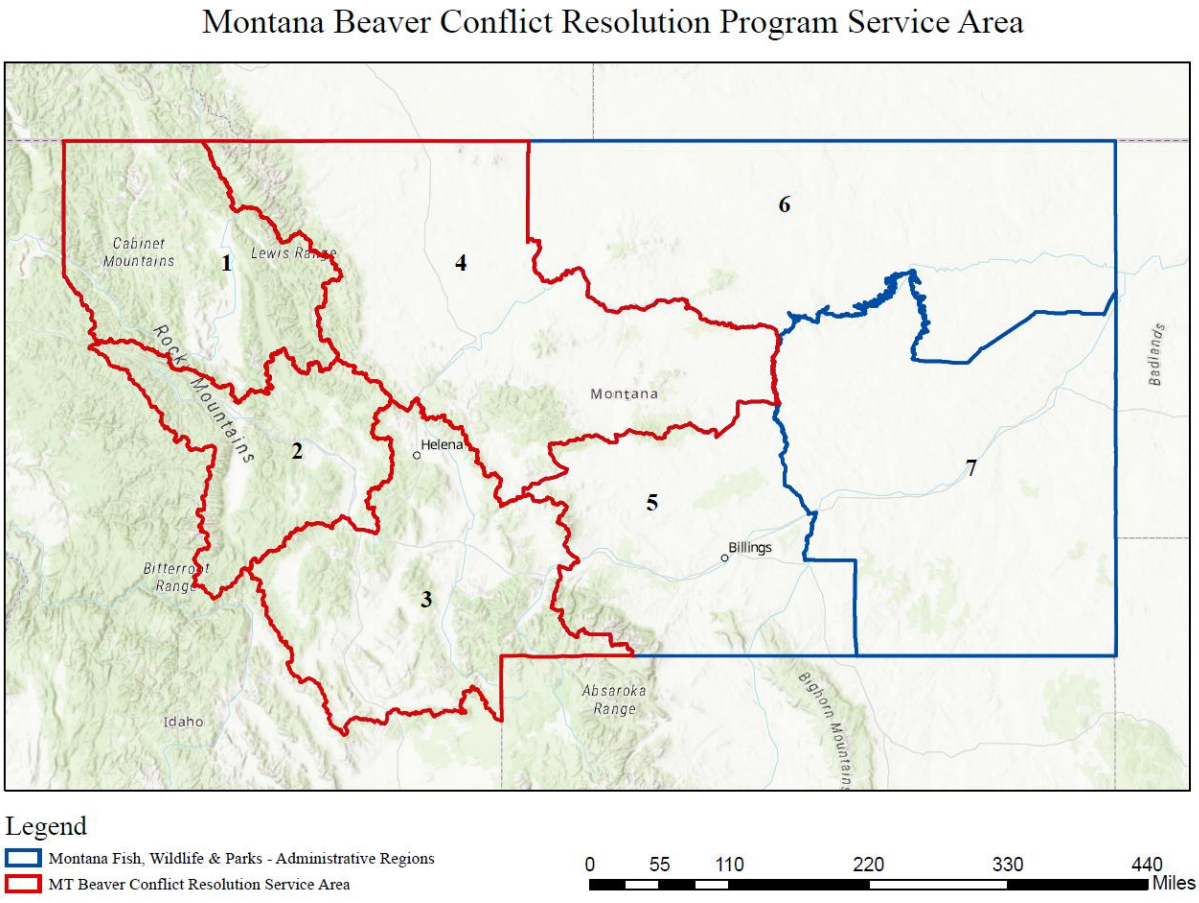

Figure 1. The above map describes the area in which the Montana Beaver Conflict Resolution Program covers (red).

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Montana Beaver Conflict Resolution Program: 2019-2025 Project Locations

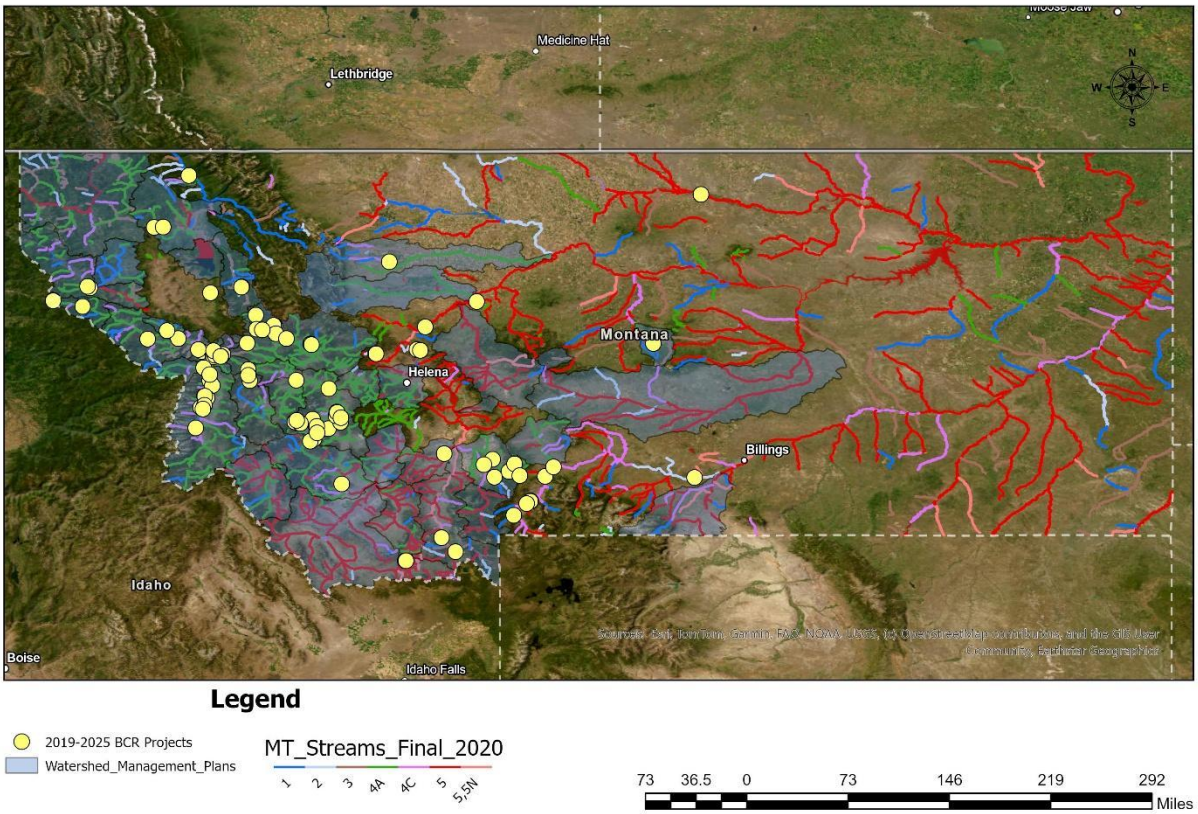

Figure 2. Montana Beaver Conflict Resolution Program map of projects implemented from 2019 to 2025 within Watershed Restoration Plan Areas and adjacent to Impaired Streams. There are a total of 110 projects the program has implemented within Watershed Restoration Plan areas. This proposal will focus within these watersheds in future years.

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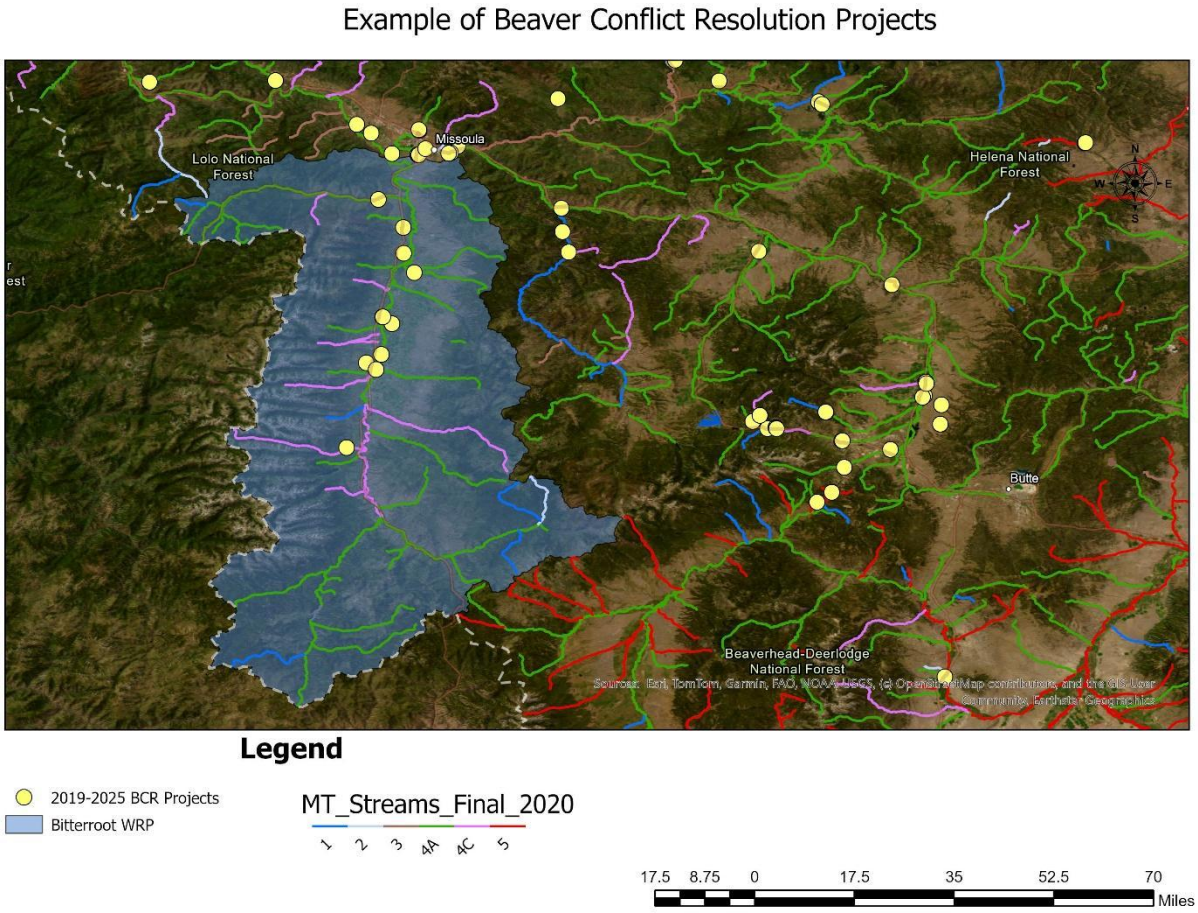

Figure 3. Example of Beaver Conflict Resolution Program projects previously implemented within Bitterroot Watershed Restoration Plan Area and within Impaired Streams.

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Exclusion Fence on Unnamed Tributary to the Gallatin River Project Information:

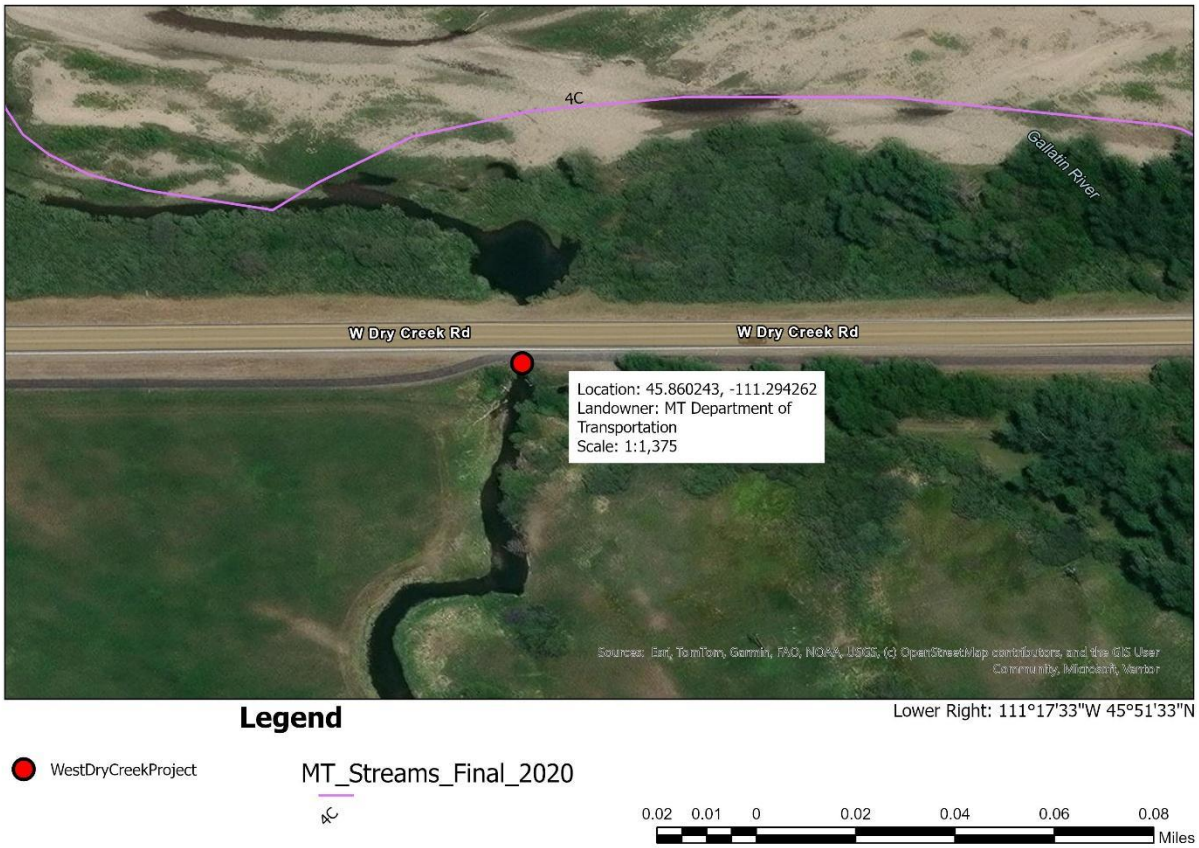

Figure 4. West Dry Creek Rd Culvert Exclusion Fence project location. See Supplemental Project Form for further information.

Project Description:

NWF's Beaver Conflict Resolution Program received a call about a plugged culvert along West Dry Creek Road and met with MDT personnel to discuss the need for a conflict resolution device. Dams inside culverts increase the risk of road flooding by reducing culvert capacity or blocking flow. Traditionally conflict resolution methods were to lethally remove beavers, resulting in a net loss of wetlands as beavers are not present to maintain dams which then degrade or are removed once beavers are removed. NWF will design and install an exclusion fence on the Unnamed Tributary to the Gallatin River to prevent culvert plugging and road flooding concerns (see Project Design Standards below). This site is located along a stream reach with heavy agricultural use up- and downstream. Using nonlethal methods to resolve this conflict means beavers can dam on the tributary, capturing sediment before the nearby confluence and raising the water table.

Project Design Standards:

- Project restores and maintains natural conditions and processes
- Project allows for the continued existence and future colonization of beavers
- Project will use Best Management Practices established with FWP for design and mesh size for beaver conflict flow devices

Project Outcomes:

Project will reduce road flooding risk by preventing beavers from plugging the culvert. This will also reduce resources used by MDT to unplug and maintain their culvert, reduce safety hazards while maintaining culverts, and help build capacity for MDT to assess future conflicts. Using a long-term conflict solution increases ecological function of the stream system by reducing nonpoint source pollution before the river confluence, keeps the beavers in place to maintain dams up- and downstream of the culvert, and increases the water table.

Project Photos:

Figure 5. Upstream view from the plugged culvert under West Dry Creek Road. There are additional dams upstream that are not causing flooding concerns.

Figure 6. Culvert view with damming materials inside. West Dry Creek Road.

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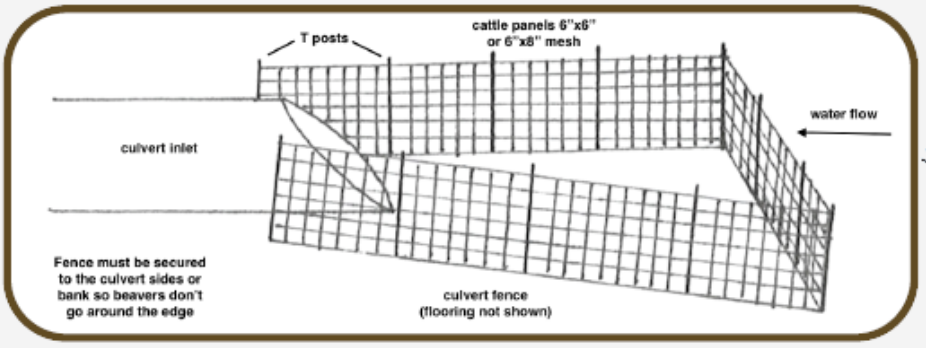
Flow Device Educational Handouts:

Beaver Conflict Resolution Program

Culvert and Head Gate Protection



MONTANA BEAVER CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROGRAM

Where to Use

Beavers are attracted to culverts because of the sound and feel of flowing water. Culverts are one of the most common conflict sites. To a beaver, culverts are holes in otherwise perfectly good dams. Beavers are able to plug culverts with relatively little work using the road embankment to flood a large area.

How it Works

Installing an exclusion fence around the culvert inlet keeps beavers far enough away from the mouth of the culvert so they do not key into the sound and feel of flowing water. Designs vary and are site specific depending on culvert size and stream width, but all culvert fences need to be surrounded by water and have a floor to prevent burrowing. If space allows, flaring the fence sides outwards discourages beavers from damming on the fence. Rectangular fences may be used on narrower streams where flared sides would run too close to the bank.

Materials

Sturdy materials and proper construction techniques are a must. Devices will fail if flimsy fencing is used. Fencing that comes on a roll will not be sturdy enough for a flow device. Using quality materials ensures devices will hold up during high water and withstand ice. Rigid panel fencing used for cattle or hogs are the only materials appropriate for these devices.

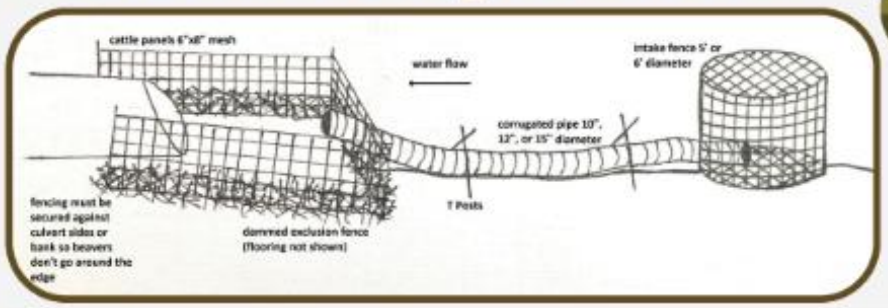
Maintenance

Maintenance is critical for proper function. Remove debris build up from around the culvert fence. Maintenance checks should be done three to four times per year, especially after high water, and usually take about 10-15 minutes per visit. More frequent maintenance may be needed if the device is on a flashy stream. Properly constructed culvert fences can last for 10 years or more.

For more information and help building these devices contact: (406) 393-5557
Tanner Clegg mtbeaver1@nwf.org, Elissa Chott chotte@nwf.org
www.nwf.org/Northern-Rockies-and-Pacific-Region/Conservation/Beavers/MT-conflict-resolution

Beaver Conflict Resolution Program

Fence and Pipe Device



Where to Use

Where freestanding dams are flooding roads or valuable property, pond levelers lower water depth upstream of dams while still allowing beavers to remain in the area. HDPE pipe is placed through a notch in the dam to control the pond depth and protect property. The intake is placed upstream of the dam within a large cylinder-shaped fence to ensure beavers do not feel the pull of water flowing into the pipe.

How it Works

The water level will drain to the level where the pipe is set at the notch through the dam.Generally about a vertical foot of water can be drained before beavers start to notice a change in pond water depth.Draining more than a vertical foot risks the beavers damming upstream or downstream in an attempt to hold lost water.When lowering pond levels, it is important to lower water only enough to protect human interests. A functioning pond leveler allows beavers to stay at the location without causing damage.

Materials




Proper, sturdy materials are a must. Devices will fail if flimsy materials are used. Using rigid panel fencing for cattle ensures devices will hold up during high water and withstand ice. Fencing that comes on a roll will not be sturdy enough for a flow device.

Maintenance

Clearing the intake fence of debris build up is important to ensure proper function. Clear any debris that builds up on the intake fence, check the pipe for damage, and make sure the outlet is clear. Maintenance checks should be done three to four times per year, especially after high water, and take about 10-15 minutes per visit. More frequent maintenance may be needed if the device is on a flashy stream. Properly built and maintained flow devices can last up to 10 years, offering a long-term solution for coexisting with beavers.

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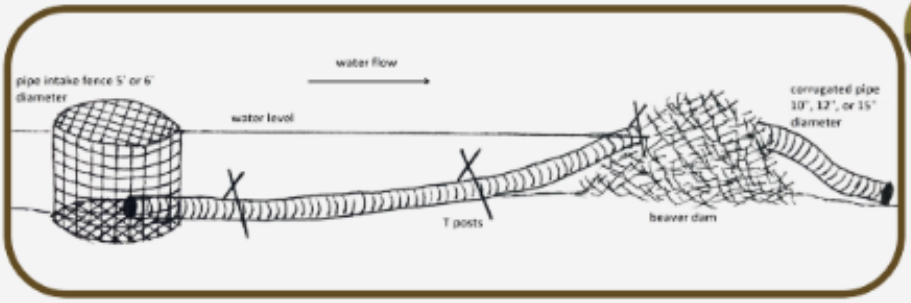
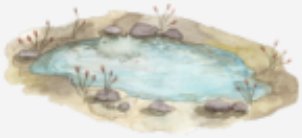
Beaver Conflict Resolution Program

Pond Levelers





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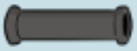
Materials



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Past Project Examples:

Figure 7. Pond leveler to prevent flooding of a private ranch access road and pasture, Choteau, within the Teton WRP and located on an impaired stream.

Figure 8. Exclusion fence to prevent culvert plugging on a Lolo National Forest Access Road, Seeley Lake, within the Clearwater WRP.

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