

## Beavers

Beavers are the largest rodents in North America and are known as “nature’s architect” due to their ability to alter their environment and construct a home. By damming streams and forming shallow ponds, beavers create wetlands that are beneficial to many plant and wildlife species. Sometimes these wetland areas create conflicts when beaver territories overlap with people’s property and removal is needed to minimize conflicts with flooding and timber damage.

**What kind of damage is caused by beavers?** Beavers construct dams on flowing water, ditches and culverts which may cause flooding in agricultural fields, residential property and forested areas. Beavers can also damage timber by chewing on or felling trees.

**Can a WCA write a depredation permit?** A depredation permit is not required to take beavers when depredation/damage has occurred. A permit is only required if the landowner or someone assisting the landowner wishes to sell beaver parts and pelts taken outside the beaver trapping season.

**Can they be relocated?** No, beavers cannot be relocated in North Carolina. They must be released on site, euthanized at the capture site, or taken to a facility designed to humanely handle the euthanasia.

**What can I do with sick or injured beavers?** There are licensed rehabilitators across the state that can take in injured or orphaned wildlife. If the injury is not significant, advise individual to leave the animal alone. It should be able to recover without help. If the beaver has a life-threatening injury or illness, it should be humanely euthanized and disposed of in a safe and sanitary manner.

**Are there any safety concerns?** No, however it is a good practice to wear gloves when handling any animal

### Non-lethal Options:

- Water level control
  - Beaver dams may be removed or breached to restore normal water level and stream flow.
  - Installing a pipe drain into the dam can be used to manage water levels in situations where the removal of the beavers is not desired or practical. For more information on pipe drain installation, click [here](#).
- Exclusion
  - Trees can be protected from cutting or girdling by fencing the tree with hardware cloth or similar wire mesh extending 2-3 ft above the ground or water level. Do not wrap fencing tightly around the tree or the beaver will be able to chew on the bark.

### Lethal Methods:

- Beavers may be trapped during the trapping season with a valid trapping license and outside of the trapping season with landowner permission when property damage has occurred. For regulations regarding trapping of beavers please review the regulations digest and the Best Management Practices.

- Beavers can be taken with firearms or bow and arrow during any open season for taking of wildlife animals with a valid hunting license. A landowner is not required to purchase a license to hunt on his/her own property.
- If property damage has occurred, beavers can be taken without a depredation permit, provided landowner permission is obtained and no parts are being sold from the removed beaver. Parts can be sold if a depredation permit is issued provided the beaver was taken during the open trapping season and the WCA has a hunting or trapping license.
- Those providing assistance must obtain permission from the landowner to hunt or trap.
- It is illegal to disturb an active beaver lodge. The lodge is a separate structure from the dam. If the lodge must be removed to assist in resolving a conflict, contact the NCWRC for a beaver lodge removal permit.

**Reporting activities:**

- For taking beaver under depredation permit:
  - Beaver taken under depredation permits need to be reported online at <https://www.ncpaws.org/RSS/>.
- For taking beaver under trapping license:
  - Report beaver taken on furbearer harvest survey issued by the furbearer biologist in April.
- This information helps NCWRC continue to monitor beaver populations and identify predominant problem areas.