

**Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners**

**Policy for the  
Management of**

**AMERICAN BEAVER**



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**2007**

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**DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE**  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document was prepared to provide the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) policy direction for the management of American beaver (*Castor canadensis*) in the state of Nevada. A collaborative process involving the input of NDOW, the 17 County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife (CABs), and the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners will establish these policies to define the intent of the management policy.

In 1985, Sid Eaton of the Nevada Department of Wildlife prepared a document titled *Beaver Species Management Plan*. That document provided a detailed description of the life history, habitat, and management history of beaver in Nevada. The document also served as a plan for the future management of beaver by the Department. The management objectives of the 1985 plan were to:

1. Manage the beaver resources to achieve and maintain desirable population levels consistent with other land use practices.
2. Monitor population status through harvest trend records and population inventories.
3. Survey and monitor beaver habitat and through cooperation with land management agencies attempt to insure its quality and preservation.
4. Receive and respond to legitimate beaver depredation complaints. Complaints are to be handled in a biologically sound, socially acceptable and economically feasible manner.
5. Maintain management strategies to reduce the occurrence of beaver depredation problems.
6. Maintain a resource utilization program that includes both consumptive and non-consumptive activities.

For the last twenty years, NDOW's original plan has provided beaver management guidance. The original plan identified the variety of challenges associated with beaver management, along with strategies to address these issues. Many of these difficulties relate to the use of limited resources by both man and wildlife.

It is NDOW's intent to incorporate elements of the original Plan into this succinct revision, now more properly referred to as a beaver management policy. Through a collaborative effort of involved interests and parties this document will guide actions to ensure that Nevada's beaver resource will continue to provide aesthetic, economic, scientific, educational, and recreational use.



## COMMISSION POLICIES

The State of Nevada acknowledges that the American beaver occupies a significant ecological niche and that management actions undertaken to affect the species must account for this.

- 1. NDOW will manage the state's beaver resource in accordance with established laws and regulations.**
- 2. NDOW will manage beaver for the protection and conservation of the species.**
- 3. NDOW will coordinate and direct the control of beaver that are doing damage to lands, streams, ditches, roads or water control structures.**
- 4. NDOW will promote both consumptive and non-consumptive uses of the species. Trapping is recognized as a legitimate and desirable management tool.**
- 5. NDOW will encourage and cooperate on research that improves its understanding of the status of beaver in Nevada or leads toward improved or innovative management courses.**
- 6. NDOW shall assume a leadership role in furthering public education regarding this species.**



## GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

**GOAL: Well distributed beaver populations within suitable habitat types throughout their native range in Nevada.**

*Objective:* NDOW will manage Nevada's beaver populations to achieve a natural balance that enhances habitat and minimizes deleterious effects.

**Strategy:** Whenever and wherever feasible, utilize established beaver trapping seasons to control beaver populations.

**Strategy:** Throughout native beaver range, work with federal and state agencies to support active beaver management, focusing on a balanced, healthy ecosystem.

**Strategy:** In habitat where beaver are not indigenous and their presence compromises native riverine systems and the management of those systems, NDOW shall coordinate or direct actions leading toward the reduction and/or removal of beaver.

**GOAL: Facilitate the control of beaver that are causing damage to property lands, streams, ditches, roads or water control structures in a timely and efficient manner.**

*Objective:* NDOW will address beaver depredation complaints by working with landowners and private individuals, companies or agencies having wildlife damage management expertise.

**Strategy:** NDOW shall issue landowners a Depredation Permit to allow them to undertake actions to control beaver damage on their property. The document allows the permittee to address depredation issues personally or to hire others to alleviate the problem on their behalf.

**Strategy:** Encourage licensed trappers to remove or reduce numbers of depredating beaver during regular trapping seasons.

**Strategy:** Facilitate cooperative agreements between landowners and the United States Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services (WS) agency to manage beaver depredation.

**Strategy:** Work directly with WS to manage beaver depredation as a preferred alternative when funding is available.



**Strategy:** When funding is available, utilize contracted individuals or companies to control depredating beaver.

**Strategy:** NDOW personnel shall control beaver in situations where their direct intervention is the most economical or efficient approach.

**Strategy:** Educate and encourage landowners to utilize exclusionary methods to prevent beaver damage on their property.

**GOAL: Nevada’s beaver population recognized as a valuable element of Nevada’s natural and historic heritage.**

*Objective:* Develop beaver educational opportunities.

**Strategy:** Work with private, state and federal entities to provide beaver viewing and interpretive opportunities. Solicit partnerships from agencies and non-governmental organizations.

**Strategy:** Develop educational materials that focus on beaver as a primary featured species.

## CONCLUSION

This policy shall guide the Nevada Department of Wildlife programs for the protection, use and enjoyment of this unique resource by the people of the state. Beaver are a distinct and integral part of Nevada’s ecology. The species has played an important role in Nevada history and has readily adapted to ecological changes created by human intervention.

These policies are neither static nor rigid in purpose and from time to time may require updating. Therefore, it is implied that the planning process always remains open to suggestion and responsive to needs and opportunities that contribute toward the implementation of management goals. To this end beaver managers will remain committed in their stewardship responsibilities.

