



Storing water for the future-one beaver at a time
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With the Slap of a Tail, Summer is Flying By!

As we transition into the arid smokey days becoming characteristic of late summer in the Methow, we at MBP often reminisce the spring freshet and the kaleidoscope of wildflowers that blanket our beautiful valley. The MBP team jumped into the summer season with gusto, responding to multiple private landowner calls for coexistence assistance, hosting four professional workshops, presenting at conferences, and completing BDA installations at our beaver-based stream restoration project sites in Cow Creek, Bear Creek, and Ramsey Creek in the Methow River Watershed.

The past week of heavy smoke from nearby fires was a poignant reminder of beaver's ability to slow water and spread it across our landscape as it moves through our watersheds. Increased surface water area from beaver damming makes our communities more resilient to wildfire but the benefits don't stop there. Beaver dams and beaver mimicking restoration projects can moderate flooding events that frequently follow wildfire and can devastate communities even after the threat of fire has passed. Beaver dams and beaver mimicking woody structures help connect streams and rivers to their floodplains and historic wetlands by acting as speed-bumps for water. Natural speedbumps can reduce water's occasional destructive force and retain water longer and higher in our watersheds to support holistic ecological watershed function through the wildfire months and beyond.



A beaver complex in California, about an hour and a half north of Lake Tahoe, stayed green and healthy even as the Dixie Fire and Sugar Fire burned the surrounding landscape in 2021. A year later, the beavers and broader ecosystem are still thriving (while nearby areas remain burnt). *Source: Dr. Emily Fairfax.*

Beaver-Based Restoration, Coexistence, & Relocation Workshop

In April and June, MBP hosted four Beaver-Based Restoration, Coexistence, & Relocation Workshops. During these workshops, participants obtained their required certification from WDFW to be qualified Beaver Relocators. These stream restoration practitioners learned how to implement beaver-based restoration to address stream degradation as well as practical beaver coexistence solutions. We shared how MBP uses computer modeling, drone imagery, and ground truthing to determine the best beaver-based engineering approach to stream restoration projects.



April Workshop participants learning how to set live-traps for removing beavers from irreconcilable human conflict conditions and relocating them to stream restoration project reaches where their dam building activity is not only welcomed but encouraged.



April Workshop participants installing a pond leveling device to manage surface water area that helps landowner coexist with beaver activity and its benefits while reducing the challenges.

In one of the workshops, this incredible group of workshop participants built and installed a permitted beaver coexistence pond leveler to manage surface water allowing landowners to experience the benefits of beavers while limiting the ponded area on their property. To cap off the week, participants had the hands-on opportunity to install Beaver Dam Analogues (BDAs) in permitted restoration sites with MBP so they can head home and begin restoring streams in their beloved watersheds.



Installing posts for the beaver dam analog or BDA into the stream bed with our hydraulic post-pounder.



The completed BDA with fir boughs woven into posts to capture sediment traveling in the stream that then fills gaps in the BDA and slows water even more.



A few weeks after BDA installation, the results are clear; beaver mimicry works... but for how long? Now, imagine beavers adopting this BDA and maintaining and expanding on it 24/7 for long-term water benefits!!! That's what we are aiming for with beaver-based restoration strategies!

Culvert Protection Installation: Aeneas Valley, Okanogan River Watershed

In collaboration with a crew from Beavers Northwest, MBP installed a protective fence around a culvert located off Aeneas Valley Road. This area is home to beavers but their penchant for expanding and deepening surface water for their own protection has caused unwanted flooding of the road and the hay field, which causes conflict with the surrounding landowners. Culvert protection fences are highly effective, accommodates other wildlife, and promotes human-beaver coexistence.



The awesome crew (left) and the culvert protection fence we installed (right).

[Click here to check out Beavers Northwest!](#)

MBP Crew Transitions

Julie Retired!

After 10 amazing years with MBP, Julie Nelson is officially retiring. She specialized in beaver handling and relocation, and led our education and outreach programs. We will miss her expertise, wit, and beaver know-how on the crew! Enjoy your retirement and all the adventures yet to come Julie, and thank you for the

lasting mark you left on the Methow Beaver Project and on these watersheds you care for so deeply. Goodbye for now!



Thank You, Livvie & Rachel & Whitman College!

We also recently said tearful goodbyes to our wonderful Summer 2023 Interns from Whitman College, Livvie (below left) and Rachel (below right). Over the summer, they helped manage workshops, table public outreach events, install BDA's for stream restoration, take structure measurements of more than 100 BDA's, install groundwater wells & learn to monitor them, and learn more about map making and restoration design work in ArcGIS for multiple project sites. They also had the opportunity to live-trap beavers for relocation and install beaver coexistence devices for private landowners. We will sure miss having this tenacious duo around, and we are so excited to see where they go next! Have a great senior year, Livvie and Rachel!





New Faces Around the Office!

We are thrilled to be working with Jason Llewellyn and Lost Creek, LLC this year! Jason has an extensive background with wildfire after working with the USFS for 20 years. After retirement from USFS, he fell in love with stream restoration work while assisting Okanogan Highlands Alliance with their very successful [Triple Creek Stream Restoration project](#). He is providing stream restoration assistance on the ground but even more importantly, he provides our beaver-based stream restoration projects with local untreated posts and fir boughs for building BDA's. Jason does this through preventative wildfire thinning and limbing of young conifer trees in overgrown forest understories. These small trees and low limbs might otherwise create ladder fuels for small fires that can contribute to the development of larger stand replacing crown fires. Thanks for your valuable contributions of saw skills, passion, and fortitude Jason!!

We are also so happy to welcome Emma Burgess to our team! Emma is an incredible asset on stream restoration projects, outreach and education programs, and social media presence. She is super tough and just as tender, as needed for the different aspects of her role!! Emma recently graduated with a B.S. in Environmental Science with an emphasis in freshwater and terrestrial ecology from Western WA University, and has a background in backcountry biology field work in the Methow River Watershed studying endangered populations of Canada lynx and Cascade red fox.

Welcome Emma & Jason! 2023 has been an exciting year for the Methow Beaver Project as we grow with the help of an amazing TEAM!!!



Huge THANK YOU's to our Wonderful MBP Volunteers & our Generous Funders!!

We shared some fun & very productive times in the field this year with local volunteers, had much needed help caring for translocated beavers, and are so grateful to have many caring hands to share the load! Thanks to each of you! We look forward to working with you and other volunteers more & more!!

Thanks to WA Dept. of Ecology, Wildlife Conservation Society, WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, WA Dept. of Natural Resources, the Broad Reach Fund, and our many community based donors for the critical support to make this great work happen!!!





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