

**For More Information Contact Your
NRCS/Conservation District Office**

<http://www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov>

Belknap County

719 Main St., Rm 203
Laconia, NH 03246-2772
(603) 527-5880

Carroll County

73 Main Street
PO Box 533
Conway, NH 03818-0533
(603) 447-2771

Cheshire County

11 Industrial Park Drive
Walpole, NH 03608-9744
(603) 756-2988

Coos County

4 Mayberry Lane
Lancaster, NH 03584-9612
(603) 788-4651

Grafton County

250 Swiftwater Road, Rm 6
Woodsville, NH 03785-0229
(603) 747-2001

NRCS Field Office

Telly's Plaza, 243 Calef Highway
Epping, NH 03042
(603) 679-1587

North Country RC&D

719 North Main Street
Laconia, NH 03246-2772
(603) 527-2093

Hillsborough County

Chappell Prof. Center
#468, Route 13
Milford, NH 03055-3442
(603) 673-2409

Merrimack County

The Concord Center
10 Ferry St., Box 312
Concord, NH 03301-5081
(603) 223-6023

Rockingham County

110 North Road
Brentwood, NH 03833-6614
(603) 679-2790

Strafford County

259 County Farm Rd #3
Dover, NH 03820-6015
(603) 749-3037

Sullivan County

24 Main Street
Newport, NH 03773-1500
(603) 863-4297

NRCS State Office

Federal Building
Durham, NH 03824
(603) 868-7581

Southern NH RC&D

The Concord Center
10 Ferry Street, Box 4
Concord, NH
(603) 223-0083

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer



Let's Restore New Hampshire's Beaver Flowages



What is a Beaver Flowage?

A beaver flowage is an area along a stream or river periodically flooded by beaver. Beaver flowages are also called beaver ponds, beaver meadows, or mud flats, depending on the current level of beaver activity.

Aren't Beavers Pests?

Sometimes beavers are pests. Although many landowners like the open water of beaver ponds, they object to the flooding of yards and gnawing of ornamental trees. Town officials fear damage to roads when beaver dams breach during storms or roads overtop because beavers have plugged culverts. The good news is that the negative impacts of beavers are largely avoidable and their beneficial impacts are important to New Hampshire's ecological health.

One of the reasons that beavers seem so disruptive, particularly in residential areas, is that in many cases they are returning after a long absence. In the last century, when New Hampshire's agriculture and trapping were at their peaks, beavers were eliminated from many areas of the state.

In their absence, forests and people came to occupy former beaver flowages. When returning beavers flood these areas, the death of whole stands of dead trees and the flooding of yards can be quick and dramatic.

Why are they Important?

Beaver activity is cyclic. Beavers move into a suitable area and flood it. Standing trees such as white pine are killed. Many aquatic plants quickly sprout in the open water. The combination of snags, open water, and aquatic plants provide habitat for wildlife. Great Blue

Hérons nest in colonies in beaver ponds using dead trees to support their large nests. Beaver ponds are an important wintering habitat to wood turtles, which hibernate, in the muddy bottom.

The pond stage of a beaver flowage is only the beginning. Eventually the beavers run out of food and leave. Without constant maintenance, the beaver dam drains. Eventually the pond becomes a mud flat and later a sedge meadow.

In the mud flat stage, the former beaver pond is very important to shore birds such as the spotted sandpiper. The sedge meadow stage of beaver flowages is important to other animals and is particularly important as habitat for many species of rare plants.

Why do they need Restoring?

Many beaver flowages have been degraded by human activity. In the more populated areas of the state they have been fragmented by roads and encroached on by development. In some cases, beavers have been killed. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is trying to remedy these problems by helping beavers and humans coexist.

Restoring Beaver Flowages

There are three steps in restoring beaver flowages (or any other native ecosystem).

- Understand the ecosystem under natural conditions.
- Understand the human caused stressors that have degraded it.
- Figure out how to relieve the stressors.

There are many stressors on beaver flowages. Generally, they result from competition between beavers and humans for living space. In most cases, the problems occur around the periphery of beaver flowages. Beavers rarely flood houses, they are more likely to flood the lower edges of yards and woods roads. NRCS will help landowners restore beaver flowages while protecting their property.

Landowner participation is voluntary. A variety of measures is available to control water levels and protect property.

Joint Efforts

Many landowners are working with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and County Conservation Districts to restore beaver flowages on their property. Cooperating in this effort are state, federal and local agencies and non-profit groups. Included are the Audubon Society of New Hampshire, NH Fish & Game, NH Division of Forests and Lands, US Fish and Wildlife Service, NH Natural Heritage Program, the Nature Conservancy, and UNH Cooperative Extension.

Several cost-share programs are available to help landowners restore beaver flowages on their property.

What can you do?

Contact your nearest NRCS and Conservation District office. They will assist you in determining if you have a potential restoration site on your property. They can also offer assistance on restoring other important ecosystems such as salt marshes, Pine Barrens and grasslands.