

## Beaver facts

With their ever-growing incisor teeth, beaver can chew down a 6-inch diameter tree in 15 minutes.

One beaver can take down 100s of trees per year.

They prefer willow and aspen; fruit and shade trees are also favorites.

Their predators are mostly gone from this area: Cougar, bobcat, coyote, bear, and wolf.

With fewer predators, beaver numbers are making a strong comeback.

Humans partially take on the role of predators through trapping and also accidentally through road kills.

Now that fur is out of fashion, trapping is down so beaver numbers are up even more causing increased conflict with humans.



Metal caging helped protect the large tree. It could also have been taller or placed around the group of trees if desired by the homeowner. For more detail see “What You Can Do” inside.

### Credits

Coon Creek Watershed District staff

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. 2010.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Web Site (online)

## Water IQ #12

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Flooding upstream from beaver dam

## Coon Creek Watershed District

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### *Mission*

*To manage groundwater and surface water drainage systems to prevent property damage, maintain hydrologic balance, protect water quality for the safety and enjoyment of citizens, and the preservation and enhancement of wildlife habitat.*

## Coon Creek Watershed District

### Water IQ #12

## Beaver Dams



Twelfth in a Water Information Quest (WIQ) Series by Coon Creek Watershed District

Tel: 763.755.0975

## Beaver dams

Periodically, we receive calls about flooding problems. Sometimes the cause of that flooding may be from your area even though your property is not flooded. Often the cause is from an obstruction like a downed tree or beaver dam.

"A beaver in the wrong place is a nuisance," In the right place, it is an ideal conservationist," as one biologist said. Wherever they have become too numerous, they can cause problems for people.

Usually, flooding caused by beavers is from their dams. Sometimes they dam a culvert. Sometimes they dam a creek or ditch. Sometimes they drop a tree for food that then is left behind and blocks flow or catches garbage.

Regardless, with the water flow blocked, even partially, property upstream can become flooded and suffer property damage. And, in the flat landscape of Anoka County, one obstruction to a ditch or creek can back water up for a mile or more. That can add up to a lot of property damage.



MN DNR 2010

## Coon Creek Watershed District

We are charged with managing water resources including flood prevention. In fact, that was the original purpose for the establishment of Coon Creek Watershed District back in 1959; to prevent flooding downstream in developing Coon Rapids after World War II while managing drainage for continued farming in the Ham Lake area.

Therefore, it is important for the watershed district to be informed of beaver dam locations so that we can help prevent flooding and property damage.



MN DNR 2010

Though beavers are protected animals under the game and fish laws, their dams have no special protection under these laws. However, beaver will likely return and rebuild. Many trees are taken down to build the dam, and also are needed for the lodge and for food.

*Questions?*

Call us

Coon Creek Watershed District

763.755.0975

## What you can do

Help prevent flooding:

1. Contact us if you know of a beaver dam or other obstruction. Call us at [763.755.0975](tel:763.755.0975) or email [info@cooncreekwd.org](mailto:info@cooncreekwd.org)
2. If beavers in the area are damaging trees on your property, a sturdy fence at least 30 inches high made of heavy wire mesh can prevent damage. A low sturdy or energized fence, 36 inches high, can keep beaver out of an area.
3. Landowners have the right to remove beaver dams from their property. A DNR Public Waters work permit is required to remove a beaver dam when the bed of a lake or stream is excavated in conjunction with the dam removal. Contact Coon Creek Watershed District for more info.



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Caging your trees with heavy mesh will help protect them from beaver damage.