

Fish Habitat Restoration Methods Concept Specification Beaver dam (Active and Old)

Purpose:

- To remove or breach beaver dams in order to provide fish passage and prevent erosion or damage to property or infrastructure.

Conditions Where Applicable:

- If the work is done in conjunction with an AaS project instream work must be approved by an Adopt-A-Stream Biologist.
- Beaver dams provide holding pools that are refuge for fish in low flow periods and during the winter.
- Not all beaver dams are fish passage problems under normal migration flows.
- Beaver dams are not considered to be debris.
- Follow the Nova Scotia Code of Practice for beaver dam removal found at <http://www.novascotia.ca/nse/wetland/docs/Beaverdam-Removal-Code-of-Practice.pdf>
- Drainage of the beaver ponds must take place between June 1st and September 30th, when water is at lower flow levels. Beaver dam removals outside these dates require prior authorization from Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)

Advantages:

- Opens up passage for migrating fish.
- Drains the pond and restores stream habitats.
- Reduces silt accumulation.

Disadvantages:

- Drains a pond that may be important summer refuge and overwintering habitat for fish.
- Active dams are rebuilt quickly.

Design Criteria:

- The removal of beaver dams and beaver debris from a watercourse does not require an Approval from NSE, providing there is no alteration of the watercourse such as modifications to the bed or banks of the brook.
- When carried out according to the Code of Practice the work does not require a permit.

- If removed by mechanical methods, a watercourse alteration permit is required.
- Contact your local provincial wildlife biologist for more information regarding the removal of beaver dams.

Implementation Steps:

- Carry out the work according to The Nova Scotia Code of Practice under a NSE permit if outside of the Code's dates, or direction from a provincial wildlife biologist.

References:

NB Department of Environment and Local Government - Watercourse Alterations Technical Guidelines.

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BEAVER DAM REMOVAL CODE OF PRACTICE