



BROWN'S CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT

Preserving the integrity of the watershed for future generations

www.bcwd.org | 455 Hayward Ave N, Oakdale, MN 55128 | 651-330-8220

MEMORANDUM

TO: Brown's Creek Watershed District Board
FROM: Karen Kill and Hannah Peterson
RE: Beaver Signage
DATE: May 8, 2026

Background

Beaver activity has been noted along Brown's Creek and its tributaries by residents, staff, and Community Advisory Committee members. While beavers are considered a nuisance to some, they are actually an important keystone species that enhance wetland habitats by raising water levels to restore the native plant community and removing early succession trees. Flooding is a potential concern, but there are opportunities to explore to coexist with beavers rather than removal of beavers and their dams when problems arise.

BCWD staff has designed signage to educate the community about the benefit of beavers and to encourage coexistence rather than removal of beavers and their dams when possible. Staff has also coordinated with the City of Stillwater and local beaver experts to assess sign content and potential locations.

Estimated Costs

Description	Quantity	Estimated Cost
18x24" Aluminum Sign	3	\$250
Sign Posts/Installation Materials	3	\$250
TOTAL		\$500

Requested Action

Approve the printing and installation of beaver signage not to exceed a total of \$500 from account 910-0000.

Managers:

Klay Eckles, President | Chuck LeRoux, Vice President | Celia Wirth, Treasurer
Luke Mattson, Manager | Griffin Brod, Manager

Beavers at Work in the Watershed



A beaver in the water.

Friend or Foe?

While sometimes considered a nuisance, beavers are a keystone species in North American forests because they provide important ecosystem services. **Coexistence should be prioritized over removing beavers and their dams!**

Beavers and Brown's Creek

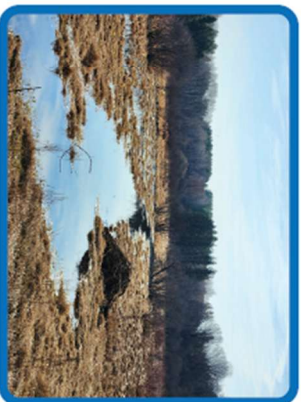
You may notice beaver activity (downed trees, dams, lodges, and pooling water) along Brown's Creek and its tributaries. **These beavers are enhancing wetland habitat by raising water levels to restore the native plant community and removing early succession trees.**

Brown's Creek Watershed District (BCWD) is aware of the activity and is monitoring it closely to determine if action needs to be taken. In general, BCWD supports beaver-human coexistence by encouraging their presence but also wants to prevent flood-related impacts to landowners. BCWD has installed levelers in a few beaver dams to let some of the water through without removing the dams. This preserves much of the ecological benefit provided by dams while reducing flood risk.

Beaver Benefits

Beavers provide many benefits to their ecosystems by building dams to hold back water. Key benefits include:

- Increasing drought and wildfire resilience by storing water
- Holding back sediments and removing pollutants
- Slowing flows to minimize streambank erosion and reduce flood damage
- Restoring wetland plant communities
- Removing early succession trees like boxelder and aspen
- Creating habitat for aquatic bugs, fish, reptiles, amphibians, waterfowl, and other mammals



Beaver lodge and dammed area of water.



Beaver dam along the creek.



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