



Town of Shelburne, Vermont

CHARTERED 1763

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TOWN OF SHELBURNE, VERMONT BEAVER CONTROL PROTOCOL

Purpose

To establish guidance to Town staff on control of beaver dam-building activity on Town property or in Town rights-of-way. Damming can threaten Town infrastructure and public safety by flooding, unexpected releases of water upon breach, damage to trees along affected waterways, and degradation of downstream water quality.

General Guidance

The Town Manager will determine in any one case, consulting with appropriate Town staff, the Natural Resources and Conservation Committee, and technical resources described in the following section, if a beaver dam is a threat to Town infrastructure and public safety, treating beaver control as an emergency event where and when warranted.

Upon determination of the threat, the Town Manager will direct appropriate staff to initiate beaver control in accordance with applicable State law and by:

- * Managing the threat by non-lethal means as a first priority
- * following Agency of Natural Resources Best Management Practices
- * seeking Department of Fish and Wildlife advice and assistance, as pertinent
- * exercising the lethal option once non-lethal means are found to fail to control threatening beaver activity or when and as an emergency situation so dictates.

Non-lethal means of beaver control

Non-lethal means of beaver control include removal or clearance of dams and installation of water control structures or exclusion devices.

The Town Manager shall maintain contact with providers of technical and experiential resources, such as the such as Green Mountain Animal Defenders, Beaver Deceivers LLC, Humane Society of the United States and the Beaver Institute, in addition to relevant State agencies, for information and assistance in employing non-lethal means as the priority Town practice and as basis for training of appropriate Town staff.

Lethal option

At documented failure of non-lethal means, such as recurring instances of threatening obstruction at a specific site or in situations of emergency response to a threatening obstruction, the Town Manager is authorized to employ trapping as population control. The Selectboard shall be notified if a lethal method is utilized. Killing of beaver shall be by the most humane means available, consistent with the AVMA Guidelines for Euthanasia.

Trapping shall be conducted by:

- * a licensed trapper
- * strict accordance with applicable Department of Fish and Wildlife requirements
- * local Game Warden notification if trapping occurs out of season
- * notice to maximize public awareness and ensure public safety.

In the case of an emergency for which prior approval of trapping by the Selectboard is not feasible, notice to the Chair may be substituted.

Live transport of trapped beaver by either Town staff or contractor is not authorized.

Dam removal

For any site, the Town Manager shall follow Agency of Natural Resources Best Management Practices in removing the obstruction. For beaver dams that are more than two years old, the Town Manager shall seek Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) evaluation of the site before conducting removal.

In the case of an imminent hazard to life and property, the Town Manager, upon notice to the Selectboard, ANR, and the Department of Fish & Wildlife, is authorized to remove the obstruction at the time, following ANR Best Management Practices to the degree possible under the circumstances of the threat.

Dam site monitoring

The Town Manager shall ensure that appropriate staff routinely monitor actual and potential dam sites as basis for regular maintenance of these such that dams do not evolve to threaten public safety and property.

Approved by the Shelburne Selectboard on October 15, 2019