

POLICY # PW 029 POLICY TITLE: BEAVER CONTROL

APPROVAL DATE AND MOTION:	August 1992 04-07-92	CROSS-REFERENCE:	Agricultural Pest Act – Pest and Nuisance Control Regulation; Wildlife Act; Fisheries Act, Species at Risk Act and Alberta’s Water Act
RESPONSIBILITY:	Public Works Formerly AG 001 Beaver Control Policy		
		APPENDICES:	Schedule “A” <i>Permission to Enter upon the lands for problem Wildlife Control form.</i>
APPROVER:	Council	EFFECTIVE DATE:	August 1992
REVISION DATE(s)/ MOTION #:	Agriculture Aug. 13, 2007 (22-08-07); April 25, 2027 (2017-04-48); Oct. 9, 2018 (2018-10-10) P/W – June 27, 2023 (2023-06-53)	NEXT REVIEW DATE:	2028

1. DEFINITIONS

1.a – Designated Watercourse – A waterbody with a defined bed and banks, designated under the Alberta Water Act Code of Practice for Watercourse Crossings as Class, A, B, C, or D. Within the County of Vermilion River this includes the Vermilion River, Battle River, North Saskatchewan River and all tributaries within two km of designated watercourses.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

2.a - The County is committed to protecting municipal infrastructure from water movement problems related to beaver activity and to provide the option of blasting beaver dams on private lands at a fee for service.

3. OBJECTIVE

3.a – Beaver pose many problems in an expanding human environment. This policy addresses the management of flooding due to beaver dams. It anticipates that such problems will occur to varying degrees from time to time and provides the guidelines required to remain flexible but prevent undue municipal expenses.

4. BACKGROUND

4.a – Beaver control was transferred to Public Works in the 2021 Budget. Due to this transfer the policy was transferred from Agriculture to Public Works.

4.b – The beaver is not a declared pest or nuisance under the Agricultural Pest Act – Pest and Nuisance Control Regulation in the Province of Alberta.

4.c – The County of Vermilion River has no legislated duty to provide beaver control on private or provincial land. However, beavers are frequently a concern in the County of Vermilion River. Heavy spring run-off or excessive summer rainstorms can create problems when beaver have built dams in watersheds, creeks, and coulees. Any culvert or watershed where there are trees nearby can become a beaver problem area.

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES (Outline guidelines and key concepts to be applied in implementing the policy.)

5.a – Protection of Municipal Infrastructure - Private or Public Lands

5.a(i) – The County of Vermilion River will remove beaver and/or beaver dams from private property or public lands if the removal serves to protect municipal infrastructure (roads, bridges, culverts, etc.)

5.a(ii) – County of Vermilion River staff will assist internal departments with the removal of beaver dams and cleaning of culverts for the protection of municipal infrastructure and public safety. Public works will maintain a system of screening off culverts where repeated beaver problems exist.

5.a(ii)a - For concerns with municipal infrastructure or public safety, The County of Vermilion River is granted authorization to remove beaver dams and control beaver on County of Vermilion River controlled lands and public and private lands to which it has access under the authority of the Wildlife Act. All beaver management work must comply with the Fisheries Act, Species at Risk Act and Alberta's Water Act.

5.a(ii)b – Beaver lodges will only be removed upon approval of Alberta Sustainable Resources Development, Fish and Wildlife Division on a case-by-case basis.

5.a(ii)c – Decisions on impact to public infrastructure will be based on the discretion of Agriculture staff and Public Works staff.

5.a(ii)d – Hired trappers/shooters must be authorized under the County Damage Control license.

5.a(ii)e – To enter on private land, County of Vermilion River personnel must obtain written permission from the owner or lessee (form WA144).

5.a(ii)f – The County of Vermilion River will facilitate appropriate explosive handling and use (i.e. licenced magazine, certified blaster, fee for service).

5.b – Does not affect protection of Municipal Infrastructure – Private or Public Lands.

5.b(i) – The County of Vermilion River will maintain a list of contacts for persons requiring removal of beaver or beaver dams from private property or public lands.

5.b(ii) – County of Vermilion River landowners with beaver – related problems on private or public land (i.e. for private or industry buildings, yards, roads, agricultural crop and pasture lands) are encouraged to deal with the problems on their own as far as possible.

5.b(iii) – Where help is required to alleviate water problems on private or public land, arrangements may be made to deal with the situation through county resources at the discretion of the Manager of Operations. Applications will be accepted on a complaint basis, but may be refused when manpower or resources are limited. Fees will be charged as per the County Fee Bylaw.

5.(iv) – Trapping and/or removal of beavers is the responsibility of the landowner.

5.(v) – The landowner must sign Schedule “A” *Permission to Enter upon the lands for problem Wildlife Control* form.

5.c – Lands located within Department of Fisheries and Oceans “designated watercourses” .

5.c(i) – County of Vermilion River landowners with beaver concerns on lands located within Department of Fisheries and Oceans designated watercourses are encouraged to deal with beaver-related problems on their own as far as possible.

5.c(ii) – All beaver management work on designated watercourses must comply with the Fisheries Act, SARA, Alberta’s Water Act and Public Lands Act.

5.c(iii) – Where help is required to alleviate water problems on private or public land (i.e. for private buildings, yards, roads, agricultural crop and pasture lands), arrangements may be made to deal with the situation through County of Vermilion River resources at the discretion of the Manager of Operations. Applications will be accepted on a complaint basis but may be refused when manpower or resources are limited. Fees will be charged as per the County Fee Bylaw.

5.c(iv) – Trapping and/or removal of beavers is the responsibility of the landowner. The County of Vermilion River will maintain a list of licensed trappers.

5.c(v) – The landowner must sign Schedule “A” *Permission to Enter Upon Lands for Problem Wildlife Control* form.

5.c(vi) – All decisions to remove beaver dams must be approved in advance by the Director of Public Works.

5.c(vii) – Dam removal will be limited to September 1 until freeze up in order to meet restricted activity restrictions imposed by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and Alberta Environmental Protection to protect spawning and fish habitat, birds and amphibians. No dams may be removed after the pond freezes without a case review by DFO.

6. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE/TASK	TITLE (s) OF PERSON RESPONSIBLE
HANDLING INQUIRIES	Public Works
MONITORING REVIEWS AND REVISIONS	Public Works
IMPLEMENTING POLICY	Council
COMMUNICATING POLICY	Public Works
INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS	Staff
EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS	Members of the Public

7. EXCEPTIONS

7.a – None

8. POLICY EVALUATION

8.a – Needs assessment if required.

8.b – Process evaluation to measure whether the policy is meeting its intended objective; and

8.c - Outcome evaluation to determine whether the policy has met its objectives and whether additional opportunities for improvement in the policy can be identified.