

Beaver Festival
When We Partner With Nature
Everyone Wins

Rotary Park
June 14th 2025 - time

Give A Dam is thrilled to announce Durango's first-ever Beaver Festival, June 14th, 2025, centered around the theme *"When We Partner With Nature, Everyone Wins."* This exciting event will bring together many diverse organizations to highlight the numerous benefits of beavers and showcase the innovative work being done locally to maintain and restore our watersheds. By partnering with nature's most skilled water engineers—beavers—we can enhance water quality, recharge our water table, reduce flood risks, create fire resiliency, and support biodiversity.

The festival will serve as an educational platform to raise awareness of how beavers contribute to healthier ecosystems and sustainable water management. Local conservation efforts, beaver habitat restoration projects, and successful partnerships between communities and beavers will be featured throughout the day. Families, children, and other attendees will have the opportunity to engage with experts to learn about the science behind beaver ecology, and explore how supporting these remarkable creatures can create long-term environmental benefits.

By joining together to celebrate the incredible role of beavers in our watersheds, the Beaver Festival will demonstrate that when we partner with nature, everyone—from wildlife to local communities—wins!

Community Impact:

- **Education on Beaver Ecology:** Emphasizing the role of beavers in water restoration and biodiversity can change public perception, helping community members see beavers not as pests but as valuable environmental stewards of our shared watersheds.
- **Community Engagement:** Bringing families and community together for an educational and entertaining event will inspire a lifelong connection to beavers and nature.

Booths

- **Everything Beaver - educational booths sharing the many ecology benefits of beavers in watersheds**

- **Booths will help the community to understand how beaver benefit issues they are concerned about- drought resilience, fire resilience, habitat providers, increase water quality, reduce floods, carbon sequestration**
- **Coexistence with beavers - flow devices, tree protection**
- **LTPBR BDAs - how humans can practice biomimicry of beavers to help restore watersheds**
- **Nature's Fire Fighters**
- **Beaver and Wetland Conservation efforts - represented by diverse organizations**
- **Best management practices**

Speakers on Water and Beavers

Art and Education Focus:

- **Booth Attendees as Wetland Animals:** Asking booth attendees to dress as beaver wetland animals will add fun and creativity, fostering a deeper connection to the environment. This artistic approach will help participants of all ages remember the lesson of coexistence in nature.
- **Multimedia Approach:** Incorporating various forms of media (e.g., visual art, interactive displays, live demonstrations) will appeal to a wide audience and make the educational experience more memorable.

Beaver Activity Tour along the Animas

A beaver expert lead attendees along the Animas River to observe beaver activity firsthand will deepen their understanding and provide a real-world context to the festival's educational components.

Beaver Expert-led River Walk:

- **This expert-led river walk** can serve as a living classroom, reinforcing the educational goals of the festival while providing a memorable experience. It also makes the connection between the science of beavers and the practical realities of living in harmony with these fascinating creatures very tangible for your attendees.
- **Ensure the walk is accessible for all ages**, possibly with shorter, slower-paced options for younger children or families with strollers. The expert can tailor explanations depending on the age group, keeping the walk engaging for both kids and adults.
- **Promote Environmental Stewardship:** Emphasize the importance of preserving wetlands, rivers, and forests, encouraging families to protect these areas in their own

- **Expert Guidance:** The beaver expert can explain the various beaver behaviors seen along the river, lodge construction, and tree felling. They can also address misconceptions, like the myth that beavers will destroy all the trees, ie educate about coppicing.
- **Showcasing Beaver Management:** Highlight a functional flow device installed 20 years ago, explaining its role in maintaining healthy beaver populations while balancing human needs (such as flood control). This can be a great opportunity to talk about how humans and beavers can coexist peacefully.
- **Tree Protection Methods:** The fencing around trees and other protective measures can be discussed to show how communities can mitigate the challenges posed by beavers while still allowing them to thrive in their natural environment.
- **Beaver Chew and Coppicing:** Demonstrate the healthy coppicing cycle (tree regeneration) and show how beavers' chewing benefits certain plant species by promoting new growth. This could help dispel the myth that beavers destroy all the trees, teaching the community about how beavers evolved with the type of trees they use for food and to build their dams and lodges with.

Connecting Beaver Science to the Festival Themes:

- **Interactive Experience:** After exploring the river, attendees can return to the festival booths to deepen their understanding of what they observed on the walk. For example, a booth could focus on "Coexistence with Beavers" and the methods used to protect trees and the beavers' habitat.
- **Hands-on Learning:** We will set up a small display of tree samples showing tree damage from beaver activity and healthy coppiced trees, helping festival-goers connect the concepts visually.
- **Marketing the Walk:** In promotional materials and on social media, highlight this special opportunity to witness live beaver activity and discuss the expert's knowledge about beaver ecology. It will be a unique aspect of the festival that will draw in participants eager to learn more.

Children's Activities

The Beaver Festival will be an excellent and interactive way to educate the community about beavers and their important ecological role! We will combine fun, education, and art to inspire and engage children and adults.

- **Beaver Scavenger Hunt:** Kids can start by crafting their beaver tails, which will tie into the scavenger hunt and create a memorable experience. At each booth, they'll have the opportunity to learn fun facts about beavers and their environment.
- **Beaver Wetland animal face painting**
- **Beaver Parade:** Children can join in a parade wearing beaver tails and hats, adding a playful and immersive element to the day.

- **Beaver Lodge & Wetland Exploration:** The life-sized lodge and wetland will offer a hands-on experience, helping children and parents visualize and understand beaver habitats.
- **Booths and Learning:** Booths will focus on the science behind beavers' role in ecosystems, water restoration, and biodiversity, with topics like "Beavers as a Keystone Species" and "Why Beavers Have Big Teeth."

Grant and Booth Fees:

Since the grant is a reimbursement grant, Give A Dam still needs to raise \$1500 upfront. Asking non-sponsor booths to contribute \$100-\$250 will help cover event costs. This upfront payment will ensure the smooth running of the event, while also helping manage the expenses.

Local Music Bands

Navaho FLC student opening up the day with ceremony and acknowledging the land

Water Blessing in English and Spanish

Beaver Wetland Animal Costume Contest