

Beavers

Beavers are a natural part of Colorado ecosystems.

Beavers are fascinating creatures; they are rodents, which means they have large front teeth that never stop growing.

Beavers are ecosystem engineers, they can change an ecosystem to suit their needs. Their changes also benefit many other plant and animal species.

Beavers build dams which create ponds. They build a lodge in the pond, where it is protected from predators. The pond also spurs more growth of the vegetation that beavers like to feed on.

Ponds create wetlands. These wetlands provide habitat for plants and animals and increase biodiversity.

Wetlands act as filters for water; they slow down water flow, allowing sediment and pollutants to settle out of the water, improving water quality overall.

Beaver ponds help replenish ground water stores, which is very important in arid climates.

Beavers cut down trees both to build dams and lodges, but also to eat. The downed trees in the water provide shade and shelter for fish as well as food for the insects that fish eat.

Humans can learn to live with beavers so that we can continue to enjoy outdoor areas while providing habitat for this important species. We can protect some trees from beavers using cages while leaving others to serve as a food source. We can find a balance between preserving a beautiful natural area and embracing an important species that lives nearby.

