

# Technical Tips

## WORKING WITH BEAVERS TO MAINTAIN FISH ACCESS

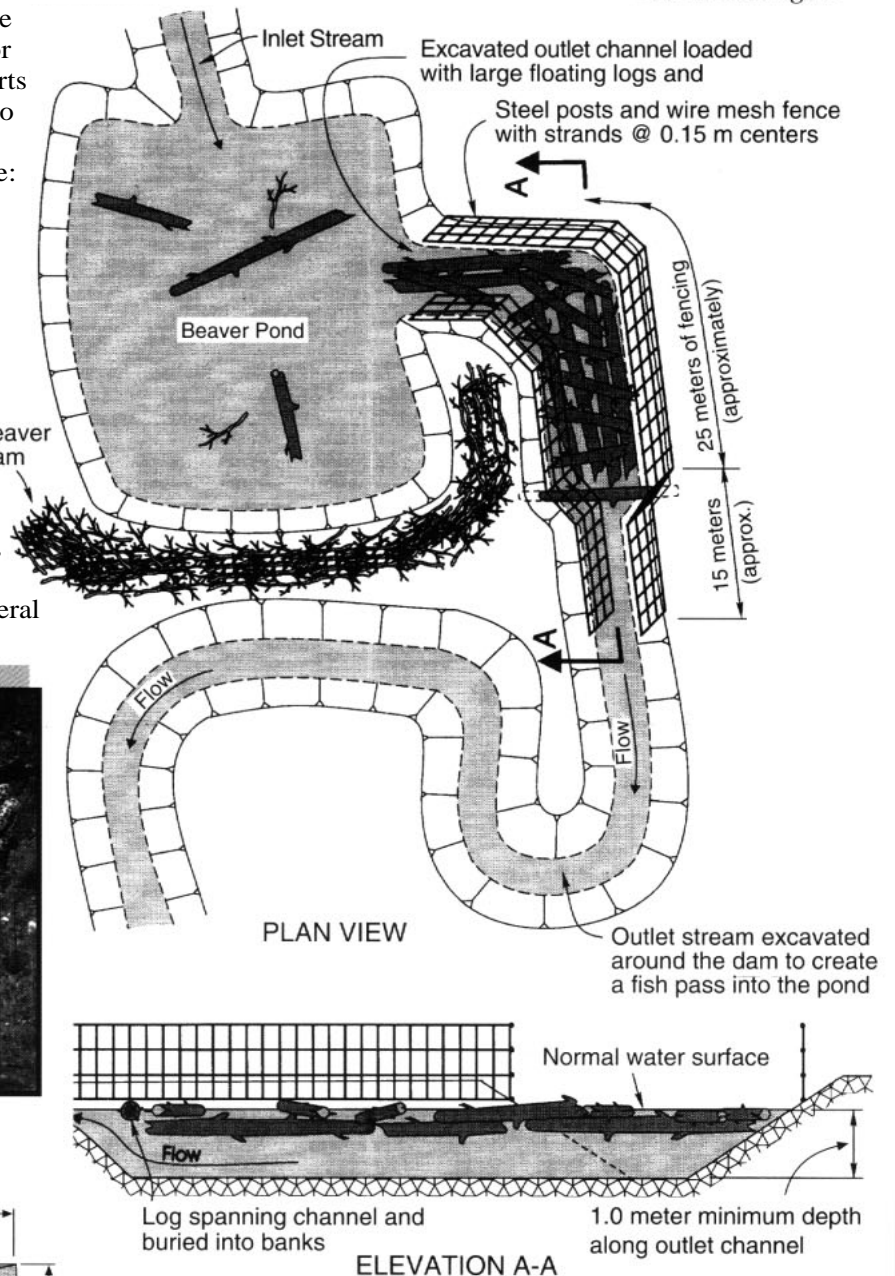
Past logging of flood plains favoured deciduous stands which promote beaver activity. Beaver dams may cause excessive flooding of low lying adjacent lands or backwater valuable spawning areas. Road culverts blocked by beavers are also frequently barriers to fish movement. However, beaver ponds are usually productive nursery areas for fish because:

- nutrients provided by a diverse riparian community, flooded vegetation and beaver droppings; all supporting the food chain
- cover provided by flooded vegetation
- moderate water temperatures

### The Telkwa River Design (Smithers, BC):

- a beaver dam was raised and reinforced
- a fish pass channel was excavated around the dam
- floating woody debris was placed near the pond outlet to impede access by beavers
- a beaver fence was installed along both sides of the outlet stream
- overwintering "holes" were excavated at several locations in the pond

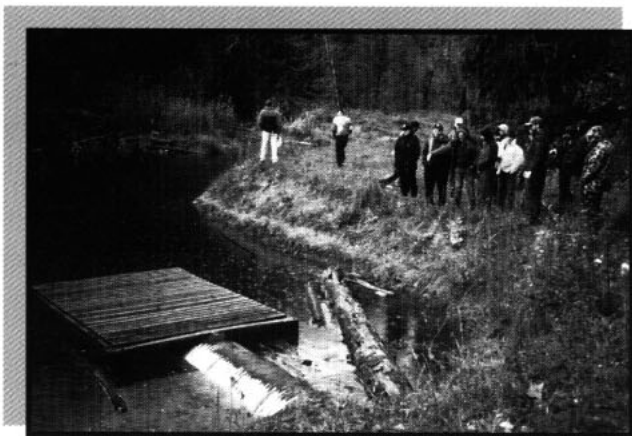
Rheal Finnigan



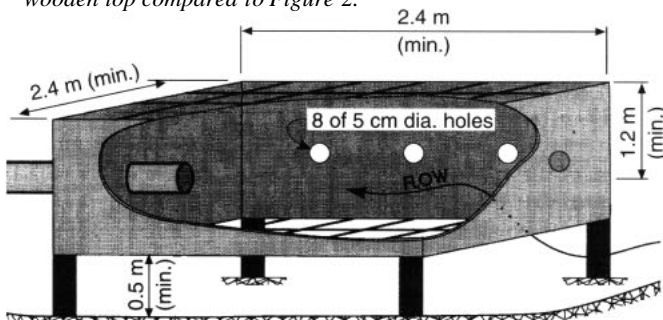
**Figure 3.** The "Telkwa" Design. A fish pass channel was excavated around the beaver dam and wire mesh fencing installed along both banks of the channel to restrict beaver access to the upstream end of fish pass.

Editor's Note:

Readers should watch for the Chapter on Working with Beavers by R. Finnigan and D. Marshall in WRP Technical Circular No. 9. ▲



**Figure 1.** Beaver box at Anderson Creek, restoring a cut-off tributary of the Chilliwack River. Note the wooden top compared to Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Rectangular box with plywood sides and wire mesh on the top and bottom @ 0.15 meter centers. The box permits fish passage, but prevents beavers from blocking the road culvert.