

Columbus, Ohio Metro Parks Installs a Beaver Flow Device—Using BWW’s “Coexisting...” DVD

Staff at Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks, Ohio in December installed a beaver pipe system in a beaver dam to manage the water level and save some wetlands. When beavers moved into Glacier Ridge Park last year their dam restored valuable wetlands, but it also affected a drainage ditch that served private properties bordering the park. The new flexpipe system, based on plans from Beavers: Wetlands & Wildlife’s (BWW) “*Coexisting with Beavers*” DVD, allows a compromise that benefits both the beavers and the park’s neighbors. Now the water level can be managed—allowing the beaver dam and wetlands to remain.

Beaver activity is the major natural method of creating and maintaining freshwater wetlands, recently valued at \$49,000/acre/year in terms of natural services.* About 90% of Ohio’s original wetlands had been drained by the 1980s, according to the U.S. EPA. In past decades, when beaver dams caused flooding of farms or roads, the animal engineers were eliminated. As beavers return to western Ohio, using flow devices to manage their ponds can help save newly restored wetlands.

Carrie Morrow, Assistant Resource Manager for Metro Parks who coordinated the pond leveler project said, “many of the parts were available at our park maintenance shops. She added, “Our volunteer Richard Tuttle graciously shared the DVD with us and Andrew Boose, our Forest Ecologist and talented handyman, assembled and built the structure.”

Boose was assisted by park technician Mike



Photo by Carrie Wakeman Morrow

Andrew Boose and Mike Bosworth install a flexpipe with a cage to protect the pipe inlet in a beaver dam at Glacier Ridge Park.

Bosworth. The dedicated men worked in cold, chest-deep water in December to complete the installation. Later, Andrew Boose’s wife ordered a BWW cap for him, “because the project was a success.”

Richard Tuttle, who gave the “*Coexisting...*” DVD to the park staff, is an expert on conservation of Eastern Blubirds. In the early 1990s, he created the “Beaver Hypothesis”— that beaver activity produces the habitat required by many wetland species.

**Costanza, R. et al. 2014. Changes in the global value of ecosystem services. Global Environmental Change 26: 152-158.*



Photo by Annette Boose.

Andrew Boose, Forest Ecologist at Columbus Metro Parks, photographs a young beaver.