



Friend or Foe?

When we look beyond what seems like destruction, we can see many benefits of beaver activity.

Because trees provide a shady oasis and a natural retreat for humans, people might be upset when beavers fell them, but research has shown that beaver activity provides many ecological benefits. Openings in the forest canopy allow new plants and trees to grow which attracts a great diversity of birds and animals.

Beaver dams clean the water by slowing the flow, allowing particles to settle out. The pond created by the dam allows water to be released in dry times and held back during rainstorms, reducing the potential negative effects of floods. Beaver ponds create healthy habitats for creatures from beetles and butterflies to mallards and moose.

Try It!

As you walk, look for beaver-cut trees that are resprouting and think about how this improves the forest.

Image Courtesy of Rose Ratliffe

