

Attitudes and Opinions Regarding Beaver and Beaver Management in Wisconsin

Background

- » A questionnaire was mailed to 8,000 randomly selected Wisconsin households during 2024.
- » The aim of the survey was to better understand viewpoints of all Wisconsinites as they relate to beaver and beaver management in Wisconsin.
- » The study was conducted in support of the update to Wisconsin's beaver management plan.
- » In total, 2,716 households responded for a response rate of 38%.

Awareness and Experience

- » 94% were aware beavers are present in Wisconsin
- » 80% have seen a beaver in the wild
- » 81% have encountered signs of a beaver (e.g., chew marks or a dam)
- » 25% have experienced beaver damage to neighboring properties
- » 11% have experienced beaver damage to their property

Attitudes and Opinions

- » 77% were favorable 18% were indifferent, and 6% were unfavorable toward beavers in Wisconsin
- » Most trusted the Wisconsin DNR to make decisions that are good for the resource (70%), appropriately use science and data (70%), listen to concerns of citizens (61%), and use reliable methods to estimate beaver populations (61%).

Management Preferences

- » Most said their preferred abundance of beavers in their county of residence and across the state was about the same as current levels.
- » Most supported education as a management priority and response option to beaver-human conflict scenarios.