

Beaver Management and Regulation in Alberta

Putting Beavers to Work for Watershed
Resiliency and Restoration Symposium

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Canada (and Alberta) have a rich history of trapping beavers

- Important part of the fur trade
- Important for Indigenous Peoples
- Rich history and wilderness connection for Alberta trappers

Legislative Context

- **Beavers are protected and managed in Alberta under the *Wildlife Act and Regulations***
 - Listed as Wildlife in Schedule 4 of the *Wildlife Regulations*
 - Listed as A Fur-Bearing Animal in Part 3 of the *Wildlife Regulations*
- **Provincial Status is Secure**
 - **Abundant throughout Alberta and located where suitable habitat is available**

Trapping of Beavers in Alberta

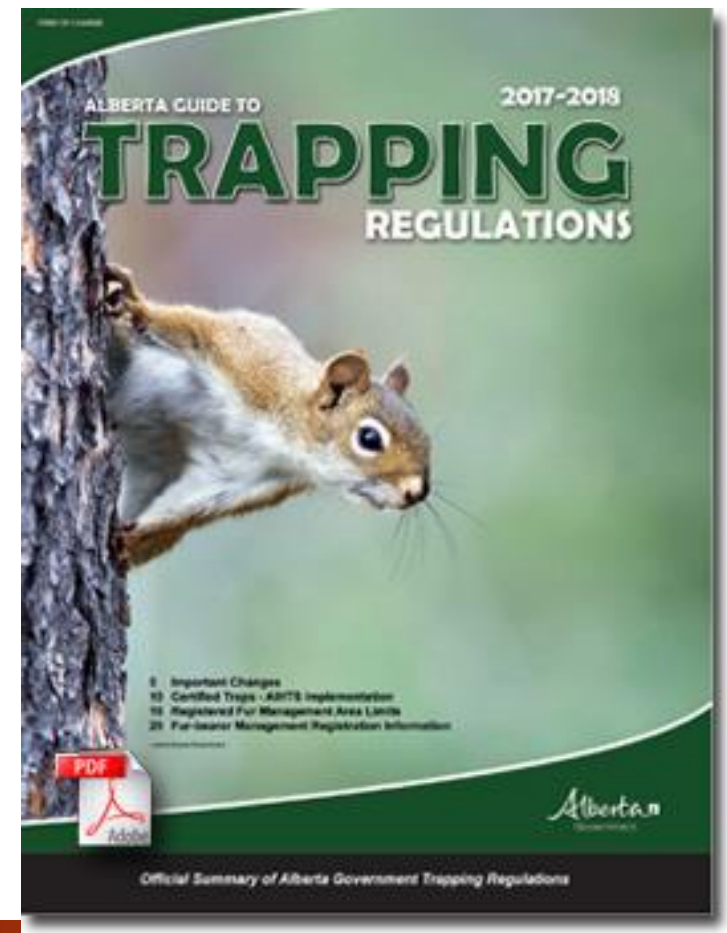
- Commercial harvest regulated through Fur Management Licences:
 - **Registered Fur Management Licences** – authority to trap on designated Registered Fur Management Area
 - **Resident Fur Management Licence** – provides qualified person authority to trap on own property or other private or leased land with permission
 - **Indian Fur Management Licence** – allows Indigenous people to hunt and trap fur bearing animals within Indian Reserves
 - **Metis Fur Management Licence** – allows Metis settlement members to hunt and trap within the boundaries of Metis Settlements

Requirements to start trapping

- **Complete a Trapper Education Course**
- **Pass a test which deals with humane trapping and fur management**

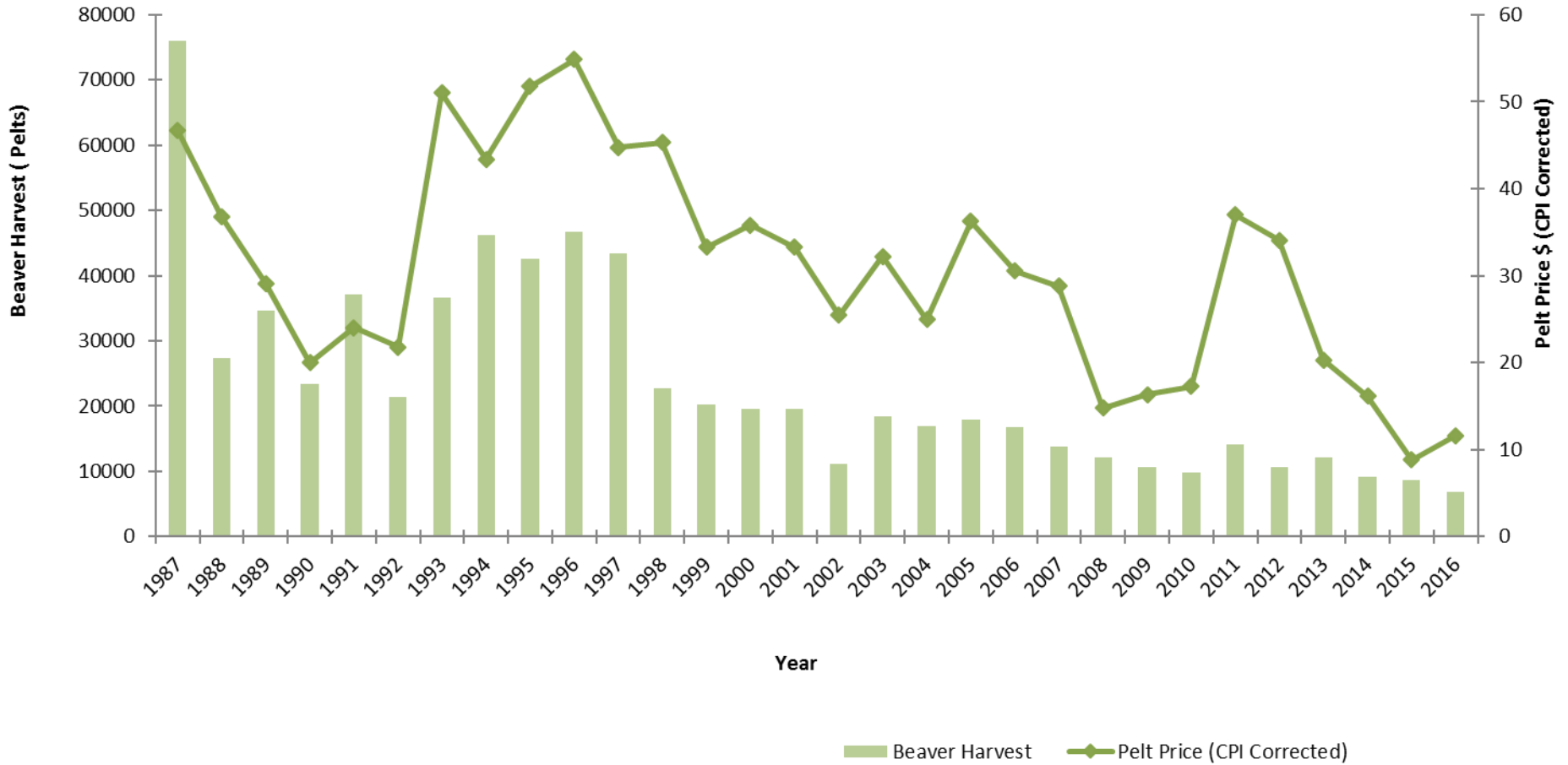
Alberta Guide to Trapping Regulations

- Provides list of traps acceptable for beavers
- Lists seasons of allowable harvest (timed for pelt quality)
 - October to April/May depending on Zone for Beaver
- Specifies limits for harvest
 - No specified limits for beavers



Albert Beaver Harvest vs Pelt Price

1987 - 2016



Beaver in the Problem Wildlife Context

- Regulations allow for allow landholders (residents only) to take immediate action to control some problem wildlife – including beavers.
- May be hunted and trapped, without a license and during all seasons, on privately owned land by the owner or occupant of the land, or by a resident with written permission from the owner or occupant of the land.
- **ON PUBLIC LANDS:**
 - Preference to work with registered trapper if in season
 - Alternative to obtain a Damage Control Licence

Removal of Problem Beaver Dams

- Under the *Wildlife Act*, section 36(1), “a person shall not willfully molest, disturb or destroy...a beaver dam...”
- To do this on Public Lands, an individual would require a **Damage Control Licence**
- also need authorisation under the **Water Act** (for all lands) and **Federal Fisheries Act** for certain situations

Beaver Management on the ground

- **High value placed on beavers in Alberta**
 - Recognition as an important part of our natural system
 - Recognition that beavers are an important resource for trappers (have value)
- **BUT:**
 - Recognition there are certain problem situation where active removal is required
 - Cooperation with trapping community is an important tool that is often used in problem situations
 - Some Counties/Municipalities also have Ag Fieldmen or other staff/resources in place to assist

What about relocation as a tool?

- **No clear policy specific to beaver translocation in Alberta**
- **There is an ability to move wildlife under the Wildlife Act and regulations BUT must be authorized by a collection license**
- **Any translocations would only be considered under IUCN criteria (criteria applied for any wildlife translocations in Alberta)**
- **Focus for riparian habitat work in the province is largely directed for habitat conservation**

Questions?
