

January 10, 2021

Mayor & Council, Town of Aurora

allcouncillors@aurora.ca

cc Lori McLean l.mclean@lsrca.on.ca

Judy Milner j.milner@lsrca.on.ca



85 DARIOLE DRIVE
RICHMOND HILL, ON L4E 0Z4

RE: ALTERNATIVES TO TRAPPING BEAVERS

It has been brought to the attention of York Region Environmental Alliance (YREA) that traps for beavers near the Bayview & St. John's Sideroad area are in place. The apparent intention is to protect trees by inhumanely displacing the beavers without due consideration for their biological importance.

By impounding water and felling trees, beavers not only provide themselves with wood for their lodges and twigs for their food, they also open areas creating opportunities for a variety of plants and animals. Because of this, they have been called a keystone species in temperate environments.

Has Aurora Council considered humanely capturing and moving the beavers to the McKenzie wetland? Beaver-killed trees provide sites for cavity-nesting birds. Toads, frogs and newts breed and thrive in the ponds, providing food for herons and racoons. Seeing a beaver lodge can be awe inspiring for young and old and lead to a better knowledge and appreciation of the natural world. It could be a focal point of a McKenzie wetland visit.

The water and its surroundings may also attract mink and muskrat. Thus, the activities of the beaver serve to increase the biodiversity of the areas it inhabits. The Town needs to take an ecological approach to this situation, by planting more trees – leaving some for the beavers and protecting a portion of the rest in a more sensitive manner without injuring wildlife as suggested below.



Individual trees can be spared from beaver gnawing by placing wire cylinders around the base of their trunks. The heavy wire cylinder of 2"x4" mesh will keep the beaver from getting to the tree. It should have about a 3-6" gap to allow for tree growth and doesn't need to be secured to the ground. The height of the wire tree collar should be about 2' above the highest winter snow line. The technique is 100% effective, only takes a few minutes per tree, is inexpensive, and will remain effective for many years with no maintenance.

Please consider YREA's suggested alternatives to the present callous method to wildlife control and instead choose an approach that works with nature to enhance biodiversity rather than destroying it.

Sincerely

Gloria Marsh, Executive Director

York Region Environmental Alliance

gloria@yrea.org