

## **Cost or Benefit? Using Pond Levellers to Mitigate Human-Beaver Conflicts**

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### *Oral Presentation Abstract:*

Human-wildlife conflicts can create social, economic and environmental issues within protected areas and rural municipalities. Increasingly, parks and rural municipalities are tasked with managing these conflicts, despite sometimes unclear jurisdictional and political boundaries. Wildlife, as a public good, is also highly valued by Albertans for recreational and aesthetic reasons. For this study, we developed a cost-benefit analysis to assess the management of human-beaver conflicts within the Cooking Lake/Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area and Beaver County. Through the installation of pond-levelers and an assessment of their efficacy over several years we were able compare traditional and alternative management approaches. This research provides greater insight into how wildlife are managed at a local park or municipal level and how well these management actions perform relative to economic and ecological metrics.

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