

**HIDDEN LAKE AQUATIC WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
HIDDEN LAKE ASSOCIATION**

TREE PROTECTION INFORMATION SHEET



One of the goals of the Aquatic Wildlife Subcommittee was to provide information on our natural resources and support to Hidden Lake association members on issues of wildlife that were a concern to members especially in protecting trees from beaver activity.

We have researched and identified two methods that have high success in protecting trees. Any tree protection should be done before October and November as this is when there is a possibility of an increase in beaver activity and trees would be most at risk. This information sheet describes both methods and provides instruction. Presently, our committee and a few volunteers are in the process of wrapping trees on all of the association beaches. Work has already been done on all of the beach areas to clear any stumps or debris that were deemed potentially hazardous. Feel free to take a walk to the beach if you would like to see how the tree cages look.

We are also announcing a program to provide wire fencing for tree protection to any homeowner who has lake front property. The tree fencing materials has been approved and purchased by the association board in order to ensure proper protection of our resources.

INSTRUCTIONS GO HERE:

If you are interested in getting the material needed, please send an email with your name, address and contact number to: _____ . This sheet includes instructions on two proven methods of protecting trees. If you choose the wire cage method, directions for estimating how much fencing would be needed is explained.

If anyone would like to volunteer if a neighbor needs assistance, or is anyone has any questions, please email _____ .

Again, the members of this committee would like to thank the Hidden Lake Board for their enthusiasm and support which has made this project possible.

Protecting Trees with wire fencing

If you are concerned about current or potential beaver issues, one of the first things you can do is take a look at your property's tree scape. Beavers tend to prefer faster growing tree varieties such as poplar, willow, cottonwood and alder. They also tend to go after trees within five yards of their shoreline habitat. While beavers prefer certain trees, they do not necessarily take them in order of preference. When planting trees along a shoreline, consider less palatable varieties, such as spruces in the eastern U.S. and plant them ten yards or more from the shore when possible.

The best way to protect your trees is to wrap them with cylinder cages. You will need fencing, wire snips and gloves. The tree trunk fence cylinders are best made using **19 gauge hardware cloth or sturdy galvanized welded wire fencing with 2- 4" X 2- 4" mesh** openings. You can paint your hardware cloth with a flat brown spray paint to make it blend in with surroundings. Do not use chicken wire as it will rust out in a year or two. We recommend 4 foot high fence so the beavers cannot get above it. In cold climates make sure the fence height is 2 feet above the highest snow level to prevent winter tree chewing.

To make a cage, measure the circumference of your tree adding at least one foot to the measurement. With simple wire snips, cut a length of fence long enough to encircle the tree trunk while leaving a 6 inch gap between the wire mesh cylinder and the tree trunk - this is very important to allow the tree room to grow. You can cut the bottom of the cylinder to fit a sloping ground. Large exposed roots that extend outside the cage may need to be protected too. On one end of the cage, bend every other horizontal wire into hooks to connect with the other side. Wire fasteners or small zip ties can also be used to fashion the cage. One can also anchor the cages to the ground with stakes to keep beavers from pushing it against the tree. Large groups of closely spaced trees or shrubs may be wrapped as a group to facilitate protection of valuable landscape plantings. Check your cages periodically to make sure they are secure and in good shape. They should last for many years.

Sand Paint Tree Protection

Painting trees is one of the newer tree related beaver control methods practiced today, but wrapping a tree will always protect a tree much better and much longer for a lot less work. When utilizing the painting method, mature tree trunks are coated with a mixture of sand and paint to help prevent gnawing. Latex paint allows the bark to "breathe", while the gritty texture of the sand deters beavers. For aesthetic purposes, the paint can be color-coded to match the trees. A paint store can color match exterior paint to the color of your trees if you bring them a 6" piece of the bark. Trees should only be painted about four feet high and young trees or saplings should not be painted at all. Instead, you can use the tree cages described above to protect trees too young to be painted. The paint used on your trees should be a specific mixture of sand to paint.

Ingredients

1. Paint: Exterior Latex (choose a color to match the bark)
2. Mason Sand: 30 mil – 70 mil

Formula

- Mix 5 oz sand per quart of paint, or
- Mix 20 oz sand per gallon of paint

Procedure

Make in small batches at a time on the day you are going to apply it. Using too much sand will cause the mixture to roll off the tree. Apply paint to bottom three to four feet of tree trunk (2 feet above snow). Renew the paint every 2 - 3 years as needed. Consider leaving some trees unpainted for beaver food.