

## Identification

- Largest rodent in North America
- Adults weigh 30 – 60 pounds
- Fur reddish-brown to almost black
- Flattened tail with leathery scales
- Webbed hind feet
- Small eyes and ears
- Large orange-red incisors



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- Large orange-red incisors
- Sometimes confused with muskrats



Photo courtesy of USFWS

## History of Beaver in Illinois and Wisconsin

- Common at time of European settlement
- Valued for their pelts and glands
- Heavy trapping pressure
- Rare by mid-1800's
- Extirpated by early 1900's
- Reintroductions in the 1920's – 1950's
- Beaver are now common



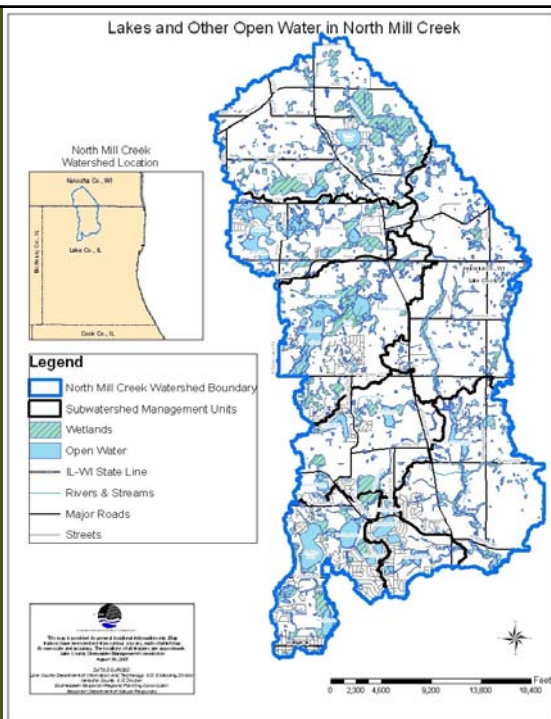
Photo courtesy of USFWS

# Range and Habitat

- Occur statewide
- Associated with water
- Streams, rivers, ponds, lakes, marshes, drainage ditches, canals



Lakes and Other Open Water in North Mill Creek



## Behavior and Habits

- Primarily nocturnal
- Mainly aquatic
- Build dams, canals, lodges, and burrows
- Live in colonies
  - adult male and female
  - young from previous year
  - young from current year
- Down trees
  - food
  - lodge and dam materials
- Do not hibernate
  - cache food for winter



## Diet

- Herbivorous
- Spring and summer
  - herbaceous plants
    - water lilies
    - cattails
    - clovers
    - corn
- Fall and winter
  - woody plants
    - willow
    - cottonwood
    - boxelder
    - dogwood
    - oak



## Ecological Role

- Control water levels
- Create wetlands
- Create habitat for fish, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and other mammals



## Damage and Damage Identification

- Downed trees or trees with characteristic chew marks



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- Plugged culverts



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## Damage Prevention and Control Methods

- Tolerance
- Repellents
- Exclusion
- Dam removal
- Water control structures
- Removal



## Damage Prevention and Control Methods

- Tolerance
  - inexpensive
  - can be enjoyable



## Damage Prevention and Control Methods

- Tolerance
- Repellents
  - usually temporary
  - may or may not be effective



## Damage Prevention and Control Methods

- Tolerance
- Repellents
- Exclusion
  - tree protection
  - culvert protection



## Damage Prevention and Control Methods

- Tolerance
- Repellents
- Exclusion
- Dam removal
  - labor intensive
  - usually temporary



## Damage Prevention and Control Methods

- Tolerance
- Repellents
- Exclusion
- Dam removal
- Water control structures
  - provide long-term solution
  - not applicable in all situations
  - can be costly
  - require maintenance



# Damage Prevention and Control Methods

- Tolerance
- Repellents
- Exclusion
  - tree protection
  - culvert protection
- Dam removal
- Water control structures
- Removal
  - trapping
  - shooting

# Damage Prevention and Control Methods

- Tolerance
- Repellents
- Exclusion
- Dam removal
- Water control structures
- Removal
- Multiple methods in combination



## Legal Status

- Beaver are protected in Illinois and Wisconsin
  - Special permits may be required to trap and remove beaver
  - Consult your state's Department of Natural Resources for applicable regulations
- Waterways may be under jurisdiction of a local, state, or federal entity

