

## How Beavers Help Create Drought and Fire-resistant Land Pre-unit Worksheet (Teacher Guide)

1. Why were beavers nearly hunted to extinction?

Fashion statement - used in hats and accessories

Damaged/flooded farmland so were removed - thought of as a nuisance

2. What made people notice the impact of the beaver on the landscape?

After a fire there was one oasis of green around a beaver dam and pond.

3. What effects does a beaver dam have on water?

Effects are:

Keep rainwater and snowmelt from draining down rivers and into the ocean

This results in:

a natural fire break and reservoir

Which is important because:

Releases water over time which people in the west use to irrigate, grow food and drink.

4. How are scientists using beavers as “climate change engineers”?

Reintroducing beavers into ponds in the western United States.  
People are building starter dams so the beavers can build colonies and help naturally create water reservoirs.

5. On the back of the paper talk about what changes you think might have been caused by the removal of beavers from the ecosystem in the American West during the 1800's.