OUTDOOR CALIFORNIA BY THE DIVISION OF FISH & GAME

CALIFORNIA'S BUSY BEAVERS

ARE BEING TRANSPLANTED
-SOMETIMES BY PARACHUTE-
TO MOUNTAIN AREAS
WHERE THEIR INDUSTRY
AND SKILL WILL BENEFIT
THE STATE

THESE BEAVERS ARE
LIVE-TRAPPED BY
THE DEPARTMENT
OF FISH AND GAME
IN FARM AREAS WHERE
THEY CAN DAMAGE
CROPS AND LEVEES

BAILEY LIVETRAPS
ARE HARMLESS

BEAVER DAMS IN THE MOUNTAINS SAVE WATER
FOR FISH, WILDLIFE AND AGRICULTURE.

ANNOTATED CA 1950

BEAVER LIVE TRAPPING AND TRANSPLANTING - REVIEW 1923 - 1950

The first beaver transplanting inCalifornia occurred in 1923, as an accidental escape of 23 beaver from a fur farm in Genesee into Indian Creek, Plumas County. According to the records these were Sonora beaver (C. C. frondator). from Riverside County

The first authorized plants were made by the U. S. Forest Service in 1934. These were C. C. Taylori introduced from the Snake River in Idaho. One plant of two pair was made in Roland Creek, Plumas County, and another plant of two pair in Wheats Creek, Tuolumne County. The plant in Roland Creek was very successful, due possibly to the exceedingly favorable habitat and the adaptability of the Idaho beaver to high altitudes. More than 200 beaver - 178 at the end of 1949 - have been live trapped and transplanted from Plumas County to other water sheds in the State, and practically all of the streams adjacent to the arigonal plant in the Plumas County are now stocked with beaver through natural migration. No beaver have been live trapped from the Tuolumne County plant but recent checks show that here to there has been considerable migration into adjacent waters.

The Bureau of Game Conservation beaver program developed as a result of a fur survey in which Gordon True, Donald Tappe, Howard Twining, Arthur Hensley, and George Seymour participated. This was in the early 1940's.

In 1942, according to Tappe, the beaver population was estimated at 1,300 animals in the entire State. (Est. 20,000 now.)

It was decided that a program of live trapping and transplanting would be beneficial, not only to the preservation of a valuable fur-bearing species which was on the way to extinction, but also in the removal of nuisance beaver from agricultural areas to mountainous regions where their work might prove beneficial to Fish and Game; also, as a soil erosion control measure and provide an additional supply of water and green forage for livestock and game through the dry months, and perhaps in time a fur crop.

About all these beaver pioneers had to work with was the old model Bailey beaver live trap, burlap bags, and the "tandex tail hold." Why there weren't more injuries to both the workers and the beaver is hard to understand.

Although experimental beaver plants were made by the U. S. Forest Service and the Division of Fish and Game as early as 1934, a large scale program was not launched until 1945, when Bill and Alfretta Pollard were employed on full time beaver work by the Bureau of Game Conservation.

Specifications and instructions for building holding pens, transportation boxes, nets, etc., was obtained from the Oregon Game Department. The method of external sexing now in use was perfected by Pollard and Hensley.

Methods of feeding holding, transporting, trapping, etc. were improved by field personnel as time went on.

Everyone who worked on the beaver project added something in the way of improvement until today we are able to transport and transplatn beaver from Northern California to the southern most portions of the State by plane and parachute in a matter of only a few hours, and at an average cost of less than $10 per animal planted.

The idea of planting beaver by means of expendable parachute was first conceived by Elmo Heater and Ival Sies of the Idaho Game Department. After experiments in the area of using burlap chutes was abondoned. However, they did successfully plant beaver by means of silk chutes. The cost of such chutes when not retirievable made their use prohibitive. A wooden box which opened under elastic tension was used as a conveyor for the beaver by the Idaho men.

After the 1949 live trapping season, Mr. Glading assigned me to the task of figuring out a practical method of planting beaver from the air. With the cooperation of the U. S. Forest Service we were able to fulfill the assignment. The experimental drops were made at Eagle Field, Dos Palos, on May 16, 1950. This experiment was so successful that it was decided to use this method of planting beaver. During the 1950 season 24 animals were successfully planted in Eldorado County by means of 10 x 10' burlap cargo chutes.

Beaver Population Estimates

1942 - (1300 Tappe)	Young	Yearlings	Adults
1942	500	300	500
1943	500	500	800
1944	800	500	1300
1945	1300	800	1800
1946	1800	1300	2600
1947	2600	1800	3900
1948	3900	2600	5700
1949	5700	3900	8300
1950	8300	5700	12200

Total Population 1950 estimate at 20,000