



FINAL REPORT: **BEAVER DAMS BUILD NEIGHBORHOODS:** *Playing with a Full Deck*

"The sun shines not on us but in us. The rivers flow not past, but through us." John Muir

Every beaver festival has its own vibe: some are full almost rafters with strangers who barely know the beaver story. Some are so dominated by locals it is practically a reunion. This was full of good feeling and beaver believers. Not the MOST but the BEST people, and more children than we have seen recent years. One woman arrived with her suitcase from Chicago after reading about the festival in this month's National Geographic. She has plans to start her own festival next year.



to the
Some
festival
people,
in



REQUEST FOR CHANGES TO THE GRANT APPROVAL AND EXPLANATION OF CHANGES:

The trading card activity was a huge hit with attendees – such that several young adults tried to slip in as well. There were a few significant changes we employed to make the activity run smoother, which made alterations to the expenses listed in the grant. First of all we decided to have children trade with other children to receive the cards, rather than simply receive them from an exhibitor. This meant that they were responsible for identifying

every card and knowing what was missing. It also made for a more active understanding of beaver pond neighborhoods and when each child returned to the starting booth with their complete set to “Join the beaver booster pack” they were smiling and proud. Some children even said they had put the cards in order!

Since we were able to have our own volunteers staffing the “trading booth” we were more able to monitor the activity and be sure every child knew what was involved. We added one other card with an overview of the project and showing all the cards they were meant to collect. Because of our early ordering and return customer status this still cost less than was budgeted for the original 600 cards. However since the children were trading amongst themselves to collect the cards we needed more prominent signs marking the activity at a slightly higher cost. It turned out that this had the added benefit of making it more visible to adult attendees as well who presented to volunteers with questions and comments about beaver ponds.



Finally, a third change was the packaging for the cards themselves. Our original idea was to use credit card sleeves for children to keep the cards, but in actuality we learned that the sleeves were much too slender to hold the cards. In reviewing our options we saw a thin card case from the same company that could hold a few business cards at a time. These were far too expensive to order for 100 children so we ordered one to familiarize ourselves



with the design then fashioned them ourselves on evenings and weekends. The paper, stickers and gluesticks needed for the designs are listed in the receipts. It was surprising how impressed children were by the finished packs and how seriously they responded to earning them.

More boys than girls wanted to participate for the first time. In all eighty children participated in the card activity. Fifty of those took the post test with an accuracy of 80%. Most of those that got items incorrect were confused by the idea of predators being part of a healthy creek although everyone seemed to know right away that trash and fishing tackle didn't belong.

As usual children were eager to show off their knowledge with the post-test. Often parents had to be encouraged to stand back and let their child puzzle out the answer for themselves. Participants were very motivated by the chance of winning one of the beaver kit puppets. One of the lucky winners made sure his answers were understood by writing them out at the bottom of the test. Winning contestants were from Santa Clara and Concord.



Meanwhile the chalk artist completed her compelling design in the middle of the exhibit for all to see. Because of the 'tooth' of the patio she made the decision to use a slightly less expensive pastel than in previous years. We made the decision to credit her with an sandwich sign near the display using chalk pens. Building on the chalk theme we added a small chalk board to the start of the trading card activity. A brother and sister team were allowed to help with some of the lettering.

One of the nicest parts about her work is that it makes everyone feel as if they are included as part of the beaver story, with the creek unfolding right at their feet. Several people thanked us for bringing the festival to Martinez and one woman proudly displayed the beaver shirt she had obtained at the very first festival back in 2008.

All in all it was a dam fine day!

*Heidi Perryman. Ph.D.
President & Founder
Worth A Dam
July 6th, 2025*



Worth A Dam: Playing with a full Deck Expenses

CARDS			
133.35	6 trading cards x 100		
64.32	Explainer Card X 100		
197.67		\$197.67	Actual = Trading Cards
CARD SLEEVES		\$81.37	Home made version
18.73	sample	\$212.15	Cost for display signs
16.45	cardstock	\$127.46	Chalk expenses
7.22	glue stick	\$22.89	End signs & Post test
9.99	gold emboss sticker	\$394.48	Maps for cards and exhibits
10.96	Booster pack stickers	\$1,036.02	Total
18.02	Booster pack stickers		
81.37		81.37	Home made version
Trading Card Signs			
155.13	Trading Card Signs		
36.18	Neighborhood pond flags 2		
20.84	flag pole		
212.15		212.15	Cost for display signs
Chalk Artist			
81.5	Actual Chalk cost		
18.53	Chalk pens for mar1uee		
27.43	Small Chalk board activity		
127.46		127.46	Chalk expenses
End signs & Post Test			
16.45	Trading post sign		
6.44	Pens for post test		
22.89		22.89	End signs & Post test
Maps/Brochures			
394.28	Brochures X 500		
		394.48	Maps for cards and exhibits
		\$1,036.02	Total



Project Budget (itemized):

The following expense list outlines costs for the activity. Note that in-kind donated services include: sponsor consultation and participation, card design and Amy G. Hall two day artwork.

Trading cards	100 sets x 6	250.00
100 Credit card sleeves	2 beaver pond sticker	50.00
Exhibit location map	festival brochure x 500	350.00
Trading card flags	x 6	100.00
5 artist quality 48 Koss soft chalk pastels		250.00
Printing of signs & post tests		30.00

Total cost for project:

1030.00