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The current population of beaver is at a very low level with a statewide estimate of 60,000 animals. At present the open season is from the first Saturday in November until the end of March south of Highway 64 and until the end of April north of 64. Spring trapping tends to target dispersing animals while fall and winter trapping targets established colonies. Shortening the season in fall would protect established beaver colonies and allow trappers to take advantage of the spring season when dispersing 2 year old animals will make up a larger proportion of the catch. USDA-APHIS-WILDLIFE SERVICES protects 1500 miles of trout streams and the majority of beavers removed are maintenance related with more than half of the animals taken in the first month (April). Further protection to beaver could be accomplished by delaying the start of maintenance nuisance trapping by USDA-APHIS, Wildlife Services until after the end of beaver season.

Be It Resolved, that the Conservation Congress work with the Department to take action to correct this situation by introducing a rule change to shorten the beaver harvest season by one month in the fall while maintaining beaver trapping opportunity in the spring. Beaver season would start on the first Saturday in December.

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