

**PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY****CARRIER:**

Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

**REVENUE: No revenue impact****FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued****SUBSEQUENT REFERRAL TO:****Action:****Vote:****Yeas:****Nays:****Exc.:**Ayes, 51; Nays, 7--Buckley, Gomberg,  
Greenlick, Helm, Holvey, Linger,  
Taylor;**Prepared By:** Beth Reiley, Administrator**Meeting Dates:** 5/18

**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Directs Department of State Lands (DSL) to establish by rule pilot program for voluntary stream restoration and beaver recovery through construction of artificial beaver dams located in Malheur Lake drainage basin. Defines terms. Requires pilot program to include requirement for monitoring and criteria for evaluating program and requirements for participants to provide information on number and specific locations of artificial beaver dams to be constructed and materials to be used. Exempts construction of artificial beaver dams on qualifying streams from being considered artificial obstructions and exempts them from fish passage requirements. Where practicable, requires DSL to adopt rules that include options for designing and constructing beaver dams in manner for fish passage in a qualifying stream if streams were restored as result of voluntary restoration project or dams that could be modified to provide fish passage if streams were restored and native migratory fish return as result of voluntary restoration project. Requires participating landowners to work collaboratively with State Department of Fish and Wildlife to provide appropriate fish passage for any native migratory fish that return to area in restoration project, but stipulates fish passage may only be required subject to available funding for construction in Fish Passage Fund. Requires DSL to provide preliminary report to Legislative Assembly no later than January 1, 2017 and to report to Legislative Assembly on identified environmental and economic impacts resulting from pilot program no later than January 1, 2025. Sunsets January 2, 2027. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:****EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:**

**BACKGROUND:** Historically, many small streams in eastern Oregon were inhabited by beaver populations and strongly influenced by beavers' unique ability to modify their physical surroundings. Beaver dams had the effect of slowing the flow of water, allowing for natural overflow onto surrounding floodplains and providing many positive benefits to stream ecosystems and to the hydrologic functioning of streams.

House Bill 3217 A would direct the Department of State Lands (DSL) to establish by rule a pilot program for voluntary stream restoration and beaver recovery through construction of artificial beaver dams located in the Malheur Lake drainage basin. The measure would also require the DSL to report to Legislative Assembly on identified environmental and economic impacts resulting from pilot program no later than January 1, 2025 and submit a preliminary report no later than January 1, 2017.

5/15/2015 12:17:00 PM \*

***This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.***

Committee Services Form – 2015 Regular Session