

I am a farmer in Columbia County and live and farm in the Scappoose Drainage District. Beaver management is critical to maintaining my farm infrastructure, preventing flooding and maintaining roads. There are more than 14 Drainage Districts in Columbia County and it is imperative that their system of ditches and infrastructure allows water to flow with no obstructions in the way. These Districts were put in place for agriculture, flooding and sanitation and that must be allowed to continue uninterrupted.

Beavers can cause extensive riparian damage, their dams block culverts, wash out critical roads, flood farm fields, alter water systems, flood homes of landowners as well and in our area can impact the city of Scappoose. I rely on the ability to privately trap beavers to avoid the significant damage that beavers can cause my operation which includes destroying our corn by taking the stalks to for their dens and the ears for food. I do not trap for sport nor do the drainage district staff, we only take them when they are causing damage to my property or impacting my farm as well as all the properties within the boundary of the districts.

Beavers are abundant on our landscape, and there is no data that suggests that they need additional protection. Additionally, the bill purposes to remove the classification of beavers as a rodent. Beavers are taxonomically classified as rodents and should be correctly identified in statute.

As a landowner I need to address a beaver issue that is jeopardizing my property immediately. I cannot afford to be required to get a permit from ODF&W (which I know environmental groups would advocate should eventually not be issued.) Further, the available non-lethal deterrence doesn't work well in my experience, and relocating beavers can actually transfer disease and will pass on the issues listed above to other landowners in other areas.

I and others need to maintain the ability to manage predatory species as needed to protect my farm-the state should not eliminate tools, especially with no sound scientific basis to do so. I ask that you extend the 20 minute hearing on this issue so all farmers/landowners have a chance to be heard.

In closing I urge you to OPPOSE HB 2844.

Sincerely,
Marie Gadotti Farmer/Landowner
President Columbia County Farm Bureau