

My name is Dana Estensen and I am a grape farmer in Marion and Yamhill Counties. Being able to manage beavers, voles and other rodents as well as birds is critical to protecting our grape crop and grapevines, maintaining farm infrastructure, preventing flooding, and maintaining roads.

On our farm birds have destroyed portions of our grape crop, voles have girdled and killed grape vines, beaver dams have blocked culverts causing erosion under our roads and beavers have destroyed trees that were planted as part of a mitigation project. My farmer neighbors have had parts of orchards disappear and farm fields that were flooded and were unable to be farmed/planted due to beavers.

Farmers and ranchers need effective and timely predator control to limit this significant damage that predatory animals cause to our operations. These are economic losses cannot be absorbed. The Oregon Department of Agriculture is the appropriate agency to oversee the management of predatory animals as defined by statute that are destructive to agricultural crops, products and activities.

It would be inappropriate for the ODFW Commission to have authority to make rules and regulations related to predatory animal management on agricultural operations, especially considering nowhere in their mission or as part of their agency operations do they consider the value of agriculture to Oregon, or the economic cost of predatory animal management and damage, including health and sanitation concerns, to this important economic sector.

Please oppose SB 199. Thank you.