

Oregon State Legislature
Oregon State Capitol
House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

March 19, 2023

RE: HB 3464

I am an ecologist who has been working to promote sustainable management of Oregon's natural resources for over 15 years. I work as a Senior Program Manager for an environmental non-profit based in Portland and have been facilitating a multi-stakeholder partnership focused on improving ecological and cultural capacity of beavers and their beneficial behaviors for the last two years. By passing HB 3564 and requiring reporting on the take of beavers, removing beavers' predatory status on private land, and promoting the adoption of co-existence tools that does not include trap and removal the state can ensure that the agency responsible for managing and recovering all of Oregon's fish and wildlife, ODFW, can effectively do so, while taking significant steps to adapt Oregon's natural resources and communities to current and future climate change conditions

As climate change and its impact on wildlife and water worsens, loss of biodiversity intensifies, and habitat degradation expands, it's critical that our natural resources agencies are equipped and prepared to protect essential habitat and the species that rely on them. Beavers are an important tool to help combat some of the worst effects of these environmental crises.

Known as ecosystem engineers, beavers provide a number of environmental services such as creating and restoring habitat like wetlands, capturing excess sediment, recharging groundwater, slowing storm water flow and much more.

Beaver ponds create important habitat for many other species, including juvenile Coho salmon. For example, in the Oregon Coast Coho Conservation Plan, it specifically notes the importance of allowing for the restoration of beavers and beaver dams as a key component to creating and supporting critical Coho habitat.

There are many more examples like these, but one thing is certain: as we look for solutions to solve the mounting environmental challenges of our time such as intensified drought, wildfire, deterioration of quality fish habitat, and biodiversity loss, it's essential to include the restoration of beavers as a primary (and natural) fix. Passing HB 3464 is an important step in doing so.

Current regulation prevents us from using the tools necessary to appropriately manage beaver populations. Without requirements to report the take of beaver, natural resource managers and regulators will never know if and to what scale harvest is impacting healthy beaver population dynamics.

It is critical that HB 3464 is passed to better track, monitor, and analyze beaver presence across all of Oregon, determine where recovery efforts are needed and to encourage co-existence with beavers where possible.

Thank you and I urge your support of HB 3464.



Jean-Paul A. Zagarola
Ecologist in Corvallis, OR