

Submitter: Rebecca Steffoff

On Behalf Of: beavers

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure: HB3464

Dear Members of the Oregon House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment:

I urge you to support HB 3464, removing the designation of “predatory animal” from beaver. I ask this not for fussy semantic reasons, because the beaver is not really a predator, but because beavers deserve and need a higher level of protection, monitoring, and management in Oregon and everywhere.

Studies have shown that in places where beaver have been allowed to use their natural skills at landscape engineering and waterway management, wildfire severity is reduced, riparian ecologies are created or improved, and other forms of wildlife, including salmon and birds, find habitat or resting places during migration. In a time when fires regularly devastate huge swaths of our state and wildlife everywhere is reeling from the loss of habitat, we should see beavers as allies, not as problems to be extirpated. Many places in the western United States and elsewhere are working to restore beaver habitat and to help people learn how to live with or safely remove beaver. These important animals should not be killed at will on private lands without permits.

Of course beaver activity can be destructive or problematic to individual landowners or in certain circumstances, but this is a reason to pass HB 3264 and allow our state agencies, such as the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission, to manage beaver on private land and to oversee and track beaver removals.

Oregon is proud of its state animal, the beaver. HB 3464 is a way of putting that pride into action.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Rebecca Steffoff, Oregon citizen