



Oregon

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To: The Honorable Pam Marsh, Chair
Senate Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment



House Bill 3464

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The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) appreciates this opportunity to provide information relevant to House Bill 3464 and has no position on the bill.

ODFW management of “fur-bearing mammals” (furbearers), as defined in ORS 496.004, provides for both conservation of the species and, as appropriate, harvest opportunities while also addressing human-wildlife conflict. As a furbearer, beaver harvest opportunities and restrictions are described in the current Oregon Furbearer Trapping and Hunting Regulations. Except for nine closure areas, the current regulations establish an annual beaver harvest season from November 15 through March 15 with licensing and harvest reporting requirements. Landowners can obtain a free license to take furbearers on land they own and on which they reside.

For most species of furbearers, take in response to damage or conflict requires a permit issued by the ODFW. Typically, landowners experiencing damage or nuisance from a furbearer species make a phone call to the local department office and discuss the conflict situation with a wildlife biologist. The biologist is often able to provide advice on options to alleviate the conflict through non-lethal actions but may also issue permits allowing lethal take when appropriate. In most situations, determining if lethal take is the appropriate response can be accomplished during the phone conversation. Permits are issued free of charge through ODFW’s damage complaint database and can be either printed and mailed to the landowner or sent same day via email.

Under current statute ORS 610.002, “predatory animals” are regulated by the Oregon Department of Agriculture and include rodents, feral swine, coyotes, rabbit and birds (excluding game birds) that are or may be destructive to agricultural crops. Since beavers are a species of rodents, in most cases a private landowner or their agent may lethally take beaver from their property without a permit pursuant to ORS 610.105.

House Bill 3464 seeks to remove beaver from the definition of “predatory animals” in ORS 610.002. If passed, ODFW would manage permits to take beaver in response to damage consistent with other

furbearers under ORS 496.004. HB 3464 directs the State Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) to adopt rules governing the take of beavers by landowners when beavers are causing damage. The rules must include a reporting requirement for any lethal take of beavers associated with damage. The Commission must also consider options to promote non-lethal alternatives to address beaver conflict and determine whether, and under what conditions, a person may be authorized to take a beaver without a permit.

HB 3464 would not change the management of beavers on certain private timber lands as specified by Senate Bill 1501 (2022), the Private Forest Accord (PFA). On private forestlands subject to the PFA, other than small forestlands, take of beavers for damage purposes is limited to threats to infrastructure with take allowed without a permit for immediate threats to infrastructure and a 30-day wait period if the threat is not an immediate threat.

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