



THE BEAVER COALITION

Rick Cook 18451 SW Stafford, Lake Oswego OR, 97034

Dear Rick,

It has been a pleasure working with you to coexist with the family of beavers that have taken up residence in Pecan Creek on your century farm and the adjacent landscape. As promised, here is a little more context on both beaver's role in creating and maintaining the function of healthy streams, and what makes the beaver family, and their habitat use in your area, unique and important to protect.

For millions of years, the North American Beaver has actively shaped the form and function of aquatic ecosystems in North America. More than glaciers or plate tectonics, beaver have shaped our landscape. Through their predictable construction of dams, ponds, burrows, and channels, beaver have slowed water and sediment down, pushing it up and out, building the valley floors that are the floodplains we and a myriad other species call home. Beaver have provided a stable habitat niche within which the rest of our aquatic ecosystems have evolved. It shouldn't be surprising then, that as we have removed beaver from the system they built and maintained, the structure of our streams, rivers, wetlands, and floodplains has started to crumble.

Beaver are the quintessential "keystone species" for our landscape. Beaver have formed the riverscapes that our fish and wildlife resources depend on, and these riverscapes naturally clean and cool streams, recharge aquifers, and buffer forests and grasslands into a fire resilient landscape. Beaver will actively maintain all of these functions in a robust and dynamic fashion, but quite obviously, only if they are present. Only when beaver are living and working in all of the streams and rivers and floodplains of North America will these riverscapes deliver the ecosystem services we have come to depend upon.

When beaver are removed from streams and rivers, or prevented from becoming re-established in watersheds, the maintenance contract is broken and the system falls into disrepair. Down-cut, incised streams, disconnected from their floodplain, simplify into single-threaded channels. Sediment and carbon are exported from long-term storage, water warms and becomes eutrophic, the landscape dries out, and fires run for miles across a uniform expanse of fuel. Little is left in terms of healthy habitat for fish and wildlife. Beaver-managed floodplains are salmon, trout, and lamprey habitat. Beaver ponds and wetlands are sinks for carbon and processing domains for nitrogen and phosphorus. Beaver floodplains are water-cooling, water-storing, and flood-dissipating places we must foster.

Jakob Shockey, Executive Director PO Box 193 Jacksonville, OR 97530

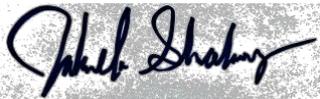
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Beavers, like people, seem to enjoy the fertile low gradient valley bottoms over steeper mountain streams. For these valley bottoms are generally places with adequate forage plants and water availability. Here there is often there is so much water, as in the case with mainstem rivers, that beavers don't need to build dams to have adequate protection from predators. However, much of the attention beaver have received in recent years has been for the habitat they facilitate with their dams on small and mid-sized streams. It is in these systems that beaver dams do the most for increasing water quality and quantity, reducing wildfire risk, and creating and maintaining fish and wildlife habitat.

The family of beavers living on your land is doing all of these things with much less water than I have ever seen beaver persist in a location on. This is great news for you, your farm and your neighbors downstream. It also means that this particular family of beavers represent a relatively rare frontier for beaver dispersal into the systems like Pecan Creek where we need their help fixing streams. This family can be the seed for seeing more beaver-facilitated habitat restoration in your area, but only if they are able to persist in place. If these beavers are trapped out, or leave due to another disturbance, I think it will be unlikely that you will see another family take up residence in the area again soon.

I applaud all you are doing to help beavers stay at this site, and help beavers begin to fix Pecan Creek through insuring adequate dispersal corridors, forage availability and instream complexity.

Sincerely, Jakob Shockey

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jakob Shockey", is placed over a rectangular grey textured background.



To whom it may concern,

The mission of the Oswego Lake Watershed Council is to foster stewardship, education, participation, and financial support for the purpose of the conservation, restoration, enhancement, and maintenance of watershed functions that achieve and sustain a healthy watershed.

The vision of the Oswego Lake Watershed Council is a healthy properly functioning watershed. This vision is of streams, wetlands, riparian forests, upland forests/trees, Oswego Lake, and other natural resources working together as a sustainable ecological system that supports good water quality, productive habitat for native plant and animal communities, and enhanced quality of life.

Oswego Lake Watershed Council supports work to conserve and improve habitat and watershed function along Atherton Tributary and Pecan Creek. We have observed wildlife, especially beavers, activity utilizing and traversing this stream network for habitat. Riparian areas and sensitive lands provide numerous ecosystem services. Pecan Creek and the larger Tualatin River watershed provides drinking water for Clackamas County residents, and habitat for a number of species. OLWC is working to develop restoration projects in this area, with a focus on community and student engagement, habitat enhancement, and stormwater management. We encourage the protection and enhancement of natural resources and habitat along Pecan Creek, and hope to see these prioritized as the area is developed. We look forward to supporting active collaboration between local jurisdictions, residents, community partners, and tribal representatives as projects are developed and implemented.

Jack Halsey, he/him/his pronouns, Watershed Coordinator, Oswego Lake Watershed Council 503-754-8770

