



*~ Working to protect clean water, native fish, and healthy communities in the
Rogue River Basin.*

Chairwoman Marsh, Vice-Chairs Levy, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of House Bill (HB) 3464. Rogue Riverkeeper is a nonprofit advocacy organization that fights for clean water protections in the Rogue River watershed to ensure drinking water, aquatic habitat, and recreation opportunities. We represent over 3,000 supporters and urge you to pass HB 3464 that will provide much needed holistic management of beaver in the state of Oregon. Beavers contribute to vital ground water retention, healthy riparian habitat, and a reduction of wildfire severity. Providing non-lethal beaver management options, removing beaver from the “predator” list, and creating a reporting system on beaver removals are all common sense improvements to current beaver management practices.

Southern Oregon continues to be impacted by severe drought conditions and will benefit from increased ground water retention. Beaver created and maintained wetlands also act as natural buffers to slow the spread of wildfire protecting farms, cities, and critical wildlife habitat. Farmers and ranchers need water to grow crops and raise livestock while cities and towns also need dependable high-quality water, and drinking water. The passing of HB 3464 will diversify the options available to land managers interested in alternative beaver management practices.

By building ponds, wetlands, and wet meadows, beavers create aquatic systems that store and release water slowly helping to offset declines in stream flows and water quality related to declining snowpack and spring melt. Many native fishes species including federally listed coho salmon thrive in cold water stream and river habitat that is only enhanced by the presence of beavers. Rogue Riverkeeper strongly supports HB 3464 and urges the Committee to report out this legislation.

Sincerely,

Emily Bowes
Rogue Riverkeeper Conservation Director