

February 5, 2024

House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for HB 4014 - Support

Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Levy and Levy, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 4014. Central Oregon LandWatch (“LandWatch”) is an Oregon non-profit, public interest organization of about 950 members. Its offices are located in Bend, Oregon. LandWatch’s mission is to defend and plan for Central Oregon’s livable future, and it has advocated for preserving natural resources in Central Oregon for over 30 years.

LandWatch supports HB 4014. As our communities face the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, we must improve our management frameworks to employ better natural solutions that restore and preserve ecosystem functions and processes.

The United Nations Convention on Biodiversity has defined ecological restoration as:

the process of managing or assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged or destroyed as a means of sustaining ecosystem resilience and conserving biodiversity. Degradation is characterized by a decline or loss of biodiversity or ecosystem functions. Degradation and restoration are context-specific and refer to both the state of ecosystems and to ecosystem processes.¹

It is well documented in the literature that beavers can (and do) play a critical role in scaling ecological restoration to meet the current need. Additionally, beavers provide a cost-effective solution to mitigating the impacts of drought, water scarcity, and wildfire, all critically important issues facing Central Oregon communities.

HB 4014 is a pragmatic step that builds upon the legislature's 2023 work to remove beavers from the predatory animal statute by eliminating barriers to landowners interested in embracing non-

¹ [Ecosystem restoration: short-term action plan \(cbd.int\)](https://www.cbd.int/restoration/short-term-action-plan)





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lethal mitigation tools and techniques. Providing financial and technical assistance to landowners helps ensure they have the necessary resources and information to coexist with beavers and supports the myriad ecological benefits beavers can provide on private lands within the state.

LandWatch supports HB 4014.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeremy Austin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jeremy Austin
Wild Lands & Water Program Director
Central Oregon LandWatch
2843 NW Lolo Dr. St. 200
Bend, OR 97703



We defend and plan for Central Oregon's livable future