



CITY OF PORTLAND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



1120 SW Fifth Ave, Suite 613, Portland, Oregon 97204 ■ Mingus Mapps, Commissioner ■ Dawn Uchiyama, Director

February 5, 2024

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

Dear Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Levy and Levy, and members of the committee,

On behalf of the City of Portland's Bureau of Environmental Services, I am writing today to express our strong support for House Bill 4014. This legislation provides significant financial support for the coexistence of beavers and people on private lands.

The City of Portland has long worked to be strong stewards of the natural environment with all our public works bureaus seeking to restore and protect natural spaces and habitat within our urban landscape. In particular, the Bureau of Environmental Services' mission to manage wastewater and stormwater infrastructure to protect public health and the environment supports the City's four watershed health goals (enhancing hydrology, habitat, water and sediment quality, and biological communities).

Beavers support these watershed goals with their transformative dam-building activity and are considered ecosystem engineers and keystone species that: improve stream health and water quality; facilitate groundwater recharge; increase drought and wildfire resiliency; lessen the effects of floods and peak flow events; and support biodiversity by creating new critical and essential habitat for many fish and wildlife species.

The bill creates a grant program that awards money to watershed councils, among others. The bureau has long been a partner with the Columbia Slough, Johnson Creek, and Tryon Creek Watershed Councils, as well as the Westside Watershed Resource Center. This bill will expand the capacity of these close city partners.

While beavers provide important watershed health and ecological benefits, their activities can cause damages to private property and infrastructure. This bill provides support to elevate the positive benefits of beavers and help mitigate the sometimes detrimental impacts of their actions. For these reasons and more, we encourage you to vote yes on HB 4014.

Thank you,

Dawn Uchiyama
Director
Bureau of Environmental Services, City of Portland