

Submitter: Paul Engelmeyer

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure: HB4014

My name is Paul Engelmeyer and I thank you for this opportunity to discuss this next essential step concerning beaver conservation - HB 4014 - I have worked to improve stream habitat in order to help recover coho salmon and improve water quality for over 30 years. I have been working at Portland Audubon's Ten Mile Creek Sanctuary, and with the MidCoast Watersheds Council and have partnered with the Siuslaw NF and ODFW here on the central coast on many projects to improve habitat for coho salmon. Audubon has over 15,000 members from around the state and we are dedicated to protecting habitat for birds, fish, wildlife and all Oregonians.

From my perspective this legislation fills a much needed gap and is a logical next step in beaver conservation. It is clear we are in the process of developing new tools to help with this conservation effort.

I support the proposed legislation since I want to help landowners live with beavers for all the benefits they bring. We are very aware beavers are directly linked to multiple issues that have been on my/our work plan - improving water quality, stream complexity as examples. These issues have been a priority for us on the central coast as well as every other group working to bring back robust populations of salmon. You probably are aware there are approximately 60 watershed councils throughout the state now trying to help recover our ESA listed salmon populations.

And also you are well aware beavers, water quality and quantity are issues identified in every salmon recovery plan. I am sure you all have heard this many times beavers will help with those issues - increasing beaver dams at a landscape scale is a priority issue. This keystone species creates a positive habitat conditions for over 60 species. Truly a keystone species that needs special attention for multiple benefits.

I break this effort down into multiple bins - I see a need to ensure private land owners have adequate funding and expertise to assist in these efforts to improve habitat conditions on their lands. We are well aware programs that are in-play - EQIP as one example and now with HB 4014 it could be expanded to include BDAs potentially and pond levelers as well. This takes a funding line item - an investment in out-reach, as well as expertise in planning and design that will lead to natural infrastructure with many benefits.

This investment is linked to a natural climate solution as well. I have attached a short document from the Interagency Climate Adaptation Library. As you can see key

pieces of the document are perfectly linked to this effort - recommending expanding beaver populations -

The document also includes recommendations that beavers also help with low flows and water quality - the reality that we have water quality problems all over the state - over 112,000 stream miles are water quality impaired - is it a surprise we have ESA listed salmon throughout the state? It is time to invest in natural climate solutions and beavers are just one of the leaders in this adaptive approach. Natural water storage, improved recreational opportunities, and the restoration economy are all real. Dedicating funds to help with this adaptive management approach makes sense -

I hope you can take the time to review this short document that has been pulled from the following source:

Climate Adaptation Library

(developed by USFS, NPS and other organizations)

<http://adaptationpartners.org/library.php>

Mentions how beavers can help many resources

Thank you for this opportunity to discuss this legislation and this keystone species.

Paul Engelmeyer