

Submitter: Elizabeth Collins
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3932

I support HB 3932.

"Oregon's wetlands are key to everything Oregonian, from clean water to agricultural abundance and wildlife habitat. But the threats on Oregon's wetlands continue to increase from a changing climate, growing populations, and development pressures."
Credit: Wetlands Conservancy

"Beavers are ecosystem engineers. As a keystone species they have a disproportionately large effect on their surrounding ecosystem. If they are removed everything else suffers. When beavers build a dam and create a pond they are expanding wetland habitat, cooling and recharging groundwater, diversifying the micro-habitats within the stream channel, building speed bumps that slow down the force of floods, and securing fire breaks."
Credit: ProjectBeaver.org

"For millennia beavers have been building the living conditions that salmon, steelhead, lamprey, frogs, turtles, and willow flycatchers require. But beaver benefits are not restricted to dams alone: their bank tunnels shelter young fish; native turtles bask on their lodges; and migratory birds nest in their coppiced willows. Even the beavers' simple act of cutting and moving stream-side trees and shrubs into the water as they feed builds the foundation for the aquatic food web of a stream—collections of beaver-chewed sticks become "river reefs" teeming with life. Beavers push all of these fantastic ecosystem benefits out ahead of themselves, one dam at a time. They build an aquatic kingdom, each stick and paw-ful of mud expanding a lush, diverse, resilient habitat."
Credit: ProjectBeaver.org

"Even acknowledging that beavers store water and sustain other creatures is insufficient. Because the truth is that beavers are nothing less than continent-scale forces of nature, in large part responsible for sculpting the land upon which we Americans built our towns and raised our food. Beavers shaped North America's ecosystems, its human history, its geology. They whittled our world, and they could again—if, that is, we learn to treat them as allies instead of adversaries. Our future must be as entwined with beavers as our past has been, and yet we must completely reverse the nature of our relationship. They will build it, if we let them come."
Credit: Ben Goldfarb, Eager: The Surprising, Secret Life of Beavers and Why They Matter