

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

Date: 03.25.2025

### Letter of Support for HB 3932

Dear Members of the Committee,

Think Wild, a 501c3 nonprofit organization based in Bend that serves Central and Eastern Oregon, supports HB 3932, the Beaver and Water Quality Bill, for its recognition of the vital role beaver populations play in maintaining healthy waterways and supporting Oregon's wildlife.

The presence of beavers—and the way they engineer their environments—improves water quality, mitigates drought and wildfire impacts, and fosters biodiversity. The legislature took a critical step toward recognizing that the presence of beaver benefits Oregon's ecosystems and promoting beaver population recovery through the passage of HB 3464. But it's only by building on this foundation and advancing beaver coexistence strategies that we can achieve those climate mitigation, wildfire refugia, and firebreak benefits highlighted by the law.

Think Wild's Beaver Works Oregon program works to promote beaver success through riparian habitat restoration, conflict mitigation, and education. We work with landholders across Central and Eastern Oregon - from Klamath County to Harney and Malheur – to promote beaver recovery through restoration and nonlethal conflict mitigation. Our team includes a wetland ecologist and a licensed wildlife control operator.

One of the key takeaways from our work is that removal is not a lasting solution in the immediate or the long term. Trapping only provides temporary relief, as it is only a matter of time until another beaver moves in or the habitat degrades due to their absence. Proven coexistence strategies - like flow devices and culvert protection - offer a more cost-effective and sustainable approach.

The millions spent on statewide habitat restoration efforts aimed at promoting beaver recovery will have little impact if just a couple miles downstream of the project, any existing or incoming beavers are trapped out. As an example, Beaver Works Oregon's multi-year beaver habitat restoration project at Collier Memorial State Park is near several "impaired" public waterways, where our efforts can contribute to ecosystem recovery. However, the benefits of these efforts, along with those of Think Wild and other conservation organizations, are undermined if the few remaining beavers in these impaired waterways are lethally removed or relocated.

Allowing the continued lethal control of beavers is ecologically harmful and undermines vital conservation efforts across Oregon. Protecting beavers by limiting trapping and hunting,

especially along impaired waterways, strengthens restoration initiatives, like those led by Think Wild, while also improving water quality and drought resistance for all Oregonians. We urge the legislature to pass this bill and recognize the essential role beavers play in sustaining the state's natural resources.

Thank you for your time and consideration.