

Submitter: Evan Olden
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3932

I agree that beavers are an important part of the ecosystem. However, I oppose HB3932 for several reasons which I will list below.

- ODFW and the Fish and Wildlife commission have conducted multiple reviews in recent years and determined that trapping harvest does not have a biologically significant impact on beaver populations.
- Approximately 4% of beaver harvest in Oregon occurs on public land, eliminating this proportion will have no effect on beaver populations
- Beaver abundance on public lands is low due to poor forest management that does not encourage healthy riparian areas. Beaver presence is directly tied to the presence of suitable forage, namely willow trees. On public lands willow is scarce because many of these forests were logged and replanted for future harvest in the past. The forest consists of a single age class of genetically identical trees grown in a nursery, and the USFS and BLM have not had the necessary tools to adequately address this issue to promote forest and ecosystem health. If we want more beavers on public land we need to focus on habitat restoration.
- Beaver trapping is a rich cultural tradition, passing this ban would remove this practice from a number of people who do not have access to private land for trapping and other recreational pursuits.
- Decisions relating to natural resources management should be based on science and not left to activists and politicians. The state of Oregon has a perfectly capable wildlife management agency (ODFW) that is entrusted with wildlife stewardship and management. ODFW has been successful in these duties since its inception and is staffed with competent and passionate scientists who should be left to make these decisions.