

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

Dear Senate Resource Committee,

Hello my name is Rusty Kramer and I reside in the desert country of Southern Idaho. I am a farmer, rancher, water master, canal manager, trapper and the president of the Idaho Trappers Association.

Beaver are one of the most misunderstood animals in the world. In some capacity they do good for the environment by backing up the water table, building riparian areas and providing habitat for many animals. These facts are undisputable. In some areas they cause millions of dollars in damage to cropland, roads, houses, and rangeland. Beaver like all animals must be managed!

I live in the very arid part of southern Idaho where we rely on heavy snow pack to grow our crops. I am the watermaster over a huge area in Camas County in charge of hundreds of miles of canals and creeks. We have a lot of beaver issues where beaver plug all of the headgates going to ranchers and farmers crops and pasture. Every year we trap out any problem beaver that are causing issues. Beaver are rodents and are extremely resilient to harvest. We can take a very high percentage of beaver out of a section of a river and in one year they are back, sometimes thicker than the previous year. I have literally been trapping the same section of one river since I was in Jr High, over 30 years. That stretch of river has more beaver than ever. North of the stream I am referring to is a stretch of river on National Forest that had some beaver stocked into it in the 80's and was subsequently closed to all beaver trapping for 30+ years. Beaver dams were thick through this section, every 50 yards had huge dams and huge beaver lodges. 7 years ago the biologist from the Forest Service contacted me about all of the beaver being dead. He told me there was dead floating beaver everywhere through this stretch of river. They tested some of these beaver and realized that the population of these beaver had contracted tularemia. Just like rodent populations do, the populations had gotten so high that mother nature corrected itself and for over 20 miles every single beaver was dead. They literally had "loved" the beaver to death.

I know it is easy to think that we just let nature take its course and everything will be in harmony. In the 21st century that is just not the case. We must manage these wildlife populations just like the water, trees, elk, salmon and turkeys. Humans have been managing beaver populations in Oregon and all over the west for the past 75 years with great success. Beaver populations are healthy all over the west because of managed trapping. Don't manage wildlife through emotions, use your biologists in your game and fish department.

Sincerely
Rusty Kramer