

Submitter: Glenn Fee  
On Behalf Of: Tualatin Riverkeepers  
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and  
Wildfire  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3932

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and Members of the Committee-

On behalf of the 400 members and thousands of volunteers and supporters of Tualatin Riverkeepers, I urge your support of House Bill 3932. Beavers are ecosystem engineers, and this bill would close beaver hunting and trapping in waterways on public lands that the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) classifies as impaired, allowing the beavers to do their work to improve water quality and restore habitat. Beaver activities - such as canal-digging, dam-building, and pond-filling - can help slow water flow, restore impacted water tables and underground aquifers, create natural wetlands that filter toxins, expand riparian habitats for wildlife, and incorporate woody debris in streams for salmon.

Unfortunately, over 100,000 miles of Oregon's waterways, including many in the Tualatin River watershed, are in poor health - their temperature is too high, and there's often significant sedimentation and toxins. DEQ is required to restore these waterways, but this is a monumental task given limited resources. Frankly, beavers can serve as a significant part of the solution. We've been fortunate to participate in a project in our upper watershed along Gales Creek, where a farming family effectively allowed beavers to engineer 10 acres of their land that previously used to grow crops. The transformation of the land into a thriving wetland was stunning, and it was accomplished in only a few years. Rather than water coming off the Coast Range via an unshaded culvert, it's filtered through this thriving wetland, allowing it to support wildlife while staying cool as it makes its way to Gales Creek and on to the Tualatin River.

By supporting this bill, we can enjoy more of these successes across Oregon as an inexpensive means of protecting water quality for humans, salmonids, and other wildlife. We encourage your support of this bill, and we look forward to serving as unwavering partners in restoring land in conjunction with our beaver friends.

Best Regards,

Glenn Fee