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**Memorandum of Support – HB 3932A**

*Relating to protecting beavers.*

Dear Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash, and members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire,

I am writing on behalf of the Animal Legal Defense Fund, and our thousands of members in Oregon, in strong support of HB 3932 A, a common sense and narrowly tailored bill aimed at prohibiting the hunting and trapping of beavers on public lands that the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) deems impaired.

There are approximately 106,390 miles of waterways that the DEQ has declared impaired because of high water temperatures, sedimentation, and toxins. As a keystone species that can dramatically improve the health of surrounding ecosystems, healthy beaver populations are crucial to ensuring the health of our waterways. Studies have shown time and time again the significant role beavers play on their environments. By simply existing and doing what their instincts tell them to do, they can address many of the problems that these impaired waterways face. Their activities, such as canal-digging and dam-building, help slow water flow, restore impacted water tables and underground aquifers, create natural wetlands that filter toxins, and simultaneously create wildlife and fish habitats.<sup>1</sup>

This bill is not about demonizing hunters and trappers or taking away anyone's livelihood. In fact, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's data shows that only approximately 4% of reported beaver harvests come from public land. This bill is narrowly tailored to "impaired" waterways on public lands and will have no impact on trapping in private lands, where the majority of the state's hunters and trappers make their harvests. It would simply protect beavers from being trapped out of areas that desperately need them.

Significant money and time is being spent to restore beavers to waterways all over the state. It does not make any fiscal sense to then allow them to be trapped out of the areas they are needed most before they even have a chance to perform their ecosystem functions. Oregon has a serious water quality crisis and we should be looking at every "tool" possible to address it for our future generations. Beavers are not the only solution to this complex problem, but they are a solution, a free and natural one at that, and should be afforded the protection needed to perform the functions our waterways desperately need.

Allowing beavers to be protected from hunting and trapping in these limited circumstances is a win-win for the species and for the state. For these reasons, we strongly urge you to pass HB 3932 A. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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Legislative Affairs Manager  
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<sup>1</sup> Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, *Living with Wildlife: American Beaver* (2023), available at [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/living\\_with/docs/beaver.pdf](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/living_with/docs/beaver.pdf).

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