

March 15, 2021

Representative Brad Witt, Chairman
House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, Oregon

RE: House Bill 2844: Beaver Management

Chairman Witt and members of the Committee:

My name is Sharon Waterman and our family operation in Coos County is an Oregon Century Ranch. I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this important issue to agriculture, timber, road departments, drainage districts and other agriculture drainage. HB 2844 would limit the ability of private landowners to manage beaver on their property by requiring a permit before removal, non-lethal deterrent measures, and immediate reporting. This would also move management of beavers causing damage out of the Oregon Department of Agriculture and into the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. This is not a good bill and will make the take of beaver more costly and cumbersome.

Currently, beaver are classified as a "rodent" and managed as a predator on private lands under the Oregon Department of Agriculture. Beaver can be taken by private landowners or their agents on their property without the need for state authorization. I encourage you **not** to change this procedure.

Beavers do a lot of damage. In our experience, we have seen beaver destroy our family fruit trees, chew up tide lids and other wood infrastructure, and they dam up drainage ditches causing flooding which impacts not only agriculture land with crops but rural residential properties. Beavers love to plug up culverts under roads which can eventually cause road failures if not detected early. We did a riparian planting as part of a watershed project. The seedlings were planted with protection tubes and the beaver literally destroyed the riparian planting. Landowners must be able to "take" the beavers causing such issues in order to protect their land and infrastructure. Further, the available non-lethal deterrence doesn't work well. Relocating beavers just puts the problems on another person and that is not fair plus the process is time consuming and costly. Beaver dam removal whether it's in a culvert or drainage ditch is truly a challenge, costly, and not an easy job.

Beavers are prevalent and continue to increase in population even with the current take rules. Agriculture and timber landowners, road departments, drainage districts and other rural property owners need to maintain the ability to manage such species as needed to protect their property, crops and infrastructure. The state should not be eliminating the existing tools we have to manage beaver damage or move control of the management to ODF&W. I urge you to vote "NO" on House Bill 2844.

Respectfully,

Sharon Waterman