



OREGON HUNTERS ASSOCIATION

Protecting Oregon's Wildlife, Habitat and Hunting Heritage

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Testimony on HB 2844
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The Oregon Hunters Association has a long history of wildlife and habitat conservation, as well as supporting science-based wildlife management. Based on these tenants, we oppose HB 2844, which would remove beavers from both the predatory animal designation and the rodent listing.

OHA acknowledges that beavers are an important species and bring ecological benefits to Oregon's landscapes. However, beavers can also cause damage issues for Oregon's farmers, ranchers, small woodlands owners, timberland owners, municipalities, water districts, and other entities. Private landowners must have the appropriate means and tools to mitigate these damage issues. HB 2844's removal of beavers from the predatory animal listing would severely hamper landowners ability to take care of damage issues in a timely manner.

Beavers, along with several other animals, are listed both as a furbearer and as a predatory animal. Under current law (ORS 610.002), they can be taken by a private landowner or their agent on private land without the need for state authorization. They can be taken on public lands with a furbearer license and adherence to all pertinent regulations. HB 2844 would change this established management structure, moving implementation of the predatory animal regulation away from Oregon Department of Agriculture, where all other predatory animal rules are currently administered.

This change in process is opposed as it is not grounded in science. Beavers are abundant on our landscape, and there is no data that suggests that they need additional protection. Additionally, the bill proposes to remove the classification of beavers as a rodent. Beavers are scientifically and taxonomically classified as rodents and should continue to be correctly identified in statute. HB 2844 does not allow for agile management. It would remove the ability of landowners to address damage on their property without first getting a permit from ODFW and completing non-lethal deterrence as outlined in the bill, some of which will actually harm beaver populations. There is no ability to expedite this process if there is a beaver whose foraging activity or dam is causing jeopardy to property or damaging crops.

Additionally, there is presently an ongoing workgroup process established by ODFW to discuss beaver management. It would be premature for the legislature to disrupt or circumvent that ongoing process. In truth, this bill is also simply another attack on trapping in the state of Oregon. Numerous petitions and legislative concepts have been initiated in recent years to restrict or ban trapping activities. Trapping is a scientifically sound, responsible, and sustainable activity within the tenants of the North American Model of Conservation, a vital heritage skill, and cultural touchstone within many communities.

HB 2844 is not grounded in science, nor has it proven a need to move away from the established management structure relating to predatory animals and beaver, in particular. We urge the committee to oppose HB 2844.