



March 18, 2021

RE: Testimony on HB 2844

Chair Witt, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the invitation to provide testimony. Since 2015, I've owned and operated a small business, through which I've helped people solve frustrating beaver problems with long-term, cost-effective solutions. I've worked with home-owners and neighborhood associations, farmers and private timber industry, county public works departments, city municipalities, engineering firms, restoration practitioners, nonprofits, and federal and state agencies. I don't advertise—these partnerships have been the result of referral and word-of-mouth.

Beaver are territorial, and seem to mate for life. Management through trapping—whether lethal or for relocation, is like posting a vacancy sign in a place beaver have clearly identified as good habitat. It's only a matter of time before a new pair moves in—could be a year, and it could be only six weeks later.

Coexistence solutions, like pond levelers and culvert protection systems, enable us to step off that frustrating treadmill of trapping and reactive management, and stabilize flooding issues for the long-term. There are also practical ways to protect trees we don't want beaver eating, whether it's a couple ornamental trees in a city park, or a large orchard or blueberry patch. For a few thousand dollars and with readily available materials, I have stabilized situations at road culverts that have cost tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars to deal with, over years and decades. It sounds too good to be true. It's not—humans really can outsmart this rodent.

Last year, I co-founded The Beaver Coalition, a nonprofit focused on empowering humans to partner with beaver. We are working in collaboration with ODFW, NOAA and USFWS to develop standards and best management practices—to put more tools in the toolbox for people with beaver issues.

I believe trapping must always be an option, however almost all my clients have said they wished they knew there were non-lethal alternatives sooner—that just this knowledge would have saved them money, time and stress. My sincere hope is that if anything can be bipartisan—it is this idea, that both landowners and wildlife managers need better information on beaver in our state; coexistence techniques, best available science, and population data.

Thank you for your public service, and your thoughtful deliberation on this issue.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jakob Shoddy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.