



3910 NE 10th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97212

March 18, 2021

Representative Brad Witt
Chairman, House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
900 Court St. NE, H-382
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support for HB 2844

Dear Chairman Witt and House Committee Members:

I am a life-long Oregonian. I am also an Oregon registered professional civil engineer since 1987 and an Oregon registered geotechnical engineer since 2005. I live and work in Portland.

I support HB 2844. As an engineer that has designed small dams and culverts and has dealt with flooding issues, I know that there are no bad beavers, just poorly designed culverts and overflow structures. Current, best practice culvert-design, combined with responsible management, can and will solve flooding issues. And will do it cost-effectively.

HB2844 will enable the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission to manage beavers everywhere they occur in Oregon. It will encourage using a variety of co-existence tools but will still allow lethal removal. Mr. Jakob Shockey spoke in your hearing about an array of non-lethal means his company employs to manage beaver-caused flooding issues. I support his work.

In your hearing, Representative Brock Smith, Mary Anne Cooper of the Oregon Farm Bureau, and Ms. Annie Kramer Steincamp, farmer, discussed problems caused by beavers damming culverts.

As old culverts wear out, it is easy to replace them with modern culverts designed to prevent beavers from damming them. Oversized culverts reduce the speed of flow, decreasing the likelihood that beavers will want to dam them. Oversized culverts also make fish passage easier. Some landowners and public agencies have success with steel culverts with flared ends or rectangular concrete culverts.

If replacing is not an option, several methods of controlling beavers around existing culverts include:

- Installing devices that keep beavers from damming culverts
- Installing devices that reduce the speed of water flow at the culvert's entrance or exit
- Using devices to frighten beavers



- Using repellants
- Installing fencing

As Dr. Emily Fairfax noted, beavers provide many hundreds of thousands of dollars of ecosystem benefits were square mile of beaver-dammed riparian area. This benefit should and must factor into the cost of replacing old, poorly performing culverts.

This bill encourages the use of non-lethal co-existence tools to prevent beaver-related property and infrastructure damage. That is smart and cost-effective. I approve of the bill.

Sincerely,

ALDER GEOTECHNICAL SERVICES, LLC

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John N. Cunningham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, wavy horizontal line extending to the right.

John Cunningham, P.E., G.E.
Oregon Geotechnical Engineer No. 13,507

(1) Addressee via pdf