

We write, as two Oregonian senior citizens, in support of HB 2844. This bill removes the “predatory animal” designation of beavers. How ironic that Oregon -- “the beaver state” -- so designates them! Beavers provide amazing ecological benefits to nature, and to our state, including water security (wetlands and ponds store surface and groundwater); wildfire resilience (natural firebreaks and post-fire habitat); salmon recovery (their work provides rearing habitat for multiple imperiled salmonid species); carbon capture and storage (removing carbon from the atmosphere); improved drinking water quality; and improved stream temperatures.

Other benefits of HB 2844 include giving back to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife the ability to manage beaver state-wide, as it does for the majority of Oregon wildlife (deer, elk, black bear, wolves, raccoon, fish and other species). It encourages the use of non-lethal measures to prevent beaver-related damage to property and infrastructure. However, it neither hinders the Oregon Department of Agriculture from working with landowners to protect their property, crops and infrastructure, nor does it preclude the option of lethal removal of beaver for landowners in Oregon.

HB 2844 is a win/win for Oregon and for beaver. Its passage will give better protection for beaver, and provide great ecological benefits for Oregon. Thanks for giving our recommendation your most serious and thoughtful consideration.