

I am writing today in support of HB 2844, specifically in regards to removing beavers as "predatory" animals and creating a new set of guidelines in regards to beavers in this state.

During this era of climate change acceleration and with the increase in frequency and severity of fires here in Oregon, I believe that beavers can play a key part in mitigating both of these crises. Beavers have the unique ability to change landscapes to make increase wetlands and ponds storing surface groundwater and in doing so, creates natural and effective firebreaks as well as improving drinking water quality and stream temperatures and improving habitats for salmon. Beavers dams also sequester carbon, which in turn slows the effects of climate change.

This bill would allow the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to manage beavers in a way to strategically combat climate change and inline with the ways the department is able to manage the majority of other wildlife. Climate change requires all of the tools in our "toolbox" and beavers are a natural, effective tool that we can use, if only they were regarded as a non-predatory animal.

This bill would also encourage non-lethal interventions and would encourage relocation of beavers from places where their habitat might be damaging property and infrastructure to places where their presence could help change the landscape to sequester carbon, improve water quality, and increase groundwater storage.

I highly encourage the committee pass this bill to more effectively manage our beaver population and to help combat climate change.