

Submitter: Terence Shumaker

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure: HB3464

Beavers are a critical link in a healthy environment. Where beavers have been eliminated, the environment suffers. Fewer trees and shrubs such as willow and aspen grow, hence reducing the foliage and tree canopy along streams and ponds. This in turn reduces the habitat for browsing animals and birds. Additionally, the loss of tree canopy along streams leads to increased water temperature, thus creating a hostile environment for fish and other aquatic species.

The presence of beaver dams and ponds increases water retention in watersheds leading to higher water tables and increased stream flow in dry months.

Beavers also promote growth of vigorous shrubs and trees such as willow, maple and aspen by their feeding (trimming and pruning) habits. This can hardly be termed "predatory" because the end effect of a healthy beaver population is an overall healthy riparian environment.