



March 22, 2023

House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for HB 3464

Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Levy and Levy, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for opportunity to provide testimony on HB 3464. Central Oregon LandWatch (“LandWatch”) is an Oregon non-profit, public interest organization of about 700 members. Its offices are located in Bend, Oregon. LandWatch’s mission is to defend and plan for Central Oregon’s livable future, and it has advocated for the preservation of natural resources in Central Oregon for over 30 years.

LandWatch supports HB 3464. As our communities face the twin crises of climate change and the loss of biodiversity, we need to update and improve our management frameworks to better employ natural solutions that restore and preserve ecosystem functions and processes.

The United Nations Convention on Biodiversity has defined ecological restoration as:

the process of managing or assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged or destroyed as a means of sustaining ecosystem resilience and conserving biodiversity. Degradation is characterized by a decline or loss of biodiversity or ecosystem functions. Degradation and restoration are context-specific and refer to both the state of ecosystems and to ecosystem processes.¹

It is well documented in the literature that beavers can (and do) play a critical role in scaling ecological restoration to meet the current need. Additionally, beavers provide a cost-effective solution to mitigating the impacts of drought, water scarcity, and wildfire; all critically important issues facing Central Oregon communities. Oregon’s current classification of beavers as a predatory animal on private lands is both inaccurate and a significant barrier to fully embracing the work beavers can contribute toward a more resilient future.

HB 3464 is a pragmatic step forward that would remove the predatory animal designation and allow for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to manage beaver on private lands, thereby modifying existing management frameworks to better support beavers and the myriad ecological benefits they provide.

¹ [Ecosystem restoration: short-term action plan \(cbd.int\)](http://cbd.int)

LandWatch supports HB 3464.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeremy Austin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeremy" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Austin".

Jeremy Austin
Wild Lands & Water Program Manager
Central Oregon LandWatch
2843 NW Lolo Dr. Ste 200
Bend, OR 97703 | jeremy@colw.org