

Submitter: Montana Pagano

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure: HB3464

I am writing in support of HB 3464. As a fisheries biologist, I work to conserve threatened salmon and steelhead populations in Northeast Oregon. Specifically, my work is in watershed/habitat restoration. What I have learned over the course of my career is the significant lack of beaver on the landscape, and the ecosystem-wide benefits they provide. "The beaver is a keystone species that has a disproportionately large ecologic, geomorphic, and hydrologic effect on their environment compared with their abundance." As with any wildlife population, particularly that of keystone species, wildlife managers need baseline data related to abundance, distribution, productivity, and depredation in order to better understand their population status. As we learn how essential beaver are in providing water storage, restoring native vegetation, wetlands/wet meadows, fish habitat, wildfire protection, drought resilience, and other solutions to our highly departed ecosystems in the West, we need to establish means to collect more baseline data on these animals. Through the passing of this bill, state wildlife managers can also forge a path towards human/beaver co-existence strategies, broaden public education to help people understand the essential role beaver occupy in our watersheds and bring them back to the landscape.

Sincerely,
Montana Pagano