

Lane County
Audubon
Society



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Please accept this comment on behalf of the Lane County Audubon Society in support of **HB 4014** which would establish the Landowners Living with Beaver Grant Program Fund. Lane County Audubon Society members are dedicated to the conservation of our natural environment, with a primary focus on birds and other wildlife and their habitats. Wetland areas are particularly popular for birding activities due to the large numbers and diversity of birds that can be found in that habitat.

Beavers act as environmental engineers and keystone species that provide multiple benefits to nature. Their activity provides habitat for a host of species. The resultant meadows, wetlands, and riparian vegetation offer resources that may be difficult to find elsewhere. Among the birds supported are kingfishers, herons, ducks, woodpeckers, owls, songbirds, and several sensitive species like the sandhill crane. Beaver activity allows for water storage and helps to suppress damage from floods due to heavy rains. They reduce erosion and help to clean and cool water which, in turn, supports fish and wildlife. Beavers help to mitigate climate change through carbon capture and storage. Beaver activity provides barriers to wildfire spread and refuges for animals when wildfires occur.

We hope that many landowners will recognize the benefits of beaver activity and seek coexistence. Funding from HB 4014 will enable these landowners to be supported in their efforts through financial assistance and technical know-how.

We believe this to be a commonsense bill that allows ODFW to successfully support a healthy population of beavers and the important ecosystem services that they provide. Importantly, it provides a chance for education both on the benefits of beavers and on how to co-exist with them. It provides funding that will allow private landowners to learn about and use non-lethal management tools. Please support HB 4014. Thank you for your consideration.

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