

HB 3932 A -A4, -A5, -A6 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

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Meeting Dates: 5/6, 5/8, 5/20

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure prohibits the taking of beavers in designated areas and requires the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to publish a map identifying these areas. It allows federal or state land management agency employees to take beavers only when necessary to address damage or an imminent threat to infrastructure, agricultural crops, or private property adjacent to public lands, and only with authorization from ODFW. Establishes that it does not supersede the treaty, statutory, regulatory, or aboriginal rights of federally recognized Tribes, nor interfere with Tribal harvest activities or cooperative management agreements between Tribes and ODFW.

Fiscal impact: Has minimal fiscal impact.

Revenue impact: No revenue impact.

Detailed Summary:

Defines terms and prohibits individuals from taking beavers for recreational or commercial purposes in specific areas designated by ODFW. Requires ODFW to identify these areas on a map published and updated every two years in coordination with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Exempts federal or state land management agency employees from prohibition, who may only take or relocate beavers with ODFW approval if needed to address damage or imminent threats to infrastructure, crops, or private land near public lands. Clarifies that the prohibition does not apply to private lands located below the ordinary high water line of a navigable waterway or to public lands closed to beaver hunting or trapping. Establishes that the measure does not override the treaty, statutory, regulatory, or aboriginal rights of federally recognized Tribes, nor does it interfere with Tribal harvest activities or cooperative management efforts between Tribes and ODFW.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Beaver Action Plan
- Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission discussions about beaver
- Distribution of Trapping Activity: 96 percent on private land, 4 percent on public land
- 53 percent of Oregon is public land
- Legislative authority to regulate wildlife harvests

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-A4 The amendment replaces the measure. It requires the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to collaborate with conservation groups, and with persons who have certain fur-bearer trapping licenses and can trap live beavers for relocation, to: 1) reintegrate beaver populations into habitat areas of concern, as determined by the department; 2) enhance ecosystems through the strategic reintroduction of beavers, prioritizing the reintroduction of beavers to certain habitats, and 3) manage animals that prey on beavers to reduce the predation.

-A5 The amendment modifies provisions related to the taking of beaver, requires the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to adopt rules related to the prohibition until January 2, 2036, and requires the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission to make certain information publicly available.

Detailed summary:

Removes the definition of “nonlethal coexistence measure.” It modifies the prohibition on the taking of beaver, modifies the designated areas where taking may occur, and requires the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to adopt rules related to the prohibition. Requires ODFW by rule to publish the map of where beaver taking may occur. Specifies that rules adopted related to the taking of beaver may not apply to certain areas or prohibit or supersede certain rights or actions from taking place. Requires the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) to adopt rules as soon as practicable after the effective date of the Act.

Requires the Commission, on or before January 1, 2036, to make publicly available on an ODFW website an assessment of water quality of certain bodies of water and watersheds and the health of beaver populations in certain areas. Requires the Commission, not more than 30 days after the commission makes the assessment, to review all rules adopted based on the results of the assessment.

Changes the **requirement** to adopt rules related to the prohibition on the taking of beaver to an **allowance** to adopt such rules, operative on January 2, 2036. Requires the Commission, starting January 2, 2036, to periodically review the rules to determine whether the rules are improving water quality or the health of beaver populations, if the Commission chooses to adopt the rules.

-A6 The amendment modifies provisions related to the taking of beaver.

Detailed summary:

Removes the definition of “nonlethal coexistence measure.” It modifies the prohibition on the taking of beaver, modifies the designated areas where taking may occur, and requires the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to adopt rules related to the prohibition. Requires ODFW by rule to publish the map of where beaver taking may occur. Specifies that rules adopted related to the taking of beaver may not apply to certain areas or prohibit or supersede certain rights or actions from taking place. Requires the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission to adopt rules as soon as practicable after the effective date of the Act and, on January 2, 2036, repeal certain rules unless specified action is taken. Sunsets rules adoption and repeal on January 2, 2046.

BACKGROUND:

House Bill 3464 (2023) modified the way beavers are managed on private property in Oregon. Prior to its passage, beavers were classified as "predatory animals" and rodents under laws administered by the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), allowing landowners to kill them on private land without a permit. The bill removed beavers from this classification and shifted management authority to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). Current law requires landowners to obtain a permit from ODFW to legally take a beaver. Before a permit is issued, they are required to attempt non-lethal mitigation methods—such as installing tree barriers, using repellents, or planting beaver-resistant vegetation. Beavers may still be taken for their fur during the legal hunting and trapping season, which runs from November 15 to March 15, with the appropriate licenses from ODFW. However, trapping on public lands remains subject to additional regulations.