

## HB 3143 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

### House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

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**Action Date:** 02/12/25

**Action:** Do pass and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference

**Vote:** 8-0-1-0

**Yeas:** 8 - Boice, Hartman, Helm, Levy B, Marsh, McDonald, McLain, Owens

**Exc:** 1 - Scharf

**Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued

**Revenue:** No revenue impact

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**Meeting Dates:** 2/5, 2/12

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#### WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure establishes the Landowners Living with Beavers Grant Program Subaccount (subaccount) in the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund (OCRF) and appropriates \$1.5 million for deposit into the subaccount. The measure authorizes the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) upon recommendations from the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Advisory Committee (OCRAC) to award block grants and to provide statewide technical assistance related to coexisting with beavers. It contains a joint reporting requirement for ODFW and OCRAC.

#### Detailed Summary

##### **Landowners Living with Beavers Grant Program Subaccount**

- Establishes the **Landowners Living with Beavers Grant Program (LLBGP) Subaccount** (subaccount) in the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund (OCRF).
- Specifies the subaccount to fund the LLBGP and to consist of moneys appropriated to Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), gifts, grants, contributions, and other donations received by ODFW and caused to be deposited into the subaccount.
- Authorizes the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) upon recommendations from the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Advisory Committee (OCRAC) (1) to **award block grants** of not more than \$50,000 in each grant cycle for beaver coexistence projects on private land that quickly and efficiently mitigate the effects of beavers, (2) to **provide statewide technical assistance** regarding beaver coexistence, and (3) authorize and administer expenditures related to the program.
- Includes the moneys deposited in the subaccount in existing joint biennial reporting requirements for ODFW and OCRAC.

##### **Block grant applicants**

Eligible block grant applicants include

- Watershed Councils
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Nonprofit organizations

##### **Block grant projects**

Eligible block grant projects include

- Tree protection tools
- Crop protection strategies
- Landowner education and outreach

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- Training related to mitigating beaver effects

### New Reporting Requirements

- Requires ODFW and the OCRAC to jointly submit a report on the LLBGP subaccount expenditures, as well as the status and outcomes of LLBGP grant-funded activities to an environment-related interim committee of the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2027.

### Appropriation and Authorization

- Appropriates \$1.5 million General Fund moneys to ODFW for deposit in the LLBGP subaccount and authorizes ODFW to spend up to \$95,000 on program administration.

### Effective Date

- Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

### ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Past legislative actions on human-beaver coexistence
- Provisions of measure

### EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

### BACKGROUND:

Beavers (*Castor canadensis*) are the largest living rodents in North America. Beaver-related conflicts can occur when dam building and tree cutting result in flooding, habitat damage, and safety problems. [House Bill 3464](#) (2023) removed beavers from the definition of “predatory animal” (Oregon Revised Statute ([ORS](#)) [chapter 610](#)), and since then landowners have been encouraged to prioritize non-lethal solutions for dealing with beaver-related issues.

The Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund ([ORS 496.252](#)) was established by the Legislature in 2019 with the purpose to fund projects that serve to protect, maintain, or enhance fish and wildlife resources in Oregon. It is financed primarily through General Fund allocations, as well as from gifts, grants, contributions, or other donations that are received by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife expressly for the Fund.