



**THINK
WILD**



Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sally Compton, and I am the executive director of Think Wild, a nonprofit wildlife organization based in Bend. I am writing to share our support of HB 3143.

One of Think Wild's largest and fastest growing initiatives is [Beaver Works Oregon](#) - a program dedicated to working with landholders across Central and Eastern Oregon to promote beaver recovery through habitat restoration and nonlethal conflict mitigation. Our team includes a licensed wildlife control operator, giving us firsthand experience in navigating beaver and other wildlife challenges.

One of the key takeaways from our work is that removal is not a lasting solution in the immediate or the long term. Trapping only provides temporary relief, as it is only a matter of time until another beaver moves in or the habitat degrades due to the absence of their wetland creating activities. Proven coexistence strategies - like flow devices and culvert protection - offer a more cost-effective and sustainable approach.

When you passed "The Beaver Believer Bill" in 2023, you recognized that beavers play a significant role in increasing water storage and mitigating the effects of wildfire and drought. In an effort to promote these benefits, the new law removed the predatory status of beavers and now requires that landholders get a lethal removal permit, and consider nonlethal methods first.

But, there are no funds currently allocated to the outreach, implementation or training of nonlethal methods of beaver conflict mitigation. And what we've seen and experienced in our work is that a) landholders are not even aware of the new law and b) even if they are, without affordable resources for nonlethal technical assistance and equipment, they view removal as the fastest and cheapest solution.

HB 3143 would establish a fund for programs like ours and agencies to do targeted outreach to landowners to let them know that coexistence solutions are available, and provide the grants for us to install those solutions at low to no cost. It's a win-win





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- solving a landowners immediate beaver conflict while allowing beavers to do what they do best
- create wetlands that will ultimately benefit the landholder and broader landscape.

Ultimately, without the allocation of these funds, the path forward to actually supporting landholders while preventing lethal removal of beaver on a meaningful scale is extremely limited. It would mean the new beaver law was just another “conservation-based restriction” imposed on landowners without providing the resources necessary for them to actually support it. The millions spent on statewide habitat restoration efforts aimed at promoting beaver recovery will have little impact if just a couple miles downstream of the project, the neighbor traps any incoming beaver out.



HB 3143 presents an opportunity for you, wildlife organizations like us, and agencies to partner and align with your constituents - again, a win win.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sally Compton

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Executive Director, Think Wild

