



COALITION OF OREGON LAND TRUSTS

2540 NE MLK JR BLVD, PORTLAND, OR 97212 • 503-719-4732 • OREGONLANDTRUSTS.ORG

February 4th, 2025

To: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

From: The Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts

RE: Support for H.B. 3143, the Landowners Living with Beavers Grant Program

Co-Chair Helm, Co-Chair Owens, Vice-Chair McDonald, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts (COLT), I would like to share our support for H.B. 3143, which would establish the Landowners Living with Beavers Grant Program and provide \$1.5 million for block grants to support beaver coexistence projects on private land.

COLT is a membership organization representing 31 land trusts, soil and water conservation districts, and conservation organizations working across Oregon to protect our habitat and natural spaces – for all people, forever. Collectively, our members have protected more than 318,000 acres of land across our state.

The legislature has already made progress in how Oregon manages beavers on private lands. In 2023, the lawmakers passed H.B. 3464, which removed beavers from the predatory animal statute on private lands. Beavers are keystone species in Oregon - beavers create wetlands, and wetlands mean water. As our state grapples with widespread drought and stressed water supplies, we need all the tools available to improve waterways and keep more water on the landscape.

The Wetlands Conservancy is a member of COLT and nonprofit with a mission to conserve and steward Oregon's wetlands in partnership with communities. They protect, restore, and manage wetlands in the Portland area, Central Coast, and lower Willamette Valley. The Cedar Mills wetland in Cedar Hills provides a clear example of



24 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS: Blue Mountain Land Trust • Center for Natural Lands Management • Columbia Land Trust
Deschutes Land Trust • Ducks Unlimited • Forest Park Conservancy • Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust
Greenbelt Land Trust • Klamath Lake Land Trust • Lower Nehalem Community Trust • McKenzie River Trust
North Coast Land Conservancy • Northwest Rangeland Trust • Oregon Agricultural Trust • Oregon Desert Land Trust
Pacific Forest Trust • Southern Oregon Land Conservancy • The Conservation Fund • The Nature Conservancy in Oregon
The Trust for Public Land • The Wetlands Conservancy • Willowa Land Trust • Western Rivers Conservancy • Wild Rivers Land Trust

8 ASSOCIATE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS: Black Oregon Land Trust • Cerro Gordo Land Conservancy • Clackamas Soil & Water
Conservation District • East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District • Helvetia Community Association
Tualatin Soil & Water Conservation District • View the Future • Yamhill Soil & Water Conservation District

the benefits a grant program like Landowners Living with Beaver could provide. This 15.82 acre wetland is beaver managed and surrounded by walking paths and a nearby apartment building. Between 2019 and 2021, a beaver constructed dam was blocking the entrance to a large culvert under highway 26 and causing high water levels to the nearby apartments.

TWC installed a flow device at the culvert's opening so beavers could build their dam on top of the device instead of blocking the culvert, stabilizing the water level and allowing the beavers to continue their work retaining water and creating habitat for wildlife.

Landowners and organizations like the Wetlands Conservancy will benefit from the resources provided by H.B. 3143 to complete beaver mitigation projects on private lands, an identified strategy within the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's 3-year Beaver Action Plan. We urge the Committee to support this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Joe Buttafuoco
Executive Director
Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts

