

Submitter: Taryn Turner

On Behalf Of:

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Protecting Oregon's beavers and streams is not just an environmental cause — it's a practical, science-backed solution to improving water quality and strengthening ecosystems. Beavers are nature's engineers, and their dam-building activities play a crucial role in addressing some of the most pressing water quality issues facing Oregon today.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) identifies high water temperature, sedimentation, dissolved oxygen levels, bio-criteria, and toxins as the primary factors contributing to waterway impairment. Remarkably, beaver dam complexes and the floodplains they create help mitigate four of these five issues, offering a natural, cost-effective remedy.

Beaver dams slow the flow of water, creating wetlands that reduce water temperatures by allowing cooler groundwater to mix in. This cooling effect is vital for fish species like salmon and trout, which depend on cold water for survival. Additionally, the slowed water flow reduces sedimentation, as suspended particles have time to settle before moving downstream, leading to clearer and healthier waters.

The presence of beaver ponds also enhances dissolved oxygen levels. As water pools behind dams, it seeps into surrounding soils and vegetation, recharging groundwater supplies. This process not only stabilizes stream flows during dry periods but also increases oxygenation, promoting a healthier environment for aquatic life.

Furthermore, these wetlands support diverse invertebrate populations, improving bio-criteria by fostering habitats essential for shellfish, insects, and other organisms. Healthier invertebrate communities are indicators of overall water quality and ecosystem balance.

Protecting beavers means embracing a natural ally in the fight for cleaner waterways. By preserving and restoring beaver populations, we empower these remarkable animals to continue providing ecosystem services that benefit not only wildlife but also Oregon's communities and future generations. Beavers are a solution we can count on — free of charge, and tirelessly working to heal our streams.