

Submitter: Ellie Smith
On Behalf Of: Oregon Trapper Association
Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3932

Addressing Chair Marsh, senator Gorsec, and senator golden.

I am here to testify in opposition to Bill HB 3932, which proposes strict regulations on the regulated harvesting of beavers on waters or watersheds within 200 feet of high water mark of the waters. Instead of this ban I propose we consider all the facts before impacting farmers, trappers and the beaver themselves.

Promoting Healthy Ecosystems

Sustainable Population Management: Responsible/Regulated harvesting of beavers helps maintain their populations at sustainable levels, ensuring they can fulfill their ecological roles without becoming a liability.

Biodiversity Support: This practice enhances overall ecosystem health by preventing the negative impacts of overpopulation, thereby supporting biodiversity.

The Ecological Role of Beavers

Ecosystem Engineers: Beavers create wetlands that support diverse wildlife, contributing positively to the environment.

Potential Damage: When beaver populations grow over carrying capacity, they cause significant damage to agricultural lands, infrastructure (roads, bridges), and residential areas, leading to costly repairs.

Preventing Conflicts and Property Damage

Proactive Management: Responsible harvesting is essential for managing beaver populations and preventing extensive damage.

Reducing Human-Wildlife Conflicts: Keeping beaver numbers in check minimizes conflicts with humans, especially in developed areas, protecting both property and public safety.

Threat to Beavers: Overpopulation not only threatens agriculture and infrastructure but also poses risks to the beavers themselves, as they may face starvation or disease when resources become scarce. Due to Beavers fierce territorial disputes the often lead to conflict, injury, and suffering, putting their overall well being at risk.

Threat to Farmers: Regulated beaver harvesting is essential for maintaining healthy habitats and preventing overpopulation-related conflicts. This proposed bill not only imposes stricter regulations on trappers but also places a heavy financial burden on farmers, leaving them with limited options to manage beaver-related damage. Without responsible management, both beavers and landowners will face escalating challenges.

Call to Action: I urge you to reconsider this misguided proposal and engage with our community to develop a more balanced and effective approach to wildlife management. Rather than imposing blanket restrictions, let's work together to create regulations that promote responsible trapping practices while ensuring the welfare of our ecosystems. It is time to listen to the voices of those who live and work in these environments. We are not against conservation; we are advocates for a sustainable approach that respects both wildlife and the livelihoods of Oregonians. I look forward to your prompt response and hope for an opportunity to discuss this urgent matter further.