

Submitter: Mason Collins

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3932

Dear Chair Rep. Lively, Rep. Vice-Chair Gamba, Rep. Vice-Chair Levy and members of the committee,

I am writing to ask that you please support HB 3932 so we can allow beavers to help restore Oregon's thousands of miles of impaired waterways for free, while returning a crucial keystone species back to Oregon. Beavers were once abundant throughout Oregon, and now I see more nutria than beavers, why not push the trapping of the invasive species over the native species?

Beavers are ecosystem engineers. Their activities such as canal-digging and dam-building, help slow water flow, restore impacted water tables and underground aquifers, create natural wetlands that filter toxins, and create wildlife and fish habitat at the same time. Oregon is a state that boasts its natural beauty and beavers would only help make our state more beautiful.

Almost half of all of Oregon's streams and rivers suffer from poor water quality. That's over 100,000 miles of waterways! The Department of Environmental Quality is tasked with restoring these waterways but lacks the resources to do this at the scale needed. This is where beavers can help. As an avid fisherman, I know that rivers require lots of structure for quality fish habitat, and creating river conditions, there are many projects around the state-funded to create these structures, but why not let beavers do it for free? A rising population of beavers would most likely lead to better fishing, bringing in more money on the recreation side of things.

Passing HB 3932 would allow beavers to help restore these waterways by closing hunting and trapping of beavers on these impaired waterways on public lands. There is robust scientific evidence that shows beaver dam complexes can address most of the water quality issues of concern. This bill is NOT about limiting beaver harvest and increasing beaver population. Instead, this bill would enable beavers to access

waterways where they need to be and remain long enough to perform their ecosystem functions without getting trapped out.

Sincerely,

Mason Collins