

Submitter: Nikki Dennis

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3932

Chair Lively, Vice-chairs Gamba and Levy and Committee Members,

I write to ask that you please support HB 3932 to allow beavers to help restore Oregon's thousands of miles of impaired waterways.

Beavers are ecosystem engineers and they are essential in the preservation of biodiversity in wetlands and the creation of habitats for other plants, animals and insects. Their natural behaviors including canal-digging and dam-building, help slow water flow, restore impacted water tables and underground aquifers, establish natural wetlands that filter toxins, and create wildlife and fish habitat all at once. Their dam-building skills enable proactive water management and climate change mitigation.

According to the Department of Environmental Quality, over 100,000 miles of Oregon waterways suffer from poor water quality.? DEQ is tasked with restoring these waterways but lacks the resources to do so at the scale needed.?This is where beavers can help — for free!??

Passing HB 3932 will allow beavers to help restore these waterways by closing hunting and trapping of beavers on these impaired waterways on public lands, not private. This bill is not about limiting beaver harvest or increasing beaver population, but it will enable beavers to access waterways where they need to be and remain long enough to perform their ecosystem functions.

It is imperative that we learn to coexist with creatures that are deserving of their place here as well (in the "Beaver State"), and who are contributors to maintaining our shared spaces. Doing so is a benefit to all of us, human and nonhuman. Please support HB 3932 - a natural, compassionate, and free solution to our state's water quality crisis.