



# BACKCOUNTRY HUNTERS & ANGLERS OREGON

March 25, 2025

House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment

Re: HB3932 Beaver trapping and hunting ban on public lands.

The Oregon Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (BHA) expresses strong opposition to HB 3932 which would ban beaver hunting and trapping on public lands and waters within the state. Wildlife populations, including beavers, are managed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) in trust for the public good in accordance with the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. Key furbearer species have been recovered from extinction and now are sustainably harvested because of furbearer management and regulated trapping. Trappers are an important part of this management regime, which is critical to the sustainable use, management and conservation of furbearer species along with numerous other species that may be impacted by furbearers including endangered plants and animals, waterfowl and other species.<sup>1</sup> HB 3932 would impede ODFW's ability to manage wildlife within the state and runs contrary to longstanding management practices that have helped to ensure ecological balance and sustainable harvest for decades.

Oregon's Beaver populations are considered stable by state biologists (per fur bearing reports) and ODFW regulates trapping and hunting of the population both as a management and control tool. "Trapping, like most technologies, has changed dramatically during the last two hundred years. Traps and trapping systems have made tremendous advances since the 1800s when beavers were nearly eliminated. Today, all regulated trappers in Oregon must first complete a study course and successfully pass a written test showing an acceptable level of knowledge of animal behavior, current laws and regulations and trapping skills. Modern science-based information is used to establish strict laws, enforced by the Fish & Wildlife Division of Oregon State Police, which allows regulated trappers to harvest beaver during authorized seasons using state-of-the-art traps and techniques. Such trapping systems are a benefit by removing damage causing beaver while maintaining a healthy and abundant beaver population. Many beavers trapped today fall into this damage category.<sup>2</sup>

Wildlife is and should remain a public resource. All management strategies must incorporate the interests of Oregon's varied stakeholders. Furthermore, any implementation must consider multiple variables and be flexible across a range of different environments so as to guarantee a best-fit solution. The existing ODFW management policies, as stated in the current OR Statute 496.012, fulfill the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. Partners around Oregon are identifying ways to improve habitat and work with beaver to increase population and use beaver as a tool to provide critical fish and wildlife habitat. However, it is still incredibly important that wildlife managers retain a variety of tools, including hunting and trapping, to ensure adaptive management of beaver populations to maintain ecological balance and mitigate potential conflicts. This bill would impact those proven methods for sound management.

On behalf of Oregon BHA, we again ask that you reject these current proposals as they do not demonstrate scientific evidence, and do not follow established wildlife policy. Any trapping ban impacts a wide variety of interest groups and must be significantly researched and worked through thoughtfully and collaboratively with stakeholders. Furthermore, decisions should be backed by game management models and fully vetted by our

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<sup>1</sup> White HB, Decker T, O'Brien MJ, Organ JF, Roberts NM. Trapping and furbearer management in North American wildlife conservation. *Int J Environ Stud*. 2015 Sep 3;72(5):756-769. doi: 10.1080/00207233.2015.1019297. Epub 2015 Nov 16. PMID: 26692584; PMCID: PMC4662097.

<sup>2</sup> Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. (n.d.). *Living with beavers: A guide for homeowners*. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/living\\_with/docs/beaver.pdf](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/living_with/docs/beaver.pdf)



wildlife managers before accepting a broadly impactful rule change. HB3932 has been presented to the ODFW Commission three times and rejected due to a lack of scientific support. This bill undermines the existing professional and science-based approach by politicizing wildlife management and disrupting effective, regulated practices. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter, and please do not hesitate to contact us with questions or to engage in further discussion.

Sincerely,



Elijah Brown

Co-Chair, Oregon Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers



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