

To: Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire

Re: Testimony in support for HB 3932

Dear Chair Golden and Members of the Committee,

The Great Old Broads for Wilderness, Bitterbrush Broadband of central and eastern Oregon support HB 3932. This bill will allow beavers to help restore Oregon's thousands of miles of impaired waterways for free as a nature-based solution. The bill proposes beaver hunting and trapping closure in waterways on public lands that DEQ classifies as impaired so they can provide the ecosystem services and improve water quality. There are caveats in the bill for trapping nuisance animals that are causing damage, and opening the hunting, and trapping closure if a stream or river is no longer deemed impaired by DEQ.

The Great Old Broads for Wilderness is a national grassroots conservation organization with 40 chapters around the nation and 4 in Oregon. Our Broadband believes that this bill is a simple but important first step toward restoring beavers in impaired watersheds across the state that will have significant water quality and quantity benefits.

Beavers are a keystone species that can create and restore riparian and wetland ecosystems which are critical for the health of fish and wildlife habitats and their native species. In an equally significant role, beavers, and their abilities to store water behind small naturally made dams and dig canals, raise water tables in riparian areas and wetlands, capture sediment, increase water quality and summertime base flows, filter toxins, moderate flood events and help restore groundwater aquifers. Oregonians will benefit from improved water quality and quantity for agricultural crops and livestock, drinking water for towns and cities, improve perennial flows in rivers and streams during drought conditions, and reduce flooding. As Oregon progressively experiences the effects of a warmer and drier environment due to climate change, the improved riparian and wetland functions that beavers create will moderate flooding and drought impacts from more frequent storm events, sequester carbon, and increase the connectivity of fragmented waterways for fish and wildlife species.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment and for your consideration of our support for HB 3932.

Respectfully,

*/Amy M. Stuart/* electronic signature

Amy Stuart, Co-leader, Great Old Broads for Wilderness, Bitterbrush Broadband