

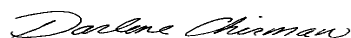
*Dear Chair Golden and members of the Senate Natural Resources and Wildlife Committee*

I am writing to request that you vote yes in support of HB 3932 to allow beavers to help restore impaired Oregon streams and rivers. I am an ecologist and Oregon resident, and I see the value of beavers as ecosystem engineers. Over 100,000 miles of surveyed rivers and streams in Oregon fail to meet Clean Water Act standards, due to high temperatures, sedimentation, low dissolved oxygen, or other issues. HB 3932 will prohibit trapping and hunting beavers on public lands where there are impaired waterways, allowing the beavers to improve water quality without costly stream restoration interventions. The Department of Environmental Quality is tasked with restoring these waterways but lacks the resources to do this at the scale needed.

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. There is extensive scientific evidence that shows beaver dam complexes can address most of the water quality issues of concern.

HB 3932 proposes closing hunting and trapping of beavers on waterways on public lands that are deemed impaired by DEQ. I urge you to vote yes, and move this bill forward. The "Beaver State" can and should allow beavers to help us improve water quality in our rivers and streams, benefiting fish populations, and downstream drinking water users, and expanding moist riparian zones for natural wildfire firebreaks and wildlife refugia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Darlene Chirman".

Darlene Chirman

Master's in Ecology