

Testimony: Oppose HB 3932 – “Relating to protecting beavers” (Phillip H. Gerstner)

May 5, 2025

Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildlife:

- Senator Jeff Golden, Chair, D/District 3-Ashland, [sen.jeffgolden@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:sen.jeffgolden@oregonlegislature.gov)
- Senator Todd Nash, Vice-Chair, R/District 29-Enterprise, [sen.toddnash@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:sen.toddnash@oregonlegislature.gov)
- Senator Fred Girod, Member, R/District 9-Stayton, [sen.fredgirod@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:sen.fredgirod@oregonlegislature.gov)
- Senator Floyd Prozanski, Member, D/District 4-Springfield & Eugene, [sen.floydprozanski@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:sen.floydprozanski@oregonlegislature.gov)
- Senator Kathleen Taylor, Member, D/District 21-Milwaukie, Oak Grove, SE/NE Portland, [sen.kathleentaylor@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:sen.kathleentaylor@oregonlegislature.gov)

I oppose HB 3932, “Relating to protecting beavers” ([olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2025R1/Measures/Overview/HB3932](https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2025R1/Measures/Overview/HB3932)) and urge you to vote “No” on HB 3932.

This Bill is an over-reach by misinformed Legislative sponsors, the fourth such effort in five years according to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW)[1], to limit existing and effective wildlife conservation tools, specifically trapping beavers. Why would the State of Oregon knowingly deny decades of credible science from ODFW that show “available data indicate it (trapping and other forms of harvest) is not limiting beaver abundance”<sup>ibid. 1</sup> and countermand Oregon Statute ORS 496.012, the wildlife policy of the State of Oregon, to “maintain all species of wildlife at optimum levels”[2]?

I am an active outdoorsman. I have been my entire life. I have hunted and fished all over the state of Oregon beginning in the 1980’s. I trapped beaver in my youth. I frequent many rivers, ponds, lakes, and swamps. I see more evidence of a healthy beaver population now than I did when I first started. I am also witnessing more beaver damage in the form of flooding and beavers cutting down fruit trees.

Let’s rely on the biologists and wildlife scientists at ODFW to manage beavers. Trapping is, in fact, an effective wildlife management tool. Trapping regulations based on ODFW findings should control beaver trapping. The experts already exist at ODFW. Let’s not have DEQ try and re-invent the wheel. The biological reality is stopping trapping would have the perverse and unintended consequence of actually harming healthy beaver populations. Please take time to familiarize yourself with already existing ODFW beaver trapping rules[3]. These rules allow trapping of beaver with extensive additional special regulations, where trappers work directly with local ODFW biologists in sensitive areas such as salmon rearing rivers. These regulations have been working for Oregon to maintain a healthy ecosystem for nearly three decades and form the scientific backbone of a successful, cooperative conservation best practice. Make no mistake, HB 3932

seeks to end beaver trapping in Oregon, thereby ending an effective management tool and a part of Oregon's cultural heritage forever.

Another unintended consequence is the loss of revenue for wildlife conservation. The revenue from trapping licenses contributes to the funding of ODFW. These dollars are used for the actual conservation of beavers in Oregon. If this legislation passes, you will decrease the number of beaver trappers. You will eliminate trapper license fees as a source of ODFW funding. This would eliminate a revenue source for ODFW; the only way to replace that revenue is to get it with additional taxation or a shift of revenue from another government program. The citizens of Oregon are already overtaxed. Let's keep the revenue from Oregon trappers and use those funds for funding beaver conservation. HB 3932 would wipe out this conservation revenue stream.

I am a licensed Professional Engineer in the State of Oregon and science provides the unpinning of all I do in my career as a mechanical engineer. Please do not be a science denier and replace an effective conservation tool providing a useful revenue stream with a convoluted, bureaucratic, and unworkable new law promoting government overreach that will break the imperative of a working system of conservation. Would you please let me know if I am selected to provide testimony on May 6<sup>th</sup>? Thank you for your consideration and your "No" vote on HB 3239.

Unsurprisingly, over 80 percent of the nearly two dozen Legislative sponsors of HB 3932 live in urban districts that largely do not support the habitat for healthy beaver populations. These urban Legislators appear to be largely out of touch with the realities of wild ecosystems found in rural areas.

This bill is legislative mismanagement. Oregon already has the ODFW that manages wildlife for the state. There is absolutely no reason for the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), to direct conservation efforts. This is another example of legislature causing more harm than good. I strongly oppose HB 3932 and request you do the same.

Sincerely,

Phillip H. Gerstner  
Portland, Oregon (House District 21, Senate District 11)

cc:

- Governor Tina Kotek
- Representative John Lively, Chair, House Climate, Energy and Environment Committee, D/District 7-Springfield, [rep.johnlively@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:rep.johnlively@oregonlegislature.gov)
- Representative Tawna Sanchez, D/District 43-N/NE Portland, [rep.tawnasanchez@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:rep.tawnasanchez@oregonlegislature.gov)
- Senator Lew Frederick, D/District 22-N/NE Portland, [sen.lewfriedrick@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:sen.lewfriedrick@oregonlegislature.gov)

- Dr. Debbie Colbert, Director, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, [debbie.l.colbert@state.or.us](mailto:debbie.l.colbert@state.or.us)
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- Doug Nichol, President, Oregon Trappers Association, [doug@tgnicholplumbing.com](mailto:doug@tgnicholplumbing.com)
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- Duane Dungannon, State Coordinator, Oregon Hunters Association, [dd@oregonhunters.org](mailto:dd@oregonhunters.org)
- Leah Feldon, Director, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, [leah.feldon@deq.oregon.gov](mailto:leah.feldon@deq.oregon.gov)

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[1] House Bill 3932, Written Testimony, Shaun Clements, Deputy Director for Fish and Wildlife Programs, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, 26 March 2025.

[2] ORS 496.012, Wildlife Policy, [oregon.public.law/statutes/ors\\_496.012](http://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors_496.012).

[3] Oregon Furbearer Trapping and Hunting Regulations (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2026), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Salem, Oregon.