

Submitter: Debra Merskin
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3932

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire:

There are so many reasons why, particularly in the Beaver State, we should do all we can to ensure these natural waterway restorers are kept safe from being killed on these public lands. But, here are few of them:

HB 3932 allows beavers to help restore Oregon's thousands of miles of impaired waterways for free.

HB 3932 targets rivers and streams categorized as Category 4 or 5 by DEQ's water quality standards—both indicate impaired waterways. This also includes waterways deemed impaired under the Clean Water Act. More than two-thirds of surveyed waterways in Oregon (106,390 miles) are currently classified as "impaired."

Robust scientific evidence shows that beaver dam complexes can address most water quality issues. And they do it for FREE! 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 simultaneously create wildlife and fish habitats.

Almost half of Oregon's streams and rivers suffer from poor water quality. That's over 100,000 miles of waterways! The Department of Environmental Quality is tasked with restoring these waterways, but lacks the resources to do this at the scale needed. This is where beavers can help.

Passing HB 3932 would allow beavers to help restore these waterways by closing hunting and trapping of beavers on these impaired waterways on public lands.

Thank you!