



MidCoast Watersheds Council

*Watersheds of the Salmon River, Siletz River, Yaquina River,
Alsea River, Yachats River, and Ocean Tributaries*

December 4, 2019

Dear Fish and Wildlife Commissioners:

The MidCoast Watersheds Council supports the request of the Siuslaw National Forest to restrict beaver trapping within the forest boundary.

We work closely with the Siuslaw National Forest through the public-private-tribal Alsea Stewardship partnership. We collaborate on restoration planning and projects on our public lands as well as on downstream private lands that benefit coho, steelhead, and other species. A beaver trapping restriction will help assure that the conservation and restoration work that the forest is doing can be sustained over time, and that the water flowing out of the national forest can continue to provide the key habitats and cold water refugia that benefit our work.

We have spent many millions of dollars of state funds planning and implementing projects with the help of ODFW staff that assure fish passage, restore large wood to streams, improve riparian conditions, and restore floodplain and estuarine marsh connectivity. These are all helping to restore the ecological processes that were curtailed in the past. However, the scale and reach of our work seems small compared to the challenges faced.

Beaver work round the clock to do the type of work that needs to be done to restore watershed conditions, and can do it efficiently. They don't need years to plan, fund, permit and implement a project! While certainly beavers can be challenging to roads and treasured trees, we have also worked to inform people of the benefits of beaver and how to "live with beaver". However, progress is slow and beavers continue to be removed from both public and private lands and accordingly many dams fail without the continued maintenance provided by these animals, draining the impounded water necessary for coho over-wintering habitat.

We think that restricting beaver trapping in the Siuslaw National Forest would have significant positive watershed level impacts and help protect designated coho critical habitat on the forest (see attached maps). It will also provide us with places for fieldtrips to show, on the ground, the benefits of beaver presence and how beaver mitigation devices can work.

Please support beaver trapping restrictions within the Siuslaw National Forest.

Thank you,

Paul Engelmeyer
Chairperson
MidCoast Watersheds Council

411 NE Avery Street, Suite B
Newport, OR 97365

(541)265-9195

www.midcoastwatersheds.org

The Siuslaw National Forest (green) conserves and enhances Coho Critical Habitat (blue)

