

**Oregon Central Coast Forest Collaborative
Wildlife Subcommittee Zones of Agreement on Beaver Habitat
May 10, 2024**

Status: A quorum of Oregon Central Coast Forest Collaborative voting members reached consensus to support the following Zones of Agreement (ZOAs) on May 10, 2024

Topic: Beaver (*Statements below have been adopted from the [Adaptation Partners' Climate Change Adaptation Library](#).*)

Vision: The Oregon Central Coast Forest Collaborative (“OCCFC/Collaborative”) envisions a Siuslaw National Forest (SNF) that restores ecological processes and promotes healthy and robust beaver populations by acknowledging beaver as a valuable priority species. This can be accomplished by prioritizing the following Zones of Agreement (ZOAs):

1. The Collaborative agrees that beaver habitat is an important component of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) and the Collaborative agrees with the objectives of the ACS referenced in the Northwest Forest Plan.¹
2. **Priority Species:** The OCCFC agrees that the SNF should consider Beaver as a priority species in the restoration program. The Collaborative supports the highest possible value designation of Beaver in future policy.
3. **Associated Species:** Identify, retain, and restore riparian and wetland habitat for beaver and associated species. The OCCFC agrees that beaver ponds attract and provide habitat to numerous other species, including endangered coho salmon.²
4. **Aquatic Conservation:** The OCCFC supports the commitment that the Forest Service has made to improve key watersheds in the Siuslaw National Forest, which supports beaver habitat and populations.
5. **Water Quantity:** Robust beaver populations and associated ponds and dams will increase water storage and dry season water availability. Supporting the reintroduction and recovery of beaver will increase water residence time, water storage on the landscape, and meadow restoration.
6. **Habitat Quality:** Decrease stream network fragmentation to maintain connectivity, beaver habitat quality and support habitat resilience. Provide woody browse and consider restoring willow to maintain the integrity and quality of remaining habitat or habitats that may become suitable in the future.
7. **Riparian Areas, Wetlands, and Groundwater-Dependent Ecosystems:** Increase upland water storage that will accommodate and maintain larger beaver populations. Increasing beaver populations creates more wetland habitat by storing water on the landscape and reduces the effects of decreased streamflow in riparian areas.

¹ Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl, Appendix A: Standards & Guidelines. - p. B-11, ACS Objectives. https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd479477.pdf

²(2016) Final ESA recovery plan for Oregon Coast coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), United States, National Marine Fisheries Service, United States, National Marine Fisheries Service., West Coast Region. <https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/15986>.

8. **Water Resources and Infrastructure:** Support passive restoration of riparian areas by beaver populations through active reduction and/or removal of obstructions when and where appropriate.
9. **Watershed Function:** Add wood to streams to help maximize floodplain flow attenuation and restore watershed functions by connecting floodplains, supporting groundwater-dependent ecosystems, reducing drainage efficiency, and maximizing valley storage. Where appropriate, promote and increase beaver populations to restore watershed, floodplain, riparian area, wetland, and groundwater-dependent ecosystem functions.
10. **Carbon Storage:** The SNF should create natural carbon capture and storage (CCS) areas by restoring beaver habitat. Beavers create wetlands and wet meadows by building and maintaining dams, which support CCS.
11. **Projects:** When identifying and developing instream habitat improvement projects, the SNF will consider incorporation of beaver habitat needs into its selection criteria.
12. **Beaver Population Management:** The OCCFC supports tactics accommodating and maintaining larger beaver populations, including: live-trapping and relocating beavers that create dams that flood infrastructure into unoccupied sub-basins, using riparian shrub planting, protection, and riparian restoration and management, and/or using valley form analysis to assess potential sites for beaver colonies and channel migrations. (consensus reached)