



Beavers Northwest

15833 11th Ave NE
Shoreline, WA 98155

April 30, 2017

Dear review committee,

I write this letter in support of this grant proposal submitted by The Beaver Institute. As beavers rebound from near extirpation during the early 20th century they continue to recolonize streams and wetlands that were once filled with beavers. As they do so, they engineer new wetland complexes and expand existing ponds and habitat. This process increases geomorphic complexity and creates numerous habitats that support an amazing array of biodiversity. The dams that they build increase hydrologic stability by slowing storm water, decreasing erosion, reconnecting streams with their floodplains, and allowing for groundwater recharge and stream temperature variability. These numerous benefits have been shown to increase ecosystem resilience and many in the scientific community believe that beavers have a unique and important role in decreasing the impacts of climate change.

While beavers are well known as ecosystem engineers and keystone species, their good deeds can also lead to conflict with landowners and infrastructure. As beavers recolonize lowland areas, they often create ponds that flood property, build dams in drainage systems, and plug culverts. Historically, when beaver populations were low, trapping was an easy task and it could take years for beavers to return to an area. Now that populations are starting to climb back towards carrying capacity in some areas, trapping is no longer an option as adjacent beavers will quickly recolonize a trouble spot. Landowners now also have a renewed land ethic and, armed with the knowledge that beavers are a vital component of aquatic systems, they are hesitant to remove them.

The Beaver Institute is dedicated to finding novel and effective approaches towards managing beavers non-lethally. By finding nonlethal solutions that reduce flooding and protect infrastructure, beavers can remain onsite and continue to provide the myriad of ecosystem benefits and services that they are known for. Countless organizations such as Beavers Northwest work closely with Mike Callahan and the Beaver Institute and rely on them for technical expertise and knowledge sharing. In this regard, The Beaver Institute is an indispensable partner; the generous support that you would be providing by funding them also provides direct benefits to many of its sister organizations.

For these and many other reasons, I am pleased to support this grant proposal. Beavers Northwest looks forward to working with The Beaver Institute on this innovative and worthwhile project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads "Benjamin Dittbrenner".

Benjamin Dittbrenner

Executive Director,
Beavers Northwest
Dittbrenner@gmail.com