

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter to express my support for Mike Callahan and The Beaver Institute. As a 19 year practitioner of the art and science of beaver management with over 1,400 successful installations, an international spokesperson, advocate and trainer, you couldn't find a better director for the institute.

I met Mike in 2013 when he taught me how to design and install flow control devices, and have been consistently impressed with his professionalism, forward-thinking innovation, generosity, and forthright manner of communicating.

As a beaver damage mitigation professional in California, I am acutely aware of the difficulty in implementing broad-scale adoption of nonlethal beaver management techniques. While I can only speak directly to the issues at a state level, anecdotal reports from other professionals suggest the following issues apply nationwide to varying degrees.

Currently in California, depredation permits are free and readily given with no requirement that nonlethal methods be attempted first. USDA APHIS trapping services are either free or heavily subsidized, and relocation is illegal. There are no bag limits for trapping and hunting, and no reporting requirements for depredation permits. Together these factors make it impossible for nonlethal methods to compete economically, difficult for them to compete socio-politically, and thus result in lethal management being the default option.

So, an average of over 800 beavers a year are killed through depredation permits, and our watersheds are the poorer for it. Coho Salmon, Red-legged Frogs, Western Pond Turtles, Willow Flycatchers and other RTE species depend on habitat that beavers generate, so every beaver lost adds pressure to species that are already near extinction. California's aquifers are overdrawn, human pressure on all water systems is increasing, and many riparian corridors are deeply incised and disconnected from their floodplains.

Addressing such a complex snarl of issues will demand a statewide multi-stakeholder process, the inclusion of beavers as a watershed restoration tool, and sufficient funding to advance nonlethal methods as a first line of response to human-beaver conflicts.

By securing funding to subsidize nonlethal techniques, The Beaver Institute will help California move into a new era of responsible watershed stewardship, prepare for climate change, support endangered species, and meet increasing human water needs. I have full confidence that Mike Callahan is the man for this job, and so will be contributing 40 hours of writing, editing, proofreading and other services to The Beaver Institute on an as-needed basis over the next year.

Sincerely,

Kevin Swift, Owner  
Swift Water Design  
Phone: 530-416-1907  
Web: [www.swiftwaterdesign.com](http://www.swiftwaterdesign.com)