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Editorial: Should Oregon have tighter regulations for raising mink?

- Bulletin Editorial Board
- Mar 16, 2021

Recently it was beaver. And now it is mink. The Center for Biological Diversity has aimed to reshape how Oregon treats animals.

The group had filed a petition with the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission to get the state to move to ending beaver trapping and hunting on federal land. The commission rejected that last year. This year, the Center for Biological Diversity filed a petition for the commission to move to put mink on the list of prohibited species. The commission [may make a decision on Friday](#).

Oregon has some 11 permitted mink farms with more than 400,000 mink, according to The Capital Press. Moving mink to the prohibited species list would not mean all those farms would have to close. They would, though, be subject to tighter regulation.

The immediate concern about mink is that there is a threat that mink can help spread COVID-19 to other animals and to humans. There have been cases of mink in this country and others catching the disease. And of course, some people do not want animals raised for their pelts or meat. A bill in the Oregon Legislature, Senate Bill 832, would actually shut down all mink farms in Oregon. That bill does not seem likely to move this session because it is not scheduled for a work session.

Commission staff have reviewed the Center for Biological Diversity's request and recommend that it be denied. It believes there are already adequate protections in place. We have only briefly summarized the issue here, but what do you think the state should do? Let us know. Letters to the editor can be up to 250 words and emailed to letters@bendbulletin.com.