



# OHA TRACKER



**AUGUST 2017**

KEATING BULL MAKING A GETAWAY  
SUMMER 2017/TYLER DUNGANNON

## OHA enjoys a productive 2017 legislative session

The 2017 Oregon legislative session has ended, and in the final analysis, OHA and our mission fared very well. The OHA bill (HB 2566 Mentored Youth Hunter Program upper age increase) has become law. Also, OHA crafted a budget note for the ODFW budget that addressed poaching. Here is a very brief breakdown of what OHA helped pass and defeat.

### OHA at Work

#### HB 2566 Mentored Youth Eligibility

This bill was introduced at the request of OHA. This OHA bill expands the upper age of the Mentored Youth Hunter Program to 16. The Governor signed the bill on May 17. The bill passed the House and Senate without a single vote in opposition. The bill goes into effect Jan. 1, 2018.

#### Poaching Addressed on Two Fronts

Poaching was a key issue that many wanted to address this session. OHA worked on two fronts to approach this issue. OHA supported HB 3158, which directs ODFW to set up a rewards program to report poaching.

In a unique move, OHA submitted a budget note to the ODFW budget to address poaching. The budget note addresses the OHA concerns regarding poaching in this way:

“ODFW is instructed to develop a proposal for a broad anti-poaching public awareness campaign, including a budget, that will include, but not be limited to: An anti-poaching public awareness campaign strategy, identification of tools needed to combat poaching, and any statute changes needed to address poaching. The Department is to report to the appropriate Ways and Means Subcom-



*Poaching was a hot topic in the 2017 Oregon legislative session, and two bills were passed in an effort to address the problem.*

mittee during the February 2018 session on the details and budget for this work.” OHA and ODFW are currently developing a plan on how to implement this new charge.

Here are the bills OHA was involved with that passed:

#### HB 3158 Poaching

This bill directs ODFW to set up a rewards program to report poaching. The bill passed the House 56-0 and the Senate 27-3. The Governor has signed this bill, and it goes into effect Jan. 1, 2018.

#### HB 2030 Nonresident Fall Bear Tag Cap

This bill removes the 3-percent nonresident tag cap on fall bear tags so more general fall bear tags can be sold to nonresidents. The bill to remove the cap passed the floor of the House 39-16 and the Senate 28-1. The Governor has signed this bill. It goes into effect Jan. 1, 2018.

#### HB 2883 Outfitters and Guides

This bill increases penalties for outfitters and guides. It authorizes the Commission to revoke all licenses, tags and

permits issued to a person with culpable mental state who is convicted of violations of wildlife laws involving taking or killing of wildlife if that person was an outfitter or guide registered with the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB). The bill prohibits the person from applying for another such license, tag or permit. It increases the length of time OSMB may suspend an outfitter and guide registration from 24 to 60 months. The bill passed the House 57-0. The bill passed the Senate with 28 Yes votes and 0 no votes. The Governor has signed this bill, which goes into effect Jan. 1, 2018.

#### SB 372 Wildlife Salvage Permits

SB 372, introduced by Sen. Hansell (R-Athena) and Rep. Barreto (R-Cove), requires the Commission to adopt rules for issuance of wildlife salvage permits to salvage deer or elk accidentally killed as result of vehicle collision. The bill passed the Senate and the House. The Governor has signed this bill. The bill goes into effect Jan. 1, 2018.

#### SB 373 Urban Deer Conflict

This bill requires ODFW to adopt a pilot program for urban deer population control. The bill passed the Senate and the House. The Governor has signed this bill, which goes into effect Jan. 1, 2018.

#### Dead Bills

#### SB 6 Trap Check Requirements

#### HB 2634 Disabilities Under Wildlife Laws

#### HB 2487 Deer or Elk Tag Guarantee Bill

#### HB 2107/2589/SB 371 Cougar Hunting with Dogs by County Vote

#### HB 3228 Wildlife Policy

#### SB 458 Cougar/Dog Controlled Hunt Program —AL ELKINS, OHA LOBBYIST

See this week's Hunting Headlines at [www.oregonhunters.org](http://www.oregonhunters.org)

## Getting elk back onto public land: a cooperative effort

Elk distribution, or the need for redistribution, has become a major issue around the West, and Oregon is no exception. As hunters, we see this long-term trend for elk not being on public land during the hunting seasons as a big problem. The Oregon Hunters Association and partners are working on this situation in several areas. However, solutions will take multiple stakeholder cooperation, collaboration, and time to show results.

Key factors vary with the specific situation. For instance, in the Chesnimnus Unit's primary factors are private land security, food quality, and level of predation pressure. In the Ochoco Unit there is a long period of intense human disturbance – with more activity being planned. At Cold Springs in the Hermiston area, it is the “candy” provided by irrigated crop circles, combined with no big game hunting allowed in the federal refuge area.

So what are some solutions? In the Chesnimnus Unit, there are currently 7 cow hunts on private property and landowners are cooperating to allow more hunter access. The Forest Service is increasing prescribed burns, thinning, and considering more specific hunting season travel restrictions – all intended to help attract and hold elk on these public lands.

For the Ochoco Unit, human disturbance is the key element, and sportsmen have opposed a proposed Summit OHV Trail – based specifically on loss of elk security habitat. The trail is scheduled to happen, but OHA – partnering with RMEF and ODFW – will monitor effects with cutting edge science using GPS collars on elk and trail cams at strategic places.

As for Columbia Basin elk – at Cold Springs and other “non-elk habitat” sites, these herds need increased hunting effort and opportunity, and in some cases, elk relocated to suitable habitats.

OHA is a very engaged stakeholder and is seeking solutions, case by case, that will benefit elk and elk hunters, and provide relief to the agricultural interests of our state. —JIM AKENSON, OHA CONSERVATION DIRECTOR

## A&H awards OHA 3 auction tags, discusses priorities

The Oregon Access and Habitat state board in July awarded OHA three auction tags for our 2018 banquet season. OHA also received three tags in 2017, and those tag sales totaled \$98,500 for two statewide elk tags and one antelope tag. OHA set a record for statewide elk tag sales in 2016 and topped our own record in 2017.

In 2018, OHA will auction a statewide combination elk and deer tag during our May 12 35th Anniversary State Convention at Seven Feathers Casino, a statewide elk tag at the OHA Columbia County Chapter banquet and an antelope tag at the OHA Lake County banquet. Ninety percent of the auction tag sales are returned to ODFW specifically for the A&H programs benefitting wildlife and hunters, and OHA invests the other 10 on the ground.

Also at the July A&H meeting, presentations on projects were brought forward to the state A&H board by the regional A&H advisory councils. Much of the discussion was specific to funding hunter access vs. wildlife habitat projects. Several comments were made regarding the trend toward fee-based hunting access. A&H funds are more typically expended on programs to facilitate access through law enforcement patrols and travel management agreements. The trend appears to be toward more direct requests for access compensation. An example is Hancock Forest Management's 2016 access project in northeast Oregon. A similar project was brought forward for access to western Oregon timber lands managed by Hancock.

The A&H board has identified a need for more private land habitat projects in the 2107-2018 biennium according to a statement by the Board Chair. For the recent 2015-2017 A&H report, visit <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/> —KEN MCCALL, OHA RESOURCE DIRECTOR

## ISSUE UPDATES



### • **Big Game Regulations Setting:**

ODFW public meetings have been completed around the state, with OHA chapters hosting several of these. The only significant tag allocation changes were related to the winter severity impact on mule deer in the far eastern side of the state.

### • **Oregon Wolf Management Plan:**

The Draft Wolf Management Plan, with revisions, is expected to go before the Commission for approval sometime this fall.

### • **Oregon Cougar Management Plan:**

The draft plan is now available for public review, and an informational presentation to the Commission will occur on Aug. 4. This schedule will put the plan up for Commission approval in late October.

### • **Elliott State Forest Ownership:**

This coastal forest, totaling 93,000 acres and including the 82,500-acre common school fund lands, will remain in public hands. The managing entity is yet to be determined, but OHA will continue being a champion for public access and active forest management to improve deer and elk habitat.

### • **Ochoco Summit Trail System:**

OHA, RMEF, and ODFW have remained staunch advocates for minimizing elk disturbance if this trail system is developed as planned. Working with our partners, we are producing an “Effects Monitoring Proposal” that involves applied science – with elk radio-collaring – based on past Starkey Experimental Forest research findings.

### • **Master Hunter Program:**

This program is going through a rebranding process. OHA will be actively involved in developing the criteria for the next generation of this program.

### • **Metro Property Public Hunting Access:**

OHA attended a second meeting of the Metro Parks and natural areas rules review group which yielded positive responses to change the no hunting rule recommendations. The advisory committee will meet again in September before sending rule change proposals to the Metro Council for consideration.

### • **Cascade Siskiyou National Monument:**

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke visited CSNM in July in a nationwide tour of national monuments created over the past 21 years. The secretary heard from individuals, government figures and interest groups on both sides of the monument expansion issue. OHA submitted written public comments before the recent expansion and during the open comment period associated with the monument review.

