



OHA TRACKER

JUNE 2018

PINE CREEK/TYLER DUNNANNON

ODFW proposes new bills

By Al Elkins, OHA Lobbyist
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At the OHA State Board meeting on May 12, ODFW gave an overview of the legislative concepts they will present during the 2019 legislative session. Here are just a few of them:

Enhanced ODFW Licensing System

- Allow licensing agents to pass on credit card transaction fees to customers;
- Remove mandatory requirement for mail order renewals;
- Remove mandatory requirement for duplicate license fees to be charged;
- Allow for providing incentives to license agents to collect information from customers.



Allowance of Hunter Check Stations

- Model after aquatic invasive species check stations;
- Enhance Department's ability to survey for harvest, obtain biological information and monitor for disease.

Reduce Fees by Delaying Implementation Date for the Final Fee Increase Outlined in 2015 Bill

The 2015 ODFW fees bill allows for the third fee increase not to be implemented if funding is available to offset.

ODFW has proposed this and will discuss with the Governor's office and constituents over the next year to determine if a bill is to be introduced to allow for a reduction in fees by not implementing the increase.

There is a need for approximately \$6 million to implement. This is the smallest fee increase of the three.

Ewe Tags as Management Tools for Bighorns

This concept is based on projected needs and ODFW would like to be able to use ewe tags in the future to manage bighorns.

ODFW seeks funds for anti-poaching campaign

ODFW has included in its 2019-21 proposed budget a policy option package (POP) for the anti-poaching campaign that OHA has been working diligently on with ODFW since the 2017 legislative session. ODFW's \$4 million general fund request POP includes money for a public "anti-poaching awareness" campaign, more game enforcement officers on the ground, and money to work with district attorneys regarding poaching crimes.

This is just the first step of many in the process. The POP will be presented to the 2019 legislature for passage.

OHA funds 3 major projects

By Ken McCall, OHA Resource Director
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Three collaborative partnership projects were approved by the OHA State Board this spring, including safe wildlife passage on Highway 97 south of Bend, early seral habitat improvements on the central coast, and winter range forage improvement in the Rogue Unit.

➤ A planned Highway 97 wildlife underpass near Gilchrist is the second major step to improve safe passage of deer and elk through the Highway 97 corridor between winter and summer range. The existing Lava Butte underpass resulted in 80-percent reduction in wildlife/vehicle crashes, saving wildlife and reducing vehicle damage or worse. The upcoming Gilchrist underpass is expected to yield similar results.

Partners involved are ODOT, ODFW, USFS, Protect Animal Migration (PAM), Oregon Wildlife Foundation (OWF), OHA and others. The group is seeking additional partners to fund and maintain wildlife directing fencing for the project. Our state board funded support to PAM for wildlife passage educational outreach. The OHA Bend Chapter has been active locally on wildlife passage issues.

➤ The Dog Creek grant supports deer and elk winter range near Butte Falls northeast of Medford. This grant will expand existing winter big game forage projects on BLM lands. The Dog Creek project mirrors the board-approved 2017 Bowen Willow grant award on nearby USFS lands. Other partners interested in future expansion of forage producing and forest fuel load reduction treatments are the City of Medford municipal watershed and Hancock Forest Management. OHA's Rogue Valley and Josephine County chapters are involved also.

➤ OHA had been working with Hancock Forest Management (HMF) prior to the January 2018 ODFW approval of a 220,000-acre central coast Access and Habitat project. In addition to providing more hunter access during fire season, HMF has been seeking opportunities to improve early seral forage for wildlife on sites that are less productive for commercial timber use. Two general categories are powerline right of ways and wet sites often associated with old homesteads. OHA state board awarded a powerline forage improvement grant in February 2018. OHA staff and local chapters are working with HFM on both habitat project planning and access improvements. Five local OHA chapters are interested and/or committed to either habitat or access volunteer work.

OHA challenges gun initiatives

The OHA Board and Legislative Committee have reviewed IP 43 and 44, and we've been working diligently preparing comments and strategy to stop these ill-conceived and grossly misleading measures. OHA

OHA collected more than \$6,000 in donations & pledges to fight the gun initiatives at our State Convention.



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IP 43 would make felons out of law-abiding citizens who own a semi-automatic weapon. Even citizens who registered their firearms would be prohibited from using them on public lands.

OHA is coordinating with gun rights organizations to block this measure from reaching the ballot box.

The Attorney General on May 23 issued a ballot title for IP 43 that gun rights organizations have vowed to challenge in the State Supreme Court. To view the ballot title, visit <http://oregonhunters.org/documents>

Clearly, IP 43 violates our right to bear arms under the Oregon Constitution and the second amendment of the U.S. Constitution. If a challenge to the ballot title doesn't stop it, we anticipate this ending up in court. OHA will be prepared to do everything it can on behalf of our members to defend our rights.

IP 44 also raises concerns over how it would affect young hunters, because minors would always need to be under direct supervision.

OHA comments outlining our objections to the draft ballot title on IP 43 were submitted to Oregon's Secretary of State and Attorney General. Our comments can be found at <http://oregonhunters.org/documents>

Regulation simplification: is it good for hunters?

By Jim Akenson, OHA Conservation Director
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ODFW is initiating a three-phased approach to making the Oregon Big Game Regulations easier to use, less redundant, and possibly more sensible for management.

Phase 1 has already been applied to the 2018 regulations and that involved moving "like-topic" information into one place, such as the youth hunt descriptions. Phase 2 will involve language, details, and some of the rules, and this phase is being proposed during this year for the 2019 regulations. Phase 3 will be proposed next year and be applied in 2020. For this year there are 32 issues being addressed; some are specific to units or areas, and others are statewide in scope. The full list of 32 items proposed for change will be discussed at the annual public meetings hosted by District or regional ODFW offices.

Here's a sampler of eight proposals under consideration:

- **Spring Bear:** Make SW limited spring bear hunt a controlled hunt consistent with all other spring bear hunts, which would enable late purchase of a point saver. This hunt, for which tags once went begging as leftovers, has been selling out well in advance of the spring bear application deadline in recent years.
- **Decoys:** Currently, the use of decoys with moving parts is prohibited for big game species. This proposal would eliminate regulations, and assumes that this regulation is not necessary and may be limiting cougar harvest.
- **Minimum Muzzleloader Caliber:** Currently, there's a restriction of .50 for bighorn sheep and mountain goat but .40 for bear, cougar, deer and pronghorn. Proposed is a reduction to .40 for all six species.
- **Muzzleloader Open Ignition:** Currently the muzzleloader must have an open ignition. The proposal would eliminate the requirement for open ignition.
- **Muzzleloader Propellant:** Currently, it is illegal to hunt with pelletized powder or propellants. Granular (loose) black powder and black powder substitutes are the only legal propellants. This proposal



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Many of the proposed simplified big game regulations affect muzzleloaders.

Find the ODFW proposals to simplify big game regulations:
<http://oregonhunters.org/documents>

would eliminate that rule, making powder pellets legal.

- **Archery Minimum Draw Weight:** Currently, there is a minimum draw weight of 50 pounds for elk, sheep and goat and 40 pounds for deer, pronghorn, bear and cougar. The proposal standardizes a minimum draw weight of 40 pounds for all big game.
- **Leftover Controlled Tags** (Legislative Concept): Currently, leftover tags can be purchased in addition to controlled hunt and general season tags. The proposal would allow leftover tags for purchase only by hunters who do not already have a tag for that species.
- **Nonresident Tag Cap** (Legislative Concept): Currently, there are different percentages allowed per species (3 percent for pronghorn and black bear hunts, 5 percent for deer and elk, and 10 percent for sheep and goat). The proposal would make it 5 percent cap for all big game species.

From these eight concepts it is obvious that the proposed simplifications vary from being a sensible change to something that Oregon hunters might oppose. It will be important to participate in public input opportunities, which will be scheduled mid-summer – so stay tuned for more details next month.