



HARNEY COUNTY SNOWS/TYLER DUNGANNON

## Hunting-related bills gaining momentum

By Al Elkins, OHA Lobbyist

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**HB 4030: Poaching Penalties**

**Summary:** The bill provides that for a misdemeanor under wildlife laws that involves taking or killing of wildlife, in addition to any term of incarceration imposed, courts may impose an applicable fine for a misdemeanor or impose a compensatory fine payable to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission.

➡ **UPDATE:** This bill had a work session in mid-February. The bill passed out of committee and is now headed to the floor of the House for a vote.

**HB 4015: Conservation/Recreation Fund**

**Summary:** The bill establishes Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund. The bill appropriates fund moneys to Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife for carrying out activities serving to protect, maintain or enhance fish and wildlife resources in Oregon. The bill also establishes an Oregon Conservation and Recreation Advisory Committee to review department policies regarding use of fund moneys and make recommendations regarding use of fund moneys for implementing and administering department activities.

In early February, this bill saw many twists and turns. As drafted, HB 4015 included a \$13 million General Fund appropriation to the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund, which represented Oregon's match for federal funding proposed in Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

## ODFW unveils anti-poaching campaign

ODFW has unveiled its response to the OHA budget note asking for the establishment of a statewide anti-poaching campaign. Presented at a hearing before the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources in mid-February, the report narrative states:

"The department proposal focuses on two areas: increasing detection of poaching and enhancing current efforts to deter poaching. Proposed strategies will build upon current initiatives that appear to be working and address shortcomings in the current efforts." Here is a site where you can find that report:

<https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2018R1/Downloads/CommitteeMeetingDocument/145802>



To hopefully ensure passage, this is the new strategy for the bill:

The general fund request in the bill will be reduced from \$13 million to a minimal level to set up the fund's oversight committee and lay the groundwork for the federal funds. ODFW has provided a rough cost estimate of \$40,000 to get the fund up and running, analyze current/future implementation of the conservation strategy, etc.

Based on those numbers, an amendment will be prepared to reduce the appropriation in HB 4015 to \$40,000.

This approach was proposed to move the bill this session.

➡ **UPDATE:** This bill had a hearing and work session in mid-February (OHA testified in support of the bill). The bill has passed out of committee and now goes to Ways and Means for further consideration.

**HB 4106: County Wolf Damage Funds**

**Summary:** The bill requires:

✓ ODFW to biennially report to the Legislative Assembly regarding estimated

change in Oregon's wolf population.

✓ The Legislature to identify amount of state funding necessary to provide counties with assistance sufficient for carrying out essential features of county programs regarding wolf depredation and financial assistance.

✓ The Legislature to review estimate of change in wolf population prior to making appropriations to funds used for wolf depredation and financial assistance grant program.

✓ The Legislature to establish, to the extent practicable, fund appropriation amounts greater than identified necessary funding amount and reflecting estimated change in wolf population.

This bill has been introduced at the request of: Rep. Barreto (R-Cove), Rep. Witt (D-Clatskanie), Senator Hansell (R-Athena), Senator Baertschiger (R-Grants Pass).

➡ **UPDATE:** The bill had a work session in mid-February and passed out of the committee. It now goes to Ways and Means for further consideration.

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

## OREGON ISSUES UPDATE

By Jim Akenson, Conservation Director  
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### More Wolf Plan Meetings:

OHA will continue to be an active stakeholder with the revised Wolf Plan approval process. Additional stakeholder meetings are planned for the coming months, but our focus is clear: let's wrap it up – with hunting as an option in the future wolf management toolbox.

### Ochoco OHV Trail Update:

OHA's attorney has submitted a final summary judgement brief about the potential elk disturbance from this proposed OHV trail system. ODFW has produced and submitted a very strong amicus brief statement supporting our opposition. OHA's Bend Chapter matched State OHA's \$25,000 investment in the litigation, and RMEF has given OHA a \$10,000 grant to help with legal expenses on this important lawsuit.

### Chesnimnus Elk Project:

OHA's Chesnimnus public lands planning group met with USFS, ODFW, The Nez Perce Tribe, and other stakeholders to iron out specifics of public land actions that will help move elk off private land and back onto the National Forest.

### Elk Damage – Landowner Liaison Program Concept:

OHA has been working to produce a Landowner Liaison program proposal – which would respond to big game damage on private property in specific local situations, using responsible hunters to remove or redistribute unwanted elk and deer.

### Elliott Forest Update:

The Elliott is no longer managed by Oregon State Forestry. Division of State Lands is developing plans for future forest and wildlife management on the Elliott property.

## New crossings will save wildlife, human lives and property

By Ken McCall, OHA Resource Director  
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Oregon lags far behind most western states and Canada in providing safe wildlife passage across busy highways. Deer carcasses scattered along Oregon highways and incidents like the recent one involving more than a dozen elk killed west of Portland offer evidence enough. Add statistics such as 1,000 deer killed annually in central Oregon alone – that's more than half the legal harvest of bucks in the six central Oregon units combined – and the reality sets in.

OHA's Bend Chapter has partnered with the US Forest Service, ODFW, ODOT and others to maintain the fencing on the successful Highway 97 Lava Butte underpasses crossing south of Bend.

OHA staff is getting involved in an upcoming second Highway 97 wildlife crossing project planned near Gilchrist.

These efforts are only a start. As Oregon wildlife advocates, we must demand and partner in more safe, effective crossings for wildlife statewide, for the sake of both migrants and motorists. Safe wildlife crossings must be on the long-term planning radar of highway managers at all jurisdiction levels – federal, state, county and municipal. Crossings for wildlife are expensive, require extensive planning and must be recognized and included in highway improvement projects years before they are installed.

All benefit from avoiding the loss of human lives and property, but in saving wildlife, hunters have perhaps the most skin in the game, so we need to be on the frontline in this fight.



## OHA offers dream hunts with A&H tags

OHA and the Oregon Access & Habitat program are partnering to offer several great opportunities to enjoy a dream hunt while supporting OHA's mission as well as wildlife habitat and hunter access.

OHA will offer three A&H hunts this banquet season, starting with a Statewide Elk tag in the auction at the OHA Columbia County Chapter banquet Feb. 24.

The OHA Lake County Chapter will auction a Pronghorn tag at its banquet on April 7, and the coveted Statewide Deer and Elk Combo hunt will be up for bid during OHA's 35th Annual State Convention at Seven Feathers in Canyonville on May 12. The Convention will also host the annual A&H Hunt Raffle's final ticket sales and subsequent drawing.

You can attend the banquets or register in advance to bid by phone on any of these auction hunts. Check the A&H ad in the January/February and March/April issues of OREGON HUNTER for details on these opportunities, as well as Oregon A&H tags offered for auction by other conservation-minded sportsmen's groups. Proceeds benefit Oregon's wildlife habitat and access opportunities.

## OUTDOOR OUTLOOK

MARCH 1

Central Oregon Sports Show opens

MARCH 3

OHA chapter banquets:

Pioneer 503-710-1233

Rogue Valley 503-250-3000

Malheur County 208-739-1885

MARCH 10

Late goose seasons end

MARCH 17

OHA chapter banquets:

Clatsop County 503-359-3535

Union/Wallowa 541-562-6267

Yamhill County 503-550-4740

Tualatin Valley 503-453-7520

MARCH 24

OHA Bend Chapter banquet, 541-330-6218

MARCH 31

White River Youth Turkey Clinic

503-358-7821

APRIL 1

Western Oregon spring bear opens

Find more OHA events at:  
<http://oregonhunters.org/events>