



Though this bolt-action Howa 1500 6.5 Creedmoor in the OHA State Convention auction May 12 would be unaffected, your semi-auto varmint gun or shotgun could be in the sights of Initiative Petition 43.

MAY 2018

Two initiatives threaten Oregon's gun owners

By Al Elkins, OHA Lobbyist
alvinelkins@yahoo.com

OHA is working with gun rights groups regarding strategy in response to the filing of two gun control initiatives: IP 43 "Reduction of Assault Weapons" (<http://oregonvotes.org/irr/2018/043text.pdf>) and IP 44 "Mandatory Storage Requirements" (<http://oregonvotes.org/irr/2018/044text.pdf>). OHA will submit comments on the proposed IP 43 ballot title in May.

Anti-poaching campaign budget due

The Oregon Sportsmen's Caucus has scheduled a meeting to develop the budget for the legislatively mandated anti-poaching campaign. The meeting agenda includes the creation of a budget that will be presented to the 2019 legislature. The meeting invitees include legislators, OSP and ODFW personnel, and members of various hunting and fishing interest groups.

Hunter check stations considered

OHA is working with Oregon State Police and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife on two proposed legislative proposals for the 2019 legislative session. One of the concepts that has been mentioned addresses the ability to allow hunter check stations in Oregon, and the other legislative concept concerns changing the statutes to make the commercialization of wildlife a felony offense. The proposed hunter check stations legislation would be patterned after the boat check stations that are now used in Oregon to check for invasive species.

ODFW may see cuts in general funds

OHA is part of the External Budget Committee (EBAC) that will develop the ODFW budget for 2019-21. Since our last meeting, EBAC members have learned that current projections of General Fund monies for 2019 are being reduced statewide, and that the national projected revenues from the federal Pittman-Robertson program that helps fund state wildlife agencies nationally are also being reduced.

These factors may result in the proposed ODFW budget looking different than the one recently presented at the ODFW town hall meetings.

Portland Metro Council takes new hunting stance

By Ken McCall, OHA Resource Director
Ken@oregonhunters.org

The Portland Metro Council approved a change in its no-hunting policy at its April 12 meeting. Future controlled hunting opportunities on Metro parcels will be vetted through and in conjunction with ODFW, OHA and Metro.

The no-hunting policy was part of the original 1993 code rules put in place with the inception of Metro as a regional agency. Part of Metro's charter was purchasing small parcels to create and maintain neighborhood parks and natural spaces in Portland urban areas.

Over time, Metro land parcel purchases have included larger and less urban sites. The purchase of 1,600 acres on Chehalem Ridge created a large natural area near Hillsboro, excluding former hunting opportunities. The parcel is within the Willamette Unit elk de-emphasis zone.

OHA's Yamhill Chapter brought forward the news of the hunting closure on those lands to OHA's State Board and staff at OHA's August 2016 Chapter Leadership Summit. A team of OHA board members, chapter leaders and OHA staff got involved in seeking a policy change at Metro. OHA sought a change to allow limited season and limited-range hunting options, taking the approach that a parcel of this size surrounded by private agricultural lands and residences will create a refuge area for deer and elk populations to increase to damage-causing levels.

OHA and Metro spoke at a hearing of the Oregon House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources in September of 2016, followed by participation in a series of Metro Sounding Board meetings in summer of 2017. The very diverse group of urban interests represented at the sounding board meetings were supportive of a policy that allowed future hunting as a safe, biologically and socially acceptable wildlife management option.

Those efforts led to a unanimous vote to change the strict no-hunting policy, among other rule changes, to allow controlled hunting in certain instances on particular properties.

See this week's Oregon Hunting Headlines at www.oregonhunters.org

ODFW report counts minimum 124 wolves

ODFW wildlife biologists counted 124 wolves in Oregon this past winter, an 11-percent increase over the number counted last year.

This count is based on verified wolf evidence (like visual observations, tracks, and remote camera photographs) and is considered the minimum known wolf population, not an estimate of how many wolves are in Oregon.

Twelve wolf packs were documented at the end of 2017. Eleven packs were successful breeding pairs, meaning that at least two adults and two pups survived to the end of the year. This marks a 38-percent increase in breeding pairs from 2016.

"The wolf population continues to grow and expand its range in Oregon," said Roblyn Brown, ODFW Wolf Coordinator. "This year, we also documented resident wolves in the northern part of Oregon's Cascade Mountains for the first time."

See the full report under Director's Report in the April minutes: www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/18/04_april/index.asp

Other highlights of the report:

🐾 The 12 wolf packs documented had a mean size of 7.3 wolves, ranging from 4-11 wolves. Another nine groups of 2-3 wolves each were also counted.

🐾 Known resident wolves now occur in Baker, Grant, Jackson, Klamath, Lake, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa and Wasco counties.

🐾 25 radio-collared wolves were monitored, including 19 wolves that were radio-collared during 2017.

🐾 Four collared wolves dispersed out of state (two to Idaho, one to Montana, one to Washington).

🐾 13 wolf mortalities were documented, 12 of those human caused.

🐾 54 percent of documented wolf locations were on public lands, 44 percent on private lands, and 2 percent on tribal lands. —ODFW STAFF



ODFW

This wolf of the Wenaha Pack was captured on a remote camera on U.S. Forest Service land. ODFW in April shot two wolves in the Pine Creek Pack that would not leave livestock alone and could not be hazed away.

OHA gears up for last leg of wolf plan

By Jim Akenson, OHA Conservation Director
Jim@oregonhunters.org

OHA will continue to serve as a stakeholder through the next round of meetings, which will be led by a professional facilitator. OHA will be a stalwart on keeping hunting language "as is" for the pending plan revision. The date is still not set for final plan approval by the Fish and Wildlife Commission, but October is looking to be a likely month, and that meeting is scheduled to take place in Klamath Falls.

Mule deer still struggling; elk faring much better

ODFW eastside district biologists are wrapping up spring herd composition counts, and they report either stable or dropping deer numbers, particularly for fawn/doe ratios and total deer numbers. The poorest counts are in areas hit the hardest by the 2016-17 winter, such as the coveted Beulah Unit on the far east side and Paulina in the centrCal part of the state.

Elk numbers are looking good, with several units hanging close to management objectives for bulls, calves and total numbers.

No emergency closures are slated for deer or elk, but it would be worth checking with specific area district biologists before submitting your controlled hunt applications by the May 15 deadline.

Regulation simplification

OHA will get a briefing in May on the first rendition of regulation simplification. Public meetings will soon follow for all the regions of our state. A preliminary heads-up suggests that this simplification will entail some equipment aspects, for archery and muzzleloader, but in general make the regulations less cumbersome and easier to use.

Ochoco OHV trail update

The OHA attorney has submitted an official "reply brief" to the Ochoco Forest Service response to arguments against the Summit Trail ATV proposal.

ODFW has produced a very strong amicus brief statement, augmenting OHA and other plaintiff's contentions. On May 22 there will be a hearing by a federal judge in Pendleton. It is important to recognize that the issue here is not opposing ATVs, but opposing the route through critical elk habitat.

Chesnimnus elk project

The OHA Chesnimnus public lands planning group will meet again with USFS and ODFW reps to iron out specifics of public land actions, such as extending hunting season period of green dot closures in a specific travel corridor to help move elk off private land and back onto the National Forest and hopefully hold them there.