



OHA TRACKER

OCTOBER 2019



SUNRISE ON WILD BILLY LAKE

Commission approves new regs

By Jim Akenson, OHA Sr. Conservation Director and Al Elkins, OHA Lobbyist

Oregon's Fish and Wildlife Commission voted on Sept. 13 to adopt the large package of regulation changes proposed by ODFW. Most of these changes will go into effect beginning in 2020. The three biggest issues presented by OHA representatives were about the new bag limits for black-tailed deer, the situation with mule deer populations in eastern Oregon, and the scale and process of the proposed general cow elk hunts.

Black-tailed Deer: The Western Oregon deer bag limit will soon allow for spike harvest with the new bag limit of "one buck with a visible antler." Spike bucks will be illegal to harvest during controlled antlerless hunts.

Cow Elk Damage Tags: This is for areas of the state with high elk damage and will replace 19 controlled hunts and the need to provide damage tags to landowners. Hunters taking advantage of this new opportunity would still need permission to hunt on private land to use the tag and it would be their only elk hunting opportunity.

Work Group Development: The Commission also directed staff to form a work group to continue the big game hunting season and regulations review, specifically focusing on blacktail and mule deer issues. OHA will play a key role in this process as it develops.

What served as the impetus for forming this work group was the testimony OHA staff and a State Board member gave before the Commission at the September meeting in Gold Beach. Here are some of the highlights of that testimony:

OHA, the largest hunting group based in Oregon, had detailed conversa-

tions with ODFW staff on their proposals. As a respected stakeholder, OHA spent hundreds of hours evaluating each proposal with consideration of the biological resource as the first element. During our meetings with ODFW staff, we shared our concerns. All of our time, effort and solid science-based recommendations fell on deaf ears – and had no influence on their proposal to the Commission.

The proposals adopted by the Commission illustrate a significant change in the way Oregonians hunt. For such a huge change, the process of discussion and interaction between stakeholder groups and Department personnel was just the opposite of the wolf plan process: there was not a great deal of time for anyone to read and respond to these significant changes.

We will keep you updated on the progress that the workgroup makes in future Trackers.

Sage grouse harvest topic of Oct. 11 meeting



The issue of continuing sage grouse hunting will be a topic at the next Commission meeting in Ontario on Oct. 11. OHA has continuously advocated for maintaining these hunting opportunities because of the wealth of information wing collection provides and the fact that the extremely conservative harvest does not affect the carryover population, and that advocacy will continue in Ontario.

Gun initiative turns in its signatures

By Al Elkins, OHA Lobbyist
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Supporters of a gun storage ballot measure have submitted 2,000 signatures to the Oregon Secretary of State recently, and the process of verifying those signatures has begun.

This ballot measure includes these provisions:

A person who owns or possesses a firearm shall, at all times that the firearm is not carried by or under the control of the person or an authorized person, secure the firearm:

- With an engaged trigger lock or cable lock...
- In a locked container, equipped with a tamper-resistant lock...

The measure also addresses guns being used while hunting, stating that this measure does not apply if the unsecured firearm was obtained for the purpose of hunting, trapping or target shooting, during the time in which the person is engaged in activities related to hunting, trapping or target shooting.

This language is similar to the proposed language in 2018, but that proposal never made the ballot. During the 2019 Legislative Session, similar language was included in a gun bill, but that bill was killed as part of negotiations to get the Senate Republicans to return to the Capitol building. Like earlier attempts, there is no reference at all for stiffer penalties for those who actually steal guns.

OHA will work with gun rights advocacy groups to help defeat this ballot measure. If this measure gathers enough signatures, it would appear on the November 2020 ballot.



New license plate raises funds for safe migration

Highway 97 south of Bend is a hot spot for wildlife vehicle collisions as it runs through a historical deer migration route. ODOT has worked with ODFW, OHA, RMEF and others to build wildlife crossings that allow wildlife to safely cross over or under this busy highway. Currently there are two undercrossings near Sunriver that have reduced wildlife vehicle collisions by 90 percent since 2012. A third undercrossing is under construction north of Gilchrist and more are planned in central Oregon.

OHA has pledged over \$100,000 for the project.

The non-profit Oregon Wildlife Foundation (OWF) is currently selling vouchers for a Watch for Wildlife license plate featuring a mule deer and Cascade Range mountain in the background. Once 3,000 vouchers are sold, the DMV will put the plate into production. OWF will invest the proceeds raised from license plate sales to projects that help wildlife move safely within their habitat range.

Visit OWF's website for more information: <https://www.myowf.org/>

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Commission bans marten trapping in W. Oregon

By Amy Patrick, OHA Outreach Coordinator
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The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission on Sept. 13 approved the requests of petitioners seeking to ban marten trapping west of the I-5 corridor. Additionally, a ban on all mammal trapping within the Dunes National Recreation Area and a prohibition of traps or snares suspended in trees within the Siuslaw and Siskiyou National Forests were also implemented.

The vote signals a broader concern regarding all trapping in Oregon.

Despite ODFW staff recommendations and multiple testimonies by

OHA staff, Oregon Trappers Association, Oregon Farm Bureau, and Oregon Forest & Industries Council, the commissioners voted 4-3 to uphold the petition filed last year by several activist groups.

The vote signals a broader concern regarding all trapping within Oregon in light of California's recent move to ban all trapping within the state and New Mexico's ban on trapping in two national forests. OHA continues to support trapping as an important wildlife management tool.



OHA 2020 GUN RAFFLE CALENDAR

OHA will give away a gun a week in 2020!

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We post photos from projects and events that advance our mission.

Please check it out!