



UNION COUNTY/JIM WARD

## OHA weighs in on SE Oregon land management issues

By Jim Akenson, OHA Sr. Conservation Director  
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OHA recently teamed with other sportsmen's organizations to provide input on two key public lands issues in Lake County and the Owyhee Canyon.

The Owyhee bill from Sen. Ron Wyden is an attempt to resolve the complex mix of land-use designations in the desert canyon country adjacent to the Owyhee River. An aspect worth consideration is that it would put to rest the fate of many wilderness study areas. The proposal calls for an accumulated designation of 1.13 million acres of wilderness with a similar amount of remaining lands going into a multiple use approach.

In addition, a 13-member advisory committee, comprised of stakeholders from inside and outside the local community – including hunters – would guide traditional uses such as grazing, vegetation management, and access for hunting and other recreation. Issues of concern are that it may not allow for enough of the most effective type of habitat and wildlife management to promote recovery and protection of key game species, including mule deer and bighorn sheep.

The Lakeview Resource Management Plan is another long-term process with sportsman engagement that also needs more detail on alternatives that allow for traditional uses, appropriate protections, and active and balanced management approaches. OHA will continue to engage at both state and chapter levels on both these land issue areas.

## Hunters under fire as 2020 begins

By Al Elkins, OHA Lobbyist  
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### New gun initiatives filed

Petitioners have filed initiative petitions that apply to certain semiautomatic firearms and magazine size. If passed, they would raise the minimum age to purchase those firearms to 21, tighten background check requirements, institute a five-day waiting period on new purchases and ban magazines over 10 rounds.

The petitioners must gather 1,000 signatures to send the initiative petition to the state Attorney General and Supreme Court for the ballot title and definition. If it's approved, the petitioners then must gather some 112,000 signatures to place the petitions on the ballot in 2020.

OHA and our allies are working to defeat these initiative petitions:

- **IP 40 Gun storage, strict liability.**
- **IP 60 Regulate semi-automatic firearms and ban large capacity magazines.**
- **IP 61 Regulate semi-automatic firearms.**
- **IP 62 Prohibit large capacity magazines.**

### New gun bill introduced

A hearing was held in January on a not-so-new hodgepodge of previous gun bills in the form of Legislative Concept 38. Some of the elements of LC 38:

- Requires the owner to lock up firearms and only transfer them with locks engaged.
- Makes gun owner liable for two years for anything that happens with a firearm that wasn't locked.
- Regulates the circumstances under which you may transfer a firearm to a minor.
- Forbids possession of a firearm by a

minor unless they are being supervised by an adult.

### Coyote contest bill back

In the 2019 legislative session, a bill was introduced to ban coyote contests in Oregon. The bill passed the Senate and was heard in the House during the last days of the session. The bill, however, was still in the House Committee on Rules when the 2019 session ended.

A new bill to ban coyote contests will be introduced in the 2020 session. If this is the exact same bill language as in the previous session, it would affect the coyote contests that some OHA chapters around the state hold annually. OHA will keep you updated on the progress of this legislation.

### Residency bill returns

During the 2019 legislative session, OHA supported several bills as part of our anti-poaching campaign. One of those bills, HB 2293, the residency bill, passed the House and passed out of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. Once it passed the Senate Committee, however, the Senate President assigned it to Ways and Means where the bill languished until the end of the session.

In mid-January 2020, OHA appeared before the House Interim Committee on Natural Resources to discuss this bill and what it means to help with prosecuting poachers in Oregon. At the January hearing, OHA was joined by representatives from Oregon State Police and ODFW. After listening to our testimony, the House Interim Committee agreed to introduce the bill for the 2020 Legislative Session.

# Whitetail die-off could affect hunts

By Jim Akenson, OHA Sr. Conservation Director  
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Wildlife biologists learned about the Blue Mountains white-tailed deer die-off in late fall last year, when landowners were increasingly reporting dead deer. ODFW collected tissue samples for testing, and lab results later confirmed EHD, or “blue tongue,” as the cause of death.

Deer surveys in December showed a big decrease in white-tailed deer, which led wildlife officials to estimate a potential loss of 2,000 deer from the disease.

ODFW said it is still determining if deer tags for the fall 2020 seasons need to be reduced or hunts canceled in the units affected (Walla Walla, Mt. Emily, Ukiah). Hunters will be informed of any changes



Some 2,000 whitetails have died in NE Oregon.

by April 15, so they will have time to change their controlled hunt application choices before the May 15 deadline.

EHD is transmitted by biting midges known as “no-see-ums” or gnats, typically a problem only during late summer and early fall.

# OHA offers tools for effective input

By Amy Patrick, OHA Outreach Coordinator  
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While OHA staff provide testimony before the ODFW Commission and the state legislature on behalf of our membership, there are instances when hearing directly from our membership can provide an effective influence on those governing bodies.



Jim Akenson, Sr. Conservation Director, and Amy Patrick, Outreach Coordinator, are developing a template to make delivering testimony easier and more approachable for OHA members.

To see the benefit of grassroots involvement by members around the state, one does not have to look any further than the success of the TimberUnity movement that took place in last year’s legislative session. Started by two log truck drivers, the groundswell of participation captivated much of the state and served to remind rural communities that they can indeed be heard.

Conversely, the number of activists that environmental groups can activate to participate in commission and legislative hearings can also be impressive.

Both of these examples shed light on the benefits gained by membership participation in both fish and wildlife policy-making and the legislative process.

The OHA template will include steps for creating and delivering proficient testimony based on a few key items: staying current on topics and issues; utilizing a fact sheet to keep testimony concise and consistent; and coordinating with staff for the appropriate timing of input. Additionally, key to any grassroots or member-driven participation is the inclusion of personal experience; complementing facts and consistent messaging with an individual voice makes testimony compelling and memorable.

In addition to creating accessible steps for delivering effective testimony, the template will also include a section on the appropriate use of social media to encourage member participation. Posts related to testimony opportunities should be kept concise and fact-based and are most efficient when they create opportunities for face-to-face interactions to discuss testimony content in lieu of conversations within comment sections.

Providing testimony to a commission or legislative committee does not need to be a daunting experience. OHA staff is committed to creating a clear and concise set of steps for proficient testimony with the goal of presenting it at chapter meetings in 2020 and posting it on OHA’s website for convenient reference.

# You’re invited to an OHA banquet near you

OHA invites you to a fun evening among friends at a chapter banquet near you soon. Enjoy a great meal, and check out great outdoor gear, trips, artwork and other items to be auctioned and raffled.

Proceeds are used for funding local wildlife and habitat projects and youth events, as well as defending hunting and gun rights and keeping public lands in public hands.

Money we raise here stays here.

Raffles featured at every OHA banquet in 2020 include the Coastal Farm & Ranch Raffle, featuring a Nosler Rifle, and the annual Les Schwab Raffle.

See the 2020 OHA banquet schedule at [www.oregonhunters.org/events](http://www.oregonhunters.org/events)



# Outreach coordinator named for anti-poaching campaign

ODFW has announced that it has hired Yvonne Shaw to coordinate the anti-poaching outreach effort.

The anti-poaching outreach program is the result of general funds that OHA helped secure during the 2019 legislative session.

Shaw will be visiting OHA chapters around the state. She can be reached at [Yvonne.L.Shaw@state.or.us](mailto:Yvonne.L.Shaw@state.or.us)

OHA looks forward to working with her on this very important program.

—AL ELKINS



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