



OHA TRACKER



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oregonhunters.org



BEATYS BUTTE/TYLER DUNGANNON

Anti-poaching funds facing budget axe

By Al Elkins, OHA Lobbyist
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After receiving all the state agency submissions on budget cuts for the 2020-21 biennium, the legislature put together a cut list that recommended slashing general funds for the OHA-supported anti-poaching program and OSP wildlife enforcement positions.

OHA testified during a legislative budget hearing on the need to protect Oregon's wildlife, and asked that these two especially important programs keep their funding levels.

The legislature will make the final decision on these programs during Special Session 2.

In July, the Fish and Wildlife Commission adopted the agency's requested budget for the 2021-23 biennium. There was no fee increase request in this budget request. The budget now goes to the Governor and then to the legislature in 2021 for final approval.

OHA will advocate for more game enforcement and anti-poaching program dollars.

In addition to the 2021-23 budget submission, all state agencies were asked to submit budget cuts for the current 2019-21 biennium. This is due to projected loss of general fund revenues considering the current pandemic crisis.



OHA Restores Gassed Guzzlers

With summer heat soaring to the century mark, OHA's Klamath Chapter helped restore water guzzlers into service on July 18 so wildlife can wet their whistles. Volunteers cleared access roads, cleaned and leveled guzzler aprons, repaired screens and fences, snaked pipes, and unclogged float boxes.



Pass the Plate for Wildlife

Help make this licence plate that will fund safe wildlife crossing projects in Oregon become a reality. 3,000 plates must be reserved before they can go into production. For information about getting yours, visit <https://www.myowf.org>

OHA urges Commission to continue sage-grouse hunting



Sage-grouse hunters provide invaluable scientific support for sage-grouse conservation.

By Tyler Dungannon, Conservation Coordinator
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OHA supports continued harvest of sage-grouse due to the indispensable biological data that it yields, in addition to the recreational opportunity that it provides hunters who are fortunate enough to draw permits. Sage-grouse hunters provide biological data by sending hundreds of harvested wings each year to ODFW for analysis of specific demographic rates such as nest success, sex ratio and age structure.

There are many factors driving popu-

lation decline, including predation and habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation, but the conservative hunter harvest does not limit sage-grouse populations in Oregon. Hunters are at the front lines of conservation for the species, and it is imperative that sage-grouse maintain their gamebird status in order to receive support from hunting organizations, which substantially contribute to sage-grouse conservation.

OHA sent a letter stating the facts to the Commission in July for the decision at the August Commission meeting.

Fire regs heat up as hunting season nears

By Mike Totey, OHA Conservation Director
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Fire restrictions recently have been tightened in Oregon, affecting hunters in terms of campfires, smoking outside vehicles, and traveling off well maintained roads.

To find current restrictions, visit the Oregon Department of Forestry's website: <https://www.oregon.gov/odf/fire/pages/restrictions.aspx>

This will lead you to an interactive map of Oregon. Zoom in on the location you want to go, and click on the map.

If you click on private or state managed lands, the current restrictions will show up on the left side of the page. If you click on federal lands, such as USFS or BLM, there will be a link directing you to their respective websites.

These restrictions will change with changing conditions, so check frequently.

There is also information available for many of the large private forestland owners for their restrictions and closures: <http://www.ofic.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2020-OFIC-Closure-Form.pdf>

OHA outreach carries on amid COVID-19

By Amy Patrick, OHA Outreach Coordinator
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While COVID-19 has restricted many outreach opportunities OHA had planned for 2020, we've been able to accomplish several goals and are actively planning additional events when the state fully reopens. Monthly virtual meetings were started to connect chapter leadership and state staff to discuss timely issues and topics, ranging from proposed hunting regulation changes to updates on wildlife undercrossing projects OHA has funded and efforts to launch a Watch for Wildlife license plate that would fund safe crossing projects.

Participation in the Oregon Zoo's Twilight Tuesday events has been postponed,

but OHA staff and board members were able to take part in a virtual meeting with zoo staff and volunteers to deliver the message of hunters as conservationists with great success.

OHA staff has begun partnering with PEW Trust to develop outreach messaging that includes educational components regarding wildlife habitat and migration corridors.

OHA is working on the initial stages of an adult first-time hunter series that has good potential for future use in chapters across the state.

When large gatherings and events are allowed to resume, OHA will be ready to again participate with our education and outreach components.

Gun initiatives fail to gather signatures

By Al Elkins, OHA Lobbyist
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The deadline to submit signatures for November ballot initiatives came and went, and no signatures for the four gun control initiatives were submitted. COVID-19 restrictions certainly played a part in the inability of circulators to gather signatures, but we expect to see them introduced in the 2021 Legislature in bill form. OHA will remain vigilant in the defense of our firearm ownership rights, and we appreciate the support of our 26 chapters and 10,000 members.

Conservation committee seeks to fill vacancies

There are two vacancies on the Oregon Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee. The areas covered in the two open advisory board positions are the Nearshore & Coast Range and Columbia Plateau & Blue Mountains. This Committee is responsible for implementing the Oregon Conservation Strategy and for overseeing the conservation fund that provides funding for conservation projects around the state.

If you reside in one of the two open areas and have an interest in wildlife conservation, outdoor recreation, especially wildlife-associated recreation such as wildlife viewing, nature photography, or outdoor education, contact the OHA Medford office, oha@oregonhunters.org