



WILLAMETTE VALLEY/TROY RODKOWSKI

OHA can help with wildfire recovery effort

By Mike Totey, OHA Conservation Director
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After a record-setting fire season with nearly 1,000,000 acres burned in Oregon, natural resource managers and conservation groups are digging in to start on the post-fire recovery process. While it is difficult to see anything positive with these types of catastrophic events, there is work to be done and opportunities for OHA to engage.

The part that will take the longest will be the long-term planning and implementation to recover the severely burned areas. The planning and discussions for this are underway, but will take some time and coordination to get moving.

OHA has started discussions with the U.S. Forest Service, ODFW and the Oregon Department of Forestry to offer help and stay engaged in the recovery and restoration work.

Projects like forage seeding or replacing existing seasonal winter range gates could be areas where local chapters can engage with their local national forest to make a difference, particularly for big game.

Proactive management will ensure that burned areas provide valuable early seral habitat for big game species and help make sure that those areas aren't taken over by invasive species.

Poaching leads legislative agenda

By Al Elkins, OHA Lobbyist
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The 2021 Oregon Legislature is set to start in mid-January, and OHA will make funding for OSP wildlife enforcement officers and the anti-poaching program our priorities for 2021, along with two bills that had passed the House in the 2019 Legislative Session but died due to the walkouts.

The two bills from the 2019 Legislative Session that will be reintroduced are:

- A bill that proposes new residency requirements for purposes of licenses, tags and permits related to taking wildlife. The bill defines resident as a person who has physically resided in this state for no less than six consecutive months immediately prior to application submission.

- A bill that gives ODFW the authority to operate wildlife inspection stations to prevent the spread of disease and to collect information related to wildlife management efforts. The bill requires that wildlife inspection stations be plainly marked by signs and be staffed by at least one uniformed ODFW employee.

Will the bill to ban coyote contests in Oregon be back? Or a bill addressing beaver trapping in Oregon and ways to restrict it or even outright ban it?

Watch this column closely as the 2021 Legislative Session unfolds. We will bring you all the latest news about bills that affect hunting, trapping, wildlife and habitat.

OHA asks for rules on wildlife crossings

At its November meeting, the OHA Board of Directors approved a letter to ODFW Director Curt Melcher, asking for consideration of rulemaking to reduce human disturbance at Oregon's current and future wildlife highway crossing structures. In part the letter said:

“Our approach to this potentially harmful disturbance of Oregon wildlife is simple: a proactive rule-making approach to actions at and near the crossing sites would set the stage for future wildlife protection.”

In the letter OHA offered to work closely with ODFW in developing these rules that help protect the wildlife that use these crossings.

ODFW seeks A&H help

ODFW is looking for volunteers to serve on the Access and Habitat Program (A&H) statewide board and regional councils. The A&H boards and councils are some of the most important decision makers in relation to hunting and wildlife in Oregon.

If you are interested, you can find application materials at https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/get_involved.asp or contact Mary Newcomb at Mary.J.Newcomb@state.or.us

Hunters score wins in Elliott Forest

By Ken McCall, OHA Vice President
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The proposal transferring the Elliott State Research Forest to OSU's School of Forestry Management was approved by unanimous vote of the State Land Board on Dec. 8.

OHA was at the table, adding hunters' and anglers' voices to the call for continued public ownership and access. While there are a few hurdles yet to jump in the transfer process, public ownership and access is assured.

OHA also pushed for science-based decision making on the level of access as related to wildlife disturbance, primarily focused on elk. OHA also successfully pushed for harvest plans that ensure distribution of complex early seral habitat across the landscape over time.

Among the specific points on public ownership, access, big game habitat

and security, OHA input followed three main themes: return the Elliott to an active working forest, create jobs for local economies, and continue recognizing hunting and angling as primary traditional uses of the forest.

Adding to the themes, OHA advocated that any new management or recreation development, such as campgrounds and forest headquarters, should be located outside the forest, maintaining the forest lands for dispersed recreation and timber management.

The last two years have shown OHA's intense participation on the Elliott State Research Forest Advisory Committee was key to conserving the hunting heritage on the 82,500-acre block of central coast range lands.

For a deeper dive into the approved proposal, visit <https://www.oregon.gov/dsl/Land/Pages/Elliott.aspx>



OHA members and other volunteers worked on brushing in blinds at the new Wapato refuge in Gaston Saturday. OHA's Columbia County and Pioneer chapters each sponsored a blind. After lobbying for hunting opportunities there, OHA volunteers worked hard over the past months to meet the Dec. 15 opener. Other supporters DU, ODHA and Oregon Waterfowl Festival sponsored blinds, and Fallen Outdoors volunteers built blind frames.



OSP named Melissa Leritz, Jackson County Assistant DA, 2019 Wildlife Prosecutor of the Year.

OSP, OHA honor prosecutor

Jackson County Assistant District Attorney Melissa Leritz was presented the 2019 Oregon State Police Fish and Wildlife Division Wildlife Prosecutor of the Year Award on Dec. 4. The wildlife print with engraved plaque was underwritten by OHA and presented by the Oregon Sportsmen's Coalition.

Prosecutors play an integral role in helping combat wildlife crime by working to help bring those to justice who disregard state fish and wildlife laws. Leritz was selected for her outstanding work in 2019, and was specifically nominated for her ability to prosecute any fish and wildlife case that comes to her office. Leritz also works actively with the Rogue Valley OSP Team by putting on educational training to keep them current with case law.

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 OHA State Office.
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www.oregonhunters.org/store

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BAKER	April 3
BEND	March 13
BLUE MOUNTAIN	April 3
CAPITOL	July 31
CLATSOP COUNTY	March 20
HOODVIEW	Feb. 20
JOSEPHINE COUNTY	March 20
KLAMATH	April 24
LAKE COUNTY	April 3
MID-WILLAMETTE	April 17
PIONEER	March 6
REDMOND	Feb. 27
TILLAMOOK	May 1
TIOGA	March 20
TUALATIN VALLEY	April 10
UMPQUA	April 10
UNION-WALLOWA	March 13
STATE CONVENTION	May 22

➤ A&H Statewide Deer Tag Auction
➤ A&H Statewide Elk Tag Auction