



ODFW

## Wildlife crossings bill gains more traction

By Al Elkins & Amy Patrick, OHA Lobbyists  
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As the short 2022 Legislative Session enters the home stretch, two of the three bills that OHA is actively supporting will not make it to the finish line, but one is on the fast track.

HB 4130, the wildlife crossings bill, originally would have allocated \$5 million to wildlife crossing hotspots around the state, but the bill was amended to increase the amount allocated for the program to \$7 million.

OHA testified in support of the bill, as did many other conservation groups. The bill passed out of committee and has been sent to Ways and Means. The bill can be found here: <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2022R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB4130>, and information on the bill can be found on OHA's website:

<https://oregonhunters.org/documents>

HB 4080, a continuation of predator control districts in Oregon, was supported by OHA and other groups but was pulled from a work session and is presumed to have died in committee.

HB 4127, a bill that would provide funding to the state wolf depredation and mitigation fund, has also died in committee.

The bill requested \$1 million to ranchers and farmers for damage suffered to livestock due to wolf depredation.

OHA offered testimony in support of both the bill and management of wolves in Oregon.

## Wolves re-listed in W. Oregon

By Mike Today, Conservation Director  
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A U.S. District court ruling on Feb. 10 in response to a lawsuit returned wolves west of Highways 395-78-95 to the federal Endangered Species List. The lawsuit was filed by a coalition of groups, including Cascadia Wildlands, Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center, the Western Environmental Law Center and others after wolves in the western two thirds of Oregon and much of the U.S. were delisted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in early 2021.

This ruling, which returns wolves to the ESA listing, means federal rules now supersede the Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan and Oregon Administrative Rules in this area, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (not ODFW) is the lead management agency. The ruling clearly changes wolf management west of Highways

395-78-95. Some tools for responding to livestock depredation are no longer available, including the "caught in the act" provision that allowed livestock producers to shoot a wolf caught in the act of biting, wounding, killing (and in some areas chasing) livestock. Also, the Oregon wolf plan rules that allowed ODFW to consider lethal control of wolves when non-lethal measures are failing to stop chronic livestock depredation are also off the table.

OHA was proactively involved in the development of the current Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan that outlines a thorough process, using solid science, to both recover and manage wolves. Wolf populations are stable and growing in Oregon, indicating they are in no danger under the current plan. This recent ruling is another example of why courts should not be the decision maker on wildlife management.

## OHA rolls out Learn to Hunt program

By Amy Patrick, OHA Policy Director  
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OHA's Learn to Hunt Program (LTH), aimed at adult first-time hunters, was rolled out to chapters in early February. The program features a two-pronged approach with online courses and resources, as well as in-person classes, clinics, and events.

Chapters can participate in the program by identifying two members to join the LTH committee and by encouraging members to become



certified to teach through ODFW's Train the Trainer program.

Participating chapters will receive a quarterly contact list of new LTH participants and will be asked to provide chapter-specific information for a monthly email sent to all LTH students.

This is an exciting opportunity for OHA chapters with a proven track record of recruiting students and members.

For more information, contact the LTH team at [learntohunt@oregonhunters.org](mailto:learntohunt@oregonhunters.org)

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OHA wants to get these points across – safely.

## OHA working to reduce vehicle/wildlife collisions

By Tyler Dungannon, Conservation Coordinator  
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As sportsmen conservationists, OHA aspires to bolster our deer, elk and other game populations. One way to do that is to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions on our highways via wildlife crossing structures. There's little doubt that crossing structures significantly reduce vehicle/wildlife collisions, but the hurdle to implementing safe passage infrastructure is funding.

HB 4130-01 (Wildlife Crossing Investment Act), if passed, would allocate \$7 million to the Oregon Department of Transportation to invest in wildlife crossings across the state.

OHA has testified in strong support of this bill and has testified on multiple occasions in front of the Oregon Transportation Commission in support of allocating ODOT funds to wildlife crossings via the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

In order to ensure Oregon is ready to compete for federal funds for impending wildlife crossing grants, OHA has dug deep and developed a priority list of wildlife crossing projects that are currently being constructed, near completion or undergoing initial consideration. Specifically, in cooperation with PEW Charitable Trusts and the Oregon Action Team on Ungulate Migration, OHA has outlined 10 projects across the state ranging from Interstate 5 south of Ashland to Interstate 84 in Meacham and many locations in between.

A report posted on OHA's website has been sent to state and federal legislators, and will be continually updated as projects advance, and as new projects gain traction. You can find the report here:

<https://oregonhunters.org/documents>

## Environmental activism prevents forest access

By Mike Today, Conservation Director  
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After a year and a half, much of the public lands involved in the catastrophic wildfires of September 2020 remain closed to the public. When you hear the term "public lands," it should imply that they are open to the public to visit and recreate, and for us to hunt.

Despite efforts by land managers to safely re-open these lands, environmental groups have once again successfully halted the necessary work to allow that to happen in a large portion of the area.

David Warnack, the Forest Supervisor of the Willamette National Forest issued a letter on Jan. 11 detailing this: "The Willamette 2020 Fires Roadside Danger Tree Reduction decision authorized the felling of fire-killed or injured trees which pose a danger to roads and those traveling along them across about 404 miles of road affected by the Beachie Creek, Lionshead, and Holiday Farm fires of 2020. The purpose of the project was to provide for access and improved safety along Forest System roads within the fire-burned areas of the Forest and reopen these roads as quickly as possible for public and administrative use." He went on to write: "Our work to safely restore public access to areas burned in the 2020 Labor Day fires continues to be top priority." But unfortunately, due to another frivolous legal action brought on by four environmental groups, "These areas will remain closed to the public until safety concerns are addressed."

OHA has long supported active management of our public lands to manage wildlife habitat, to provide safe access and recreational opportunities, and to support local communities. As an example of what can be done, on the Santiam State Forest, salvage logging and road work have been completed on the southern end of the forest, and that area has been re-opened for public use.

OHA submitted a letter of support in a similar situation on the Clackamas River Ranger District on the Mt. Hood National Forest to proactively work to re-open roads in the area burned by the Riverside, Lionshead, and Bull Complex Fires.



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## You're invited to an OHA banquet near you

Enjoy a fun evening among friends and check out auctions and raffles featuring trips, great gear and more!

Watch for 2022 fund-raiser updates at:  
<https://oregonhunters.org/events-2>

## 2022 OHA BANQUETS

Online	Clatsop County	503-738-6962
Online	Union-Wallowa	541-786-1283
Feb. 26	Redmond	541-233-3740
Mar. 5	Emerald Valley	541-731-2403
Mar. 5	Pioneer	503-710-1233
Mar. 12	Bend	541-480-9848
Mar. 19	Josephine Co.	541-821-1511
Mar. 19	Rogue Valley	503-250-3000
Mar. 19	Yamhill County	503-490-2489
Mar. 26	Tualatin Valley	503-502-0611
Apr. 2	Baker	541-403-0402
Apr. 2	Blue Mountain	541-231-4384
Apr. 2	Capitol	503-851-8409
Apr. 2	Lake County	541-810-1617
Apr. 2	Tioga	541-267-2577
Apr. 9	Mid-Willamette	541-971-3351
Apr. 9	Umpqua	541-430-7324
Apr. 30	Klamath	541-882-9593
May 14	OHA State Convention, Seven Feathers Casino	541-772-7313
May 14	Columbia Co.	949-533-7271
July 16	Tillamook	503-801-3779
A&H Statewide Deer/Elk auction		