



OHA members and volunteers of other groups built fence to protect aspen at the annual All Hands All Brands project June 18-20 in the Ochocos.

Commission trims trap check intervals

By Amy Patrick, OHA Policy Director
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The Fish & Wildlife Commission approved the 2022-24 furbearer regulations at the June 17 commission meeting. ODFW staff recommended only one change: reducing the 30-day interval for lethal sets when damage is occurring to 14 days.

The commission was not satisfied with the staff recommendation and instead approved reductions to two additional damage-related intervals. The new regulations put in place a 48-hour check time for all trap check intervals except the lethal sets for damage, which is the 14 days recommended by staff.

The commission's decision was disappointing as it was not based on staff recommendations or the best available science and does not take into account the financial hardship that livestock producers and land managers will now incur. OHA provided testimony in support of the staff recommendations only, as did representatives of Oregon Farm Bureau, Oregon Trappers Association, and Oregon Forest & Industries Council.

IP3 receives ballot language approval

By Amy Patrick, OHA Policy Director
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Initiative Petition 3, the initiative that aims to criminalize hunting, fishing, and trapping, along with farming and ranching, met another milestone in its attempt to make the 2024 ballot by receiving certified ballot language on June 13.

OHA submitted comments requesting changes to the ballot language and was successful on several points to further clarify the damage this initiative would do. Comments were also submitted by Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Safari Club International, American Kennel Club, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Ducks Unlimited, National Wild Turkey Federation, and several farming and ranching organizations.

With the certification of the ballot language, proponents of IP3 can begin collecting signatures. They will have until July 8, 2024, approximately two years, to gather the 112,020 signatures needed to qualify for the November 2024 ballot. Keep up to date on the latest IP3 information at <https://oregonhunters.org/initiative-petition-13>

US House passes wildlife funding act

By Mike Totey, Conservation Director
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Another big step toward securing one of the most significant sources of wildlife conservation funding in our lifetime was completed on June 14, when members of the U.S. House of representatives voted to pass the bipartisan Recovering America's Wildlife Act (H.R. 2773), marking the furthest this critically important bill has progressed in Congress. It now moves to the senate for their consideration, then on to the President for final authorization.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act seeks to provide nearly \$1.4 billion annually for proactive, non-regulatory conservation projects in every state, territory, and on tribal lands and waters.

This bill would be one of the most significant investments in fish and wildlife conservation in recent history.

For Oregon, funding provided through H.R. 2773, combined with a 25-percent non-federal match, could mean as much as \$25 million per year for implementation of the Oregon Conservation Strategy and other important wildlife conservation work.

It has taken 7 years to get to this place, so OHA is optimistic that we will see the Recovering America's Wildlife Act finally reach the finish line soon.

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OHA chapters help kids make their marks



MEL KIND

OHA Tualatin Valley Chapter's archery and shooting stations were hits with kids at the June I'm Hooked event at Hagg Lake. OHA chapters around the state hosted spring youth events aimed at helping kids sharpen their outdoor skills.

OHA forms wolf subcommittee



By Mike Totey, Conservation Director
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The OHA Board of Directors has sanctioned the formation of a wolf subcommittee that will consist of wolf experts from around the region and be chaired by OHA Northeast Director Jim Akenson. The subcommittee will report to the OHA Wildlife-Lands Committee.

Wolves have been in the headlines for years and continue to be a concern for both hunters and landowners. The subcommittee will focus on pressing for implementation of the existing Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan that was updated in June 2019, particularly in the northeast portion of the state where wolves have been in Phase 3 (well established) for some time.

The subcommittee will advise the Wildlife-Lands Committee on wolf management issues and work on OHA's long-term goal of moving management of the species forward. This work will be critical for improving agency and landowner relations where they are currently strained, and set the stage for an eventual update to the Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan.

The subcommittee members include a subset of the OHA Advisory Council: Jim Akenson, Vic Coggins, Holly Akenson, Mike Schlegel from Idaho, Tim Hiller from Montana, and Mike Totey.

OHA work continues on conservation easement

OHA Conservation Director Mike Totey and OHA Bend Chapter President Rex Parks recently met with the landowner of OHA's existing conservation easement in the Wychus Creek area to assess the effectiveness of the work that was completed by a number of OHA volunteers from central Oregon last fall.

The results were mixed. Seed that was spread seems to have little germination.

However, transplanted bunchgrass and planted Wyoming Big Sagebrush appear to be doing well and getting established.

Nearly all of the work done last fall targeted restoring the many dozer lines that were put in during the fire suppression efforts in July of 2021 when the Grandview Fire burned across the area.

Unfortunately, those dozer trails are now being heavily used by cattle in the area.

This portion of Jefferson County is considered open range, which allows legally permitted cattle that are grazing under a permit from the Crooked River National Grasslands to wander to other properties.

OHA and the landowner are now exploring the feasibility of either fencing the property with wildlife friendly fencing or other options that might mitigate the heavy cattle use of the area, which is important big game winter range.

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