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OHA introduces bills, follows close to 100

CWD, cougars, bobcats, wildlife crossing bills highlight OHA's efforts

By Amy Patrick, OHA Policy Director
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The 2023 legislative session has officially begun with more than 4,000 bills filed the first week and potentially hundreds more waiting to be filed in the next few weeks. The session will last until the end of June, providing six months of political engagement on a myriad of topics. In this protracting landscape of bills, OHA is actively tracking close to 100 bills that affect our interests of wildlife, habitat and hunting heritage.

OHA has authored several bills this session, providing us the opportunity to play offense on issues such as establishing funding for enhanced, in-state testing for Chronic Wasting Disease, restructuring the Fish & Wildlife Commission, and attempting to secure a ballot referral for a constitutional protection to fish, hunt, harvest and gather.

OHA will support the plethora of concepts that have been put forth to approve cougar hunting with hounds on a county-by-county basis by utilizing a county-wide election. There are no less than six bills addressing this topic, each with slight differences in the process but all unified with the intent to allow hound hunting for cougars. However, a bill has been filed attempting to further restrict

hound hunting by making it illegal to utilize hounds in the pursuit of lynx and bobcat; OHA will oppose this bill.

Protecting wildlife migration and reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions has long been an area of focus for OHA. In 2022, OHA supported the \$7 million wildlife crossing bill, and in 2023 we will be supporting the follow-up legislation that requests an additional \$5 million while tasking Oregon Department of Transportation and Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife with prioritizing projects that support wildlife mobility and habitat connectivity.

OHA will engage on numerous other bills throughout the session, all with a focus on our mission of protecting Oregon's wildlife, habitat, and hunting heritage.

OHA files briefs challenging Measure 114

By Amy Patrick, OHA Policy Director
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OHA filed two amicus briefs in early January, supporting the lawsuit against Measure 114 brought by National Shooting Sports Foundation and Oregon State Shooting Association, both members of the sportsmen's coalition formed to fight the measure.

The first brief was filed in conjunction with Ducks Unlimited; the second was filed with other members of the coalition, including Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, National Deer Association, Oregon Wild Sheep Foundation, Delta Waterfowl, Safari Club

International, and Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation.

Two OHA members provided depositions to the amicus briefs that gave individual voices to our arguments. Kelly Parkman, Hoodview Chapter president and Learn to Hunt founder, spoke to the detrimental effects Measure 114 would have on new hunters and those wanting to expand their hunting skills into new areas of game that require specific firearms. James Nash, outfitter/guide and podcast personality, wrote eloquently about his experiences as an outfitter/guide, hunter, and veteran, all of which would be negatively impacted by the measure.

OHA worked with two lawyers to

prepare the briefs, Mike McLane and Matt Wand, both of Lynch Murphy McLane LLP in Bend, who support sportsmen's priorities. OHA was able to file both briefs with the recent donations made to our Victory Fund. To donate to this effort, and the numerous others on the horizon, you can donate to OHA's Victory Fund on the OHA website. Visit <https://oregonhunters.org/donate>

DONATE TO OHA'S VICTORY FUND AT
www.oregonhunters.org/donate

FEBRUARY KICKS OFF BANQUET SEASON!



Enjoy a fun evening among friends and check out auctions and raffles featuring trips, great gear and more at an OHA chapter banquet near you soon.

Watch for 2023 fund-raiser updates at: <https://oregonhunters.org/events-2>

OHA's 2023 banquets will feature the Coastal Farm & Ranch Raffle for a Howa Lightweight (4 lbs 7 oz) in 6.5 Creedmoor.



OHA 40TH ANNIVERSARY GUN RAFFLES
CHRISTENSEN RIDGELINE BURNT BRONZE .300 WIN.

2023 OHA BANQUETS

TBD	Lake County	
TBD	Emerald Valley	
Feb. 18	Ochoco	541-777-4830
Feb. 25	Columbia Co.	949-553-7271
Feb. 25	Hoodview	503-314-3090
Feb. 25	Redmond	SOLD OUT!
Mar. 4	Pioneer	SOLD OUT!
Mar. 11	Union-Wallowa*	541-786-1283
Mar. 11	Bend	541-480-9848
Mar. 18	Josephine Co.	541-821-1511
Mar. 18	Yamhill County	503-490-2489
Mar. 18	Clatsop County	503-440-9934
Mar. 25	Tualatin Valley	503-502-0611
Apr. 1	Baker	541-403-0402
Apr. 1	Tioga	541-267-2577
Apr. 8	Umpqua	541-580-5660
Apr. 15	Mid-Willamette	541-971-3351
Apr. 22	Capitol **	503-851-8409
Apr. 29	Blue Mountain	541-231-4384
Apr. 29	Klamath	541-884-5773
May 6	Tillamook	503-801-3779
May 6	OHA State Convention,*** Chinook Winds Casino,	541-772-7313
June 3	Rogue Valley	541-773-8736


- * OREGON MOUNTAIN GOAT TAG AUCTION
- ** A&H STATEWIDE DEER TAG AUCTION
- *** A&H STATEWIDE ELK TAG AUCTION

OHA protects hunting on Elliott Forest

To initiate the forest management on the Elliott State Research Forest, the Department of State Lands and Oregon State University are seeking an Incidental Take Permit (ITP). In order to get the ITP, they must have an approved Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP).

OHA has submitted written comments on the draft HCP in support of the preferred alternative, which will allow the forest to remain open to public access and hunting throughout the duration of the 80-year HCP.

The forest consists of 83,000 acres

in Coos and Douglas counties that were formerly managed by the Oregon Department of Forestry to generate revenue for the state's Common School Fund. After much political wrangling, the State Land Board finally agreed to turn over management of the forest to OSU to manage as a research forest. 

Throughout this process, OHA has had a representative on an advisory committee, former state Vice President Ken McCall, to ensure that the future plans for the forest would include the access and inclusion of hunting. —MIKE TOTEY

OHA stands up for mountain goat hunters

OHA staff testified at the January Fish & Wildlife Commission meeting in support of re-issuing three tags to Rocky Mountain goat hunters who were not able to hunt due to fire closures in Hat Point

and Goat Mountain in 2022.

OHA applauded ODFW staff for their effort to restore once-in-a-lifetime hunts for those who were impacted by land closures. —TYLER DUNGANNON

OHA weighs in for wildlife

OHA members went before the Deschutes County Commission two weeks in a row in January, first giving input regarding the priority of the Goal 5 Wildlife Inventory Update that had been shelved for political reasons. OHA members showed up wearing OHA hats and jackets, and the commission noticed to the degree that additional opportunity for comment was provided the next week.

OHA members, mainly from the Redmond and Bend chapters, both in person, and through email comments, reminded commissioners that our mule deer, elk and eagle wildlife inventories were last updated in the 1990s and are not the best scientific data.

The overwhelming message from OHA was that development and recreation pressure is bringing more conflicts between land use and wildlife protection and that protection of wildlife is a widely shared value in Deschutes County.

Our thanks go to OHA Southeast Director Mary Jo Hedrick and to OHA president Steve Hagan for not letting this fall through the cracks. And thanks to the Bend and Redmond chapters who showed up in January when they could have been out chukar hunting. —GARY LEWIS



First Gun Calendar winners announced

OHA drew the winners of the 2023 Gun Calendar Raffle on Jan. 4 at the OHA State Office.

Winners are posted every Wednesday on OHA's Facebook page and website. Here are January's winners:

- **Christensen Mesa .28 Nosler:**
Jeffrey Martin, Baker City
- **Pointer Acrius Over/Under:**
Perry M. DeLapp, Jr., Salem
- **Taurus The Judge revolver:**
Joshua Raby, Portland
- **Browning Hells Canyon Speed:**
Jimmy Borah, Klamath Falls



Sales of the 2024 OHA Gun Raffle Calendar will begin in February, at sports shows, participating OHA banquets, and by calling the OHA state office at 541-772-7313 or visiting OHA's website at: www.oregonhunters.org/store