



Volunteers constructed 4,000 feet of buck-and-pole fencing to protect aspen at OHA's White River Wildlife Area Blacktail project on June 10 and 11.

## OHA builds fencing to protect aspen on White River Wildlife Area

By Tyler Dungannon, Conservation Coordinator  
[TD@oregonhunters.org](mailto:TD@oregonhunters.org)

In response to a recent wildfire that burned aspen stands on White River Wildlife Area, OHA and ODFW installed nearly 4,000 feet of wildlife-friendly buck-and-pole fencing June 10-11 to protect one of only two aspen stands on the wildlife area.

Throughout the west, there is concern about the loss of aspen habitats and a reduction in aspen regeneration following disturbance. In some areas in Oregon, 80 percent of aspen woodlands have been lost since the 1800s.

Aspen provides fawning and calving habitat, hiding cover and forage for mule deer and elk, but heavy livestock use can prevent overstory recruitment, allow invasive plant species to establish, and degrade understories.

The OHA Hoodview Chapter covered all meals for volunteers and the great food made the camping experience one to write home about. One lucky OHA volunteer walked away with an \$1,800 Howa Carbon Fiber Rifle (donated by Legacy Sports International), and every volunteer received a great prize.

Prizes totaled \$3,000, thanks to our project sponsors, Legacy Sports International, Benchmade Knife Company, Black Rifle Coffee Company, Work Sharp, Coast and Napier Outdoors.

Stay tuned for future regional habitat projects led by State OHA and OHA chapters.

## Legislative session ends with major victories for sportsmen

By Amy Patrick, OHA Policy Director  
[Amy@oregonhunters.org](mailto:Amy@oregonhunters.org)

The 2023 Legislative session ended on June 25, and while unsuccessful in securing a ballot referendum to constitutionally protect the right to fish, hunt, harvest, and gather, sportsmen scored several major victories.

### Commission Restructure Passes

HB 3086, the bill to restructure the map by which ODFW Commissioners are selected, passed with a unanimous vote in the House and a nearly unanimous Senate vote. After working all session to keep this bill alive, the passage of this bill is notable and should be considered a substantial milestone for the bill supporters.

The Commission was previously aligned to congressional districts, plus two at-large positions, one eastside and one westside. The new statute bases all positions in the river basin regions with two commissioners each from the Northwest and West Central Regions, and one commissioner each from the Southwest, North Central and Eastern Regions. This provides greater representation to the eastern portion of the state and ensures we will no longer have three, or more, commissioners centered in the Portland area.

The bill had two public hearings in which sportsmen and women around the state submitted more than 1,000 pieces of written testimony in support, and Howl For Wildlife's action alert garnered more than 3,000 interactions and generated nearly 51,000 individual emails to legislators over the course of the session.

OHA partnered with other sportsmen's organizations, natural resource organizations, and livestock producers to build a united front of stakeholders supporting the bill. A huge factor in its passage were the six federally recognized Tribes in support.

OHA's bill for new funding for in-state testing for chronic wasting disease was not included in the final budget bill of the session, but there were other financial wins for wildlife and rural Oregonians. In addition to the \$5 million appropriated for further investments in wildlife crossings, the Minam River Wildlife Area Acquisition Phase II funding was approved, and the Mule Deer Coordinator position was funded in a permanent status.

### OHA Helps Defeat Bad Bills

Defeating a bad bill is a victory in itself. From further restrictions on hunting with hounds and criminalizing fur sales, to restrictions of managing predatory animals, the engagement of sportsmen and women around the state were instrumental in defeating or modifying five bills that would have had detrimental outcomes.

The two major gun bills were negotiated when Senate Republicans returned to the Capitol. HB 2005, which would have restricted so-called "ghost guns," instituted a restriction on firearms ownership and possession, and restricted concealed carry abilities, was reduced to restrictions on homemade firearms. Additionally, SB 348, which would have instituted all provisions of Measure 114, was effectively shelved.

**TO DONATE TO OHA'S HUNTER VICTORY FUND, VISIT [HTTPS://OREGONHUNTERS.ORG/DONATE](https://oregonhunters.org/donate)**

## Court hears case against M-114

The U.S. District Court for Portland heard final closing arguments on the several lawsuits challenging the constitutionality of Measure 114 on June 9.

OHA filed an Amicus brief in support of overturning 114. The State of Oregon has spent \$2 million of your state taxes hiring private lawyers to defend this measure. Paul Donheffner, OHA's Legislative Committee Chair, attended the court session and reported that the legal team fighting for us did an outstanding job. Matt Rowen, the attorney who wrapped up the plaintiffs' case gave a very eloquent and persuasive argument.

A decision by Judge Karin Immergut is expected in several weeks. Regardless of the outcome, it is very apparent this case will be appealed, and will likely go all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Meanwhile, the State Court case in Harney County is set for trial in September.

## 40th Anniversary sees OHA banquets, membership surge

Despite Measure 114 and court challenges casting a shadow over guns at fund-raisers, OHA enjoyed a banner year for our 40th Anniversary. Redmond, Hoodview and Columbia County led off the charge for our fundraiser season on Feb. 25. More than half of the chapters holding events set records with their gross and/or net income.

All of these funds will be used in Oregon promoting our mission: Protecting Oregon's Wildlife, Habitat and Hunting Heritage. The Bend Chapter set a new OHA chapter record of \$113,921, and the Tioga Chapter netted the second-best all-time mark of \$108,195.

OHA's State Convention also tallied an all-time record net at our sold-out 40th Anniversary banquet attended by 550 guests on May 6 at Chinook Winds Casino Resort in Lincoln City.

Attendance at OHA banquets was a big reason OHA's membership surged over the 11,000 mark this year, surpassing even our pre-COVID numbers.

OHA thanks our chapters, members and sponsors for their unwavering support in the face of the challenges we've seen in recent years. —*BRYAN COOK*

## ODFW public meetings on hunting regs move to webinars for 2023

ODFW's annual public meetings to discuss big game management and introduce recommendations for big game season proposals this year will move to a webinar, done regionally around the state. Look for information starting in July on the ODFW News Release site [www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2023/index.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2023/index.asp) to see when the meetings will take place and how to attend one of the webinars.

This format will allow people around the state to hear updates and proposals for other parts of the state. —*MIKE TOTEY*

## ODFW releases new mule deer brochure

ODFW has published a new document titled "Migration Matters: The migratory journeys of mule deer in Oregon." The 26-page document covers important information about mule deer, their needs and importance of migration in their life cycle, as well as the importance of mitigating barriers to their migration. This is a compilation of mule deer research and biology from across the West and specific data and information from Oregon.

This information is useful for everyone who has an interest in mule deer in Oregon. Hunters, land managers, transportation planners, renewable energy developers and policy makers will all benefit from this information.

—*MIKE TOTEY*



## OHA responds to easement invaders

In January of 2021, OHA executed its first conservation easement on David and Pamela Potter's property in southern Jefferson County. Since that time, part of the property burned in the Grandview Fire. OHA has done conservation work on site, and there's been some unauthorized grazing by some stray cattle.

In late May, conservation staff spent an evening with David Potter on the property. The property was green, but unfortunately a lot of it is cheatgrass that has invaded in areas of the Grandview Fire footprint. However, there's a fair amount of native bunchgrass coming back, as well. The unwanted visitors, the cattle, were back. After dealing with that issue last year, the landowners were told by Forest Service managers that the cattle were not supposed to be in that area. So a quick text to Monty Gregg, OHA Advisory Council member and Crooked River National Grasslands Wildlife Biologist, and he jumped on it for us by reaching out to the range manager.

The easement is located in prime big game winter range. —*MIKE TOTEY*

**RENEW YOUR  
OHA MEMBERSHIP  
& GET A CHANCE TO  
WIN A GREAT GUN!**

### OHA GUN RAFFLE CALENDAR

**OHA will give away  
A GUN A WEEK in 2024!**

**For \$50 you get:**

- 2024 Gun Raffle Calendar.
- Chance to win 1 of 52 guns raffled (\$599-\$1,800).
- 1 Year OHA Membership (Join, renew, gift or \$35 toward life pledge)

**Buy yours today!**

**Call 541-772-7313**

**or visit**

**[www.oregonhunters.org/store](http://www.oregonhunters.org/store)**

