



JOIN/RENEW MEMBERSHIP

**OCTOBER 2023**

JACKSON COUNTY WIGGONS/RANDY SHIPLEY

Harney M114 case awaits ruling

By Amy Patrick, OHA Policy Director
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Measure 114, the gun control measure passed by a narrow margin last November and held at bay through litigation, remains on hold while awaiting the outcome of the state lawsuit being heard in Harney County.

The lawsuit addressed several components of the measure and was first heard last December. The initial hearings resulted in the current hold on all of Measure 114 components. The hearing began on Sept. 18 and may be the deciding factor as to whether Measure 114 will be instituted.

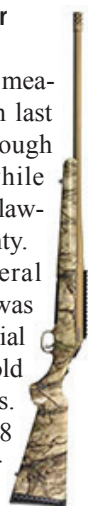
In June, a federal court case was heard in a Portland court, which resulted in a ruling that the measure's permit-to-purchase scheme was, in fact, constitutional. That ruling is being appealed at the federal level and does not supersede the Harney County judge's previous ruling

to place Measure 114 on hold.

In related gun litigation, a federal judge in California has ruled that state's ban on standard capacity magazines as unconstitutional. This ruling is oppositional to the federal judge's ruling in favor of Measure 114's magazine ban. While the California ruling will likely be appealed, it assists the arguments against Measure 114's constitutionality at the federal level.

From helping to form the opposition campaign against Measure 114 to providing amicus briefs and financial support for federal lawsuits, OHA has been actively fighting the unreasonable restrictions the measure would place on Oregonians. When legislators attempted to subvert the litigation efforts by moving bills forward that would mimic the measure's egregious components, OHA was there to fight them.

As the journey to overturn the measure carries on, OHA will continue to be involved at every opportunity.



Show off your harvest in a quick stop, help fight the spread of CWD



During the 2023 deer and elk hunting seasons, ODFW will increase sampling efforts for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) throughout the state by providing hunters with quick and easy opportunities to have their harvested animal tested.

As a reminder to hunters, CWD check stations are mandatory to stop at if you pass one along the highway or interstate while transporting a harvested deer or elk.

For a list of CWD check station lo-

cations, ODFW offices and other ways to get your deer or elk tested, such as at a taxidermist or meat processor, visit: <https://myodfw.com/CWD>.

Successful hunters can also contact some field offices to have a biologist collect a sample. Call the office to make an appointment in advance as biologists are often in the field. ODFW will collect the sample from the animal's head, so please keep your deer or elk head cool prior to sampling if possible.

OHA weighs in for game animals in state forest plan

By Mike Totey, Conservation Director
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OHA staff provided comments to the Oregon Board of Forestry in September to communicate our concerns for the future management of state forest lands, and the potential reduction in early seral habitat that's important for deer and elk. State forests have long been used by OHA members as a favorite place to hunt Roosevelt elk, Columbian black-tailed deer, black bear and upland game birds.



The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) is updating its western Oregon Forest Management Plan (FMP), which will include 640,000 acres stretching from the Columbia River to the California border. It includes the Tillamook State Forest, Clatsop State Forest, Santiam State Forest, and several other areas.

The new FMP is based on "ecologically sustainable forest management" principles and is being developed to guide forest management in conjunction with a potential Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). The draft FMP includes recreation and wildlife, both important components to OHA members, but most of the wildlife considerations and management are pointed toward species covered in the proposed HCP, and not game species.

The draft plan is available for review at <https://shorturl.at/wLQ15>

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OHA stands up for deer, elk in Commission testimony

By Tyler Dungannon, Conservation Coordinator
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OHA testified at the September ODFW Commission meeting and flagged several wildlife management issues that we will continue to work on into the foreseeable future. OHA summarized comments and provided in-person testimony pertaining to Rocky Mountain elk populations in northeast Oregon, chronic wasting disease (CWD), mule and black-tailed deer, and cougar.

In general, Rocky Mountain elk populations are doing well in eastern Oregon, however elk populations in six historically renowned elk units in the Wallowa District appear to be struggling. ODFW data indicate that the Wenaha, Sled Springs, Chesnimnus, Snake River, Minam, and Imnaha units were all well below elk population management objectives in 2022, and therefore need management attention. ODFW has been dealing with staffing issues in the Wallowa District, and as a result, elk herd composition data were not available for 2023. At the Commission meeting, OHA requested that we begin discussions with the department as to how we can improve elk populations in this district. Follow-up conversations with ODFW staff have led OHA staff to believe that improving elk populations in this district is a priority for ODFW, and we look forward to engaging on this issue in the near future.

OHA encouraged the ODFW Commission to continue their effort to increase CWD funding and awareness in Oregon. Unfortunately, OHA's aspiration to establish an in-state CWD testing facility did not come to fruition in the 2023 legislative session. However, the future support of the Commission is vital in preventing and ultimately reducing prevalence of the disease.

OHA acknowledged the effort of ODFW with regard to the revision of the

Mule Deer Management Plan. OHA is looking forward to the development and implementation of the plan to address a number of factors that are negatively impacting mule deer in Oregon. Based on ODFW survey data, which indicate declining mule deer populations, OHA supported specific mule deer tag reductions as recommended by ODFW staff.

In response to rulemaking which allowed harvest of spike black-tailed deer during general western Oregon deer seasons starting in 2020, OHA has and will continue to monitor impacts to

buck-doe ratios and harvest levels. OHA applauded ODFW staff for closely monitoring the results of this change and for providing data and figures to the public. OHA agreed with ODFW that spike black-tailed deer harvest is not yet having an impact on buck harvest for older age classes. However, OHA believes more years of data are necessary to fully assess impacts of this change, and we encourage ODFW staff

to continue to inform the public of buck harvest statistics and maintain the option to reverse this change if undesirable impacts to mature buck harvest are realized.

Cougar populations are thought to be nearing their ecological carrying capacity in certain areas in Oregon. Increasing anecdotal evidence of presence of cougars in urban areas, or areas they would not otherwise select, support this claim. It is well documented that cougar populations are limited by prey availability and space. If cougar populations are being limited by prey availability, this is likely indicative that ungulate populations are struggling. OHA commended ODFW for their ongoing work to determine the extent that cougar predation on ungulates is additive or compensatory, however, cougar population data and harvest quota information should have been made available well in advance of this Commission meeting in order for the agency to receive comments.



OHA is working to improve elk populations in units not meeting management objectives.