

OHA TRACKER

FEBRUARY 2024



BLUE MOUNTAIN MULEYS/DUANE DUNGANNON

OHA will back omnibus bill for Oregon wildlife

CWD funding, wildlife crossings support included in package

By Amy Patrick, OHA Policy Director
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House Bill 4148, a wildlife “omnibus” bill, seeks funding for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) efforts, the Invasive Species Council, efforts to reduce human-wildlife conflict, and also expands wildlife crossings policies. The comprehensive bill has bipartisan support and is led by Representative Ken Helm (D-District 27), chair of the House Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water Committee.

In the 2023 session, OHA’s bill seeking CWD funding passed out of Chair Helm’s committee with a unanimous vote and “do pass” recommendation to the Ways & Means Committee. Unfortunately, the bill was not passed by that committee and therefore died at the end of the session. OHA is excited to get a second chance at securing the much-needed CWD funding through HB 4148 and has made it the top priority for the 2024 session.

The 2024 session is a “short session,” beginning on Feb. 5 and adjourning on March 10. This abbreviated six-week length makes it difficult to pass bills with large financial components such as HB 4148’s \$6.7 million price tag. However, OHA is encouraged by the bill’s approach to addressing chronically underfunded aspects of wildlife health and optimistic regarding the large and diverse group of stakeholders already in support of the bill.

OHA steps up for Blue Mountains

\$63,000 contributed to improve habitat

By Tyler Dungannon, Conservation Coordinator
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OHA has increased its impact on elk habitat and research in central and northeast Oregon. OHA partnered with the Blue Mountains Elk Initiative (BMEI) in an effort to expand our habitat restoration and enhancement efforts on the Ochoco, Umatilla, Wallowa-Whitman and Malheur National Forests.

OHA contributed \$15,000 to the Dameron Aspen Project that will fence aspen stands, thin conifer, and improve elk security on the Malheur National Forest.

This project has thinned 11,700 acres of conifer, burned 900 acres to improve elk forage, and restored 240 acres of aspen to date. OHA funding will allow for 300 additional acres of aspen stand restoration and 100 additional acres of aspen fencing.

OHA also gave \$10,000 to the Sunflower Juniper Removal Project on the Ochoco National Forest. Juniper encroachment is a major concern for deer and elk, as it results in reduced forage for these species. OHA funding will help forest managers methodically cut 150 acres of juniper, which will restore perennial grass and bitterbrush communities in the area.

State OHA and OHA’s Union-Wallowa Chapter applied for and landed an LOP deer tag on The Nature Conservancy’s Zumwalt Prairie Preserve to raffle with proceeds (\$22,000) directly funding the Sheep Creek Thinning Project to



Blue Mountains Elk Initiative
OHA Chapter Contributions



Chapter	2023	2024	2025
Bend	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
Redmond	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	
Capitol	\$5,000.00		
Umpqua	\$2,500.00		
Lake Co	\$2,500.00		
Pioneer	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
Hoodview	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	
Emerald Valley	\$2,500.00		
Blue Mountain	\$2,500.00		
Ochoco	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
Mid Willamette	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00

benefit deer and elk in the Starkey Unit. OHA funds will contribute to the thinning and slash reduction of 1,062 acres on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest.

In addition to providing funds for OHA’s continued involvement with BMEI, the Bend, Redmond, and Ochoco chapters also provided a combined \$16,000 to fund an elk GPS collaring project on the Ochoco National Forest. These collars will provide important elk vital rate and movement data that will help ODFW in reducing landowner conflict and improve management of the elk herd.

Additional funds raised by chapters in 2023 will be used to support BMEI projects next year.

State OHA and OHA chapters around the state have committed to funding projects to benefit deer and elk in the Blue Mountains. OHA conservation staff will continue to work with managers of projects we funded to develop volunteer opportunities where applicable and monitor project progress.

OHA made a big splash in its first year with BMEI, and our impact will continue to be recognized, thanks to OHA chapters and their support for deer and elk in the Blue Mountains.

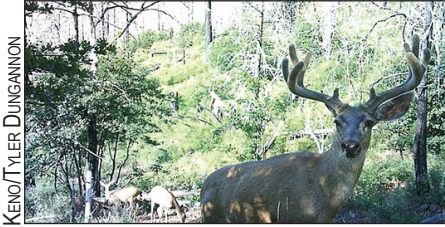
TO DONATE TO OHA’S HUNTER VICTORY FUND, VISIT [HTTPS://OREGONHUNTERS.ORG/DONATE](https://oregonhunters.org/donate)

NW Forest Plan to be amended

By Mike Totey, Conservation Director
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OHA has strived for years to improve elk and deer numbers on the west slope of the Cascades. We've had similar efforts on the east slope of the Cascades to improve mule deer numbers. One of the major causes of reduced deer and elk numbers has been a reduction in habitat, specifically on federal lands. Since 1994, the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands in these areas have been managed under the Northwest Forest Plan, which specifically set 80 percent of these lands on a pathway for old growth and late seral habitat types.

A lack of active management, including timber harvest, have dramatically reduced the amount of early seral habitat available for deer and elk on these lands. Now, the Forest Service plans to amend the Northwest Forest Plan. Clearly, the current management strategies have under-delivered on a number of items



Curtailed logging on federal lands has reduced early seral habitat for deer and elk in Oregon.

and created policy that precludes active management needed for some issues like managing fuel loads and stand health in the Wildland-Urban Interface.

OHA will provide our comments and perspectives on the need for a more balanced management approach, including high quality early seral habitat. In total, the current Northwest Forest Plan covers 24 million acres of US Forest Service lands across western Washington, western Oregon, the east slope of the Cascades in Washington and Oregon, and northern California.

Women of OHA attracts following in first month

The Women of OHA program launched on New Year's Day with a digital newsletter followed by a virtual meet & greet event on Jan. 9. The response to this new network has been outstanding with the participant list tripling in the first week.

The virtual meet & greet was well attended and proved to be a great opportunity for women to get to know each other and connect on similar interests around hunting and in other aspects of life.

The February newsletter will contain more information on the upcoming turkey clinics, as well as articles and resources related to women in the guide and outfitter industry with a focus on women-owned guide services. March will focus on turkey hunting, and there will be a special edition of the newsletter specific to fitness and the outdoors.

Join the email list to receive the newsletters and updates on events by emailing amy@oregonhunters.org

First Gun Calendar winners announced

OHA drew the winners of the 2024 Gun Calendar Raffle on Jan. 3 at the OHA State Office.

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

🎯 **Christensen Mesa .28 Nosler**
Marylyn Sumano, Baker City

🎯 **Pointer Acrius Over/Under**
Whitney Gill, Powell Butte

🎯 **Howa 1500 Flag 22-250**
Jay Pannell, Coos Bay

🎯 **Weatherby Vanguard Badlands**
Sydney Cox, Sandy



Sales of the 2025 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

YOU'RE INVITED TO AN OHA BANQUET NEAR YOU SOON!

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. Articles in this issue show the work the raised funding supports.

Watch for 2024 fund-raiser updates at: <https://oregonhunters.org/events-2>

OHA banquets in 2024 will feature a Coastal Farm & Ranch Raffle for a Browning Xbolt Speed LR Oviv 7mm PRC!



2024 OHA BANQUETS

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|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Feb. 17 Ochoco | 541-777-4830 |
| Feb. 24 Columbia Co. | 949-553-7271 |
| Feb. 24 Hoodview | 503-314-3090 |
| Feb. 24 Redmond | SOLD OUT! |
| Feb. 24 Union-Wallowa | 541-786-1283 |
| Mar. 2 Pioneer | SOLD OUT! |
| Mar. 9 Bend | 541-480-9848 |
| Mar. 16 Josephine Co. | 541-761-1852 |
| Mar. 16 Capitol | 503-930-8586 |
| Mar. 16 Rogue Valley | 541-773-8736 |
| Mar. 16 Yamhill County | 503-490-2489 |
| Mar. 23 Blue Mountain* | 541-231-4384 |
| Mar. 23 Clatsop County | 503-440-9934 |
| Mar. 23 Tualatin Valley | 503-502-0611 |
| Mar. 30 Mid-Columbia | 541-490-2980 |
| Apr. 6 Tioga | 541-294-7912 |
| Apr. 6 Umpqua | 541-580-5660 |
| Apr. 6 Lake County | 541-417-2983 |
| Apr. 13 Mid-Willamette | 541-971-3351 |
| Apr. 27 Klamath | 541-884-5773 |
| Apr. 27 Curry | 530-351-5847 |
| May 4 Tillamook | 503-842-7153 |
| May 4 OHA State Convention,** | |
| | Seven Feathers Casino, 541-772-7313 |
| | * A&H Statewide Elk Tag auction |
| | ** A&H Statewide Deer Tag auction |

VISIT OHA'S BOOTHS AT ALL THE WINTER SPORTS SHOWS