



RANDY SHIPLEY/SOUTHERN OREGON

Research funded by OHA will help document the ecological benefits of ungulates and early seral habitat for pollinators and other species of concern.

ODFW unveils 2025 big game rule changes

By Mike Totey, Conservation Director
mtotey@oregonhunters.org



ODFW hosted public meetings in July to introduce ideas for potential changes for the 2025 big game rules for deer, elk, pronghorn, sheep, goat and bear.

Meetings were presented by district biologists and other ODFW staff from the geographic area that was being covered in the meeting. Attendance was sparse from the hunting community. Interestingly, a couple of the meetings were attended by members of protectionist groups.

Plans include more bighorn sheep tags and a new goat hunt in the central Cascades.

Overall, little is proposed to change in terms of tag numbers in 2025. There are specific areas and units that have been adjusted due to local conditions, buck to doe ratios, or other factors. A bright spot is the proposed addition of several bighorn sheep tags and a new hunt area for Rocky Mountain goat in the central Cascades.

Tag proposals will go to the Fish and Wildlife Commission at its September meeting in the The Dalles for consideration and approval.

OHA funds key research on ecological benefits of elk and early seral habitat

By Tyler Dunganon, Conservation Coordinator
TD@oregonhunters.org

It is known that early seral (i.e., young generating forest) habitat is critical for deer, elk, and thousands of other wildlife species, including more than 300 listed species in the Pacific Northwest.

Unfortunately, early seral habitat is declining largely because forest practices have changed dramatically over several decades favoring late seral (i.e., old growth) forests.

OHA is working to affect how our forests are managed by amplifying the importance of reducing conifer stand density for ungulates and other wildlife. In order to achieve our objectives, non-ungulate wildlife species dependent on early seral habitat and reduced stand densities will need to be a part of the equation.

OHA recently contributed \$10,000 to an Oregon State University research project in northeast Oregon quantifying benefits of thinning treatments, and elk density on pollinators and flower abundance. Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation also contributed \$10,000 to this study, which spans several western states.

Initial analyses show elk herbivory is increasing flower abundance and diversity, which benefits pollinators and species of conservation concern.

Additionally, thinning treatments that open the forest canopy have led to a shift in flowering plant composition, which benefits species dependent on early seral habitat.

All wildlife species are important, and we will need all of our early seral obligate species to right the ship of forest management in Oregon.

IP3 misses '24 ballot, reloads for '26

By Amy Patrick, OHA Policy Director
Amy@oregonhunters.org

Initiative Petition 3, IP3, has failed to submit the necessary signatures to qualify for the 2024 general election ballot.

The initiative seeks to criminalize the killing of all animals, including mammals, birds, fish, amphibians, and reptiles, for any reason other than self-defense, which would outlaw all legal hunting, fishing, trapping, as well as raising animals for food.

The proponents have refiled for the 2026 ballot and received a new initiative petition number: IP28. While their campaign funds can be transferred from the old initiative to the new one, the signatures gathered under IP3 cannot be counted for IP28. They will now have two years to gather approximately 120,000 signatures before the July 2026 deadline.

OHA will continue to monitor the initiative's efforts and keep our membership informed of any developments.

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Women of OHA slate conservation and hunting weekend

By Amy Patrick, OHA Policy Director
Amy@oregonhunters.org

OHA's newest outreach program, Women of OHA, is planning a women's weekend away for both conservation work and hunting. Scheduled for Oct. 25-27 in central Oregon, the weekend will be split between a day of planting bitterbrush seedlings and a day of chukar hunting.

OHA is renting two large homes at Black Butte Resort for the weekend and will provide meals, including Friday dinner; breakfast, lunch, and dinner on Saturday; and breakfast and lunch on Sunday.

Saturday will be a full day of conservation work with planting bitterbrush seedlings on the Crooked River National Grasslands as part of a larger planting effort by the Ochoco National Forest. USFS will provide the seedlings and OHA will provide the planting equipment.

After the day of work, Sunday will be a chukar hunt on OHA's conservation easement adjacent to the Grasslands. OHA is purchasing 1,000 birds for a put and take hunt and will also provide several working dogs to assist the hunters.

Participants will be entered to win prizes, including a Citadel M1911 .380 pistol donated by Legacy Sports International.

The weekend is limited to 30 women and there is a registration fee of \$75. OHA membership is required for participation, so any participant who is not already a member will need to purchase a membership in addition to the registration fee.

Details will be sent out soon; scan the QR code to subscribe to the Women of OHA newsletter and receive information.

Women of OHA: why a program for women in hunting makes sense

By Amy Patrick, OHA Policy Director
Amy@oregonhunters.org

OHA rolled out the Women of OHA program in 2024 to a growing audience of women in the hunting community. The program will focus on building community among women, providing skills

building courses, and prioritizing conservation efforts.

The impetus behind the program's development is a recognition that women are an important and growing demographic of our hunting heritage. In fact, according to a 2022 study by the Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports, women are the fastest-growing demographic in both hunting and sport shooting, making up 27 percent of hunters, 32 percent of sport shooters, and 37 percent of overall gun ownership.

In addition to the demographics, it's clear that women have unique hunting experiences and concerns. Creating an opportunity for women to discuss specific topics such as personal safety, hygiene, and correctly sized gear provides a much-needed outlet for women.

The program is supported by funding from the Leupold & Stevens Foundation.

The Women of OHA program aims to create a community of women who help each other learn, teach, and mentor while creating new friendships.

To subscribe to the Women of OHA newsletter, scan the QR code. For more, visit: <https://oregonhunters.org/hunting/women-of-oha>



ODFW selects Clements as deputy director

By Mike Totey, Conservation Director
mtotey@oregonhunters.org

ODFW has selected Shaun Clements as the Deputy Director for Fish and Wildlife Programs. He began in this position on July 15. In this role, Clements will oversee the fish, wildlife and habitat divisions and field offices, as well as agency's state legislative activities.

Clements fills the deputy director position that was formerly held by Debbie Colbert, who was selected to fill the agency director position in May.

Clements holds a BS and MS in biology and a PhD in Fisheries.

While Clements has spent most of his time with ODFW working on fish-related topics and issues, in 2023 he stepped into the deputy position temporarily while Colbert was on assignment at the Governor's office. OHA looks forward to working with him on all things related to wildlife and habitat in Oregon to meet both OHA's mission and that of ODFW.