

OHA TRACKER

PROTECTING OREGON'S WILDLIFE, HABITAT AND HUNTING HERITAGE

SEPTEMBER 2026



JOIN/RENEW MEMBERSHIP

DENMAN WILDLIFE AREA/RANDY SHIPLEY

ODFW will host youth pheasant hunts in September, and OHA volunteers will help out. To register, visit <https://myodfw.com/workshops-and-events>

Lobbyist Hugh Ady joins OHA's camp

The Oregon Hunters Association has retained Hugh Ady, founder of Statecraft, a government relations firm, as our new lobbyist in Salem. Hugh brings over a decade of experience in state politics, having served as caucus staff at the Capitol, research manager for a public affairs firm, and a statewide association executive over that period.

Beyond his professional government relations credentials, Hugh is a lifelong outdoorsman who shares OHA's commitment to Oregon's wild-life and hunting traditions. He has long volunteered with Ducks Unlimited, giving him a firsthand understanding of the issues that matter most to Oregon's sportsmen and women.

Through Statecraft, Hugh has a proven track record of navigating complex policy environments and moving landmark legislation through both chambers.

He will work directly with OHA staff to ensure our voice is heard in the Capitol.

Please join us in welcoming Hugh to the team.

With our recent victory defeating IP28, we are shifting to a proactive legislative strategy. Hugh's combination of political expertise and personal commitment will be vital to securing our way of life for future generations.



Hugh Ady

OHA steps up for Oregon elk

Management practices must target management objectives

Currently only 59% (20) of wildlife management units are above population management objective (MO) for Rocky Mountain elk. Meanwhile, on the west side, just 17% (3) of WMUs for Roosevelt elk are meeting their management goals for population size. In these units above population MO, OHA strongly supports abundant antlerless elk hunting opportunity. This is adaptive management; when the resource exceeds our goals, increases in hunting opportunity should follow.

Unfortunately, Rocky Mountain elk are below population management objective (MO) in 41% (14) of the units, and Roosevelt elk are below population MO in 83% (15) of WMUs in Oregon.

There are many factors contributing to elk population trajectories, including but not limited to forage quality and quantity, predation, development, disturbance (e.g., road densities), and to a lesser extent, disease. OHA is working to address all of these limiting factors, but antlerless elk harvest can also have a tremendous impact on elk population sizes. Debates regarding the impacts of various factors on elk populations are warranted and should be part of the equation, but hunters should not elude the fact that increasing antlerless elk harvest is the foremost way to reduce elk population size.



W. CASCADES/RANDY SHIPLEY

Elk numbers and bull ratios are languishing below management objectives in many units. OHA is committed to reversing that trend.

**OHA seeks
a thorough
review of
antlerless tags
for elk herds
below MO.**

While supporting robust antlerless elk hunting in units at or above population MO, OHA is pushing for a thorough review of antlerless elk tag allocation (including general season antlerless elk damage tags) for elk populations currently not meeting MO.

Rocky Mountain elk bull ratios are currently below MO in at least 17 WMUs while Roosevelt elk bull ratios are below MO in at least eight WMUs. OHA is supporting work to address low bull ratios in the coast range, and we are encouraging ODFW to work to address low bull ratios statewide. Above all, OHA is pressing the need to revise Oregon's Elk Management Plan that was published 23 years ago.

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

OHA pushes cougar removal to benefit bighorn sheep

OHA is supporting an effort to remove cougars to benefit bighorn sheep in the Trout Creek Mountains. ODFW plans to translocate bighorn sheep in the near future to augment the existing herd and enhance its genetic diversity.

There are many examples of cougar predation negatively affecting translocation efforts.



In the early 2000s, the Minam River bighorn sheep translocation saw 3 of 17 released sheep killed by cougars within one week, and the second in the Steens, where 5 out of the 10 collared ewes were killed by cougars.

In both instances, the remaining sheep scattered and left the area.

"The science is clear," said OHA Conservation Director Tyler Dungannon. "If you want to successfully translocate bighorn sheep, in most cases, you need to first reduce predator densities and remove individuals that will prey upon the naïve ungulates that are new to the landscape."

OHA believes this effort will greatly improve the success of future bighorn sheep translocations and will benefit the declining population size and genetic diversity in the Trout Creek Mountains.

Though not the primary objective, this effort may also aid the Trout Creek mule deer herd range currently listed as "very high management concern" in the Oregon Mule Deer Management Plan.

OHA protects SW Cascade meadow with fence project

OHA worked with USFS and ODFW this summer to protect 480 acres across three areas in the Cascade Mountains, including Willow Prairie, Short Creek Prairie, and Whiskey Springs with 6.5 total miles of wildlife-friendly fencing. Volunteers also removed nearly as much old, dilapidated fencing.

Meadow systems across the western Cascades are at risk of loss, degradation and fragmentation due to conifer encroachment, heavy use by domestic livestock, wildfire suppression and other factors. Willow Prairie and Whiskey Springs are high-risk groundwater infiltration areas, and these areas provide spring water for the Big Butte Springs Municipal Watershed, which provides drinking water to approximately 140,000 people in the region.

The wet meadow and spring systems provide critical habitat for a suite of species, including deer, elk, neotropical and migratory birds, owls, amphibians, reptiles, pollinators, and small mammals.

Fencing associated with this project should physically prevent illegal off-road driving, which has damaged these mesic systems in the recent past. Fence strand spacing fit wildlife-friendly fence standards to a tee; 16 inches were measured from the ground to the first smooth wire, 6 inches to the first barbwire, 8 inches to the next barbwire, and finally the top smooth wires were installed 42 inches from the ground to reduce ungulate entanglements.

OHA tallied more than 1,000 volunteer hours with help from eight OHA chapters.

"This project was a tremendous effort by a number of OHA chapters," said OHA Conservation Director Tyler Dungannon. "More than 100 volunteers shed blood and sweat for the protection of these critical meadows, and bringing so many chapters together exponentiated our impact."

OHA obtained a \$50,000 grant from the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund to complete this project.

Nominations now open for OHA State Board

OHA members interesting in serving as state president or state vice president should attain a nomination from a chapter or 10 member signatures and submit a position statement of up to 200 words by Sept. 15, 2026. Both are two year positions that will commence on Jan. 1, 2027.

Three-year board positions are also open. No chapter nomination or signatures are needed for board seats; contact

OHA Vice President Cindy Rooney at cindyrooneyoha@outlook.com for an application and instructions. Applications must be received by Sept. 15.

OHA's board and committees meet at least once a month, twice a year in person on Saturdays, with other meetings by Zoom conferences on weeknights.

For more information, call the OHA state office at (541) 772-7313.

OHA announces next Gun Calendar winners

The next winners in OHA's 2026 Gun Calendar Raffle have been announced!

The 2027 Gun Raffle Calendar is on sale now; call 541-772-7313 or visit <https://oregonhunters.org/shop/#raffles>

See winners on OHA's website or get our app, which you can also use to enter OHA contests and get timely notifications.

★ *Weatherby Vanguard Badlands 6.5-300 Why*

Mark Goody, Ochoco Chapter

★ *Christensen Evoke Hunter .300 PRC*

Roger Heegard, Bend Chapter

★ *Sig Sauer P320 M18 Coyote Striker*

James Halsey, Union County Chapter

★ *Howa Superlite Walnut 7mm-08*

Justin Latham, Bend Chapter

★ *Browning A-Bolt synthetic 6.5 CR*

Mike Milner, Josephine County Chapter



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