



OHA TRACKER



MARCH 2015

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ROGUE UNIT

Cougar bill hearing livens up Oregon Legislature

The legislature is off and running. The House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee has held a number of hearings on hunting and wildlife bills, including cougar bills that brought OHA and the pro-hunting community out in force. Here is a breakdown of some of the highlights.



OHA testified in favor of cougar bills that would finally allow some local control.

HB 2050 and HB 2181 Cougar Bills

There are two identical cougar bills this session, both of which provide that a county is exempt from the laws banning the use of dogs to hunt or pursue cougars if voters approve a county measure proposed by initiative petition or referred to people by governing body of county.

A hearing was held on these bills, and a number of people testified in support of both bills, highlighting the need for rural Oregon to have the tools to manage cougars in relation to public safety, livestock and pet protection, and wildlife depredation. Those who opposed the bills argued that the science used to collect data related to Oregon's cougar numbers was flawed.

After the hearing, a workgroup was formed (there were three OHA representatives at this meeting) to see if an agreement could be reached by all interested parties. This group is continuing to talk about possibilities.

HB 2503 – Lead Ammunition

This bill vests sole authority to regulate hunting ammunition and fishing gear with Legislative Assembly. This bill basically takes away the threat of cities, counties, or the Governor banning the use of lead for hunting ammunition and fishing gear. The bill has had one hearing.

The bill is still in the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Amendments are being drafted to take out any reference to commercial fishing.



Poaching continues to run rampant in Oregon. Can even tougher penalties help slow it down?

HB 2537 – Anti-Poaching

This bill increases the penalties and fines related to the illegal taking of wildlife. The room was packed by those who support hunting and fishing and they all testified in support of the bill.

OHA testified on the point that prosecutors and judges need to do more in this area. Also, a work group was set up to work out amendments to the bill. The workgroup has met once and is working on draft amendments to the bill. One member on the workgroup is an attorney who works with prosecutors and judges in Oregon. He is working with the group to determine the best method to alert prosecutors and judges to the importance of stiff fines and penalties for the unlawful talking of wildlife in Oregon.



An OHA bill to prohibit the use of drones in hunting is gaining momentum.

HB 2534 – Drones

This bill directs ODFW to adopt rules prohibiting use of drones for angling or hunting. This bill, which OHA asked for and testified in support of, is aimed at prohibiting the use of drones for the purpose of hunting or fishing, and also prohibits harassing with a drone those who are hunting or fishing.

Amendments are being drafted that also speak to prohibiting the tracking of wildlife or spotting of wildlife with the use of a drone.

HB 2536 – Consent To Inspections

This bill requires the applicant for a license, tag or permit to angle, take, hunt or trap to sign at the time of the purchase of a license or tag that the applicant consents to the inspection of the tag or permit and any wildlife taken. The purpose of this bill is to help curb poaching by bringing back the concept of "game check stations."

In the past such checking points have been curtailed because of "constitutional problems." This bill aims to provide language in statute that would allow for such checking points to be legal for those licensed to hunt and fish. Amendments are currently being drafted on this bill.

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OUTDOOR OUTLOOK

MARCH 5

Central Oregon Sports Show opens

MARCH 7

OHA Tualatin Valley youth day 503-484-5617
OHA Pioneer Chapter banquet 503-710-1233

MARCH 10

All late goose seasons end

MARCH 14

OHA chapter banquets:
Emerald Valley 541-729-0877
Tualatin Valley 503-312-7643
Union/Wallowa 541-786-1283

MARCH 21

OHA chapter banquets:
Clatsop County 503-359-3535
Bend 541-330-6218
Yamhill County 971-270-7035

APRIL 1

Spring bear season opens in West Blue Mountains and Western Oregon hunt areas

APRIL 4

OHA Mid-Columbia youth turkey clinic,
503-947-6019;

OHA chapter banquets:
Baker County 541-403-0402
Lake County 541-417-0512
Capitol 971-599-8715
Josephine County 541-761-1852

APRIL 11-12

Statewide youth spring turkey hunt

APRIL 15

Spring turkey season opens;
Harvest reporting deadline, winter tags;
Deadline for ballots in OHA state elections;
Spring bear opens, most areas of E. Oregon

APRIL 18

OHA Chapter banquets:
Siuslaw 541-999-9222
Mid-Willamette 541-619-8393

APRIL 25

OHA Pioneer Spring Youth Day 503-829-2912
OHA Chapter banquets:
Tioga 541-267-2577
Klamath 541-891-5301



The investigation is ongoing and more charges are pending. Anyone with information about this case is asked to contact Officer Hayes at 541-419-1653.

Numerous large mule deer antlers, deer meat, firearms and controlled substances were seized.

Suspects arrested in big deer poaching case

Oregon State Police (OSP) Fish and Wildlife Troopers from Deschutes and Klamath Counties in February arrested a La Pine man and others in a huge case of alleged mule deer poaching.

Senior Troopers Hayes and Bean received information in December that Gene A. Parsons, 37, of La Pine, had been involved in the illegal killing of a large number of mature trophy-class mule deer bucks during the fall of 2014. Hayes and Bean initiated an investigation, gathering information and evidence over the next several weeks.

On Jan. 17, a search warrant was executed at Parsons' home in La Pine. During the service of the warrant, numerous large mule deer antlers, deer meat, firearms, and controlled substances were seized. Parsons was arrested and lodged in the Deschutes County Jail for Unlawful Take/Possession of Mule Deer with additional charges pending.

Additional information developed during the search warrant led troopers to identify another suspect, Lance Cournoyer, 44, of Grants Pass. Further investigation into Cournoyer's conduct resulted in charges for Felon in Possession of a Firearm, two counts of Unlawful Take of Mule Deer, and waste of Game Mammal.

Parsons' parents, Oliver Parsons, 64, and Suzan Parsons, 58, of La Pine, were found in possession of six sets of large



mule deer antlers and deer meat and were cited and released for the crimes of Aiding in a Game Violation, Illegal Possession of Mule Deer, and Tampering with Evidence.

The investigation is ongoing and additional charges are pending. Anyone with information concerning this case is asked to contact Hayes at 541-419-1653.

The OSP Fish and Wildlife Division wants to remind hunters and other outdoor enthusiasts about the Oregon Hunters Association's Turn-in-Poachers (TIP) program, wherein callers who report wildlife crimes to police may be eligible for a reward if the information leads to the apprehension and conviction of wildlife offenders. Anyone with information about wildlife offenses is asked to call (800) 452-7888; and additional information may be found at <http://www.oregon.gov/OSP/FW/Pages/fwtip.aspx>