



KLAMATH SNOWS/DUANE DUNGANNON

OHA supports wolf delisting in front of legislative committee

The Oregon Hunters Association was invited to participate in a panel on wolf delisting before the House Interim Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources in January. The panel, with representatives from OHA, Oregon Farm Bureau and Oregon Cattlemen's Association, spoke about the need for delisting of the wolf and why the science tells us it is time to delist. Jim Akenson, OHA Conservation Director, detailed the science that provided the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission with the green light to delist.

OHA joins task force on ODFW funding

OHA Midwest Director and Legislative Committee Chairman Paul Donhefner represented hunting interests when the task force on funding for fish, wildlife and related outdoor recreation and education held its first meeting at the State Capitol on Jan. 12. Governor Brown personally greeted each of the appointed 15 task force members, which included representatives of the outdoor recreation business community; conservation, hunting and fishing interests; outdoor recreation interests other than hunting and fishing; travel and tourism industry; county governments; outdoor education community; sport and commercial fishing industry; and diverse communities that may be underserved or underrepresented

by the state's current programs.

The task force was created by House Bill 2402, which was passed by the 2015 Oregon Legislature. The bill charged the task force with developing recommendations to strengthen the state's ability to conserve natural resources and connect the diversity of Oregonians to nature through outdoor recreation and education opportunities. This includes opportunities linked to hunters and anglers as well as the non-hunting/non-angling members of the public whose values and pursuits are connected to healthy wildlife, habitat and natural places.

The legislature has directed the task force to develop recommendations, including for legislation, that:

- ✓ Identify potential alternative, sustainable funding sources for programs and partnerships;
- ✓ Make adjustments to ensure ODFW programs are equitably funded, with future hunting and angling fee increases or alternative revenue sources being developed and implemented in a manner that connects program services with revenue tied to beneficiaries of those programs;
- ✓ Advance opportunities to leverage funds from existing and alternative sources to better achieve ODFW's mission.

Recommendations from the task force are due to the legislature by Sept. 15, 2016, for possible consideration during the 2017 legislative session.

OHA questions ODF proposed rule changes

OHA in January submitted comments on the Oregon Department of Forestry's

"Recreational and commercial use of state forests lands" proposed rule changes.

OHA questioned language in several sections of the proposed rule changes pertaining to hunting and target shooting, pets on leashes, and the use of animals and livestock during hunting activities.

ODF is accepting comments on their proposed rules until Feb. 8, 2016.

For more information on the proposed rules, visit <http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/AboutODF/Pages/ProposedLawsRules.aspx>

OHA backs Congressional Sportsmen's Act of 2015

OHA recently submitted a letter to Congressman Jeff Merkley in support of S. 659, The Sportsmen's Act of 2015. Among other things, the bill would increase access to public lands by facilitating the construction and expansion of public target shooting ranges for archery and firearms. The bill also reauthorizes key conservation programs, such as the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and the Multinational Species Conservation Fund.

In the letter OHA pointed out that in Oregon each year more than 703,000 people hunt and fish. This generates more than \$929 million in revenue while supporting nearly 14,800 jobs. These activities also generate some \$99 million in state and local taxes.

The bill passed one hurdle on Jan. 20 when the bill passed out of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee on a bipartisan vote.

For the bill's details, visit www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/405/text —AL ELKINS, OHA LOBBYIST

OUTDOOR OUTLOOK

JANUARY 31

Harvest reporting deadline, most tags;
Most bird seasons end

FEBRUARY 1

Deadline to file for OHA state elections

FEBRUARY 5

Eugene Boat & Sportsmen's Show opens

FEBRUARY 6

NW goose season 3rd period opens;
OHA Malheur County Chapter banquet
541-216-0485;
OHA Capitol Chapter wood duck nest box
project 503-566-7779

FEBRUARY 10

Deadline to apply for spring bear tags;
Pacific Northwest Sportsmen's Show opens

FEBRUARY 13

OHA Columbia Basin Chapter banquet
541-379-1074

FEBRUARY 19

Douglas County Sportsmen's & Outdoor
Recreation Show opens in Roseburg

FEBRUARY 20

OHA chapter banquet:
Ochoco 541-788-7172;
Spring bear draw results available;
South coast goose 3rd period opens

FEBRUARY 26

Jackson County Sportsmen's & Outdoor
Recreation Show opens

FEBRUARY 27

OHA chapter banquets:
Redmond 541-419-7215
Hoodview 503-255-1946
Columbia County 503-201-7495

MARCH 3

Central Oregon Sportsmen's Show opens,
Redmond

MARCH 5

OHA chapter banquets:
Pioneer 503-710-1233
Rogue Valley 541-773-1587

OHA advocates for hunters and wildlife in land- use discussions

Owyhee Canyon:

The issue of new protections over a vast expanse of public land in Malheur County continues to concern OHA. On one side is the Owyhee Coalition proposal, initiated by ONDA, which calls for 2 million acres of wilderness within a 2.5-million-acre Conservation Area or National Monument – potentially done through executive order. On the other side is the Malheur County Lands Committee, which supports continued multiple use and a much smaller wilderness, and rejects the National Monument concept.

OHA activated a committee with representatives from our state board and the OHA Malheur County Chapter to develop our organization's position on this issue, which focuses heavily on our mission statement, and will consider wildlife, maintaining habitat quality and restoration options, and public access. Most recently OHA met with other like-minded sportsmen's groups to produce a sportsmen's perspective. This has involved a meeting in Ontario to identify common interests and concerns. This "Sportsmen's Collaborative" currently involves TRCP, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, Trout Unlimited, Oregon FNAWS, Pheasants Forever and OHA.

On Jan.12, representatives from these groups met with staff from the offices of Senators Wyden and Merkley. The outcome was that sportsmen are forming their own statement on what they want to see in that landscape – within the Owyhee River Watershed. Elected officials are hearing what sportsmen want to see in that region, regardless of land designations being proposed by others.

Ochoco Mountains:

This is another permanent land protection effort, in this case initiated by Oregon Wild. Their proposal calls for a 312,000-acre Ochoco Mountains

National Recreation Area that includes 25,700 acres of wilderness and 100 miles of wild and scenic rivers. According to this plan proposal, the National Recreation Area would encourage traditional, non-motorized forms of recreation and OHV use would be limited to designated roads. In response, an OHA Ochoco planning group has been formed, mostly with local chapter representatives.

Using a similar approach to the Owyhee situation, OHA has drawn up a statement on conditions and management practices that will benefit both sportsmen and wildlife – as laid out in our OHA mission statement. Our concerns focus on maintaining the capability to manage habitat, enhance huntable wildlife species, and control threats like massive wildfire, noxious weed spread, and any other adverse developments and activities.

—JIM AKENSON, OHA CONSERVATION DIRECTOR

Commission approves new tag allocation framework

The Commission in January was briefed on a new, streamlined controlled hunt tag and season-setting process. The new process will adopt controlled hunt tag numbers and seasons the September before the calendar year, basing tags on population trends. Wildlife managers will still be able to make emergency changes to tag numbers in spring if there were major population changes in wildlife herds. Under the new process, the Commission will also consider big game regulations just once a year, in September, instead of over two meetings. These changes would provide more time for the public to review and comment on proposals, save staff and Commission time and also allow ODFW to print the season's final tag numbers in the regulations each year. (Currently, the previous year's tag numbers are shown in the regulations.)

Jim Morrell new A&H chair

The Commission at its January meeting appointed Jim Morrell of Sisters Chair of the statewide Access and Habitat Board, which distributes grants that improve hunting access and wildlife habitat on private lands. Jim is a former OHA Field Administrator.

Congratulations, Jim!

