



OHA GUZZLER, COURTESY GARY CHANDLER

OHA supports increased deer, elk objectives

OHA testified before the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission in June regarding Oregon deer and elk management objectives and local review committees, stating we support the recommended increases in deer and elk objectives (population as well as buck and bull ratios) that were made by the local review committees and respective district biologists, with a few notable exceptions.

OHA Conservation Director Jim Akenson also highlighted the warranted increases due to biological factors in these units:

Chesnimus Unit: OHA recommends a management objective of 4,500 elk for the unit with 3,800 for public land and 700 for the Zumwalt Prairie private land. The bull ratio proposed is 20 bulls per 100 cows. The committee-proposed population objective (3,500) failed to mention OHA proposed 4,500 and the Nez Perce tribe 5,200 (5 year average). This should be amended to show the range of recommendations as was done in the Imnaha Unit (1,200-2,200). This unit has two established wolf packs and is prime for continued wolf number increase looking ahead, and establishing a population buffer is wise and prudent elk management.

Imnaha Unit: The committee produced a range of population recommendations for this unit, spanning from 1,200 to 2,200. OHA recommended the high number, and for these reasons: 1) the majority of this unit is public land (75 percent) and considered high quality elk habitat; in fact, biologists have stated that this unit could be managed for a popula-



Northeast Oregon elk management objectives continue to be a hot topic for OHA and others.

tion of 3,000 elk if not for other land use considerations. 2) A large segment of the unit – used by elk during fall hunting seasons – is in the Eagle Cap Wilderness. Bull elk hunting has become very popular during both archery and rifle seasons, and cutting this population in half would displace hundreds of hunters seeking a high quality hunting experience. 3) This unit supports a growing wolf population and an established cougar population, and from a hunters' perspective, we feel it needs a population buffer – and the 2,000 elk proposed by ODFW is simply a minimum number when considering predation variables.

Pine Creek: For this unit the committee recommended maintaining the current objective at 650, while the district biologist recommended 800. OHA supports the district biologist's recommendation, at a minimum, again based upon the growing potential for elk population reduction due to increasing wolf predation. This item will be up again before the Commission for a final vote in August, at which time OHA will be providing the Commission with further explanation and more detailed analysis.

Senators introduce mineral withdrawal bill for Owyhee

Oregon U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley have introduced a congressional bill to help protect more than 2 million acres in the Owyhee Canyonlands area. The bill is designed to prohibit mineral exploration from outside mining companies including those that mine for oil and gas. The bill also puts an emphasis on economic development for southeastern Oregon.

In their joint press release, Wyden and Merkley said the Act recognizes that public lands in southeastern Oregon have hosted agriculture and cattle ranching for generations but face threats including the possibility of foreign companies who want to parachute into the state to explore for minerals such as uranium.

"This is deeply troubling because these mining operations are dangerous – to the existing local economies as well as to the overall environment," Wyden said. "Blocking mining in these areas protects the local potential for continued creation of jobs in agriculture and recreation, and the growth of small businesses."

"The Owyhee Canyonlands are a special place that merit protection from outside mining operations," Merkley said. "This bill does that while also protecting and enhancing ranching and other aspects of the local economy."

In addition to permanently withdrawing over 2 million acres in Malheur County from mineral operations, the bill also creates and expands programs to support southeastern Oregon communities so they can grow their traditional economies and build on their strengths.

JIM WARD, OHA UNION-WALLOWA CHAPTER

See this week's Hunting Headlines at www.oregonhunters.org

OSP arrests 3 in elk poaching case

Oregon State Police Fish and Wildlife Troopers from the Astoria, Saint Helens, and Portland offices on June 14 followed up on an anonymous tip about the recent unlawful killing of two bull elk in Columbia County, leading them to contact three subjects at two separate residences in northeast Portland.

While at the first residence, Troopers interviewed Esgar Garcia, age 31, who admitted to shooting both bull elk while recreationally shooting near Scappoose.

Troopers found several sets of deer antlers, which Garcia admitted were shot at night on the Sauvie Island Wildlife Area (SIWA). Additionally, Garcia admitted to shooting other deer and cow elk on the SIWA that he had left to waste.

Troopers went to the second address, and interviewed Lionzo Garcia-Rodriguez, age 41, and a 16-year-old regarding the incident. During the interview, the 16-year-old juvenile admitted to shooting several times at the elk with an AR-15. All subjects were arrested for the following crimes:

Esgar Garcia was arrested for:

- ✓ Unlawful Take of Bull Elk: Closed Season x 2

- ✓ Waste of Game Animal x 2

- ✓ Felon in Possession of a Firearm

Lionzo Garcia-Rodriguez was arrested for:

- ✓ Aiding in a Wildlife Violation: Unlawful Take of Bull Elk

16 year-old juvenile was arrested for:

- ✓ Unlawful Take of Bull Elk: Closed Season

- ✓ Waste of Game Animal

OSP seized 12 rifles, shotguns, and handguns during the interviews, as well as the unlawfully taken deer antlers and two homemade sound suppressors.

This is an ongoing investigation.

On the evening of May 29, OSP was notified of two dead bull elk in the area of Pittsburg Road near Baker Point (approximately 3 miles from Scappoose-Vernonia Highway). OSP Fish and Wildlife Troopers responded and found two dead elk, determining they had been shot and left to waste. Investigation revealed the elk were likely shot on or



Police seized 12 firearms, sound suppressors, and illegally taken antlers.

around May 28.

A reward of up to \$1,000 is offered for information leading to an arrest and conviction in this case. The reward is comprised of \$500 from the Oregon Hunters Association Turn In Poachers (TIP) program and \$500 from the Oregon Hunters Association Columbia County Chapter.

OHA annually pays out an average of \$13,000 a year to informants in poaching cases.

OHA recently helped pass a law increasing penalties for poachers.

If you support OHA's efforts to fight poaching in Oregon, please join us at www.oregonhunters.org

Commission sets 2017 big game regulations

At its June meeting, the Commission set the big game regulations for 2017. Here is a brief summary of the game regulation changes for 2017:

- ✓ Edible parts of game mammals are now defined to provide clarity for hunters and law enforcement.

- ✓ The sale of taxidermy mounts by individuals age 65 and older who legally harvested the animal will now be allowed. (Previously, taxidermy mounts could only be sold as part of an estate.) These individuals will need to pay a \$25 processing fee for up to five mounts, \$5 per mount after.

- ✓ Hunters may change their controlled hunt choices free once per hunt series (buck deer, elk, etc.); after that they will pay a \$25 fee due to administrative costs and staff time required to make adjustments. Hunters may change their controlled hunt choices until June 1



each year.

- ✓ Additional big game hunting will be allowed at Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area (archery, muzzleloaders, and shotguns only).

- ✓ Parts of Wenaha and White River wildlife areas will close during the winter to reduce disturbance to big game (Wenaha closure Jan. 1-March 31, White River Dec. 1-March 31).

OUTDOOR OUTLOOK

JULY 9

OHA Clatsop County Youth Day
503-359-3535;

OHA Capitol Chapter Youth Shotgun Clinic
541-996-9984;

OHA Bend Chapter Crescent tree thinning
541-647-0424

JULY 10

OHA Capitol Chapter Fun Shoot
541-996-9984;

OHA Bend Chapter Crescent tree thinning
541-647-0424

JULY 16

OHA Tualatin Valley Tillamook Forest target shooting area cleanup 503-407-2486

AUGUST 1

Bear season opens

AUGUST 6

OHA Lincoln County Chapter youth day shooting skills clinic 541-961-5017

AUGUST 13

Standard antelope season opens