



OHA TRACKER



AUGUST 2016



BEATYS BUTTE/DUANE DUNGANNON

Wolf amendments in federal legislation

The Congressional House of Representatives in July passed a \$32 billion Department of Interior and Environmental Protection Agency spending bill that included three amendments to manage wolf populations in the U.S.:

- Amendment No. 73 is sponsored by Reps. Dan Newhouse (Wash.), Greg Walden (Ore.) and McMorris Rodgers (Wash.). The amendment prohibits the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Interior from using funds to treat any gray wolf within the continental United States as an endangered or threatened species.
- Amendment No. 75 is sponsored by Rep. Newhouse. The amendment reinstates \$1 million for the Wolf Livestock Loss Demonstration Program by reducing funds for EPA Environmental Programs and Management by \$1 million.
- Amendment No. 78 is sponsored by Reps. Steve Pearce (N.M.) and Paul Gosar (Ariz.). The amendment removes federal protections for the Mexican wolf under the Endangered Species Act and prevents the expansion of its habitat outside of its historic range.

The bill is now in the Senate. OHA is tracking this bill and will keep you updated.

Governor Brown announces 3 gun legislative concepts

Oregon Governor Brown in July announced three “legislative concepts” regarding gun control to be brought before the Oregon Legislative Session in 2017:

- Close the “Charleston Loophole.” In

Oregon, if the state police are unable to determine a person’s eligibility to purchase a firearm within three days, current law requires approval of the sale of the firearm. The “Charleston Loophole” refers to the killer who bought a gun from a federally licensed dealer with an incomplete background check. The Governor’s proposal claims to close this “loophole” by not allowing a person to purchase a firearm with an incomplete background check.

Questions will be raised about draw-out background checks, which prompted the current law.

- Close the “Boyfriend Loophole.” This legislative concept will expand the types of relationships that qualify under “domestic violence” charges; those convicted of certain crimes of domestic violence and stalking will no longer have access to firearms.
- Ban extended-capacity magazines. This legislative concept will outlaw the future purchases of extended-capacity magazines in Oregon.

We have yet to see a definition of “extended capacity magazines,” but we’re fairly certain five 10-round clips carry a similar capacity to two 25-round clips.

Fast Tracks

The Fish and Wildlife Commission slated the following agenda items for its August meeting, where OHA will testify: ✓ Mule Deer and Elk Management Objectives. This will be a rule-making agenda item, and a decision will be made. OHA fully supports the recommended increases in deer and elk objectives (population and buck/bull ratios) that were made by the local review committees and respective district biologists.

- ✓ Update to the Commission on Wolf Stakeholder Meetings/Wolf Conservation

Plan Discussions by ODFW Staff.

OHA will testify at the September Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting on proposed rule changes for hunters with disabilities.

OHA fully supports and recognizes the value of the Disabled Hunting and Fishing Permit program, but the validation of participant enrollment is always of concern. There are demonstrated instances of abuse where there are participants who do not meet the eligibility qualifications, as defined, for a DHFP. OHA supports modifying the intent to strengthen the DHFP application and providing clear instructions to the evaluating physicians.

OHA supports the expanded bag limits within controlled hunt units where there is a surplus in the population and the management objectives would handle the additional bag limits.

OHA would like to see ODFW pursue a program that puts emphasis on pairing disabled hunters and veterans with landowners that are experiencing damage and who are being provided damage tags. This would provide quality hunts for these folks and help landowners with their damage issues.

Wolf Plan Revision Timeline

Here is the revised Wolf Conservation Plan revision timeline:

- August 2016, Salem Commission Meeting: Update on Wolf Conservation Stakeholder meetings and Wolf Conservation Plan issue discussions.
- October 2016, La Grande Commission Meeting: Wolf Conservation Plan policy guidance and public testimony.
- December 2016, Salem Commission Meeting: Draft Wolf Plan produced (informational exhibit and public testimony)
- 2017: Wolf Plan approval.

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

OHA weighs in on deer, elk management objectives

By Jim Akenson, Conservation Director

OHA is providing input – both written and oral testimony – to the Fish and Wildlife Commission on elk and mule deer management objectives (MO). This will culminate for this cycle, or planning period, on Aug. 5, when the Commission votes to adopt the recommended management objectives for mule deer and elk.

Our interests have been to maintain population levels at or above current numbers, both in totals and for ratios (buck/doe and bull/cow). Management objectives combine several variables, including: biological, social, and even economic factors. They are the blueprint for wildlife managers/district biologists in moving forward with tag numbers and species harvest planning. So how long are these numbers good? These management

objectives are slated to be evaluated and revised if necessary, every five years. The cycle for plan revision is every 10 years, so these opportunities are not frequent, and we need to be ready to give effective input.



Another concern is the need to establish management objectives for black-tailed deer. This is arguably the most hunted species in our state, yet biologists have the hardest time determining population trends, patterns, and ultimately the number estimates needed for establishing management objectives. ODFW is currently doing research on more effective survey techniques for blacktails, and hopefully this can be applied in developing meaningful management objectives before the next plan revision. We need to support this important

research now occurring in six wildlife management units in southwest Oregon.

OHA will recommend a case for more frequent MO review in situations where efforts are being made to redistribute a species – such as with elk in the Chesnimnus Unit. In this unit, we recommend a three-year review to test effectiveness of an ambitious OHA-led project that focuses on getting elk off private and onto public lands.

OHA is working to stay effective in both the MO and species planning processes. We are recognized by both ODFW staff and the Commission as important stakeholders in huntable wildlife species management and understanding the what, how, and when of these cycles is the key to us protecting both valuable game species and our hunting heritage.



For more about Oregon wildlife & habitat issues, visit <http://oha-conservation.webs.com>

WIN A GUIDED ELK HUNT ON THE NATURE CONSERVANCY'S FAMOUS ZUMWALT PRAIRIE PRESERVE!



1 Hunter and up to 2 non-hunting guests & 1 guide for 3 days in 2017!

Lodging included in updated historic ranch house with solar powered electricity, full indoor plumbing (supplied by local spring) and full kitchens.

Tickets: \$50. 300 offered. Value: \$4,900. Drawing: March 9, 2017.

To buy tickets: Call the OHA State Office at 541-772-7313, or mail check and contact info to OHA, P.O. Box 1706, Medford, OR 97501.

3-day guided bull elk rifle hunt for 1 hunter on the 33,000 acre Zumwalt Prairie Preserve in Oregon during the fall 2017 season (dates TBD; likely November). Hunter may bring up to 2 guests who do not hunt. Hunting is all on foot and hunters should be in good physical condition. Recent hunter success rate has been close to 100%. Mature bulls are common and range from 320-350+” with 385” potential. The Preserve is part of the largest remaining intact Pacific Northwest bunchgrass prairie in North America. Food, beverages, gear, and gratuity not included. Transportation to Preserve not included (once there, the guide will provide transportation). The elk tag is guaranteed, but the hunter is responsible for license/tag cost. Must make arrangements by April 1, 2017.

Raffle hosted by OHA, hunt donated by TNC, courtesy of TRCP.

Drawing: March 9, 2017, Eagle's Club, 2000 Table Rock Road, Medford, OR, 7 pm.

OUTDOOR OUTLOOK

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

AUGUST 19

OHA Klamath Chapter's Gerber Reservoir youth antelope hunt BBQ 541-281-6518

AUGUST 20

OHA Tioga Chapter nest box project 541-404-6994

AUGUST 21

Standard antelope season closes

AUGUST 26

Bow tag sale deadline

AUGUST 27

General bow season opens; Western gray squirrel season opens in Western & Central Oregon