



OHA meets with Metro to discuss no-hunting policy

OHA met with Metro officials in November to discuss the prohibition of hunting on property recently purchased by the agency. The prohibition, first brought to the attention of the OHA board in August by OHA member Bryan Cook, was first aired publicly at a hearing in September before the House Interim Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee in Salem.

The meeting with Metro in November was a continuation of the hunting prohibition policy discussion: the recently purchased property has traditionally been open to hunting prior to the purchase. OHA is interested in re-opening hunting as a legitimate form of recreation, and as a tool to manage wildlife numbers through cooperation with ODFW.

What's next? Metro will conduct a periodic review of its recreational usage policies in 2017 via a review committee made up, in part, of groups who have an interest in using the Metro properties for recreation. OHA has been invited to join

OHA is interested in re-opening hunting as a legitimate form of recreation on Metro properties, and as a tool to manage wildlife.



that group. Metro has asked for more information about the available science to model predicted levels of expected animal damage related to populations (i.e. forage needs), and for examples of management plans for mixed use including hunting as part of recreation models.

OHA will provide examples of both as conversations continue.

Bid received to buy Elliott Forest

The Division of State Lands (DSL) has received a bid to purchase the Elliott State Forest from Lone Rock Timber Management as the lead participant in conjunction with the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, and The Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians.

Public comment on the proposal will be taken by the DSL board in December. OHA is currently reviewing the proposal.

After years of declining logging, the Elliott Forest could not do what state statutes said it must do, and that was raise money for the Common School Fund. So the DSL started a very long process to sell the property and open public bidding to transfer the forest ownership.

After the process was announced, more than 30 groups submitted "expressions of interest" in acquiring the 84,000 acres, which was appraised at \$220.8 million.

Bids on the property were accepted in November and one bid was received by DSL.

ODFW funding: new options for sharing the tab

A task force was created during the 2015 Legislative Session (HB 2402) to identify funding alternatives for ODFW that would help shift some of the agency funding responsibility away from traditional sources such as license fees.

After months of deliberations, the task force recommended these two funding sources: an income tax surcharge, and a 2-percent tax on bottled beverages. The original recommendation for the income tax

The task force recommended two funding sources: an income tax surcharge, and a 2-percent tax on bottled beverages.

surcharge included an exemption for those who held current hunting and fishing licenses. OHA supported the income tax surcharge with the exemption.

As discussions continued, the exemption for those who hold hunting and fishing licenses was removed. In other words, the income tax surcharge would now apply to everyone.

OHA adopted a position to accept the task force report without endorsing an income tax surcharge, with the beverage tax as the preferred alternative. —AL ELKINS, OHA LOBBYIST alvinelkins@yahoo.com



Fighting Like Cats and Dogs



By Jim Akenson
OHA Conservation Director
jim@oregonhunters.org

While OHA toils to maintain Oregon's deer and elk herds, predators are under ever-increasing protection efforts from environmental groups. We face a constant battle to maintain our precious deer, elk, and antelope hunting opportunities, and one crucial component for that is an active predator management program that not only includes cougars, black bears and wolves, but also coyotes and bobcats.

Ideally, regulated hunting eventually will apply to all these predatory species – be they game, furbearers or unprotected mammals by definition. In addition, OHA will remain vigilant on the trapping issue in our state and lend support to our bobcat hunting members who use methods involving either traps or hounds.

The month of December will bring

the last opportunity for the hunting community to give input on the Wolf Plan, and OHA is an active participant in a stakeholder group organized by ODFW.

Earlier meetings have danced around the topic of hunting wolves once the numbers warrant it, but the time is now to get a foot in the door for near-future wolf management as game animals.

Wolves are considered a "special status" big game species in Oregon, which means as populations grow, they are eligible to be hunted, or managed, just like other carnivore game species such as bears and cougars. The "special status" implies that the population provisions within the plan must be met to do careful management, and the big game aspect considers them a species that potentially can be hunted in the future. This is critical to our future hunting opportunities; just ask our colleagues in Idaho!

On the cat side of the battle (cougars in this case), it's essential that we maintain current hunting opportunities and apply more focused removals where necessary. Previously we have referred to these as "target areas," but we would be wise to reference them as cougar "special management zones," because there will be more data-science obtained and applied for these areas as part of the Cougar Plan revision. The input process is different for the "big cats" than the "big dogs," but the use of hunting as a time-tested management tool is the same – just applied on different scales.

There will be another opportunity for public input to the Fish and Wildlife Commission in coming months once these two plans are near completion, and OHA will make sure our concerns are heard and that the best science prevails in managing our wildlife.



WIN A GUIDED BUCK 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!

Tickets: \$50, or 3 for \$100. 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 deer rifle hunt for 1 hunter on the 33,000-acre Zumwalt Prairie Preserve in Oregon's Wallowa County in the fall 2017 season (dates TBD; likely October). 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%. Trophy bucks are common. The Preserve is part of the largest remaining intact Pacific Northwest bunchgrass prairie in North America. Food, beverages, gear, & gratuity not included. Transportation to Preserve not included (once there, guide will provide transportation). Deer tag is guaranteed, but hunter is responsible for license/tag cost. Must make arrangements by April 1, 2017. Raffle hosted by OHA. **Drawing:** March 9, 2017, 7 p.m. Eagle's Club, 2000 Table Rock Rd., Medford, OR. Need not be present to win.



Check out and follow OHA's new Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/oregonhuntersassociation/>

We will be posting photos from projects and events throughout the year that further our mission. Please check it out!