



# OHA TRACKER

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Elk damage will be a hot issue in the 2021 Oregon Legislative Session. OHA will ensure that the concerns of hunters are heard.

## Bills see hearings despite COVID and ice storms

By Al Elkins, OHA Lobbyist  
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The 2021 Legislative Session is in full swing, and OHA is following many bills this session with many more bills yet to come. The month of February saw committee action on a coyote contest ban, a bill to help with wildlife corridor funding, and action on gun bills.

Here is a highlight of some of the action in February.

### **HB 2548 Wildlife Corridor Funding**

Directs the Legislative Policy and Research Office to study issues related to funding construction of wildlife corridor road crossings and report to legislature its findings on or before Sept. 15, 2022.

**Update:** At a February hearing on this bill, OHA testified in support. The bill is now awaiting a work session. The bill has across-the-board support.

### **HB 2728 Coyote Contests**

It's back! However, this version has an amendment that protects certain aspects of nonprofit contests (Section 5 of the bill lines 17-19). The bill prohibits a person from conducting or participating in a contest, competition, tournament, or derby that has the objective of taking coyotes for cash or prizes. Provides that prohibition does not apply to raffles conducted by nonprofit organizations if the organization does not award raffle prizes based on number, weight or size of coyotes taken. Punishes violation of prohibition by maximum fine of \$2,000.

**Update:** The hearing on this bill took up almost two entire hearings, because of the number of people who wanted to speak. People testified in support of the bill, but there was also much testimony given by those in opposition, especially from Harney County. The bill is now awaiting a work session.

### **SB 630 Elk Damage Tag Bill**

Authorizes the use of landowner damage tags to take elk on adjacent property with consent of the owner of the adjacent property.

**Update:** This bill was scheduled for a hearing, but the hearing was canceled due to the ice and snow.

### **SB 637 Nuisance Game Mammal Meat**

Allows a person taking certain nuisance game mammals to retain game meat if meat is offered to charitable organizations and refused.

### **Gun Bills**

OHA is following several gun control bills:

### **HB 2543 Firearm Transfer Prohibition**

Prohibits transfer of firearms by gun dealers or private parties if OSP is unable to determine whether recipient is qualified to receive a firearm.

**Update:** This bill had a hearing in February. OHA sent in testimony opposing the bill, saying in part:

"Constitutional rights delayed are Constitutional rights denied! Under our American and Oregonian systems of government, the burden of proof is on the State to demonstrate through due process that an individual's Constitutional right has been lost. If the State cannot timely do its job, then it needs to address that duty within itself by allocating sufficient resources to timely perform its function, not impose its failing upon the individual."

### **SB 554 Concealed Weapon Laws**

Authorizes city, county, metropolitan service district, port operating commercial airport, school district, college, or university to adopt ordinances or policies limiting or precluding affirmative defense for possession of firearms in public buildings by concealed handgun licensees.

**Update:** This bill had a hearing in Febru-

ary. OHA sent in testimony opposing the bill, saying in part:

"We do not want to see hunters get caught in this maze of poor definitions that could make them lose their right to carry a firearm including a rifle or shotgun for hunting if convicted of unknowingly violating this law by carrying a firearm they are licensed to carry."

### **SB 585 Repeals Preemption Law**

Repeals Oregon's preemption law allowing any locality to create and enforce any gun law they choose.

**Update:** This bill had a hearing in February. OHA sent in testimony opposing the bill, saying in part:

"The current state law gives counties and cities certain limited rights to regulate the discharge of firearms and the possession of loaded firearms in public places. The law also reserves to the state assembly all other powers related to firearms. If the Statutes referenced in the bill were repealed, we would be at the mercy (or lack thereof) of each county or city we travel through. The vast majority of hunters travel outside the county they live in to hunt. Therefore, this would have a significant impact on hunters."

### **HB 2510 Mandatory Lock Up**

Requires the owner or possessor of firearm to secure the firearm with trigger or cable lock, in a locked container or in a gun room except in specified circumstances.

To learn more about these bills, visit [www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills\\_laws](http://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws)

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## Elk archery talks resume

By Mike Totey, OHA Conservation Director  
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ODFW will resume consideration of moving some or all of the eastern Oregon archery elk hunts to a controlled hunt system. Multiple changes were considered as part of the big game regulation review conducted by ODFW in 2020. OHA participated in multiple discussions with the ODFW staff charged with leading the review. At that time, both deer and elk archery hunting were being considered to move to controlled hunts, along with several other changes.

Ultimately, input from OHA and other hunting organizations led to the delay of the elk archery hunt decision in 2020. OHA wanted more time to examine data and information on the current elk archery hunting, and also wanted an opportunity for more of our members to engage in the discussion.

Jeremy Thompson, ODFW District Biologist from The Dalles, will serve as the agency lead for the process. ODFW has a goal of getting a decision on the potential elk archery hunt changes by the June Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting, rather than waiting until the normal meeting date of September, when most archery hunters are in the field.

Any changes made on the elk archery seasons would not be implemented until the 2022 hunting season.

## OHA forms advisory council

By Mike Totey, OHA Conservation Director  
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The OHA Board of Directors has approved the formation of a new advisory council that will be chaired by Jim Akenson, past OHA Senior Conservation Director, who was appointed to that position in January. Eight other people were invited to serve on the council based on their individual experience and professional work.

The council will be used to help provide technical information and data on a number of new and ongoing projects and issues that OHA is involved with.

Other council members include: Holly Akenson, a wildlife biologist, researcher and former Fish and Wildlife Commission member; Vic Coggins, retired ODFW biologist and current OHA State Board member; Craig "Foz" Foster, retired ODFW biologist; Todd Hoodenpyl, a retired OSP Game Officer; Tim Hiller, former ODFW furbearer program leader and currently a consulting wildlife biologist; Monty Gregg, the forest wildlife biologist on the Ochoco National Forest and Crooked River National Grasslands; Steve Denny, a retired ODFW wildlife manager and biologist; and Mike Schlegel, a retired IDFG wildlife biologist and elk researcher.

The council is already providing input to staff and project leaders on several topics, including anti-beaver trapping legislation, tag reporting (were hunts on public or private land), and wildlife area management plan reviews.



*Coastal*

## OHA chapter banquets change dates, formats

Some OHA chapters have moved banquet dates and others have gone online. Please call the numbers listed for the latest info.

Online	Pioneer	503-710-1233
Online	Bend	541-480-9848
Online	Yamhill County	503-490-2489
Online	Josephine Co.	541-821-1511
Mar. 13	Union/Wallowa	541-786-1283
Mar. 20	Tioga	541-267-2577
Mar. 20	Clatsop County	503-791-0549
Apr. 3	Baker	541-403-0402
Apr. 3	Blue Mountain	541-231-4384
Apr. 3	Lake County	541-810-1617
Apr. 10	Tualatin Valley	503-502-0611
Apr. 24	Klamath	541-882-9593
May 1	Tillamook	503-801-3779
June 5	Redmond	541-233-3740
June 19	Mid-Willamette	541-971-3351
July 17	OHA State Convention,	
	Chinook Winds Casino,	541-772-7313
July 31	Capitol	503-851-8409

# 21-GUN SALUTE

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Maximum tickets offered: 1,000. Drawing: 2 p.m., Dec. 30, 2021, OHA State Office, 804 Bennett Ave., Medford, OR

OHA State Elections are in the March-April issue of OREGON HUNTER magazine. Please vote!