

Agenda Item Summary

BACKGROUND

The Landowner Preference (LOP) Program was first implemented in 1982, when controlled hunts were increasing, replacing general seasons. The program provided landowners the opportunity to obtain tags to hunt on their property and recognized the importance of wildlife habitat on private lands.

In 2000, LOP tags were limited “In certain controlled elk hunts with a bag limit of spike or better, in units where the usual bag limit for bull elk is spike only”. Elk hunts that included branch bulls in the bag limit in Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) where most of the bull hunting was restricted to spike only included hunts in Catherine Creek, Pine Creek, Mt Emily, Walla Walla, Wenaha, Starkey, and others.

In 2008, six mule deer hunts with small tag numbers (10-20 per hunt), that provide a special opportunity to hunt during the late season were added to the list of Limited LOP hunts. The formula used to limit tags for these deer and elk hunts was (and is) five tags or 10% of the tags authorized by the Commission, whichever is greater.

In 2015, the same formula was used to limit LOP mule deer buck tags in WMUs where the population was below Management Objective (MO).

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Communication with local sports groups and other interested parties. Answering questions from interested persons, including the news media.

ISSUE 1

Awarding Leftover Limited Landowner Preference Tags

ANALYSIS

There may be tags “leftover” after the June controlled hunt drawing for some of the deer and elk hunts with Limited LOP tags. The Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs) that establish the criteria for awarding (making a tag available for an individual to purchase) leftover Limited LOP tags to landowners are not the same for the special opportunity elk hunts and mule deer hunts in WMUs below MO.

The proposed amended OARs (Attachment 3) would make permanent a Temporary Rule that combines two OARs, 635-075-0020 and 635-075-0022, into one new rule, 635-075-0024. A significant difference is that the current process for issuing leftover Limited LOP elk tags limits each landowner to one tag. Limited LOP mule deer tags in WMUs below MO do not have the same constraint. A landowner may be issued more than one (only one per individual) Limited LOP deer tag for themselves or hunters on their LOP Tag Distribution Form. The proposed rules would make the process consistent for issuing leftover Limited LOP tags for mule deer and elk hunts.

This change would make leftover Limited LOP elk tags available to landowners who under existing rule may not have received all of the tags their property qualifies for based on acreage as set forth in 635-075-0005 (8). The

proposed OARs provide landowners the opportunity to receive, if available, leftover Limited LOP tags to take deer and elk causing property damage.

OPTIONS

1. Adopt staff recommendations
2. Modify staff recommendations
3. No change; retain current OARs for awarding leftover Limited LOP tags

STAFF

RECOMMENDATION Option 1.

DRAFT MOTION I move to amend OAR Chapter 635, Division 075, as proposed by staff.

EFFECTIVE DATE Upon Filing