



2021 - 2023 Biennium Report, Access & Habitat Program

Prepared by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's
Access & Habitat Program

February 17, 2023



Oregon
Tina Kotek, Governor

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Director's Message

Dear Oregonians,

This year marks the 30th anniversary for the Access & Habitat (A&H) program. The Oregon legislature initiated the A&H program in 1993 around a central theme beautifully stated in the program's motto of Landowners and Hunters Together for Wildlife. The A&H

program provides funding for projects that provide access to private land and/or improve wildlife habitat.

Oregon's citizen volunteers are the lifeblood of the A&H program, serving in appointed positions and assisting in project implementation. The program is overseen by the state A&H Board which is advised by regional councils all made up of citizen volunteers. Over three decades, 180 individuals volunteered to serve on A&H regional councils. The state A&H Board had 34 volunteers serve as members, including six former regional council members. They join hundreds of others who have volunteered on A&H projects planting shrubs, piling juniper, removing woven wire fences, installing wildlife water sources and cleaning up litter, to name but a few activities.

In the last thirty years the A&H program has partnered and completed habitat projects that have directly affected over 2.5 million acres of wildlife habitat. Most habitat projects focus on invasive plant species control, juniper removal, or planting desired grass, shrub, and tree species. These projects promote plant species diversity, improve forage quality, maintain the historical fire regime, and potentially increase available water. These projects create greater variety in the plant community which in turn leads to a higher diversity of wildlife species utilizing the area. Taken in total these habitat projects provide habitat resiliency across the array of Oregon landscapes in our rapidly changing world.

Each year the A&H program provides access to an average of 3.7 million acres across Oregon. While the A&H Program is wholly funded by hunters anyone can enjoy the access areas during the open periods. Many of the program's access areas are open year-round allowing multiple recreational opportunities. The A&H program is well positioned to continue meaningful project delivery and meeting tomorrow's challenges. Thank you for your continued interest and support of this important program.

Sincerely,
Curtis E. Melcher
Director



Introduction

The Access and Habitat (A&H) program turns thirty this year! The A&H program was established by the Oregon Legislature in 1993. In the three decades since, the A&H program has continually endeavored to bring hunters and landowners together for the benefit of wildlife. Access & Habitat is an incentive-based program that provides public hunting access and improves wildlife habitat on private lands throughout Oregon.

This report to the Oregon Legislature provides an opportunity to reflect on program accomplishments to date for the 2021-2023 biennium.

These include:

- **59** active projects
- Matching funds of almost **\$6 million**
- Annual hunter access to over **2.4 million** acres of private land
- Wildlife habitat improvements on over **12,500** acres

Program Objectives

The A&H Program's mission is to foster partnerships between landowners and hunters for the benefit of the wildlife they both value as conveyed in the program's motto, "Landowners and

Hunters Together for Wildlife”. The program also seeks to recognize and encourage the important contributions made by landowners to the state’s wildlife resources – stewardship that affects about 45 percent of Oregon’s land base. Improving landowner-hunter relations continues to be a high priority for ODFW and hunters.

How the Program Works

The A&H Program provides grants to private landowners, industrial timber companies, sporting groups, natural resource agencies, and others for projects designed to improve wildlife habitat and/or increase public hunting access on private lands. Examples of eligible projects include juniper removal, wildlife forage seeding, water development, noxious weed eradication, wetland restoration, law enforcement patrols, travel management areas, and public hunting agreements on private lands.

Anyone wishing to receive a grant must complete an application describing the project and its benefits to wildlife and/or provisions for public hunting opportunities, cooperators, work schedules and procedures, and funding commitments. Applicants are encouraged to work with the local A&H Regional Coordinator who will assist with project development and shepard the project through the approval process. Project proposals are reviewed first by the appropriate A&H Regional Advisory Council, which sends its recommendations to the A&H State Board (Board). Council recommended proposals are reviewed by the Board on a statewide level and projects that further the project goals are forwarded to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) for final funding consideration.

A&H Grant Application

A&H Grant Deadlines

July 2021 - June 2023 Revenue*

| | Project Grants |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Hunting License Surcharge | \$1,519,505 |
| Raffle Ticket Sales | \$557,462 |
| Auction Sales | \$1,157,400 |
| Green Forage and D.E.A.R. | \$90,179 |
| Total Revenue | \$3,324,546 |

*Revenue projected through June 2023. Revenue may vary depending upon actual number of hunting licenses

A&H Funding Sources

Funding for the A&H Program comes from three sources:

- \$4 surcharge on annual hunting and combination licenses
- Allocations from the ODFW Green Forage and Deer Enhancement and Restoration (D.E.A.R) programs
- Proceeds from the annual auction and raffle of 10 deer and 10 elk tags

A&H revenues are used to fund approved project grants and administrative expenses, including one permanent statewide coordinator position. Revenues not spent during previous biennia have been retained in a reserve account. Expected revenue this biennium is approximately \$3.3 million.

A&H 2021-23 Biennium Budget Summary*

| | Program Administration | Project Grants | Total |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Beginning Available Allocation | \$550,805 | \$2,425,660 | \$2,976,465 |
| Expenditures to Date | \$275,317 | \$1,289,578 | \$1,564,896 |
| Remaining Obligations | \$103,244 | \$1,041,633 | \$1,144,877 |
| Available (additional) Funds | \$172,244 | \$94,449 | \$266,693 |
| Projected A&H sub-account balance at end of biennium | | | \$2,301,449 |

* As of December 8, 2022. Does not include projects scheduled for Fish and Wildlife Commission review on March 17, 2023 and June 16, 2023.

Approximately \$2.4 million has been committed to project grants approved during the 2021-2023 biennium or carried over from previous biennia. Administrative expenses total \$550,805, including funds to print maps, install new access area signs, and systems to estimate hunter use and satisfaction. The projected reserve account balance at the end of the biennium will be approximately \$2,301,449.

| Access & Habitat Program Accomplishments* | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | Projects Approved During the 2021-23 Biennium | Projects Active During the 2021-23 Biennium | Since Program Inception (1993) |
| Total Number of Projects | 18 | 59 | 551 |
| Private Land Hunting Access (acres) | 802,195 | 2,414,193 | 8.9 Million |
| Habitat Directly Improved (acres) | 4,557 | 12,545 | 1.6 Million |

* As of December 21, 2022. Does not include projects scheduled for Fish and Wildlife Commission review on March 17, 2023 and June 16, 2023.

A&H Project Expenditures

The A&H statute establishes eligibility for projects that provide habitat improvement benefits, hunting access benefits, or a combination of both. The Commission approved 18 projects from July 2021 through December 2022, bringing the total number of projects active during the biennium to 59.

Over the last thirty years the A&H program had 551 projects funded that provided roughly 8.9 million acres of public access and 1.6 million acres of habitat improvement!

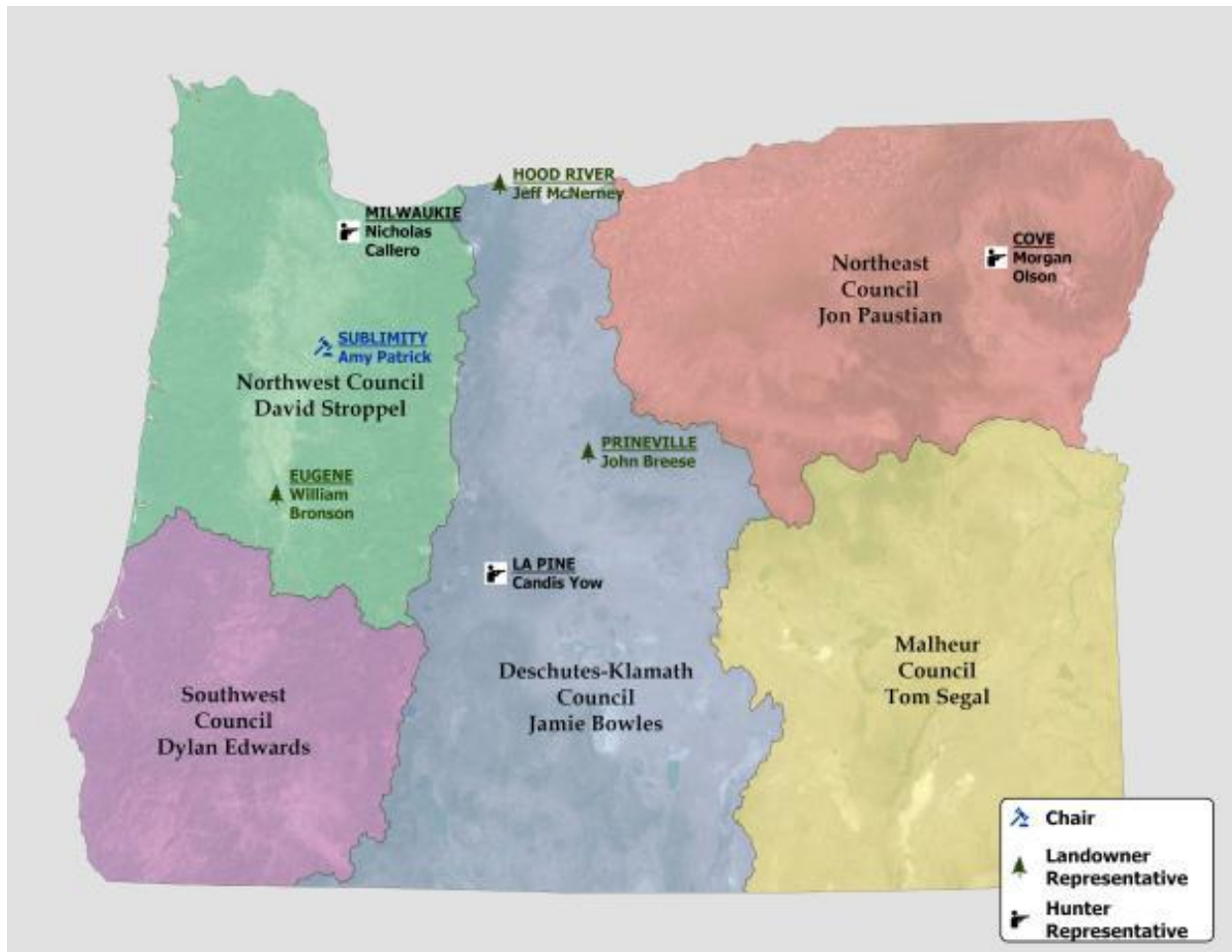
A&H project cooperators contributed about \$6 million in matching funds towards projects active during the 2021-2023 biennium. This means that over \$2.46 of cooperator funds were spent on approved projects for every A&H dollar spent.



Pictured from left to right William Bronson, John Breese, Nic Callero, Candy Yow, Amy Patrick, and Moran Olson

The Access and Habitat Board

Oregon Revised Statute 496.228 established a seven-member citizen board to provide oversight of the A&H Program. Appointed by the Commission, the Board consists of three members representing landowner interests, three members representing hunter interests, and one member representing the general public, who also serves as chair. The Board reviews A&H project proposals and makes formal recommendations for project funding to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission. The Board is directed to recommend a mix of projects that balance access and habitat benefits statewide when reviewing grant proposals. Meeting quarterly, Board members review applications and conduct other program business.



Current Board Members

Board Chair and general public representative **Amy Patrick** lives on a small farm down the road from the sixth-generation homestead where she was raised near Sublimity. With a background in forestry and farming, she is familiar with landowner issues such as access and damage. As the Policy Director for the Oregon Hunters Association, Amy works in the legislature and with the department to advocate for hunting rights and science-based wildlife management. She has worked with the department on fish and wildlife issues through participation with the Sport Group Leaders, Western Oregon Landowner and Hunter Elk Management Group, and the External Budget Advisory Committee.

Hunter Representative **Morgan Olson** lives in Cove and farms 180 acres in the Grande Ronde valley in addition to his day job as a plant manager for Woodgrain Particleboard. In the past he has produced native seed for both the BLM and USFS. Morgan graduated from

Oregon State University with bachelor's degrees in Range Management and Crop Science. Morgan has hunted and fished throughout the Western United States and abroad. He is the Oregon Conservation/ Habitat Director for Backcountry Hunters & Anglers and Chapter President for the Union/ Wallowa Chapter of OHA. Previously Morgan was a hunter representative and then chair of the Northeast A&H Regional Council giving him great knowledge of the A&H Program.

Hunter Representative, **Candy Yow** lives in La Pine with her husband Randy. Growing up on large ranches she knows and understands the ranching/farming life. Candy and Randy have a hunting show airing nationally, regionally and internationally called Extreme Desire TV. It is backcountry, do it yourself (DIY), public lands hunting, a bit extreme at times but always real. Candy started the NW Ladies Hunting Camp ten years ago to encourage and educate women in the skills they need in the outdoors, an event garnering attention in almost every state in the Nation and now has Youth Hunting Camps and Advanced Camps. Candy is a member of RMEF, OHA, NRA, Mule Deer Foundation, and helps at numerous banquets each year to support their efforts. She is also Oregon's representative for the DC Project, women from each state traveling to Washington D.C. to rally for 2nd Amendment rights. Candy is passionate about keeping our wildlife and public lands open for generations to come.

New Hunter Representative, **Nic Callero** lives in Milwaukie and works for the Pew Charitable Trusts, US Public Lands Program. He helped cultivate a new program for Pew Charitable Trusts focused on conservation of big game migratory corridor habitat across the western states. Nic Callero works with key stakeholders throughout the West to enact state and federal policies that identify and conserve key migration routes for animals such as elk, mule deer, and pronghorn. Before joining Pew, Callero spent a decade as a sportsman organizer with the National Wildlife Federation leading delegations of hunters and anglers to Washington DC to advocate for conservation issues important to sportsmen and women. Nic is

a member of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers and current board member. He is also an active member of Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, RMEF, Association of NW Steelheaders and Northwest Guides and Anglers Association.

Landowner Representative, **Willie Bronson** assists in managing a family farm and timberlands in the Willamette Valley. Willie retired after 42 years working as a forester on private timberlands in western Oregon. He is very familiar with animal damage and landowner access issues and the need to involve the hunting public to address those concerns. He served as a representative on the ODFW Black-tailed deer working group and Oregon Forest and Industry Council's bear damage co-op. Willie is a board member on the Western Lane Forest Protection Association and the Goshen Rural Fire Protection District. With more than 35 years hunting in Northeast Oregon, he is very familiar with changes to access and wildlife issues in that region.

Landowner Representative, **John Breese** and his wife own and operate a certified tree farm and ranch lands near Prineville that has been in his family for over 100 years. Balancing sustainability and profitability, John manages the land to ensure future generations will have the same ranching and forestry opportunities. John has worked with local ODFW staff and the A&H Program on several wildlife projects including elk collaring, wildlife friendly fencing, spring developments and juniper removal. John has extensive experience working on boards and committees and representing landowners including representing timber interests on the Crooked River Watershed Council for over ten years, serving on the Central Oregon Department of Forestry Budget Committee, board member of the East Oregon Forest Protective Association and testifying on forestry issues at the Oregon State Legislature.

New Landowner Representative, **Jeff Mc Nerney**, a third-generation grower in the Hood River valley and graduated from Oregon State University with a degree in Crop Science and Horticulture. Jeff farms 400 acres of tree fruit and berries with his wife and son. He

is a part-time consultant for Chamberlin Agriculture assisting others with recommendations on fertilizer and crop issues. Jeff is a passionate hunter and is a member of Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, OHA, Alaska Professional Hunters Association, and Boone and Crocket Club. He has volunteered with ODFW on elk collaring study in the Mid-Columbia wildlife district and with OSP on hunter safety courses and OSP recruit training in Salem. Jeff served one term as a landowner representative on an A&H Regional Council. He served on the Mid-Columbia RMEF board and on the board of directors for Diamond Fruit Growers.



A&H Regional Councils

Five regional councils serve in an advisory capacity to the A&H Board. The councils provide the initial review of grant proposals and forward their recommendations to the A&H Board. Composed of landowner, hunter, and public representatives, volunteer council members bring grass roots expertise and local knowledge to the project review process.

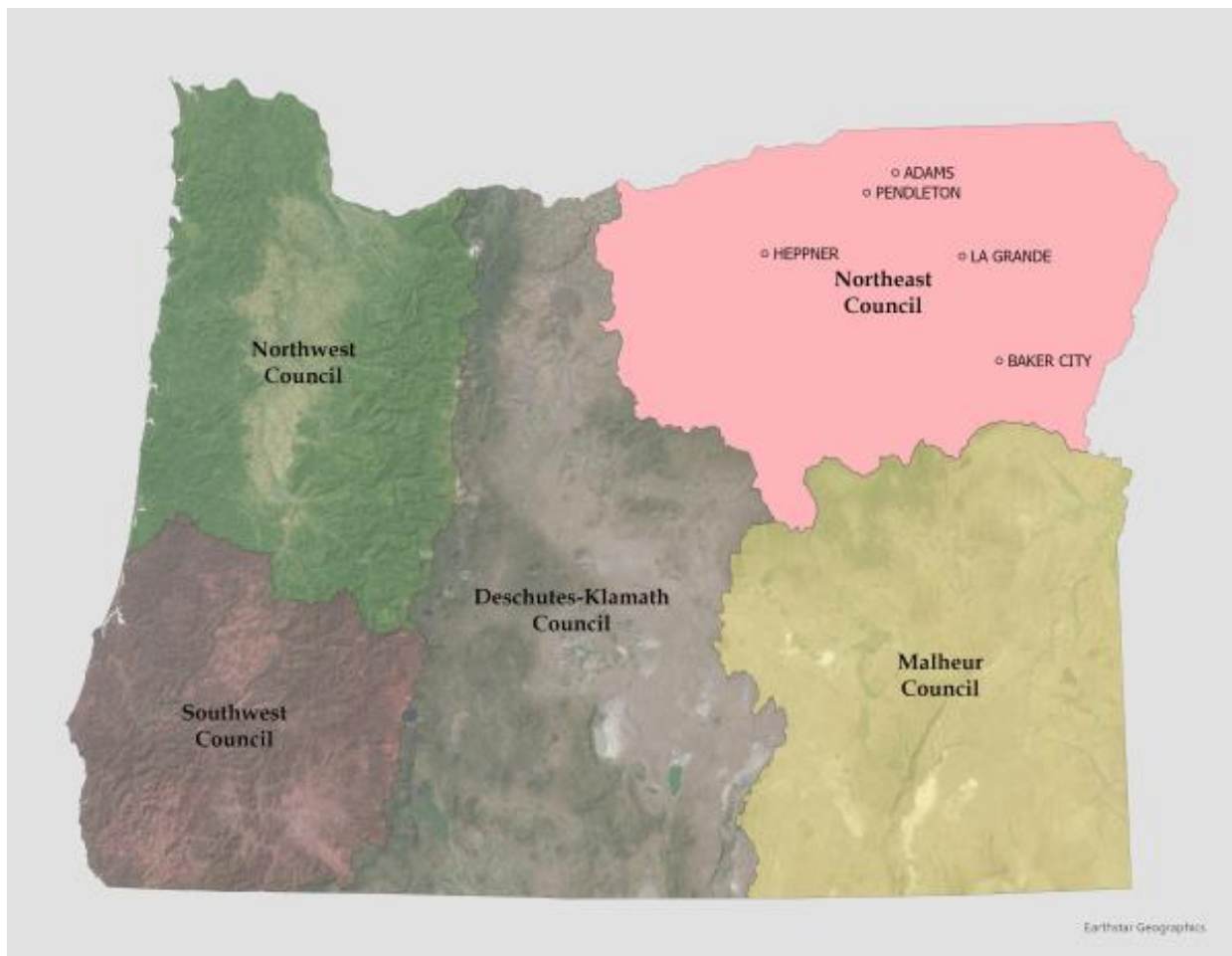


Malheur Regional Council

- Chair **Nick Miller** from Hines
- Landowner Representative **Jon Reponen** from Burns
- Hunter Representatives **Kyle Wieland and Kipp Domby** from Ontario

The A&H program is currently recruiting for one Hunter Representative and two Landowner Representatives

A&H Council Member Application



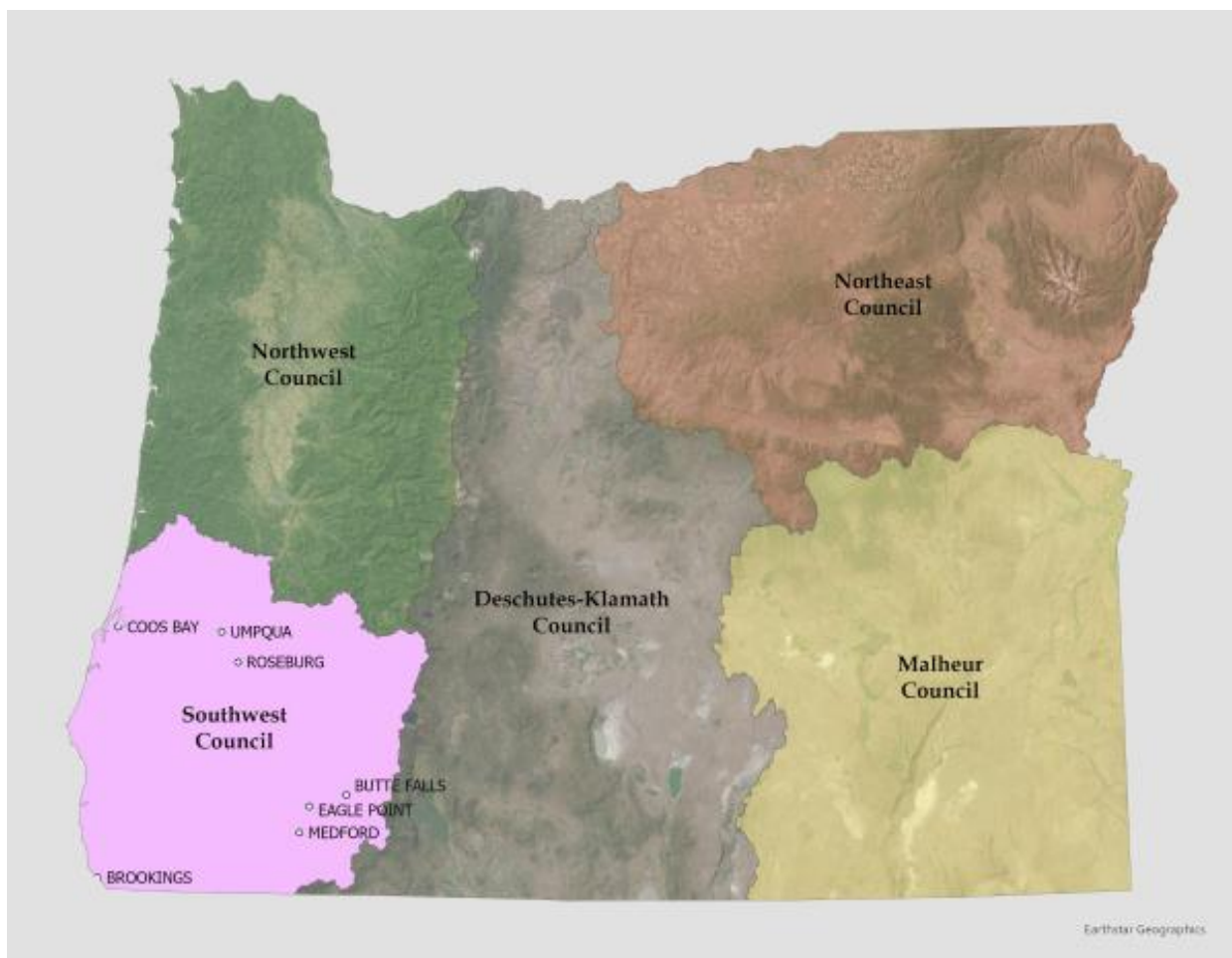
Northeast Regional Council

- Chair **Tim Campbell** from Pendleton
- Landowner Representative **Chris Brown** from Heppner
- Landowner Representatives **Doug Hopper** and **Chris Panike** from La Grande
- Hunter Representative **Tom Baker** from Adams
- Hunter Representative **Calvin Davis** from Pendleton
- Hunter Representative **Russell Elms** from Baker City



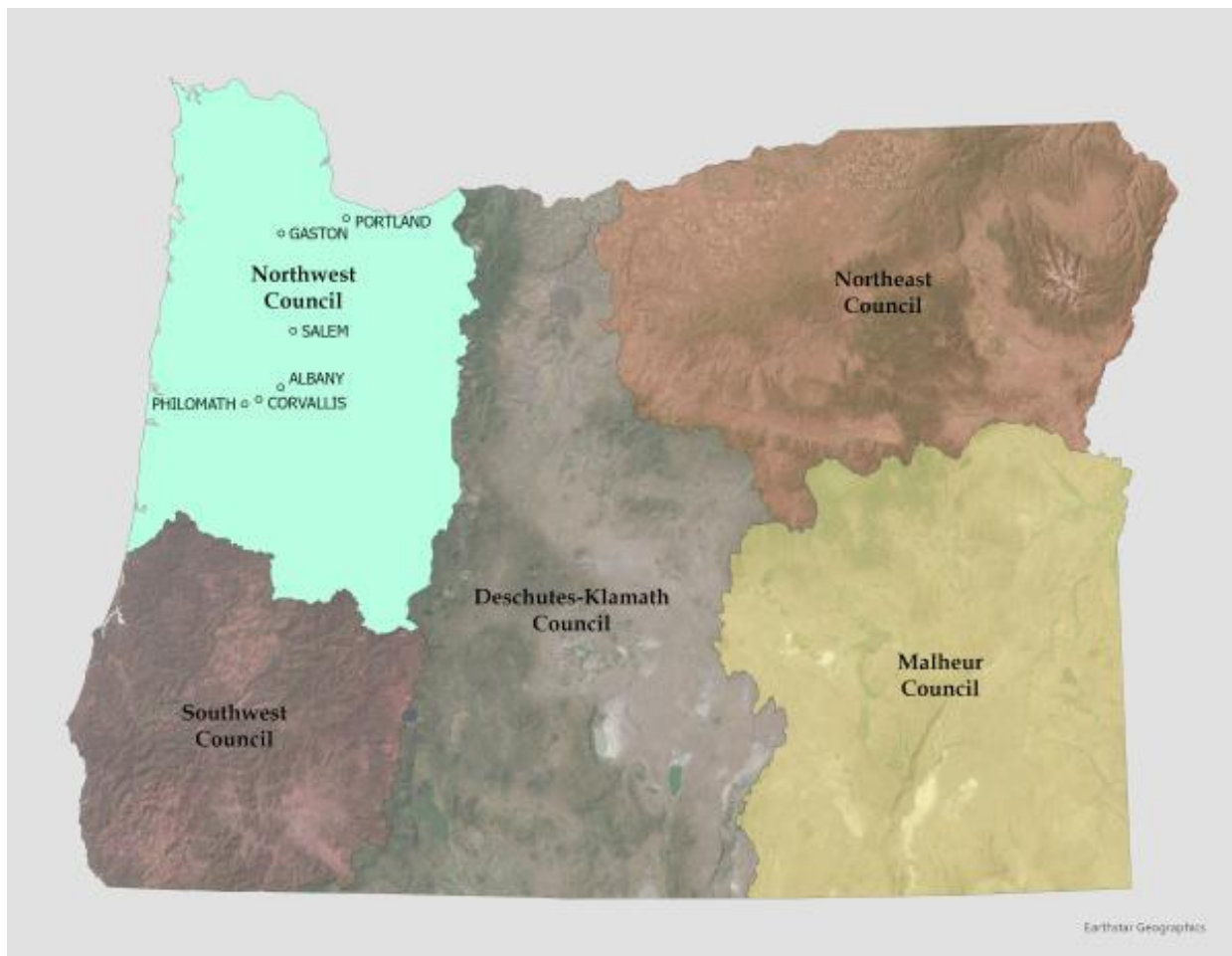
Deschutes-Klamath Regional Council

- Landowner Representatives **Colton Morgan** and **Joseph Dehler** from Prineville
- Hunter Representative **Roger Smith** from Midland
- Hunter Representative **Norman Holliday** from Klamath Falls
- Hunter Representative **Viri Glennon** from Bend



Southwest Regional Council

- Chair **Rob Schab** from Coos Bay
- Landowner Representative **Ted Birdseye** from Butte Falls
- Landowner Representative **Suzi Armstrong** from Umpqua
- Landowner Representative **Jamie Hanscom** from Eagle Point
- Hunter Representative **Zach Davis** from Roseburg
- Hunter Representative **Brian Perkins** from Brookings
- Hunter Representative **Red Schlichting** from Medford



Northwest Regional Council

- Chair **Ray Fiori** from Philomath
- Landowner Representative **Riley Stephenson** from Philomath
- Landowner Representative **Scott Marlega** from Albany
- Landowner Representative **Brad Reding** from Gaston
- Hunter Representative **John Tacke** from Corvallis
- Hunter Representative **Roy Elicker** from Portland
- Hunter Representative **Adam Stebbins** from Salem



A message from the Access & Habitat Board Chair

The Access & Habitat (A&H) Program marked its 29th year of providing access and habitat improvements on private property at the end of 2022. As of the end of 2022 roughly 3 million acres of private property are open to hunter access and over 18,000 acres of habitat improvements have been recorded in the last two years.

Large land corporate timber owners make up the bulk of private hunter access primarily in Western Oregon and Northeast Oregon. A variety of funding mechanisms open the timber property for access, including providing law enforcement patrols, habitat improvement funds, and direct compensation by the acre. Just as the A&H program has adopted and changed to meet landowner needs, the future of access to corporate timber lands remains a concern. The six ODFW regional coordinators are the key contact for landowners willing to participate in the A&H program. The coordinators are an important link to landowners providing guidance and efficient customer service.

Primarily, the A&H Program is funded by an annual surcharge on every hunting license sold in Oregon. License revenue generates an average of approximately \$750,000 annually. In addition, the 1993 legislation allowed the A&H program the ability to raffle and auction a total of ten deer and ten elk tags to generate program funding. Similar to the increase seen in tag and license sales during the years of Covid, the sale prices of tags in the raffles and auctions over the last two years have increased substantially. In both 2021 and 2022, the records for tag sales have been repeatedly broken with auctions for deer, elk and the combination hunt setting record high sale amounts in 2022, breaking the records set in 2021. ODFW also applied for a federal Voluntary Public Access – Habitat Incentive Program grant through the NRCS and was awarded 2.8 million dollars for improving access and habitat improvement projects on private property. Overall, the A&H Program has a stable funding resource into the next biennium.

The seven-member statewide A&H Board comes from a variety of backgrounds and are geographically scattered throughout the state. With members representing both hunters and landowners, the board accurately expresses the programs motto, Landowners and Hunters Together for Wildlife, while collectively working to be good stewards of the programs mission and funding.

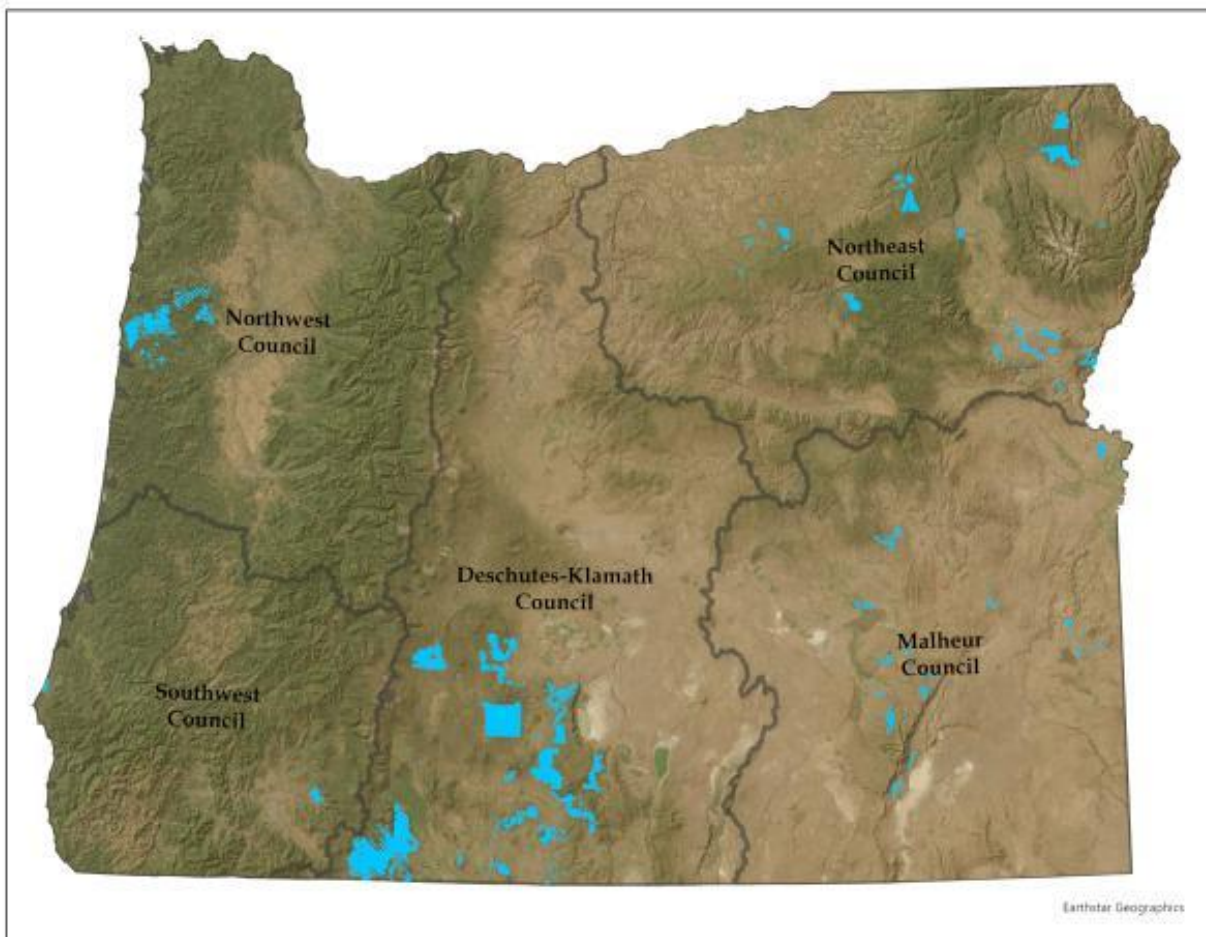
Working with the A&H Board and ODFW staff is one of the most enjoyable volunteer opportunities I have had the pleasure to participate in.

Amy Patrick
Sublimity, Oregon

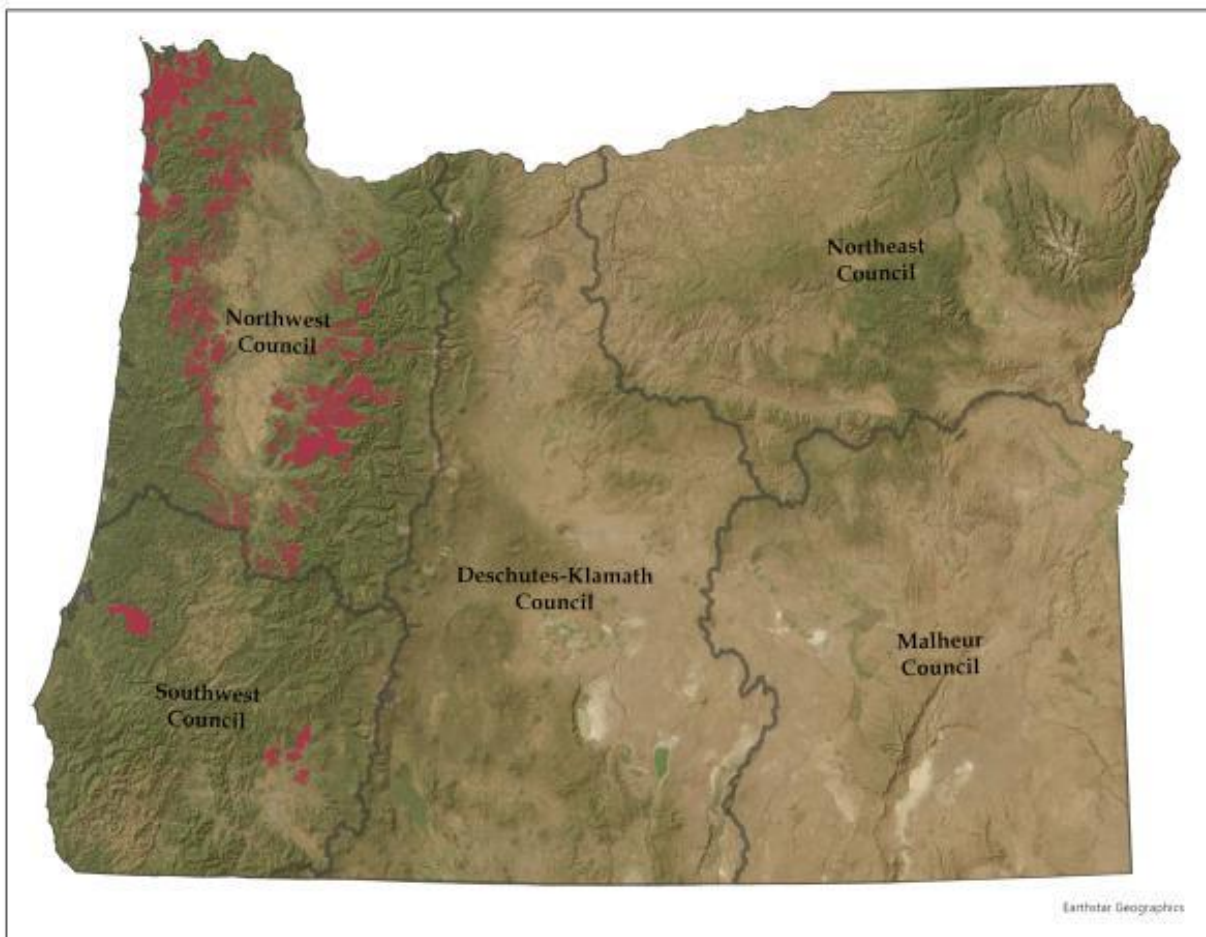


Access & Habitat Project Summary

Ninety percent of Access and Habitat projects active during the 2021-2023 biennium included a hunting access component. Information on accessing these properties is made available through a variety of outreach resources including the Big Game Regulations, on the Department's website, and Oregonhuntingmap.com. The majority of A&H hunting access projects provide opportunities for deer, elk, and upland birds. Some projects also offer hunting opportunities for pronghorn, waterfowl, cougar, bear, wild turkey, coyotes, bighorn sheep, ground squirrels, and western gray squirrel as well as shed collection and breathtaking scenery.



A&H Access Areas (Access Areas) offer access to over 856,000 acres of private farm, ranch and industrial forest lands in Oregon. Some access areas provide public access to inaccessible publicly owned property, for example the Iron Mountain Access Area near Baker provides access to over 4,000 acres of federal property. The Green Diamond Resource Company access project kept 597,000 acres of timberland open to public hunting access. C2 Ranch and Territorial Youth Deer Hunt projects provide hunting opportunities specifically for youth hunters but most projects are open to all hunters. The ability of A&H to compensate landowners for providing access helps keep working lands in production while providing wildlife managers another tool to mitigate wildlife damage by utilizing hunters.

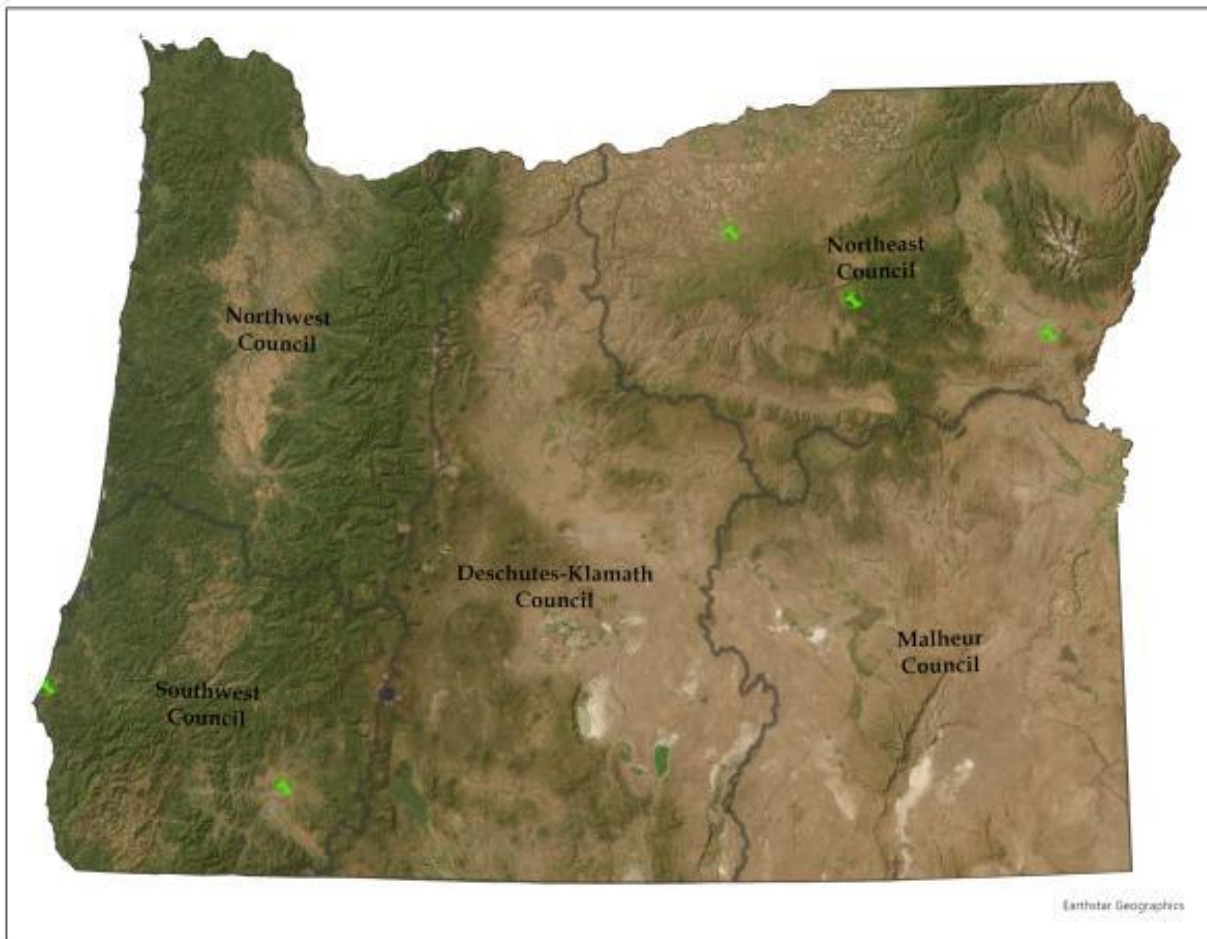


A&H Enhanced Law Enforcement Patrol (Enhanced Patrol)

provides access to over 1.5 million acres of private lands. The majority of the Enhanced Patrol areas are on the west side of the Cascades. Enhanced Patrol areas also provides access for anglers, bird watchers, and anyone that enjoys a day in the forest. With the exception of the Linn and Lincoln County projects discussed below, Enhanced Patrol projects are conducted through contract with Oregon State Police Fish and Wildlife Division (OSP) to patrol cooperating private lands. Before and during hunting season the officers enforce wildlife laws and protect against poaching, illegal hunting, theft, vandalism, littering, environmental damage to land, and ensure fire danger restrictions are followed, all to improve the quality of hunting, primarily for deer and elk.

A&H also partners with the Association of Concerned Landowners in Lincoln County and the Linn Forest Protective Association to partially fund Sheriff Deputies that keep over 398,000 acres of industrial forest property in the two counties open for public

access. Without partnerships between private landowners, law enforcement, and the Access and Habitat Program, large tracts of private timberlands would likely be closed to public entry or convert to a system requiring entry fees.



Habitat Enhancement Summary

The range of habitat improvement projects funded by the A&H Program reflects the diversity of Oregon's landscape; emergency seeding after wildfires, pasture and meadow fertilization, shrub management, seeding to improve grassland habitat structure and forb diversity, noxious weed eradication, and invasive plant species control. Over 12,000 acres of private land was improved to benefit wildlife. Not included in the acreage is habitat protection through law enforcement, primarily keeping vehicles out of sensitive areas. Habitat projects benefit a variety of species both game and non-game. The Widman Access Area was renewed to remove medusahead rye from rangelands and reseed with a forb and bunchgrass seed mix to improve critical habitat for sage grouse in

the Baker County Keating sage-grouse core area. The C2 Ranch project improves critical winter range for deer by plantings, shrub management, and blackberry removal in the Rogue Wildlife Management Unit. The Habitat improvement projects generally target game species, though all species that utilize the habitat benefit from the habitat work.

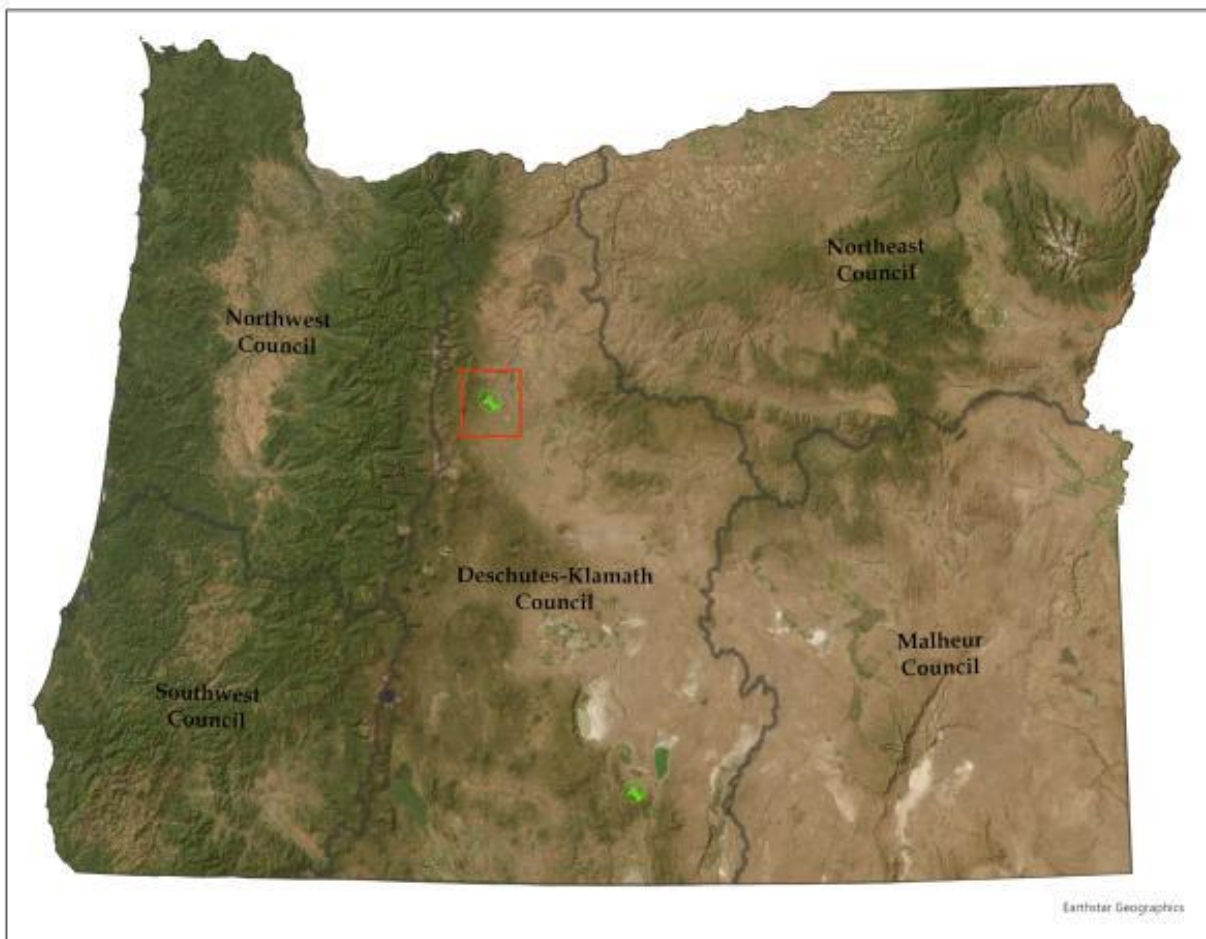


Emergency Fire Reseeding

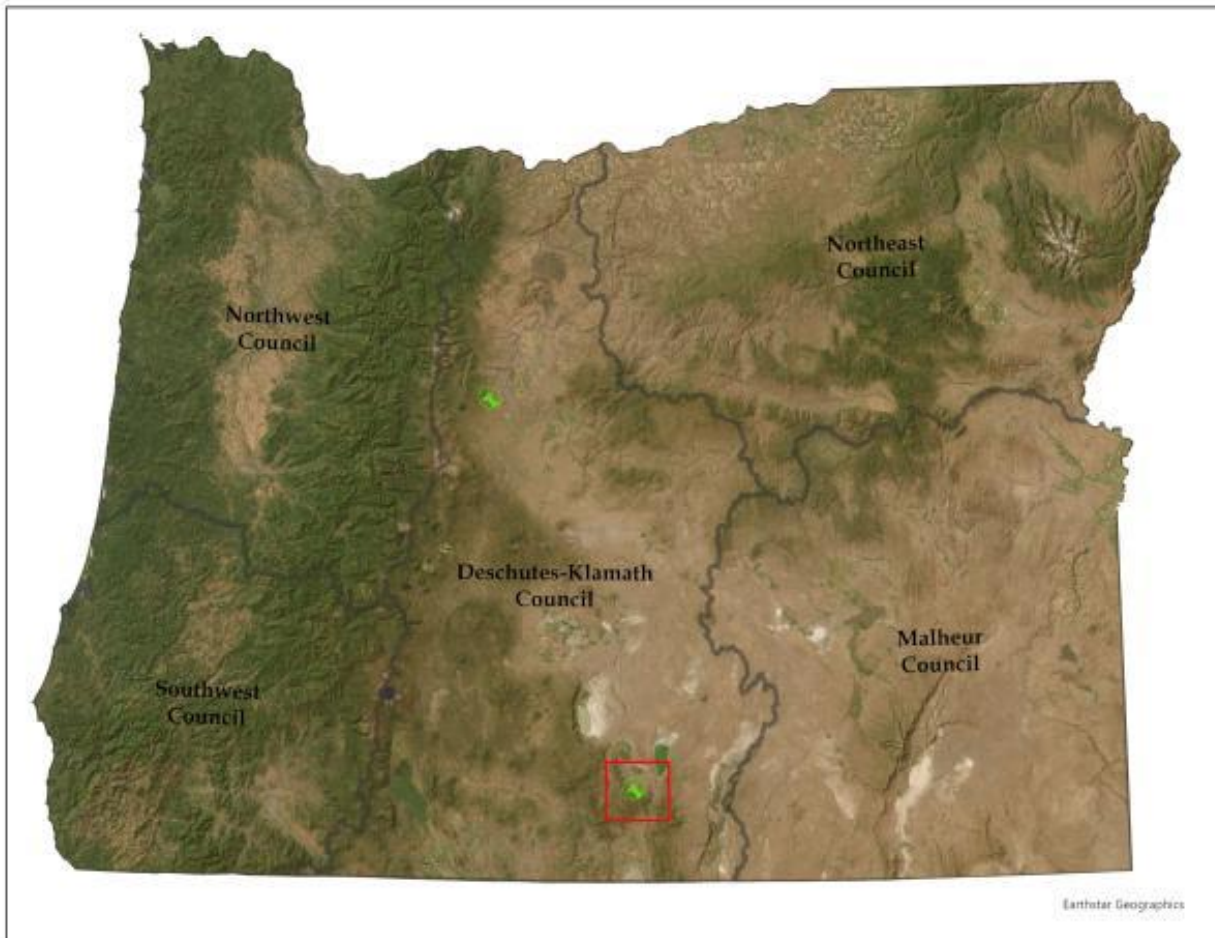
Every year a percentage of Oregon is impacted by wildfire, with some years more than others. While fire is a necessary part of establishing or maintaining most vegetation communities, the ability to recover critical habitat is essential to ensure continued survival of wildlife populations. One of the methods the Department can use to address habitat loss due to wildfire is through the Access & Habitat Program's Emergency Fire Reseeding.

Emergency fire reseeding projects follow a process similar to other A&H projects, with some key differences. The Administrative Rules for emergency fire reseeding projects ask that at least one regional advisory council member evaluate the project, the rules allow the A&H board to hold an emergency meeting for the project(s) outside the normally scheduled meetings, and lastly the grants are approved by the Director's Office rather than the Commission. All of these measures are to allow the process of approval to be rapid as the window to successfully reseed after a fire can be very narrow. These rules allow the A&H program to be very nimble after a fire to provide the greatest opportunity to successfully improve critical wildlife habitat.

The Administrative Rules for emergency fire reseeding restrict efforts to private lands that provide critical habitat for wildlife, the seed mix utilized must be approved by the local District Wildlife Biologist, equipment needed for the seeding effort must be available, and the project must be completed within the timeframe necessary for successful reseeding of desirable vegetation following a wildfire.



During the 2021-23 biennium the A&H Board approved two emergency fire reseeding projects. First, the Grandview Fire project reseeded approximately 125 acres of mule deer winter range near Sisters. The project aerially applied the seed mix to the area. Total reseeding cost was approximately \$16,731, A&H provided the seed mix at a cost about \$10,131 and the landowner provided the aerial application at a cost of roughly \$6,600.



The second project approved was the Clover Flat Winter Range/Sage-grouse Rehabilitation project near Lakeview Oregon. This project reseeded approximately 2,044 acres of critical, year-round sage-grouse habitat and essential mule deer winter range at a cost of about \$63,141 to the A&H program for the seed mix. The landowner provided the time and the tractors for the application of the seed. The seed was applied via range drills to provide the seed mix the best opportunity to successfully outcompete invasive annual grass species.



Oregon Open Fields

The A&H Program was awarded a \$2.86 million grant in 2020 from the US Department of Agriculture. The grant is administrated by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and funding is provided through the Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP), a component of the 2018 Farm Bill. VPA-HIP funding provided block grants to states and tribes to implement or expand programs that provide public hunting access to private lands. Habitat improvement projects located on private lands open to public hunting are also eligible. Known locally as “Oregon Open Fields”, the grant maintained over 454,000 acres of hunting access initiated under previous grants, expanded the acres enrolled in the program, and improved wildlife habitat. The grant focused on several emphasis areas:



Columbia Basin Upland Hunting Program

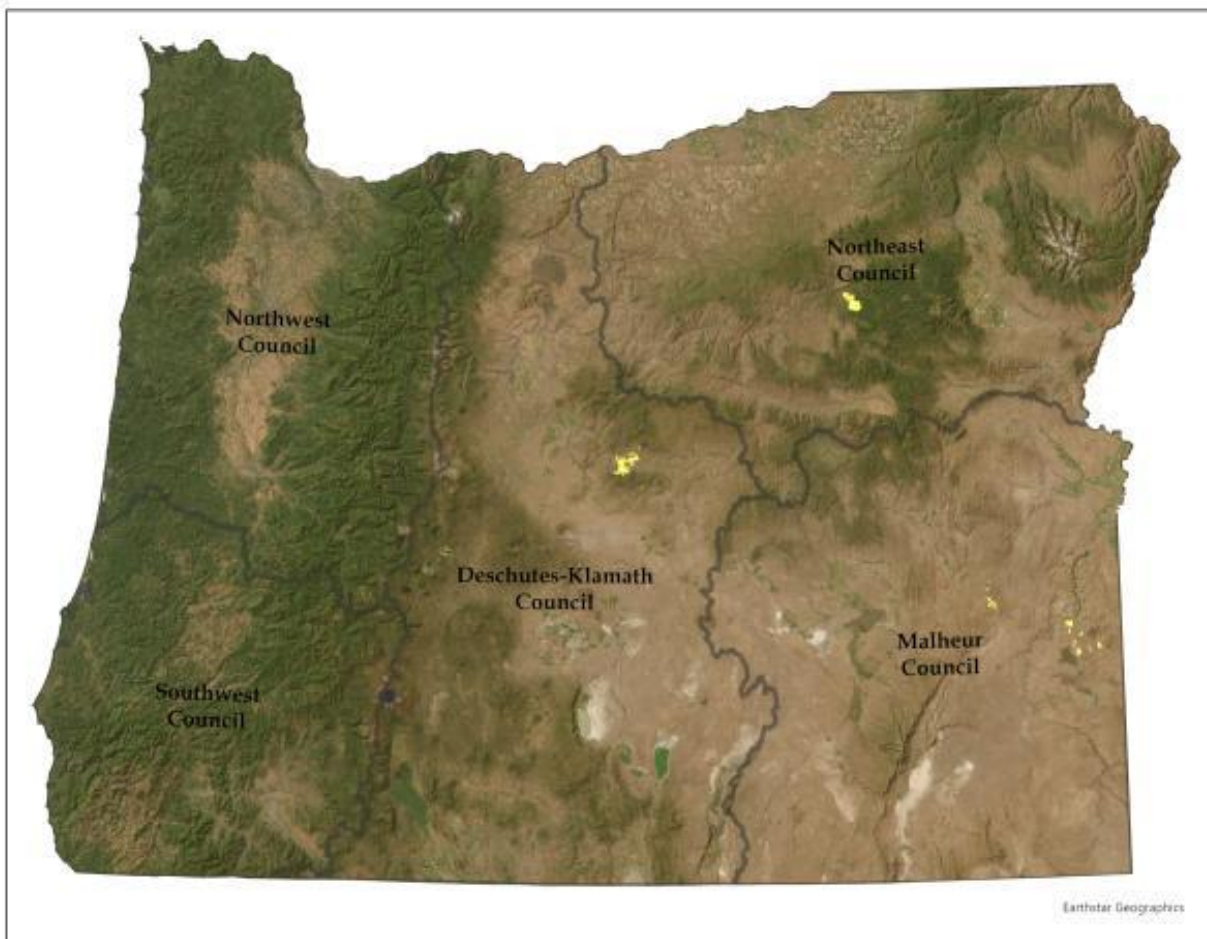
The Columbia Basin, which includes Morrow, Gilliam, Umatilla, Sherman, and Wasco counties, is comprised mostly of private lands and has historically provided a large portion of the upland game bird hunting opportunities in Oregon. Upland bird hunting opportunities are important for hunter recruitment; many new hunters begin with hunting upland birds. Ongoing A&H projects have improved game bird habitat in the Columbia Basin through technical assistance partnerships and direct habitat management. Open Fields funds allow landowners in the Basin to continue providing public hunting access to over 9,000 acres. An Open Fields Coordinator, funded by the grant, manages hunter reservations, administrative duties such as map and sign production and most importantly coordination and outreach with the landowners.



Willamette Valley Goose Hunting Program

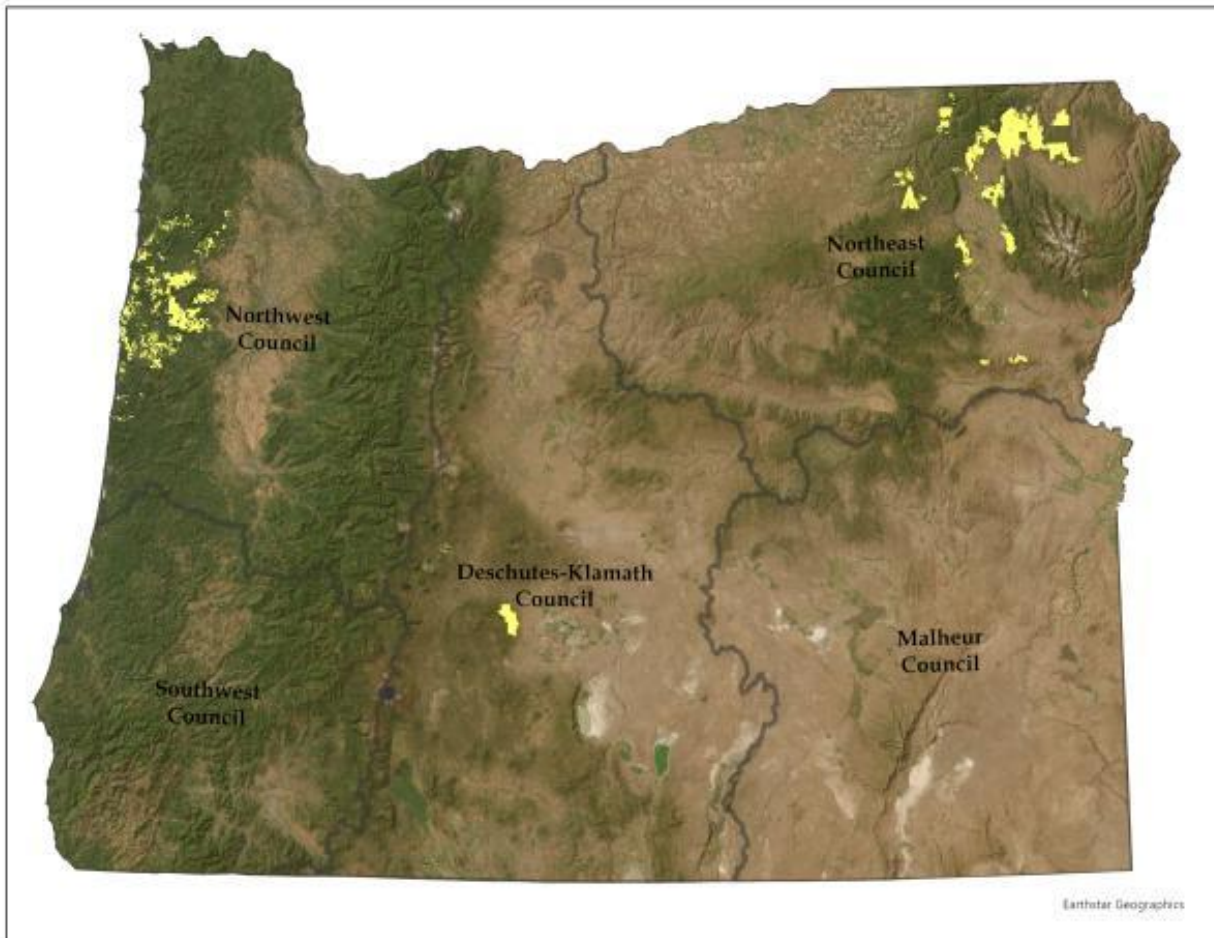
The Willamette Valley supports one of the most complex goose populations in North America, with seven Canada goose subspecies either resident or wintering in the area. Overall goose numbers have been increasing for the past three decades and agricultural depredation has become severe. Public hunting access has been identified as a key management tool for mitigation of these issues and the steady pressure provided by increased hunter access to agricultural fields hazes geese more effectively than the limited hunting some landowners previously allowed. Open Fields funds provide access to six parcels totaling almost 3,800 acres and no permission or advanced reservations are required to hunt these properties. An Open Fields Coordinator, funded by the grant, manages hunter reservations, administrative duties such as map and sign production and most importantly coordination and outreach with the landowners. Project coordination has been

instrumental in securing long-term support of participating landowners.



Open Fields Habitat Improvement Projects

Up to 25% of Open Fields funds can be used for improving wildlife habitat on private lands providing public hunting access. Five habitat projects have been approved so far for a total of 5,280 acres of habitat improvement actions. The projects have treated invasive annual grasses, removed juniper, implemented prescribed fire, restored water sources, and built a shaded fuel break to protect habitat investments. A host of species will benefit from the habitat improvement work, from sage-grouse to mule deer.



Corporate Forest Access Projects

Corporate timberlands provide some of the best hunting opportunities in Oregon. Providing hunting access to these lands is critical for achieving wildlife management objectives and hunting opportunity. In western Oregon, corporate forests provide access to thousands of hunters during “general” big game seasons with unlimited tags available over-the-counter. This is a critical component of recruitment, retention, and reactivation (R3), goals for youth and new hunters. General seasons are also important to hunters who have traditionally hunted the area and as a fallback option for hunters who did not draw a controlled hunt tag. The four projects that have been funded through Oregon Open Fields provide over 506,000 acres of access to industrial forest.

The Future of Open Fields

The NRCS approved a one-year extension to the VPA-HIP grant moving the deadline to have the federal funds spent through the

Oregon Open Fields program to September 1, 2024. The future availability of VPA-HIP grant funds is dependent on the next federal farm bill which is in the early congressional stages. The A&H Program will continue to seek out grant funds to maintain and expand access for hunters and habitat for wildlife.



Project Map

2021 - 2023 Biennium Report, Access & Habitat Program

Regional Councils Board Chair's Message Project Summary Emergency Fire Reseeding Oregon Open Fields Project Map A&H Raffle Summary

Olympia Yakima Kennewick Lewiston

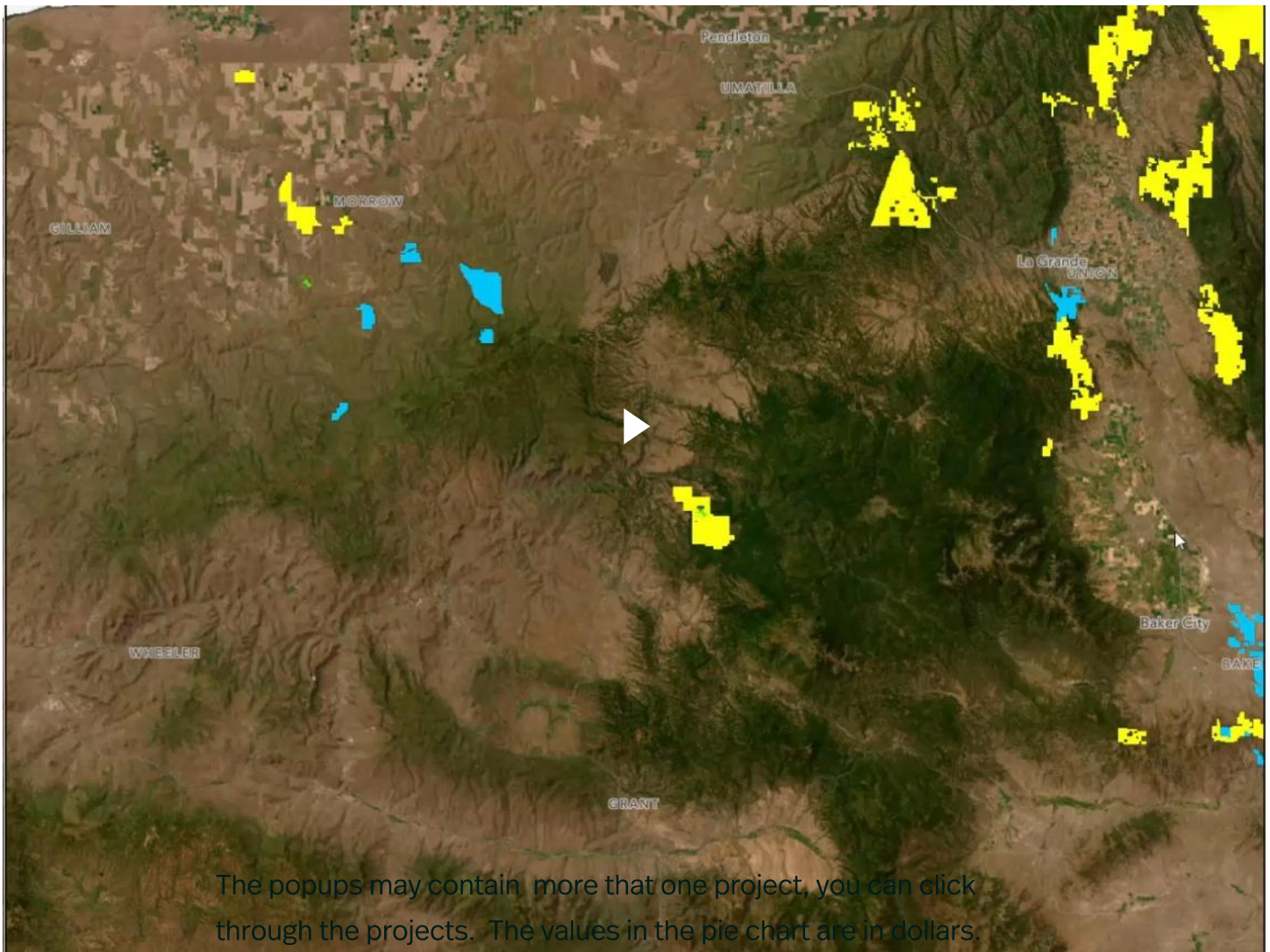
Portland Eugene Medford

Boise Twin Falls

IDAHO

OREGON

Use the buttons on the map to open the legend, expand the map to full screen, and zoom in and out





Explore away!

Select any of the below if it interests you

Only Show Habitat Projects

Display A&H Regions

Display Wildlife Management Units

Want to learn more about the regulations on these access areas, check out the Oregon Hunting Map and the our webpage on hunting access information

Oregon Hunting Map

Hunting Access Info



A&H Raffle Summary

Each year ten amazing deer and elk hunts are offered through a raffle draw, all hunts offer extended seasons across expanded hunt

areas with the legal weapon of the winner's choice. Those wishing to enter a big game raffle can do so through the Electronic Licensing System. At time of purchase each entry receives a unique, random number. The Customers' entry numbers are available online as part of their account. The winning entry for each hunt is generated one digit at a time by drawing a number from a random mixing machine. The digits are populated one at a time from right to left. All the entries for a hunt will be sorted in increasing order by the entry number. The first and second alternate will be those entries sequentially closest to the winning number in increasing order but purchased by an individual other than the winner.

The 2022 big game raffle was conducted live at the Oregon Hunters Association (OHA) state banquet in Canyonville on May 14th for the first time since 2019 due to pandemic restrictions. During the pandemic the raffle was conducted at the department's headquarters building in Salem. OHA has hosted the raffle since 1995 at their state convention.

2022 was another record year for A&H raffle sales. The total revenue from the 2022 raffle was \$429,370, outpacing 2021's record sales by \$55,244. Total income from the raffle has roughly doubled from 2019. The raffle is expected to provide approximately 17% of A&H program funding during the biennium.

The total number of individuals that bought 2022 A&H raffle entries was 2,561, down slightly from the previous year's 2,751 and well below the record of 3,393 in 2020. Roughly 43% of the individuals purchasing raffle entries did so for one hunt only, about 31% purchased entries for two raffle hunts, all the way down to less than 1% who purchased entries for all the A&H raffle deer and elk hunts.

Total entries for deer and elk raffles were up 30% over 2021. The Statewide Deer raffle more than doubled and Southeast Deer, Central Deer, western elk, Central/SE elk, and Northeast elk all saw

increases. However, the Northeast Deer, Statewide Elk, and the Combination Deer and Elk raffles were down roughly 20%.

The A&H program was delighted to be back at OHA's state convention for the twenty-eighth year after a hiatus due to pandemic restrictions. The raffle drawing went off without issue and was witnessed by many of OHA's attendees. However, much has changed in those twenty-eight years, most notably the number of individuals who watch the event on our livestream. In discussions with OHA it was mutually agreed to make the raffle a stand-alone event separate from their annual state convention. Going forward the big game raffle will be held at the department's headquarters with the next raffle on May 26, 2023 to provide more time for raffle sales and deliver the best digital product for our viewers. The future looks bright for the A&H raffle tags!

"I try and buy raffle tickets every year at a chance to win a hunt of a lifetime, hunting is a passion of mine, and I hope to pass it on to my two boys. Most of all sharing the experiences with close family and friends is what it's all about."

Zane Davis

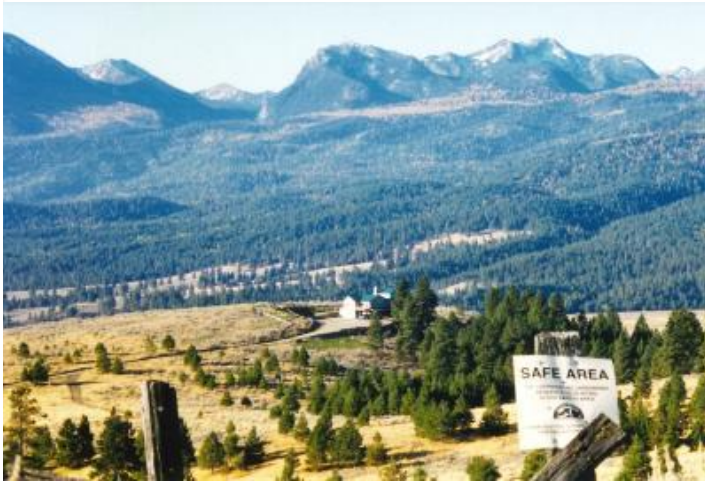
2022 NE Oregon Elk Raffle hunt winner

Do you want more information on big game raffles? Check out the sites listed below.

Raffle and Auction Information

Past Years Raffle Sales

Buy Raffle Entries



Photos from left to right, a habitat project (1995), A&H Board Meeting (1998), Access Area (1997), Field Tour (1999), Raffle Drawing 1998, another Field Tour (1998)

Thirty years of Access & Habitat

The Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 2538, creating the Access and Habitat Program in 1993. The legislation was sponsored by several landowner and hunter associations. The Oregon Legislature reauthorized the A&H program in 1997, followed in 2003 and 2009 with each renewal extending the program's sunset date. The sunset was removed by the legislature in 2019.

The first state A&H Board convened in 1994 and was comprised of Jim Bussard, Monty L. Montgomery, L.L. "Stub" Stewart, Kelly Smith, Scott C. Stouder, E.H. Van Blaricom and Jim Markman. Chuck Smith became the first regional council member to be appointed to the state A&H Board in December of 1997. Tally Patton was the first woman to be appointed to the A&H Board in December of 2000 and first female chair in 2005. Women have been part of the A&H regional councils since the beginning with Sue Ramsey and Laurie Hargett serving on the Northwest and Northeast regional councils respectively.

The first A&H project, directed toward habitat only was the Camas Prairie Restoration project in Morrow County. The first A&H project with both an access and habitat component was the 1994 Cascade Ranch Habitat and Access project in Jackson County. The Sled Springs management demonstration area was the first access only project, providing 128,000 acres of recreational access in Wallowa County.

Several projects approved in the early years are still providing public access including the Heppner Regulated Hunt Area (1994), Northwest Region Law Enforcement project (1995), North Coast Private Lands (1996), and the Jackson Access and Travel Management Area (1996).

Board recommended habitat projects have varied from a few acres to hundreds of thousands of acres. The larger projects generally used A&H funds as match to leverage far larger federal grants to

achieve landscape level projects. The largest project by acreage, the Forest Capital Weed Control project in northeast Oregon, treated over 300,000 acres for invasive plant species.

In 2002 the A&H program first set aside funds to assist landowners with reseeding after wildfire burned important wildlife habitat. The temporary rules were adopted again in 2005 and 2006 before being set permanently in Oregon Administrative Rule in 2007 by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission. The rules provided the expedited process for the A&H Emergency Fire Reseeding program.

The A&H statutes allow the auction and raffle of deer and elk for program funding. The first auction was held in 1994 with five tags up for auction: a Western Oregon Combination hunt, Trout Creek Mule Deer hunt, Bald Mountain Bull Elk hunt, Centerfire Bull Elk hunt, and Centerfire Buck Deer hunt. Total auction sales in 1994 was \$22,950. The number of hunts increased to nine in 1995: four statewide elk, 2 statewide deer, one Trout Creek Mule Deer, one Western Oregon Deer, and one Western Oregon Combination. Revenue to the program increased to \$52,110. The hunts varied until 2002 when the current selection of four statewide deer, four statewide elk and one combination deer and elk hunts, were first offered. The most recent year of auctions, 2022, brought \$578,000 in revenue to the A&H Program.

The first raffle for A&H hunts in 1995 brought in \$86,650 in revenue to the program. The hunts offered in 1996 consisted of a Western Oregon Combination, Western Oregon Deer, Northeast Oregon Deer, Southeast Oregon Deer, Central Oregon Deer, Northeast Oregon Elk, Southeast Oregon Elk, Central Oregon Elk, and Western Oregon Elk. The A&H raffle hunts offered slowly changed to meet the interest of Oregon's hunters until 2002 when the current offerings were first established; one Statewide Combination Deer and Elk, one Statewide Deer, three regional deer hunts, one Statewide Elk and three regional elk hunts. Revenue has continued to rise with 2022 bringing in \$429,370 to the A&H program.

There have been trials and challenges over the last three decades but through it all the A&H program has remained committed to bring hunters and landowners together for the benefit of the wildlife they both value. As Oregon's population grows, demand for recreation will exert an ever-increasing strain on our public lands and resources. Under the guidance of the A&H Board and regional councils, the program will serve Oregon's hunters and land stewards in a partnership for wildlife conservation for the decades to come. Just as the Access & Habitat program has done for the last three decades.