

## **Big Game Regulation Proposal Overview September 30, 2010**

This overview is primarily an abbreviated version of proposals presented to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission on June 4, 2010.

This document focuses on:

- Changes from 2010 regulations.
- Edits and changes to proposals made in June 2010 for 2011 regulations.
- Proposals which were not included in the June 2010 Commission packet.

Many of the topics covered in this overview were covered in more detail in previous Commission packets. To reduce repetition this summary contains condensed discussions of those topics.

## Proposed 2011 General Seasons

A one day shift in General Deer and Elk seasons is proposed for 2011 (Table 1). General Bear and General Cougar remain unchanged for 2011.

Table 1. Proposed general season dates and bag limits for 2011.

<b>Species/Season</b>	<b>Bag Limit</b>	<b>Proposed 2011 Dates</b>
<b>DEER</b>		
Coast Buck	Buck, 2 point+	Oct 1–Nov 4
Cascade Buck	Buck, 2 point+	Oct 1–Oct 14 & Oct 22 – Nov 4
<b>BEAR (Cubs, sows with cubs protected)</b>		
Western Oregon	1 Bear	Aug 1 – Dec 31
SW Additional Bear (Units 20 – 30)	1 Bear	Aug 1 – Dec 31
Eastern Oregon	1 Bear	Aug 1 – Nov 30
<b>COUGAR (Spotted kittens, females with spotted kittens protected)</b>		
Statewide Tag	1 Cougar	Jan 1 – Dec 31
Additional Statewide Tag	1 Cougar	Jan 1 – Dec 31
<b>ELK (Note: Antler restrictions apply in certain units)</b>		
Coast First	Any Bull <sup>a</sup>	Nov 12 – Nov 15
Coast Second	Any Bull or Spike ONLY <sup>a</sup>	Nov 19 – Nov 25
Cascade	Any Bull <sup>a</sup>	Oct 15 – Oct 21
Rocky Mt. First	Any Bull <sup>a</sup>	Oct 26 – Oct 30
Rocky Mt. Second	Any Bull or Spike ONLY <sup>a</sup>	Nov 5 – Nov 13
Columbia Basin - E Biggs	One Elk	Oct 26 – Dec 2
<b>ARCHERY (Note: Antler restrictions apply in certain units)</b>		
Western Deer	Buck, 2 point+ <sup>a</sup>	Aug 27 – Sept 25
Saddle Mt. Deer Late Season	Buck, 2 point+ <sup>a</sup>	Nov 26 – Dec 11
NW Deer Late Season	Buck, 2 point+ <sup>a</sup>	Nov 19 – Dec 11
SW Deer Late Season	Buck, 2 point+ <sup>a</sup>	Nov 12 – Dec 4
Eastern Deer	Buck, visible antler <sup>a</sup>	Aug 27 – Sept 25
Elk	Legal Bull, (varies by unit) <sup>a</sup>	Aug 27 – Sept 25
<b>WESTERN GRAY SQUIRREL</b>		
West & S Central Oregon	5/day - 15 in possession	Aug 27 – Nov 9
Hood & White R. Units	3/day - 6 in possession	Sept 10 – Oct 18

<sup>a</sup> Bag limit for archery hunters and hunters with disabilities permits may be changed to include antlerless deer or elk.

## **Tag Sale Deadlines**

The tag sale deadline for all tags, except bear and cougar, will be the day before the season opens (Table 2). General Bear, and the General (Statewide) Cougar Tag, must be purchased consistent with the General Deer tag sale deadline, which will be September 30 in 2011. There is no tag sale deadline for the SW Additional Bear Tag, and the Additional Cougar Tag. However, hunters must purchase their first general season bear and/or cougar tag by the tag sale deadline to be eligible to purchase a SW Additional Bear or an Additional Cougar Tag. It will continue to be illegal to hunt bear or cougar without a valid unused tag for the species being hunted (bear and/or cougar) in your possession and necessary to immediately tag any bear or cougar taken.

Table 2. General season tag sale deadlines in place for 2010 and proposed for 2011.

<b>Species or Season</b>	<b>2010 Deadline</b>	<b>2011 Deadline</b>
Bear	Oct 1	Sept 30
SW Additional Bear	No Tag Sale Deadline (Must purchase General Season Fall Bear Tag by Oct 1)	No Tag Sale Deadline (Must purchase General Season Fall Bear Tag by Sept 30)
Cougar	Oct 1	Sept 30
Additional Cougar	No Tag Sale Deadline (Must purchase General Season Cougar Tag by Oct 1)	No Tag Sale Deadline (Must purchase General Season Cougar Tag by Sept 30)
Deer & Elk Bow	Aug 27	Aug 26
Western Deer Rifle	Oct 1	Sept 30
Cascade Elk	Oct 15	Oct 14
General Coast 1 <sup>st</sup> Season	Nov 12	Nov 11
General Coast 2 <sup>nd</sup> Season	Nov 19	Nov 18
Rocky Mt. 1st Elk	Oct 26	Oct 25
Rocky Mt. 2nd Elk	Nov 5	Nov 4

## **2011 Hunt Proposals**

Standard calendar shifts are proposed for most hunt dates, for example, the General Buck Deer Season which opens on October 2, 2010 is proposed to open October 1, 2011 to maintain the Saturday opening day. Significant exceptions will be noted in the species discussions.

### **Pronghorn Antelope**

No new pronghorn hunts are proposed and none are proposed for deletion in 2011. Most hunts are proposed to have standard calendar shifts, except for the Swan Lake Youth Hunt which is proposed to shift one week earlier to accommodate landowner desires. One bag limit change is proposed for 2011: The North Wagonfire muzzleloader hunt would change from Either Sex to Buck Only to correct an error in the 2010 regulations.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (department) is again proposing authorization of one special pronghorn auction tag and one special raffle tag. Funds generated from these tags are dedicated to pronghorn management and research. The department received only one request to auction the 2011 Pronghorn Auction Tag. The department proposes granting the Pronghorn Auction Tag to the Eastern Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation at their February 2011 annual banquet.

For the raffle tag, the department proposes to draw the winning ticket and alternate winners during the OHA State convention in May 2011 when all other raffles are drawn (A&H deer and elk hunts, bighorn sheep and Rocky Mtn. goat hunts). The bag limit for both of these special tags is one buck pronghorn. Each tag would be valid for a two-month season (August 1 – September 30, 2011) in any pronghorn hunt area with authorized tags including Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge.

### **Bighorn Sheep**

The department is proposing standard calendar shifts for most bighorn sheep hunts. The department is also proposing one new California bighorn hunt for 2011 in the Potamus area of the upper John Day River. This population was established by a release in 2003.

The department recommends maintaining the current auction and raffle tag program. Funds generated from these tags are dedicated to bighorn sheep management, trapping and transplanting, and research. The special auction tag would be sold at the annual Wild Sheep Foundation Convention during February 2011 in Reno, NV. The special raffle tag is proposed to be drawn during the annual Oregon Hunters Association state convention (May 2011). The season for both special tags will be Aug 13 – November 20, 2011 in any bighorn sheep hunt area with authorized tags.

The department is planning to capture 20 California bighorns from the Deschutes River during December 2010, for release in the Branson Creek area of the Upper John Day River as described in the Re-introduction and Monitoring Plan (Attachment 4). Bighorns would be captured using a helicopter net gun. A portion of the animals would be fitted with GPS and VHF radio transmitters to monitor movements and determine success of the release.

### **Rocky Mountain Goat**

Department proposals would maintain the current Rocky Mountain goat seasons and continuation of the special Rocky Mountain goat raffle tag for 2011. Funds generated from this tag are dedicated to Rocky Mountain goat management, trapping and transplanting, and research. The department proposes to draw the winning ticket and alternate winners during the OHA state convention (May 2011). Proposed bag limit for this special tag is one Rocky Mountain goat. A pre-hunt orientation and post hunt check-in will continue to be required. The tag would be valid for a two-month season (September 1 – October 31, 2011) in any Rocky Mountain goat hunt area with authorized tags.

## **Bear**

### **Mandatory Check**

The department implemented a mandatory check-in of bear skulls beginning in 2008 as directed by the Bear Plan. Successful hunters are required to bring the skull of any bear they harvest, in an unfrozen condition, to a department office or a designated check-in site within 10 days of harvest. Biologists or trained volunteers collect a premolar tooth for aging and other information such as sex of the bear. This information is important for monitoring population structure, and when combined with information from statewide tetracycline marking, for estimating black bear population size. A total of 1,227 teeth were submitted by bear hunters in 2009 (Table 3). Tooth return rates were very high again for 2009. The observed return rates of greater than 100% are a sampling anomaly associated with the general season survey. An additional 286 bears taken outside of hunting seasons were sampled during 2009. Age data for all sampled bears should be available by mid winter 2010-2011.

Table 3. Bear tooth reporting compliance in Oregon, 1993–2009.

Year	Spring			Fall			Total		
	Number Harvested	Number of Teeth	%	Number Harvested	Number of Teeth	%	Number Harvested	Number of Teeth	%
1993	167	78	47	1,179	418	35	1,346	496	37
1994	200	83	42	1,250	338	27	1,450	421	29
1995	62	20	32	624	165	26	686	185	27
1996	127	58	46	880	199	23	1,007	257	26
1997	163	56	34	649	124	19	812	180	22
1998	217	85	39	834	208	25	1,051	293	28
1999	181	57	31	856	353	41	1,037	410	40
2000	246	103	42	977	311	32	1,223	414	34
2001	263	123	47	621	239	38	884	362	41
2002	244	105	44	904	293	32	1,148	398	35
2003	300	105	35	829	192	23	1,129	312	26
2004 <sup>a</sup>		96			211			337	
2005	371	126	34	716	195	27	1,087	318	29
2006	307	111	36	989	223	23	1,296	334	26
2007	477	111	23	748	227	30	1,225	338	28
2008	363	357	98	911	826	91	1,274	1,183	93
2009	461	386	84	698	841	120	1,159 <sup>b</sup>	1,227	106

<sup>a</sup>No harvest survey was conducted for bear seasons during 2004.

<sup>b</sup>Harvest estimate from random telephone survey.

### **Spring Bear**

The department proposes no changes for the 2011 Controlled Spring Bear Season or the Limited Southwest Oregon (first-come first-served) Bear Season.

### **General Bear**

The department proposes no changes for the 2011 Fall General Bear Seasons.

## Cougar

Cougar tag sales continued to increase, up 5% to 45,375 in 2009, and hunter-harvest remained relatively stable at 274 (Table 4). The statewide quota of 777 cougars has remained the same since 2006, and includes Zone A (Coast/North Cascades, 120), Zone B (Southwest Cascades, 165), Zone C (Southeast Cascades, 65), Zone D (Columbia Basin, 62), Zone E (Blue Mountains, 245), and Zone F (Southeast Oregon, 120). No zone quotas were met in 2009, and the department proposes no changes to the total statewide mortality quota nor to general cougar season dates for 2011.

Table 4. Cougar complaints and sources of mortality in Oregon, 1992–2010. Complaint and mortality data are current through 4 August 2010 and 9 August 2010, respectively, based on mandatory cougar check-in. Numbers may change as data are updated.

Year	Number of Complaints <sup>a</sup>	Number of Tags Sold <sup>b</sup>	Hunter-Harvest	Damage Kill <sup>c</sup>	Human Safety Kill <sup>d</sup>	Other Mortality <sup>e</sup>	Total Mortality <sup>f</sup>
1992	184	517	187	17	3	22	229
1993	276	560	160	21	6	21	208
1994	554	588	144	30	9	21	204
1995	742	385	34	41	22	12	109
1996	840	779	45	66	32	25	168
1997	798	935	61	82	20	18	181
1998	954	11,761	152	93	20	17	282
1999	1,072	14,564	157	91	30	25	303
2000 <sup>g</sup>	942	22,386	135	120	25	19	299
2001	829	28,447	220	97	25	23	365
2002	765	32,126	232	111	23	37	403
2003	697	34,135	248	111	28	25	412
2004	545	34,071	265	95	28	35	423
2005	622	38,079	224	125	28	30	407
2006	451	38,719	289	106	26	32	453
2007	453	41,813	308	115	21	93	537
2008	518	43,211	273	106	23	86	488
2009	432	45,375	274	110	31	58	473

<sup>a</sup>Number of complaints received during the calendar year. Sightings not associated with damage or public safety concerns are not included.

<sup>b</sup>Includes general and additional tags (including Sports Pac licenses).

<sup>c</sup>Number of animals killed as a result of damage during a calendar year.

<sup>d</sup>Animals killed as a result of real or perceived threat to humans or pets.

<sup>e</sup>Includes roadkill, accidental, found dead, illegal kill, and Administrative Removals (2007-2010 only).

<sup>f</sup>Includes harvest, damage, and other known mortality.

<sup>g</sup>Hunting season changed to calendar year.

## **Deer and Elk Highlights**

### **Mule Deer Initiative (MDI)**

Work continues in the five MDI units (Heppner, Maury, Murderers Creek, Steens Mtn., and Warner). All mule deer archery hunting in the Maury, Steens Mtn., North Warner, and South Warner units is now controlled which should better manage harvest and will enable collection of more precise and reliable information on archery hunter pressure and harvest. Habitats are being more aggressively managed via changes to management of CRP lands in the Heppner and juniper removal in the Murderers Creek and Warner units. Cougars are being removed from the Warner and Steens Mountain units and coyotes will be removed from the Heppner Unit. Finally, an improved survey methodology, quadrat sampling, is being implemented in all five units.

### **Antlerless Deer (600 Series) Controlled Hunts**

For 2011, the department is proposing to maintain existing general season structure with standard calendar adjustment to season dates. Overall, the department proposals for controlled deer hunts would delete eight 600 Series deer hunts, add one new mule deer doe hunt, and add a new white-tailed doe hunt. No changes are proposed for controlled buck hunts. Proposed changes include:

- Delete seven 600 Series hunts in response to reduced damage and landowner concerns.
- Replace Swamp–Crow Creeks with Upper Swamp Creek.
- Add a new white-tailed deer doe hunt in the Upper John Day River.

### **New Since June**

**Finley NWR:** The USFWS is proposing to allow additional deer hunting on the William Finley NWR beginning with the 2011 season. The additional opportunity would be described with the underlined text below.

Portions of the refuge are open to deer hunting Aug. 27 - Sept. 25 under regulations for general deer bow seasons. Portions of the refuge are open to deer hunting by hunters with a 615 controlled hunt tag using only archery equipment from Sept. 1 – Sept. 26 and using shotguns or archery from Sept. 27 – Oct. 31. Portions of the refuge will be open to deer hunting Oct. 1 - Oct. 31 under regulations for western Oregon general buck season. Use of rifles or muzzleloaders is prohibited. All hunters must obtain a refuge permit and check in and out daily. Information regarding open areas and special regulations is available at the refuge.

### **Elk Hunts**

#### **Units with Expanded Bag Limits for Archery Hunters and Hunters with Oregon Disabilities Hunting and Fishing Permits**

For elk, the department is proposing to remove the Desolation Unit from the area with an antlerless animal in the elk bag limit for archers and hunters with disabilities permits. The department will list the units to have an expanded bag limit in the 2011 Big Game Regulations.

The department is proposing to maintain existing general season structure with standard calendar adjustment to most season dates for 2011. The following changes are proposed to controlled elk hunts:

- Overall, department proposals would delete nine hunts and add 19 hunts primarily to better address damage issues.
- Add one new youth hunt in the Wilson Unit.
- Add five new controlled late season archery cow hunts to replace late season general bow hunting for cow elk in the Santiam, Stott Mountain, Alesia, McKenzie, and N Indigo units with controlled bow hunts. Tags would also be valid in the general season but hunters would need to draw the controlled tag to hunt in the late period.

### **Proposed Boundary, TMA, and Area Closure Changes Proposed for 2011**

**Implementation of new US Forest Service (USFS) Motor Vehicle Use Plans:** Statewide the USFS is shifting to new Motor Vehicle Use Plans for each Forest. Under these plans, roads are closed unless designated open on the USFS Motor Vehicle Use Map. In the transition the Department and USFS will need to work through situations where an existing Cooperative Travel Management Area (TMA) open road system does not match the new USFS Vehicle Use Map.

One concern is enforcement during hunting seasons. Unless the USFS or department has vacated a TMA agreement the TMA as described in the Big Game Regulations remains in effect. However, if during the transition year of implementation, the TMA road system and the USFS Vehicle Use Map do not agree, it could be confusing for hunters and OSP may be in a position where citations are only written for vehicle use on roads closed both under the TMA and on the USFS Vehicle Use Map.

Once the new USFS Vehicle Use Map is available for a TMA it may be recognized in the regulations, for examples for the “Mid-Coast” TMA:

2010 Big Game Regulations: “Motor vehicles prohibited on posted and/or barrier closed rds (including bermed) in the Siuslaw NF lands south of US Hwy 20 and north of State Hwy 126.”

2011 Big Game Regulation Draft language: Open roads in the Siuslaw NF lands south of US Hwy 20 and north of State Hwy 126 are designated on the Siuslaw NF Motor Vehicle Use Map; however, additional roads may be posted as closed as part of the Cooperative TMA or for administrative purposes.

The department will be working with the USFS and OSP at State, Region, and District levels for smooth transitions to the new USFS Vehicle Use Plans.

### **Changes presented in June proposed for implementation:**

- A winter range closure on the Phillip W. Schneider Wildlife Area to reduce disturbance on the winter range consistent with the Mule Deer Initiative.
- Extend the time period for the Murderers Creek-Flagtail TMA to begin 3 days prior to the archery season (currently begins 3 days prior to opening of controlled buck deer rifle season). Through the MDI working group process one of the objectives was to



implement the Murderers Creek-Flagtail Travel Management Area during the archery season. The objective of this TMA change would be to increase buck escapement, reduce harassment, and protect soils and wildlife habitat.

- The department is proposing a new “Wendling” TMA covering more than 130 square miles in a portion of the McKenzie Unit NE of Springfield, north of Hwy 126, east of Marcola Rd, and south of the Mohawk River Mainline. The TMA would be less restrictive than the current hunting access which is limited to weekends only in much of the area. The TMA would start with the early archery season and continue through the late archery season (dependant on the fire danger). Three major private timber landowners would be open seven days a week. A map would be produced showing roads that are open to travel unless posted as closed due to active work operations.

### **New Since June Meeting**

**Santiam WMU and Metolius WMU boundary:** In reviewing the Santiam and Metolius WMU descriptions and the High Cascade hunt boundary, differences were discovered in a section of common boundary line. Department Biologists and an OSP Trooper developed the following language to use as the eastern Santiam WMU boundary, the western Metolius WMU boundary, and controlled hunts that follow the boundary of these units including the High Cascade Hunt.

Proposed Boundary: ...southeast on Hwy 26 to 216; west and south on the west boundary of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation (CTWSRO) to the summit of Mt. Jefferson; south along the west CTWSRO boundary and the Cascade crest (Jefferson/Linn Co. line) to the junction of the “crest of the Cascades” with the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT) in T11S R8E Sec 17; then south on the PCT to Hwy 20/126 at Santiam Pass. PCT continues south.....

**Bridge Creek WA Dates:** The department is proposing to change the beginning of the public access period on the Bridge Creek WA from May 1 to April 15, consistent with the PW Schneider WA and the opening of the Spring Turkey Season.

**North Bank Habitat Management Area (NBHMA):** At the request of the BLM, the land manager of the area, the department is proposing to ban the use of bait for hunting on the NBHMA by adding the following to the regulations. Using bait to attract game animals for hunting is prohibited.

The NBHMA is relatively small and used for a variety of outdoor recreational activities. Some bait sights are not aesthetically pleasing and if in the wrong location provide a bad image for hunters and the opportunity for negative interactions with other users of the area. Also, alfalfa has been found at bait sites increasing the potential for introducing invasive plants.

For consistency the department is proposing to define bait as: “Bait” for hunting game mammals means any substance placed to attract an animal by its sense of smell or taste, including but not limited to food items or minerals (such as salt). Applying a scent or attractant to one’s body or clothing while worn, is not baiting.

## **New Regulations Proposed**

### **Archery Equipment Technology Review Summary:**

On July 24, 2010, an Archery Equipment Technology Advisory Committee Meeting was held to provide input to the department regarding the use of various equipment/technologies during archery seasons. The meeting was attended by Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Carter Kerns, department biologists, OSP, representatives of sporting groups, an archery equipment retailer, and a hunter at large.

The meeting was held in response to direction from the Commission and Director Elicker to discuss requests from archers and manufacturers to allow more technology to be used during archery seasons. The most common requests are related to lighted arrow nocks, expandable broadheads, bow mounted video cameras, and crossbows. Other items discussed included lighted sights, bow mounted rangefinders, and arrow weights (with broadhead attached).

This meeting was held on a timeline to fit into the Big Game Regulation process in preparation for the October 2010 Commission Meeting for implementation in 2011 of any recommended changes.

Current archery equipment regulations discussed at length included those related to broadheads and electronic devices (copied below).

- Broadhead blades must be fixed, unbarbed and at least 7/8" wide (except for western gray squirrel). It is illegal to hunt with or possess mechanical or moveable blade broadheads when hunting game mammals except western gray squirrel.
- No electronic devices may be attached to bow or arrow.

Other topics included:

- Factors considered when establishing big game seasons and controlled hunt tag numbers
- Archery regulations in some of the western states
- Equipment allowed by the Pope and Young Club and Professional Bowhunter Society.

In discussion, the Advisory Committee categorized, based on the groups opinion, whether or not they felt each item listed below was considered an: "**Advantage for Hunting Effectiveness**"

**Yes:** Rangefinder on Bows; Lighted Sights; Expanding/Mechanical Broadheads; Scopes;  
Red/Green Dot Sights; Radio Transmitters; Crossbows

**No:** Video Cameras

**Uncertain:** Lighted Arrow Nocks; Minimum Arrow Weight

When discussing equipment and potential regulation changes, factors considered included:

- Simplicity
- Consistency (laser rangefinders are not allowed in rifle scopes)
- Understandable
- Consequences

- If more technology were to be allowed for archery hunting during rifle seasons need to consider how this would be enforced if a hunter had an any weapon bear and or cougar tag and was hunting deer and/or elk during archery season?

Recommendations: As a group the Committee recommended no changes to the archery equipment regulations.

Discussion: Following are some of the group’s rational/concerns.

- Concern that any technology that increases hunting effectiveness, such as increasing hunter success, could result in reduced hunting opportunity during archery seasons in the future.
- The current regulation related to electronic devices is simple, none allowed on bow or arrow. There was a concern that allowing one item could lead to additional items being allowed in the future.
  - While the department understands this concern it was pointed out that if a new item is marketed the department will need to make a decision as to whether or not to propose to allow it regardless whether or not there were previous exceptions.
- Concern that using some items such as radio transmitters would result in hunters taking more marginal shots with the idea that if they get a transmitter into the animal they can follow it and eventually find it again.
- Video cameras: Although the group recognized cameras are not an advantage to hunters they chose not to allow video cameras because:
  - they would be an exception to the ban on electronic devices;
  - there are alternatives not mounted to the bow; and
  - manufactures are developing a combination video camera, rangefinder, sight.
- Lighted nocks: Concerns included:
  - they would be an exception to the ban on electronic devices;
  - they may encourage shots to be taken in marginal light because hunter will know if he hits the animal or, if a miss, the lighted nock acts as a tracer and helps the hunter adjust the next shot; and
  - adds weight to tail, “wrong end”, of arrow.
- Crossbows: The Committee did not support the use of crossbows during archery seasons. Following are some of the concerns related to the use of crossbows.
  - A hunting bow is recognized as a compound, recurve or longbow that is hand-drawn and has no mechanical device to enable the hunter to lock the bow at full or partial draw. Most hunting bows have a draw weight of 40 to 70 pounds. A crossbow’s characteristics are so different from those of conventional bows that many bowhunting organizations have opposed the inclusion of crossbows in bowhunting seasons or in archery-only areas.
    - Crossbows are:
      - locked at full draw by a trigger;
      - utilize a rifle-like stock;
      - can readily be shot from a rest;
      - typically use a telescopic sight; and
      - many have draw weights of 150 to 225 pounds.
    - The Oregon State Police have enforcement concerns, because of a crossbow’s relative silence and effective range they could be effective poaching weapons. If

it were legal to use crossbows, determining who is legal and who is not would become more difficult.

- Mechanical Broadheads, Concerns include:
  - Generally reduced penetration compared to fixed blade broadheads.
  - Require more power, not suited for the lower draw weight bows many hunters including some women and youth use.
  - Wide variation in effectiveness; some are very good, some very poor resulting in breaking and/or poor blood trails.
  - Once opened they are “barbed” so more inclined to remain in animal.
  - Encourage long shots because they “shoot like a field point” which are generally more accurate than fixed blade broadheads at long range.
    - Because mechanical broadheads require more energy their effectiveness is reduced at longer range, where they may have an accuracy advantage.
  - High quality effective fixed blade broadheads are available resulting in no strong need to allow the use of mechanical broadheads.
- Overall, the group was concerned about the poor image many people have of bowhunters this image is contributed to by animals “running around with arrows stuck in them, stories (particularly of wounding, loss) they tell in public places, and “poor taste” videos.
  - The perception that hunters are shooting too far could be heightened by the use of rangefinders, mechanical broadheads and other equipment that could encourage hunters to take longer shots.

### **Additional Comments:**

Traditional Archers of Oregon: TAO, as supported by their membership, would like to see regulation changes to define equipment used in “Traditional Archery Equipment Only” areas to say: recurves or longbows made of wood or a wood fiberglass composite, no stabilizers, no sights, no mechanical releases, must use wood arrows with fixed blade broadheads a minimum of 7/8” wide with minimum weight of 437.5 grains (one ounce) for deer and antelope, 500 grains for all other big game mammals.

TAO also requested that that ODFW issue Archery Deer & Elk tags designated as either “Modern” or “Traditional”.

The TAO proposals were not supported by the group.

Oregon Bow Hunters: OBH representatives, in support of OBH members, proposed two items, lighted nocks and mechanical broadheads, be allowed.

The OBH proposals were not supported by the group.

**Department Proposals and the Next Step:** The department made it clear at the outset of the meeting that Committee recommendations could be modified by the department. Also, anyone is welcome to express their agreement or disagreement with final proposals to the department and/or the Commission in writing or prior to or at the September 30, 2010 Commission Meeting in Bend, Oregon.

The above is a general summary of the meeting and recommendations of the group and was given strong consideration before making the final decisions for department proposals to be presented to the Commission. The Committee was informed of topics sure to receive additional discussion by department staff, included the TAO proposals, OBH proposals, video cameras, and the use of crossbows by hunters with disabilities.

After further internal discussions the department is proposing three exceptions to the “No Change” recommendation from the Committee to allow, cameras, lighted arrow nocks, and crossbows for a specific group of hunters with disabilities. The department believes these changes are consistent with the basic desire of the Committee not to make changes that will result in increased hunter success and lead to reduced archery hunting opportunity.

- **Cameras:** The Committee recognized cameras are no “Advantage for Hunting Effectiveness”. Currently hunting with a camera attached to a bow is not legal because they are an electronic device. The Committees primary concerns were:
  - they would be an exception to the ban on electronic devices and lead to other devices being allowed (the slippery slope); and
  - manufactures may develop a multi-purpose unit such as a combination video camera, rangefinder, and sight.

The department believes there is little risk of carefully worded exceptions leading to additional equipment being inadvertently allowed. If cameras are allowed wording will be crafted to be sure it does not allow other functions such as rangefinders or sights.

- **Lighted Arrow Nocks:** The Committee was uncertain as to whether or not lighted nocks are an “Advantage for Hunting Effectiveness”. As with cameras, a primary concern was starting down the slippery slope of allowing electronic devices attached to bows or arrows. If lighted nocks are allowed the department will word the regulation so that other technology, such as radio transmitters are not inadvertently legalized. There was considerable discussion and speculation regarding whether or not lighted nocks are an advantage to hunters, one thought was:
  - They may encourage shots to be taken in marginal light because hunter will know if they hit the animal or, if a miss, the lighted nock acts as a tracer and helps the hunter adjust the next shot.

Another view expressed was:

- With a shot opportunity in marginal light (which could be mid-day in heavy timber) most hunters are going to take the shot, there is seldom the opportunity for a second shot so there is little benefit as a tracer. However, the lighted nock will help the hunter know if they hit the animal resulting in animals being recovered that otherwise the hunter may have not realized they hit.

OBH as a group supports allowing lighted nocks and the OSP does not have a concern with their use.

- **Crossbows for Hunters with Disabilities:** In response to public testimony at the August 6, 2010, Commission Meeting the department was directed to look into allowing crossbows for some hunters with disabilities for 2011. After discussions with the USFWS ADA specialist the department is proposing to implement a pilot program allowing hunters with a category “d” Oregon Disabilities Hunting and Fishing permit and a “Special Use Permit” to use a crossbow for archery hunting. Category “d” is described below:

ORS 496.018 Person with disability under wildlife laws: “d) Has a permanent, physical

impairment that prevents the person from holding or shooting a firearm or bow or from holding a fishing rod in hand.”

The program being developed would require additional information from a physician including a statement as to why the hunter is unable to use “adaptive archery equipment” such as draw locks, mechanisms released by mouth, chin, etc., and devices that support the bow. As of August 5, 2010, there were 5,563 individuals with disabilities permits, of these 678 (12%) had a disability described in category “d”. Recently, the department has issued approximately 20 permits per year for individuals to use a draw lock to hold a bow at full draw.

The proposals for 2011 are not necessarily the end of the process. Since the meeting the department has heard from individuals from the public, retailers, and the archery industry interested in the result (final recommendations) and participating in future meetings if they are necessary.

**Landowner Preference:** The department is proposing two clarifications to a Landowner Preference (LOP) Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR).

1) The department often uses the terms “antlerless” deer hunt and “600 series” deer hunt interchangeably. However, some 600 series hunts include antlered animals in the bag limit. For example, in western Oregon the standard bag limit for 600 series hunts is “one antlerless or spike deer”.

To clarify the intent of OAR **635-075-0001** the department is proposing to replace “antlerless” with “600 series” as follows: A landowner as defined in OAR 635-045-0002 and immediate family as defined in 635-045-0002, owning 40 or more contiguous acres are eligible to receive landowner hunting preference tags for controlled ~~antlerless~~ 600 series deer, western Oregon buck deer, western Oregon elk, and eastern Oregon antlerless elk hunts and emergency hunts occurring on their property.

2) While it is commonly understood that when referring to a landowners property in the LOP system it is to property “registered” with the department, to make it clear and reduce questions the department is proposing the following clarifying language.

### **635-075-0010**

#### **Hunting Area Allowed With Landowner Hunting Preference Tags**

(1) A landowner preference tag authorizes the recipient to hunt only on those lands owned and registered in the Landowner Preference Program by the landowner, and meeting the minimum acreage requirements for that hunt, during the season dates for which the tag is valid, except as provided for in OAR 635-075-0010(4) and (5).

(2) Landowner hunting preference tags are valid on the landowner's registered property in other controlled hunt areas provided the species, bag limits, and season dates are the same, and the landowner’s property in that area either:

(a) Meets the minimum acreage requirements for that hunt; or

(b) is contiguous to other property owned and registered by the landowner that, if added together, would meet the minimum acreage requirements for that hunt.

(3) A landowner receiving a landowner preference controlled buck deer hunt or controlled elk hunt tag may not hunt in any other controlled or general buck deer or elk season, except as provided in OAR division 090.

**Allow any legal weapon during “rifle” pronghorn, deer, and elk hunts.** Initially the concept was to add archery equipment as an option for rifle pronghorn and antlerless elk hunts. After discussions with department biologists and the public the proposal has been expanded to include all pronghorn, deer, and elk hunts. Muzzleloaders are already legal during “rifle” seasons. Archery is already an option during centerfire seasons for bighorn sheep, Rocky Mountain goat, bear, cougar and antlerless deer. Benefits of the proposed change include:

- Provides hunters the option to use a shorter range weapon if they so choose.
- There are no Archery Elk Youth Hunts. The proposed change would enable youth from archery hunting families to use their preferred weapon.
- Allows archery hunters to hunt with rifle hunting friends and family.
- Allows archery equipment as an option in areas, such as some pronghorn units, where there are no archery specific hunts.

**Allow Sport Pac hunters to use the deer voucher for 600 series hunts.** This proposal would allow a hunter in eastern Oregon, who draws an antlerless tag but does not draw a controlled buck tag, to use their deer voucher for the antlerless tag rather than not use it or use it for a western Oregon general season buck tag they have no interest in. One person disagreed with the concept but they did not understand this proposal would not guarantee a Sports Pac licensee an antlerless tag, it simply lets them use the voucher to purchase the tag if they are successful in the drawing.

**Option to Increase Frequency of Pioneer Hunters Obtaining Controlled Hunt Tags.**

Oregon HB 3089 heard during the 2009 legislative session directed the Commission to “consider giving additional preference points to persons who have been issued a Resident Pioneer Hunting License”. In response the department developed and considered options to shorten the time between drawing tags for Pioneer License holders. Biological, social, and administrative impacts were considered.

The department is proposing that “if a Pioneer Hunter is successful in the controlled hunt drawing; their preference points are reduced to one rather than the current zero”. This type of change would shorten the time it takes the Pioneer Hunter to draw the next tag for the same species.

Biological impacts would be minimal as long as no additional tags were issued. Ideas that seem reasonable for an elk hunt with hundreds of tags may not work the same when applied to highly sought after hunts for which any advantage such as extra points may postpone other hunters drawing the tag for several years. The proposed change would shorten the time for Pioneers to draw tags however the benefit would be reduced if the Pioneer applied as a party member with Non-Pioneers.

Administrative impacts associated with implementation of changes would initially be to department and Active Outdoors (the department’s Point of Sale contractor) computer

programming staff. The long term impact would be to Licensing and Controlled Hunt staff to monitor and implement the required changes.

To provide perspective, following are numbers of Pioneers in primary categories affected:

- 2008 Pioneer License, Controlled Hunt Application, and Tag Numbers
  - Pioneer Hunters with Hunting or Combination License, 33,840
  - Pioneer Buck Deer Controlled Hunt Applications, 11,830
  - Pioneers Buck Deer Controlled Hunt Tags, 6,223
  - Pioneer Elk Controlled Hunt Applications, 10,390
  - Pioneer Elk Controlled Hunt Tags, 4,539

The department would monitor the number of Pioneer applications for comparison to recent years. If abuse was apparent the change could be reversed.

### **Considered but not proposed**

**Allow second choice after using “Preference Point” as first choice.** Currently, when applying for controlled hunts if a hunter chooses a point saver as their first choice they cannot select a second or other choice except for Landowner Preference (LOP). The department considered a proposal to modify the system so that hunters who use a point saver as their first choice could also submit second through fifth choices on their controlled hunt application. After a cool reception from both the public and department staff, the department is not proposing to make this change at this time. A common comment was why change something that is not broken.

Concern expressed included:

- It could increase the overall number preference points in the pool because individuals who now apply for an easy to draw hunt as their first choice could apply for the hunt as second choice and receive both a preference point and a tag.
- It would increase competition for hunts that fill on second or a later choice because individuals would no longer need to commit/risk their points in the drawing, they could apply for a point and compete for a hunt that does not fill first choice.
- Many of the hunts that go to second choice are exclusively or primarily Private Land hunts. Hunters currently applying for a point saver could also apply for one of these hunts, with no place to hunt, which commonly results in complaints to the department from both hunters and landowners. “By Permission Hunts” are an alternative but they are high maintenance for hunters, landowners, department field staff, and department licensing/controlled hunt staff and they do not guarantee a place to hunt.

One positive point is that a change of this type would have the potential to reduce the number of leftover tags and the need for a hunter to return to apply. However, with leftover tags issued for only 11 hunts in 2010 (including one archery hunt) the limited benefit seems to be outweighed by the concerns.

### **Bag Limit during Archery Seasons and for Hunters with Disabilities Permits**

Factors considered to determine units recommended to have an expanded bag limit include:

- The deer or elk population characteristics in the unit particularly:
  - Population level relative to the population management objective (MO).
  - Recruitment as measured by fawn or calf ratios.



- The number of antlerless firearms tags authorized in the unit.
- The distribution of firearms tags in the unit.

In June of 2011, the department will make projections on which units will have an antlerless animal in the bag limit for archers and hunters with disabilities permits for fall of 2011. If the Commission adopts this proposal the department would list the units with an expanded bag limit in the 2011 Big Game Regulations.

The department is proposing to remove the Desolation Unit from the area with an antlerless animal in the elk bag limit for archers and hunters with disabilities permits. The Desolation Unit is slightly below the population MO and also below the Bull Ratio MO. Currently, there are 10 antlerless elk tags in one damage hunt within the Desolation Unit and 40 tags proposed for the Grant Youth Hunt which includes three WMUs (Murderers Creek, Northside, and Desolation). The calf ratio continues to decline, 11 calves/100 cows were observed in 2010.

There is some risk, which the department believes is manageable, in setting antlerless areas a year ahead of seasons. If an extreme winter was to occur causing a major reduction in deer and/or elk herds in areas with antlerless animals in the bag limit, the department would propose an emergency rule change by April 15<sup>th</sup> (same reporting deadline as for canceled hunts) to protect antlerless animals in the impacted areas.