

Agenda Item Summary

BACKGROUND

In 1993 the Oregon Legislative Assembly created the Access and Habitat (A&H) Program. The authorizing statute calls for a report on expenditures of funds for the A&H programs to be submitted to the Legislature in odd-numbered years. The report provides an opportunity to highlight the accomplishments of the program during the biennium, and recognize program cooperators and participants for their participation.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The A&H Program provides for public involvement through Regional Advisory Council and State Board meetings. A&H Board meetings are advertised through press release and on the ODFW webpage. Interested parties may provide public comment during these meetings. Project proposals are also posted on the A&H website; members of the public may review the documents and provide comments. The A&H Board most recently met on January 12, 2017 in Salem, Oregon.

ITEM 1

ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CHALLENGES AND FUTURE OF A&H

ANALYSIS

The 2015-2017 Access and Habitat Program Biennium report provides an overview of projects, revenue, and spending during the biennium.

- Over 4.5 million acres of access
 - Enhanced Law Enforcement projects maintained access to over 3.5 million acres
 - Approximately 1 million acres of access provided by direct payment to landowners
- Directly funded almost 9,000 acres of new habitat work; many of the access acres also include partner habitat projects

Challenges and future opportunities:

- Increase in cost for access to private timberlands is straining the ability of A&H to maintain the current level of program
- Lack of access to private property is consistently cited as a barrier to recruitment and retention of hunters
- Habitat projects are generally much more expensive per acre than access projects, making it challenging to strike a balance

To reconcile competing demands for A&H funds the Department will work with the Board, Regional Councils, local biologists and users to identify priorities for A&H funding during the 2017-2019 biennium. The process to develop those priorities will include discussions on habitat work to address identified biological needs, types of access projects, geographic distribution and project partnerships.

OPTIONS

No action requested, informational item

STAFF

RECOMMENDATION N/A

DRAFT MOTION N/A

EFFECTIVE DATE: N/A