

**Access & Habitat Board Meeting
Salem, OR
January 13, 2015**

Attendees:

Barry DelCurto; Jim Morrell; Alan Christensen; Dave Stiefvater; Doug Baily; Craig Ely

ODFW Staff:

Keith Kohl, *Acting* A&H Program Coordinator; Christina Schmidt, Administrative Assistant; Tom Thornton, Game Program Manager

Regional Coordinators:

Jon Paustian; Tom Segal; Vince Oredson; Dave Nuzum; David Stroppel; Nancy Breuner (by phone)

Chair DelCurto called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

Review of the October 2014 Meeting Minutes

Dave moved to approve the October meeting minutes as written; Alan seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 5:0.

Board Member Reports

Craig Ely:

Craig had a productive fall, he has been waterfowl and elk hunting and he said both have been good.

Doug Baily:

Doug made a reservation with Rick McKenzie at New River Aleutian Goose Access Area. Doug originally asked to make a reservation on December 11th & 12th for 3 hunters, he did not identify himself as an A&H Board member. After making the reservation Rick asked if there was any way Doug could come down that weekend to hunt because there were thousands of geese on his property. Doug was able to go that weekend and was given a tour of the property by Rick McKenzie. He wrote an article on the access area for the local newspaper after he returned home and went back to hunt it again in December. When he was on the property the first time, he ran into some other hunters that were not aware that it was an A&H project. Doug would like to have a discussion later about how to bring awareness to A&H projects.

Dave Stiefvater:

Dave visited the MR King Ranch Access Area and got into a few huns and chukars. He said it was good access, all walk-in access. He picked up access area permits last week on the Ontario Recreational Access Area and ran into some hunters who seem to appreciate the access area. They had intended to hunt somewhere else but it was too muddy so they got on the ODFW website and found the Ontario Recreational Access Area. They're still having a great return on the permits, about 89%.

Alan Christensen:

Alan and his son deer hunted on the Wending TMA. He was impressed with how well marked the roads were and with the sign at the bottom of the hill as well as the way they managed the area.

Jim Morrell:

Jim had a good elk hunting trip. He asked about name tags for the board members that they could wear at auction events. He reminded the board that in order to advertise in the RMEF calendar again for 2016 they would have to make a decision soon as he thought that the ad information had to be to RMEF by October. He felt like it was worthwhile to advertise in it, but there was a typo that said A&H was offering 10 elk and 10 deer tags. Jim mentioned it to Chad Klinkenberg and he said that they would send a proof to the sponsors next year so they could review it.

Discussion:

Christina let Jim know that name tags had been ordered and they should have them by the first auction event.

Barry DelCurto:

Barry heard on the local radio that Oregon was 50th in the nation for access, he's not sure if that is true, he feels that maybe people are not aware of the A&H program and the access that it provides.

Discussion:

Jim said that he had heard the same thing and he believes they were referring to public land. Alan added that in working for the Forest Service he knows that every acre of National Forest Land is open to public access, just not accessible by motor vehicle. Roblyn said that that information was put out by the Oregon Outdoor Council. It does seem odd since there is far less public land in the eastern U.S., sometimes information can be misinterpreted.

A&H Program Coordinator Report

Keith Kohl, *Acting* A&H Coordinator (October 15 – December 31) gave the coordinators report. He let the board know that this would be his last duty as A&H Coordinator and Roblyn Brown would be the new acting coordinator through June 2015.

A&H Board Landowner Representative Vacancy

- It has been difficult to get 5 applicants for the position which is what they need per statute; received 2 the first time the position was advertised and another 2 when it was advertised again, now they just need 1 more to move forward.

December Commission Meeting

- The Hancock Forest Management project was approved

Open Field Status

- Matt Keenan, previous A&H Coordinator did submit an application for the first go round and was turned down

- The second round is not open yet and Roblyn should be able to let the board know by the next meeting what the status is.

Discussion:

Jim mentioned that as a disabled veteran, he can purchase a hunting/fishing license in Washington as the same price as a resident. He would like ODFW to look into doing the same thing for Washington residents in Oregon. He said he would send Roblyn the information.

A&H Budget Report

Keith Kohl, *Acting* A&H Program Coordinator, provided an update of the current A&H Program budget (refer to A&H packet).

Discussion:

The board would like to see a project review sheet at every meeting showing what the budget will look like if the projects presented at the current meeting are approved.

Public Comment

No public comment at 8:43 a.m.

Regional Coordinator Reports

Vince Oredson:

Vince has two landowner vacancies on his regional council; he has one application so far and is working on another guy who's a forester with one of the local timber companies. Vince has been working on some issues with Tod Lum, District Biologist in Roseburg, on The Sutherlin project with Weyerhaeuser. Weyerhaeuser has gone to a lot of fee hunting and on this particular tree farm they do charge to hunt during August through December, but the Sutherlin project mainly addresses elk damage and the access period is January – February, so they may want to continue the project. The project will come up for renewal at the April board meeting; however it is not a high priority project. He's been working with the new patrol officer on the Jackson Travel Management Area getting him up to speed. Vince received an email from a dad who didn't have the time to take his two sons out hunting but finally got to go out on one of the C2 Ranch youth hunts and both sons were successful in getting a deer. The C2 Ranch got a new manager over the summer; Vince met with him and went over the details of the A&H project. He is looking for opportunities to increase revenue and came to the conclusion that staying in the A&H program would be the best fit for C2 Ranch.

Dave Nuzum:

Dave has some regional council vacancies coming up, most of those members are first term and will be applying for a second term. He has received four applications so far. The council chair and a hunter representative's second term are up. Dave has working on the MOU for the NCTMA. Weyerhaeuser will be expanding their lease and permit areas. They will have three different types of hunting access; fee, permit and open. Hunting season went well. Deer season was very active being that it was wet seemed to increase the success rates. Elk season was slow due to weather. Waterfowl on the coast and at Sauvie Island Wildlife Area has been good. Law enforcement had a lot of problems on the TMA with long term camping, shooting areas, ATV

intrusions, minor thefts, and gate issues. Dave went over hunter use data from the North Coast TMA. He has 5 counters out.

Discussion:

Craig asked if Dave knew how much the lease/bids were going for.

Dave wasn't sure. He'll know this summer which land will be lease/permit land so that he can create a current TMA map.

Jon Paustian:

Jon will be pulling traffic counters and permits at the end of the month, bulk of projects close at the end of the month and open back up April 1st. When the application for the Hancock project was drafted, he didn't catch that it included commercial trapping and when Hancock took over from Forest Capital they stopped allowing commercial trapping. The contract just needs to be revised. Jon will be presenting nine projects up for renewal at the April board meeting. He has three projects enrolled in Open Fields that will be expiring at the end of the year and he'll be asking for A&H funding to backfill for Open Fields funding. Rufenacht will not be renewing so there will be some funding from that project.

David Stroppel:

David has been very busy the last 3-6 months working closely with the three district biologists on the three projects coming before the board today. He has also been posting properties. He's hoping to have some harvest and use data to bring to the board at April's meeting. He will also have some council vacancies to fill at the next meeting, one hunter representative and his chair position is also going to be vacant. He has seven applications for hunter representative.

Nancy Breuner:

Nancy gave an update on the Dixie Meadows and Aspen Valley Access Areas. Aspen Valley is in the Maury Unit, predominately a deer hunting property. There were a total of 18 hunters that reserved opportunities to hunt on this property for 3 day periods. There was a 79% return rate on permits for that property. Most of those permits were marked a satisfaction rate of 4. Some of the typical comments were that they didn't see any animals, one saw 18 does no bucks, and the harvest for the season was one deer. Dixie Meadows which is in the Ochoco Unit is predominantly an elk hunting opportunity. The harvest for that entire season was one antelope. There were 23 hunters that reserved opportunities to hunt on that property. There was an 88% return rate on permits, overall satisfaction was 4. The Dixie Meadows contract has expired as of December 31st. At the October meeting Nancy had mentioned that the landowner was not going to sign up again but that was not because he's not committed to the program it's because he has applied for a position on the A&H Board. Aspen Valley has two more years until the contract expires and the landowner has expressed interest in renewing. Nancy will be giving an update on the JWTR TMA at the April meeting.

Tom Segal:

Tom gave an update on the Moody Fire Seeding project. Everything has been seeded and with some of the extra money he was able to fly on 400 acres of seed in areas that he wasn't able to drill. They've had great fall rains in the area so the seeding should take very well. Tom's regional council has a landowner vacancy coming up. The McBride Access Area is going to

expire soon and the landowner is not interested in renewing. This project was a low priority project from the district standpoint. It's primarily a ground squirrel hunting opportunity.

Project Review

2015-01 Opie Access Area Project

Regional Coordinator Tom Segal informed the board that he was not going to present this project during this meeting as it is one of four that represent the Lawen Access Area and he'll bring the project back to the board at the April meeting with the other three.

2015-02 Jenkins Access Area Project

Regional Coordinator Tom Segal along with District Biologist Rod Klus, and Landowner Richard Jenkins presented this project (refer to A&H Board packet for the Regional Council Review and application for detailed information on this project).

This project proposes to pay Rich Jenkins \$2.50/acre for both 8,187 acres of "Welcome to Hunt" access and 4,770 acres of "By Permission" access in the Steens Wildlife Management Unit near Diamond, OR from August 1 to March 1 for 5 consecutive years beginning fall of 2015.

Discussion:

- Barry brought up the regional council concerns about the cost for the by permission access being the same per acre as the welcome to hunt access.
- Rich said that he would be okay with modifying the cost per acre for the by permission access.
- Alan is concerned about funding the project for 5 years. He asked if they could lock it in for a shorter period of time.
- Rich replied that he was fine with a shorter term contract.
- Jim worked out what the funding would be if the by permission access was funded at \$1.44 per acre, a total of \$20,606.40 over 3 years, and the welcome to hunt access was funded at \$2.40, a total of \$58,946.40 over 3 years, and asked Rich if he was ok with the numbers.
- Rich said he would accept those numbers.

Motion:

Jim moved to approve the project with the following modifications:

- The 4,770 acres that are by permission access gets funded at \$1.44/acre for three years.
- The 8,187 acres that are welcome to hunt access gets funded at \$2.40/acre for three years.
- Total funding for three years is \$79,552.80.

Doug seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 5:0.

2015-03 Wendling Travel Management Area

Regional Coordinator David Stroppel, District Biologist Brian Wolfer, and Weyerhaeuser Representative Tally Patton presented this project (refer to A&H Board packet for the Regional Council Review and application for detailed information on this project).

This project proposes to continue the operation of the Wendling Travel Management Area. The Wendling TMA has been in operation since 2011 and has experienced a high volume of use. Currently, the TMA is in effect from the beginning of early archery season through the end of general rifle deer season. Beginning in year 2 (2016) of this grant period the TMA period of operation would shift to the beginning of general rifle deer season though November 30th except when closed due to fire danger or for timber management purposes. Vehicle use is restricted to designated open roads.

Discussion:

- Dave asked how fee hunting would pertain to this project.
- Tally answered that because this is the prime hunting area for Springfield, Weyerhaeuser is able to provide it as open access to the public. If they weren't able to get funding through A&H they would go to fee hunting.

Motion:

Craig moved to approve the project as proposed; Alan seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 5:0.

2015-04 Willamette Private Lands

Regional Coordinator David Stroppel, District Biologist Brian Wolfer, and Weyerhaeuser Representative Tally Patton presented this project (refer to A&H Board packet for the Regional Council Review and application for detailed information on this project).

This project proposes to provide law enforcement via 6 state police retired senior troopers to allow landowners to permit and/or continue to allow access to their lands by hunters during hunting seasons. Two of these troopers will be deducted to the Stott Mt. and North Alsea Cooperative Travel Management Area which is located in Polk and Lincoln Counties. The project also provides signage and maps for the Stott Mountain/North Alsea Travel Management Area.

Discussion:

- Brian commented that the project size in the past has been approximately 1.5 million acres. At the time they applied for A&H funds there were some unknowns about how Weyerhaeuser's fee program would affect this project. These troopers do not patrol areas that are fee access. Brian can't really say what will happen in the future but right now what they are being told is that they could expect to see about 300,000 acres become fee access from Weyerhaeuser but that is not for sure yet. If that were to happen the acres would drop down to about 1.25 million acres. Even though the acreage would drop, the fee access would displace a lot of hunters into open areas and so they would see hunter densities increase in those open areas.
- Barry asked if they would need less law enforcement if that were to happen.
- Brian replied that the acres to be patrolled would be less but the number of people to contact will be about the same. There's going to be almost the same amount of hunters it will be less acres but not less contacts to be made because there will be more hunters in a smaller area.

- Barry asked if the officers funded by A&H would be called out on issues on Weyerhaeuser property while out on patrol.
- Tally said not if it's on permit area.
- Alan asked about the potential for more match.
- Brian replied that there is probably already a lot of match unaccounted for.
- Alan asked if the board funded the project for 3 years instead of 5 would submarine the project.
- Brian replied no.
- Alan suggested funding it for 3 years.

Motion:

Craig moved to approve project as proposed; Jim seconded the motion. Motion passed 4:1. Alan voted no because he would have like to have funded it for 3 years instead of 5.

2015-05 Linn Forest Protection

Regional Coordinator David Stoppel and District Biologist Brian Wolfer presented this project (refer to A&H Board packet for the Regional Council Review and application for detailed information on this project).

The project proposes to allow private access and access to public forest to the public for hunting purposes. This project will provide law enforcement funding for Sheriff Deputy patrols on private forest lands during general deer and elk rifle seasons as well as other general hunting seasons. The Sheriff's patrol and presence will help reduce costly vandalism, trespass, dumping, poaching, and other violations so that private landowners will continue to keep their lands open (free of charge) for hunter access during the hunting seasons.

Motion:

Alan moved to approve this project as proposed; Dave seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 5:0.

Other Business

- Doug said that he would like to discuss publicity and signage for projects and would like to see it as an agenda item at a future meeting.
- Craig brought up the notion of administrative rule adoption for ATV's and would like to know if the A&H Coordinator puts that together and submits it as a recommendation to the commission.

Meeting adjourned at 12:19 p.m.