



Access and Habitat Board Meeting Minutes

July 15, 2025
Salem, Oregon

This Access and Habitat Board meeting minutes are considered as a draft until approved by the Board.

Notice of these meetings had been published through Oregon Transparency Website and ODFW Website. <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/index.asp>, <http://www.oregon.gov/transparency/Pages/PublicMeetingNotices.aspx>

Those attending part or all of the meeting included:

<u>A&H Board</u>	<u>ODFW Staff</u>	<u>Public</u>
Amy Patrick, Chair	Travis Schultz	Tyler Goss, Harney SWCD
Ron Borisch - Landowner Rep	Derek Broman	Kenny Rose, Giustina
John Breese - Landowner Rep	Michael Hochspeier	Bryan Cook, OHA
Nic Callero- Hunter Rep		Wayne Endicott, OBH
Morgan Olson - Hunter Rep	<u>Regional Coordinators</u>	Chris Henry, NWTF
Truman Stone - Hunter Rep	Ryan Battleson	Dan Beraldo, RMEF
Absent:	Andrew Walch	Cory Toombs, RMEF
Jeff McNerney - Landowner Rep	David Stroppel	Ray Crow, MDF
	Jon Paustian	Jeremy Snitker, MDF
	Landon Hardt	Marcus Gores, ORWSF

Meeting

On Tuesday, July 16, 2025, at 8:22 a.m. Chair Amy Patrick called the Access and Habitat Board meeting to order.

Meeting Minutes Review

Month Day, 2025

John Breese moved to approve the meeting minutes with corrections and allowing for additional edits for grammar and punctuation. The motion was seconded by Morgan Olson. The motion was approved unanimously with six (6) in favor Borisch, Breese, Callero, Olson, Patrick, and Stone.

The minutes files are located in the Board packet materials and can be viewed at the following link: <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/DRAFT%20April%202025%20Meeting%20Minutes%20for%20the%20web%20.pdf>

Board Member Reports

Nic Callero, Hunter Representative

Since we were last together, I've wrapped up my legislative work and shifted focus toward habitat initiatives. We had a major win in Montana with the passage of a bill that will direct millions toward

1 critical conservation work. While our legislative efforts in Utah and Nevada didn't succeed this year,
2 we're already preparing for another run, securing funding for conservation is marathon, not a sprint.

3
4 I also had the opportunity to present at the International Conference on Transportation and Ecology
5 (ICOET) which will be held in Portland in 2027, attended the Western Association of Fish and
6 Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) conference, where Will Warren received a standing ovation for his
7 lifelong dedication to connecting youth with nature.

8
9 Outside of work, I've been gearing up for hunting season and looking forward to exploring new units
10 with insights from fellow board members.

11
12 Truman Stone, Hunter Representative

13 I have been busy with work but was able to get out for turkey season in Union County, though not as
14 much as I'd hoped. While hunting I spoke with a couple of hunters from Kentucky having a rough
15 time finding birds. They had spoken with the department, a few locals and I pointed out an area OnX
16 to them that I always find birds on and exchanged cell numbers. The next day at 7:30 a.m. I got a
17 thank you text as they harvested birds where I pointed them. Now if I am ever going to Southern
18 Illinois or Kentucky, I have some guys to go hunt with. It illustrates the generosity of the hunting
19 community, from the department to folks in the community to fellow hunters, we're all part of it.

20
21 I ended up harvesting a Turkey myself, but was more pleased I was able to put these guys on birds. I
22 saw a lot of Jakes, so the next couple years in Union County turkey hunting is looking really
23 promising.

24
25 Morgan Olson, Hunter Representative

26 Union County OHA invested significantly in youth engagement this year, providing \$12,000 in youth
27 scholarships and an additional \$10,000 to support local high school and Eastern Oregon University
28 trap shooting teams.

29
30 The Trail Association has been active with multiple trail projects throughout the summer, including a
31 trip I led on the lower Minam River in May. Work continues across several trail and watershed
32 projects including those in the Grand Ronde Model Watershed.

33
34 The local BHA chapters has been focused on e-bikes use on non-motorized trails and cross country,
35 in addition to proposed public land sales. Despite a dry spring in Northeast Oregon, I've observed
36 healthy pheasants broods and encouraging deer fawn and elk calf production in my area.

37
38 John Breese, Landowner Representative

39 Since our last meeting, conditions went from too wet to too dry, but we management to get some
40 work done. We hosted OSU's annual naturalist class, formerly known as Master Naturalist, which
41 brought about 30 participants, mostly the Bend area and local environmental groups, to learn through
42 a team-teaching approach that included soil scientists, range conservationists, and department staff.

43
44 We've also been dealing with two major fires in Crook County: one near Antelope that may lead to
45 evacuations, the High Line near Juniper Canyon, which narrowly missed our range but impacted
46 nearby subdivisions.

1 On the ranch, we've continued juniper removal, supported a local instructor at CoC with Juniper logs,
2 and success with bluebird nesting, though my tractor paid the price.

3
4 Wildlife sightings have been encouraging with healthy antelope numbers returning to the area, a big
5 change since my dad always claimed to have shot the last antelope in 1929. In lighter news, I
6 discovered that one of our A&H hats sold at a garage sale for five bucks, so now we know its market
7 value!

8
9 Ron Borisch, Landowner Representative

10 Attended the OHA State Convention where the statewide deer tag sold for the record-breaking
11 \$170,000, though I'm not taking credit for that. Before the auction, one of the phone bidders casually
12 mentioned he bought a tag for \$40,000 so would probably go to \$45,000. The hammer price
13 probably came as quite the surprise for him. I joined Nic for the Big Game Raffle Drawing, which
14 was first for me and a pretty cool experience.

15
16 On the ground, we dealt with a major illegal garbage dump up Neil Creek and with the Lynn County
17 Forest Deputy, which A&H partially funds. A big thanks to the Forest Deputy for processing the
18 dump and organizing the cleanup. On the work front it has been a busy year with road building and
19 reconstruction across BLM and Forest Service lands. Striving to get everything done ahead of fire
20 restrictions, we're currently at a two and it's hot and dry out there.

21
22 Amy Patrick, A&H Board Member.

23 I'm just glad the session is over, it was a particularly contentious one, even after the historic 2023
24 walkout. On the positive side, the legislatively approved ODFW budget restores the \$2 million in
25 general fund that had been cut from ODFW in the governor's recommended budget, preserving
26 critical programs like anti-poaching and OSP enforcement, OHA's funding priority. The governor's
27 budget also cut Wildlife Services pass through funds. We also saw the long-awaited passage of
28 wildlife crossings policy language, improving coordination between ODFW and ODOT. The sunset
29 clause was successfully removed from the landowner preference program.

30
31 While firearms bills were my main concern going in, we managed to prevent the most damaging
32 proposals. The final version of the bill allows municipalities to restrict concealed carry in public
33 buildings and banned rapid fire trigger mechanisms, but removed the under-21 possession ban that
34 would have impacted our ability to do firearms training. A special session may still be on the horizon
35 as the transportation package didn't pass. On the non-legislative front, my garden looks amazing.

36
37
38 **Public Comments**

39 No Public Comment

40
41
42 **Coordinator Reports**

43 Travis Schultz, A&H State Coordinator

44 Federal and Farm Bill Update

45 The Budget Reconciliation, or the Big Beautiful Bill, restores \$5 billion in Inflation Reduction Act
46 funding to conservation titles, EQIP, ACEP, CSP, and RCPP. Unfortunately, \$100 million was
47 rescinded from the forest legacy program. Volunteer Public Access – Habitat Incentive Program
48 (VPA-HIP) received \$70 million in grant funds to be utilized fiscal years 2025 to 2031. The VPA-

1 HIP grants will be allocated to states and tribes in a single application, no date set for the applications
2 for the funding. The major issue for A&H is the reconciliation did not renew CRP. That will require
3 a new farm bill or a continuing resolution in the congress.
4

5 Budget

6 Presented the A&H budget to the Board. The budget files are located in the Board packet materials
7 and can be viewed at the following link:

8 [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/July%2025%20Budget%20for%20the%20](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/July%2025%20Budget%20for%20the%20web.pdf)
9 [web.pdf](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/July%2025%20Budget%20for%20the%20web.pdf)
10

11

12 **Auction and Raffle Update**

13 Travis Schultz A&H State Coordinator

14 Deer and elk raffle sales are slightly down from last year but well above average at \$535,712.
15 On the Auction side, deer and elk sales broke records, repeatedly, ending with \$940,500 in revenue
16 for the year. The 2016 total revenue was just over \$500k and 2020's record year was \$718K for
17 perspective on this year. The average elk tag was up \$16,000 and deer was up \$57,000. Big game
18 auction tags generated over 2.6m in revenue for wildlife conservation, habitat and hunter access, in
19 addition to providing almost \$330k to the auction host organizations.
20

21 Don Whittaker Ungulate Species Coordinator

22 Don present updates on trend for the bighorn sheep, Rocky Mountain goat, pronghorn Raffle and
23 Auctions. Changes to Mule deer hunting zones and how they will change raffles and auction hunts.
24

25 The Auction and Raffle files are located in the Board packet materials and can be viewed at the
26 following link:

27 [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/Auction%20Raffle%20Update%20for%20t](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/Auction%20Raffle%20Update%20for%20the%20web.pdf)
28 [he%20web.pdf](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/Auction%20Raffle%20Update%20for%20the%20web.pdf)
29
30

31 **Auction Host Update**

32 Travis Schultz, A&H State Coordinator

33 Travis presented information on the auction contract and explained the process and expectations. He
34 emphasized the importance of the contractual requirements for the auctions and working together to
35 ensure successful interactions with bidders and hosts.
36

37 **2026 Auction Host Introductions**

38 The representatives for the potential auction host organization introduced themselves and their
39 organization to the Board describing the goals of the organization and how the auction funds they
40 receive will be spent.

41 Organizations

- 42 • Mule Deer Foundation
- 43 • Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- 44 • National Wild Turkey Federation
- 45 • Oregon Bow Hunters
- 46 • Oregon Hunters Association
- 47 • Oregon Wild Sheep Foundation

1 **2026 Auction Tag Host Selection**

2 The Board discussed each tag and after considerable conversation, determined allocation. The
 3 following chart shows allocation of the nine tags:

Host Organization Applications for the 2026 Oregon Big Game Auction Tags							
Organization	Chapter	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	Event Date	Event Location	2026 Tag Awarded
Wild Sheep Foundation	National	Bighorn Sheep	Pronghorn	Rocky Mt. Goat	Thursday, Jan 21st, 2026 - Saturday, Jan 24th, 2026	Peppermill hotel Casino Reno Nevada	Bighorn Sheep
Oregon Bow Hunters Association	State	Deer	Elk	Rocky Mt. Goat	Saturday, Jan 31, 2026	Linn Co Fair Expo center Oregon	Deer
National Wild Turkey Federation	Baker	Deer	Elk	Pronghorn	Saturday, Feb 07, 2026	Elks Lodge Baker City Oregon	Deer
Mule Deer foundation	National	Combo	Deer	Elk	Thursday, Feb 12th, 2026 - Saturday, Feb 14th, 2026	Salt Palace Salt Lake City Utah	Deer
Oregon Hunters Association	Bend	Deer	Elk	Rocky Mt. Goat	Saturday, Mar 14, 2026	Riverhouse Lodge Bend, Oregon	Elk
National Wild Turkey Federation	Ochoco	Elk	Deer	Rocky Mt. Goat	Saturday, Mar 21, 2026	Crook County Fairgrounds Prineville Oregon	Elk
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation	National	Deer	Elk	Pronghorn	Tuesday, Apr 7st 2026 - Thursday Apr 9rd 2026	Online	Deer
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation	Cascade Chapter	Combo	Elk	Deer	Tuesday, Apr 7st 2026 - Thursday Apr 9rd 2026	Online	Elk
Oregon Hunters Association	Willamette Chapter	Deer	Elk	Rocky Mt. Goat	Saturday, Apr 18, 2026	Boy & Girls Club Albany, Oregon	Elk
Wild Sheep Foundation	Oregon	Elk	Pronghorn	Deer	Saturday, Apr 25, 2026	Riverhouse on the Deschutes Bend OR	Pronghorn & Rocky Mt. Goat
Oregon Hunters Association	State	Combo	Deer	Elk	Saturday, May 16, 2026	Seven Feathers Casino Canyonville, Oregon	Combo
Houston Safari Club Foundation	N/A	Bighorn Sheep	Elk	Rocky Mt. Goat	TBD	Woodlands Waterway Marriott Woodland, TX	

4
 5
 6 Morgan Olson moved to approve the tag allocations as shown in the table titled Host Organization
 7 Applications for the 2026 Oregon Big Game Auction Tags. (Shown above) Nic Callero seconded the
 8 motion. The motion was approved unanimously with six (6) in favor: Borisch, Breese, Callero,
 9 Olson, Patrick, and Stone.

10
 11 The host organization applications are in the Board packet materials and can be viewed at the
 12 following link:
 13 <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/2026%20Auction%20Hosts%20for%20the%20web.pdf>
 14

17 **Project Review**

18 Ryan Battleson, Southwest Regional Coordinator

19 Ryan needed to step out briefly and Chair Patrick moved his project earlier in the agenda so he could
 20 do so.

22 Rogue River Preserve – Turkey Hunt and Habitat Enhancement

23 Ryan presented a proposal for a new A&H project on the Rogue River Preserve, a 336-acre property
 24 owned by the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy in the Evans Creek Unit. The preserve features
 25 diverse habitats including riparian forest, oak savanna, chaparral, and meadows, and supports over
 26 300 plant species and 100 bird species, many of conservation concern. The proposal includes an
 27 annual \$363 access payment and \$4,000 per year for habitat work (e.g., blackberry removal,
 28 prescribed burns), totaling \$13,089 over three years. The project also includes a mentored youth
 29 spring turkey hunt in partnership with OHA, starting with two hunts in year one and expanding to

1 four by year two. The Conservancy has a strong stewardship record and volunteer base, and the
2 project aims to strengthen our relationship with them while demonstrating that hunting supports their
3 conservation goals

4
5 Morgan Olson moved to approve the project as proposed. The motion was seconded by Ron Borisch.
6 The motion was approved unanimously with six (6) in favor Borisch, Breese, Callero, Olson, Patrick,
7 and Stone.

8
9 The Rouge River Preserve project proposal is located in the Board packet materials and can be
10 viewed at the following link:

11 <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/RRP%20Habitat%20for%20the%20web.pdf>
12 [f](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/RRP%20Habitat%20for%20the%20web.pdf)

15 **Large Landowner Discussion**

16 Travis Schultz, A&H State Coordinator

17 Travis Schultz presented an overview of the Access & Habitat Program’s revenue projections from
18 all funding sources, along with the overall budget outlook for the upcoming biennia and an overview
19 of several payment scenarios for large acreage landowners. Following the presentation, Chair Patrick
20 opened the floor for discussion on future large landowner projects. The Board expressed concerns
21 about the uncertainty of federal funding, the variability of state A&H funding, overall program
22 spending decisions, and the long-term health of the program. Key points from the discussion
23 emphasized the importance of supporting Regional Coordinators in negotiating with large
24 landowners, maintaining fiscal responsibility, preserving the program’s capacity to fund habitat
25 improvement projects, and ensuring continued support for smaller acreage access projects.

26
27 The Large Landowner Discussion materials are included in the Board packet and can be viewed at the
28 following link:

29 [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/Large%20Timber%20Landowners%20for%](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/Large%20Timber%20Landowners%20for%20the%20web.pdf)
30 [20the%20web.pdf](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/Large%20Timber%20Landowners%20for%20the%20web.pdf)

33 **Project Review**

34 David Stoppel, Northwest Regional Coordinator

35 Giustina Gate Install

36
37 Giustina Resources and Giustina Land & Timber are requesting just under \$3,000 to purchase
38 materials and install approximately nine gates in the East Lane Travel Management Area (TMA). The
39 goal is to better manage public access and reduce unauthorized vehicle use in walk-in-only areas,
40 which has caused significant road damage and disrupted hunting experiences for rule-abiding users.

41 The landowners have seen increasing misuse of the area and want to maintain open public access
42 without moving toward a permit or lease-based system like some of their neighbors.

43 The proposed gates, lighter-duty farm-style gates, are intended as deterrents rather than full barriers.

44 These gates are cost-effective, easier to repair or replace, and will primarily be closed during hunting
45 season or when active operations are underway. Giustina’s road contractors will handle installation as
46 an in-kind contribution, with the aim of completing the work before general deer rifle season.

47 The landowners have partnered with the Lane County Sheriff’s Office, contributing to a dedicated
48 Forest Deputy who helps enforce rules and reduce vandalism. This effort reflects Giustina’s

1 commitment to preserving public access while protecting their lands and supporting responsible
2 recreation.

3
4 John Breese moved to approve the project as proposed. The motion was seconded by Truman Stone.
5 The motion was approved unanimously with six (6) in favor Borisch, Breese, Callero, Olson, Patrick
6 and Stone.

7
8 The Giustina Gate Install project proposal is located in the Board packet materials and can be viewed
9 at the following link:

10 <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/Giustina%20Gate%20Install%20for%20the%20web.pdf>
11

12
13 Landon Hardt, Malheur Regional Coordinator

14 Lawen Salt Cedar

15
16 The 2025 A&H Lawen Salt Cedar project focuses on treating invasive salt cedar within the Lawen
17 Access Area. The 5,510-acre project area includes 3,928 acres enrolled in the A&H program since
18 2006, offering public hunting access for waterfowl, upland birds like pheasant and quail, deer,
19 pronghorn, predators, and small game.

20 The project targets salt cedar, a highly invasive, water-intensive plant that secretes salt into the soil,
21 inhibiting native vegetation. Discovered in the Lawen area in 2024, it poses a serious ecological
22 threat due to its potential for rapid spread, up to 600,000 seeds per plant, and ability to form dense,
23 monotypic stands. Tyler Goss of the Harney Soil and Water Conservation District is leading the
24 effort, which includes drone surveys, transect mapping, mechanical removal, and herbicide treatment
25 using Imazapyr 4SL. The project, running from August 2025 to June 2027, seeks \$14,633 in A&H
26 funding, primarily for herbicide application, crew labor, and ATV fuel. The project carries the
27 potential to eradicate salt cedar in the Harney basin.

28
29 John Breese moved to approve the project as proposed. The motion was seconded by Ron Borisch.
30 The motion was approved unanimously with six (6) in favor Borisch, Breese, Callero, Olson, Patrick,
31 and Stone.

32
33 The Lawen Salt Cedar project proposal is located in the Board packet materials and can be viewed at
34 the following link:

35 <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/AH/minutes/2025/July/Lawen%20Salt%20Cedar%20Treatment%20for%20the%20web.pdf>
36

37
38
39 **Regional Coordinator Reports**

40
41 **Malheur Regional Coordinator Report**

42 Landon Hardt

43 During the past winter, above-average precipitation led to a heavy snowpack north of Burns. A rapid
44 warming event in March triggered accelerated snowmelt, leading to significant flooding along the
45 Silvies River. The severity of the flooding was worsened by the loss of vegetation from the previous
46 summer's extensive wildfires, approximately 200,000 acres, which had significantly reduced the
47 landscape's ability to retain moisture. This flooding inundated southeast Burns and much of the
48 surrounding basin. Wildlife monitoring revealed unexpected winter mortality among the elk

1 population, with GPS collar data showing that five elk died out of twenty-two tracked, including four
2 due to nutritional deficiencies. In response to environmental challenges, habitat restoration efforts are
3 underway, including the 2025 A&H Lawen Salt Cedar Project in partnership with Tyler Goss of the
4 Harney Soil and Water Conservation District. Additionally, \$100,000 in GNA funding has been
5 secured for sage grouse habitat restoration, with plans to cultivate 50,000 sagebrush seedlings for
6 replanting in areas burned in the 2012 fire. Contract renewals with Pine Creek, Harney County,
7 Malheur County, and Mackenzie Ranch are also in progress. Meanwhile, I am continuing efforts to
8 fill a vacant landowner representative position on the Board.
9

10 **Deschutes-Klamath Regional Coordinator Report**

11 Andrew Walsh

12 Andrew, the district wildlife biologist currently filling in for Jessica during her job rotation, provided
13 updates on regional conditions and ongoing wildlife efforts. Fire season has begun to impact the area,
14 with smoke recently observed drifting in from a fire north of Madras. Although the region
15 experienced a wet spring, precipitation tapered off by mid-April, contributing to increasingly dry
16 conditions across the landscape. Wildlife monitoring continues, with pronghorn and mountain goat
17 flights scheduled for later this month. Notably, the first-ever mountain goat hunt in the Cascades is
18 planned for this fall. Camera monitoring projects are ongoing for elk and the Sierra Nevada red fox,
19 and emergency fire seeding has been initiated in Tygh Valley to mitigate habitat loss. Habitat
20 management efforts on the Fort Rock EFM EcoTrust property include conifer thinning around
21 riparian zones, with work nearing completion. Additionally, preparations are underway for the
22 renewal of the Green Diamond agreement, with Kasey Johnson and Mike Moore joining the
23 negotiations, which will focus on maintaining public hunting access.
24

25 **Southwest Regional Coordinator Report**

26 Ryan Battleson

27 The New River Access Area has seen recent updates, including the creation of a new access sign,
28 with efforts underway to find a local printer for production. April's strong northwest winds caused
29 some forage damage in the area. Support for the 2025–27 match funding has been bolstered by letters
30 from the OHA Curry and Tioga chapters. In the Jackson TMA, road mapping and boundary
31 adjustments have been finalized, accounting for nearby private timberlands. Fire season restrictions
32 have been added to the updated maps, and old signage is being replaced with new signs and green dot
33 markers. For the Territorial Youth Deer Hunt, invoices for 2024 match funding have been submitted
34 by the OHA Emerald Valley and Umpqua chapters, with an updated pledge letter from Umpqua still
35 pending. District staff are also preparing to present 2026 hunt regulation proposals to local OHA
36 chapters. Potential projects include reworking proposals for Mountcrest Forest to enhance turkey and
37 deer/archery opportunities, exploring access on Siskiyou Crest Ranch with its oak savannah habitat,
38 and promoting the Hunt by Reservation program to interested landowners. Habitat development
39 efforts for 2024–25 include thinning 228 acres at Whaleback Mountain—already seeing elk and deer
40 use—and 49 acres near Cinnabar Mountain. Volunteer-supported fencing upgrades have been
41 completed at Rogue River Preserve and Pompadour Bluff, and assistance was provided to the USFS
42 for fencing near Whiskey Springs to protect Medford's water supply. Wildlife boxes for bats, ducks,
43 and songbirds have also been installed. Looking ahead to 2025–26, planning is underway for a second
44 phase of Whaleback thinning through an RMEF grant, and funding is being sought from the Blacktail
45 Deer Foundation for over 120 acres of thinning near Lake Creek. A wildlife forage seed giveaway is
46 also being prepared for fall 2025.
47

48 **Northwest Regional Coordinator Report**

1 David Stroppel

2 I've been busy preparing for yesterday's A&H tour and today's meeting. I have also been working
3 closely with Giustina to finalize their application for funding to install gates that will help manage
4 public access. Our Habitat Crew is currently shorthanded, with one team member out on a rotation
5 through December. However, our new intern, a former Marine, who's already proving to be a strong
6 asset, especially with his equipment operation skills. I'm also coordinating 15 private land restoration
7 projects across the Willamette Valley focusing on wetland, grassland, and oak woodland habitats in
8 partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. On a positive note, we secured a PR grant that
9 will allow us to purchase a new John Deere batwing mower this year, which will significantly
10 enhance our wildlife area management capabilities.

11 **Northeast Regional Coordinator Report**

12 Jon Paustian

13 The second annual volunteer event sponsored by Stihl Corporation took place at the Minam Wildlife
14 Area and Bear Creek access area, focusing on a thinning project and fence removal, respectively.
15 This year, 37 volunteers participated, with Stihl contributing employees, tools, and chainsaws. The
16 company has expressed a strong commitment to making this a recurring event, planning to continue it
17 annually on the third weekend in May. In terms of property management, staff have been preparing
18 signage and postings for the August 1 openers and getting ready for the fall bear hunting season.
19 However, vandalism issues have emerged in Baker County, particularly at Virtue Flat, where high
20 school students have been causing disturbances, raising concerns about potential fire risks. In
21 response, staff are working with state police to implement night patrols. On the conservation front,
22 the Upper Grand Ronde project is progressing, involving a potential acquisition of an 11,400-acre
23 property valued at approximately \$22 million. Funding is being pursued through the Forest Legacy
24 Program, though it remains contingent on the president's budget. Looking ahead, key challenges
25 include preparing for fire season, navigating the Blue Mountains forest plan revision, and continuing
26 discussions with Manulife.
27
28
29

30 **John Breese Award**

31 Amy Patrick, Chair

32 Amy presented John with an A&H engraved water bottle and a framed, signed plaque in recognition
33 of his eight years of service on the A&H Board. She expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to
34 serve alongside him, highlighting the value of his perspective as both a landowner and an A&H
35 project recipient. Amy noted that John's knowledge and expertise have been greatly appreciated
36 throughout his tenure on the board.
37

38 Andrew Walsh

39 I want to say thanks to John Breese for service on the Board over the last eight years. I've been in
40 Central Oregon for 10 years now. I first moved to Prineville, John and Lynn were some of the first
41 landowners I met. Their commitment to responsible land stewardship, support for the next generation
42 of landowners and natural resource professionals, and deep community involvement were highlighted
43 as particularly meaningful and impactful.
44
45

46 The meeting was adjourned at 2:41p.m. by Chair Amy Patrick