

# Oregon's Access & Habitat Board News

Fall 2011



The Oregon Legislature established the Access and Habitat Program in 1993, funded primarily through a \$4 surcharge on hunting licenses and proceeds derived from deer and elk auction and raffle tags. The A&H Board, composed of members of the public, identifies and recommends funding for projects that improve wildlife habitat and facilitate public hunting access on private lands.

## Lake County A&H juniper projects improve habitat for deer and sage grouse

Juniper treatment continues to be an important management tool for improving wildlife habitat throughout eastern Oregon's sagebrush country — especially to benefit mule deer and greater sage grouse. The Access and Habitat Program has been a major funder of these types of projects, including in Lake County where a number of ranchers have obtained A&H grants to better manage juniper on their properties.

An ongoing project is the Micke Ranch Wildlife Enhancement Project where ranch owners Dan and Nina Micke received a \$19,500 A&H Program grant to cut junipers on their 9,000-acre ranch. The Micke Ranch is located within the Drews Gap mule deer winter range in the Interstate Wildlife Management Unit.

A little more than half of the ranch is upland habitat with varying degrees of encroachment by juniper. The juniper

density on the property averages 50 to 100 trees of different sizes per acre. Thinning the areas of the ranch with higher densities of junipers will promote shrub and forb growth, enhance the flow of springs, and restore the vitality of aspen groves. These changes will provide better forage habitat for deer, additional nesting habitat for sage grouse, and more reliable water sources for a variety of species. Juniper trees also provide perches for birds of prey, which helps them better spot sage grouse. Cutting juniper will help reduce avian predation on grouse.

Juniper will be cut on a total of 300 acres, with the A&H grant funding work on 195 acres. The remaining acres will be treated with funding from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Mule Deer Initiative funds. This project was started in spring 2011.

Another Lake County juniper removal project that benefited from an A&H grant was the L.D. Bennett Juniper Cut project, which was completed in 2008.

This project received a \$15,000 A&H grant to cut juniper on a ranch identified as mule deer winter range in the Lake County Land Use Plan.

The A&H grant funded juniper cutting on 120 acres, while another 80 acres of treatment was funded by the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board and the



*Juniper treatment on the Micke Ranch in Lake County is benefiting upland habitat, aspen groves, and water sources, providing better quality habitat for mule deer, sage grouse, and other wildlife species. Photo by Jim Yuskavitch*

landowner. This project benefited upland habitat and aspen groves.

Although junipers are native trees, traditional fire suppression methods have allowed them to encroach on areas that were historically sagebrush steppe habitat. Here they crowd out shrubs and forbs that wildlife depend on for food, dry up springs by diverting water to their root systems and, in some cases, grow in such dense stands that wildlife has difficulty traveling through them.



*Aspen health has been improved by juniper cutting on the L.D. Bennett property in Lake County. Photo by Jim Yuskavitch*

### Oregon Open Fields

The new Oregon Open Fields program offers Willamette Valley and Columbia basin landowners income in exchange for public hunting access. For additional information visit: [www.OregonOpenFields.com](http://www.OregonOpenFields.com)

## 2012 Raffle Hunt Tickets on Sale

Raffle tickets are now on sale that offer hunters the chance to win big game tags permitting extended hunting seasons virtually anywhere in Oregon where hunting is allowed.

A total of 13 tags will be offered and raffled off at the Oregon Hunters Association State Convention on May 19, 2012 in Redmond. The deadline to purchase tickets at license agents and ODFW offices is May 7, 2012. Tickets start at \$4.50.

Raffle tickets offered include statewide and regional elk and deer tags along with hard-to-get tags for bighorn sheep, Rocky Mountain goat, and pronghorn. Proceeds from the elk and deer raffle will be used by the A&H Program to fund habitat restoration projects and increase hunting access to private lands. Proceeds raised from raffle sales for the Rocky Mountain goat, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn hunts will directly benefit the management and research of those species.

For more information or to order tickets log on to [www.OregonRaffleHunts.com](http://www.OregonRaffleHunts.com) or see pages 21-23 of the 2012 Oregon Big Game Regulations.



*2011 Northeast Elk Raffle Tag Winner Chad Thompson harvested a bull elk that green-scored over 400.*

## Ron Borisch and Barry DelCurto re-appointed to A&H Board

Ron Borisch and Barry DelCurto were both re-appointed to second four-year terms on the A&H Board as Landowner Representatives by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission at its December 2 meeting in Portland.

Borisch, a resident of Keizer, works as a forester for Longview Timber and administers the public hunting access program on the company's Silver Falls Tree farm. He is a member of the Oregon Forest Industries Council's animal damage committee and the North Cascades Animal Damage Cooperative.

DelCurto, of Halfway, is a lifelong rancher with additional experience in small logging operations. Before being appointed to his first term on the A&H Board, he served on the A&H Northeast Regional Council. He is on the board of the Pine Valley Rural Fire Department, including serving two terms as President.

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## Calendar of Events

**January 18-19, 2012**

A&H Board Meeting,  
Salem, 503-947-6087

**March 9, 2012**

Fish and Wildlife Commission  
A&H project review, Corvallis  
503-947-6044

**April 23-24, 2012**

A&H Board Meeting,  
Lincoln City, 503-947-6087

## Have an idea for an A&H project?

If you have an idea for a project that increases public hunting access to private lands and/or improves wildlife habitat, contact the A&H Regional Coordinator nearest you for advice and assistance applying for an A&H grant.

### Northwest Region

Dave Nuzum, Tillamook 503-842-2741  
David Stroppel, Corvallis 541-757-5237

### Southwest Region

Vince Oredson, 541-826-8774  
Central Point

### High Desert Region

Larry Pecenka, Bend 541-633-1117  
Meg Eden, Prineville 541-447-5111  
Tom Segal, Hines 541-573-6582

### Northeast Region

Jon Paustian, La Grande 541-962-1838

## A&H on the Web

[www.dfw.state.or.us/Lands/AH](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/Lands/AH)



# 6 new open fields properties opened to public waterfowl and upland game bird hunting

Six more private properties — three in the Willamette Valley and three in the Columbia Basin — have been opened to public hunting access through agreements between the landowners and ODFW's Open Fields program.

See below for more details on the properties, including whether they are open on a "Welcome to Hunt" or "By Permission" basis. If the property is marked "By Permission," hunters must contact ODFW's local Open Fields coordinator to reserve a time to hunt before going to the property.

New properties are continually being added to the program so hunters should visit the Oregon Open Fields website for updated information or contact the local Open Fields coordinator, (503) 798-3610 for the Willamette Valley and (541) 224-3182 for the Columbia Basin. Additional property details and maps are available at [www.OregonOpenFields.com](http://www.OregonOpenFields.com).

## Willamette Valley Open Fields properties

### Manning Farms Access Area

736 acres in McKenzie Unit  
"Welcome to Hunt" basis, walk-in access with very limited motorized vehicle access  
Open through Jan. 29, 2012  
Hunt for goose, duck, and Wilson's snipe

### Calvin Farms Access Area

Three parcels totaling 342 acres in the Willamette Unit  
"Welcome to Hunt" basis, walk-in access only  
Open through March 10, 2012  
Hunt for goose and duck

### Galen Kropf Farms Access Area

913 acres in the McKenzie Unit  
"Welcome to Hunt" basis, walk-in access only  
Open through Jan. 29, 2012  
Hunt for goose and duck

## Columbia Basin Open Fields properties

### Social Ridge Access Area

4,535 acres in the Columbia Basin Unit  
"Welcome to Hunt" basis, walk-in access only  
Open through Sept. 30, 2012  
Hunt for chukar, valley quail, pheasant, gray partridge, coyote and deer

### Bedrock Farms Access Area

363 acres in the Columbia Basin unit  
"By Permission" basis, call (541) 224-3182 to reserve; walk-in access only

Open through Jan. 31, 2012 by reservation only  
Hunt for valley quail, pheasant, goose, coyote, and deer

### Bunker Hill Access Area

1,345 acres in the Columbia Basin Unit  
"By Permission" basis, call (541) 224-3182 to reserve  
Hunt for chukar, valley quail, pheasant, gray partridge, and coyote  
Open through Dec. 31, 2011 by reservation only

## 3 A&H/Open Fields projects approved

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission approved three new Access and Habitat Program projects at its December 2 meeting in Portland. These include:

### Pine Creek Mule Deer Forage Enhancement

A \$45,000 Open Fields grant will provide funds to cut, pile and burn juniper on the Pine Creek ranch, located within the Malheur Wildlife Management Unit, which will enhance mule deer forage by reducing competition with aspens and shrubs. About 200 acres will be treated using grant funds.

### Alvord/Kueny Access Area

The Alvord and Kueny Ranches will continue to allow public hunting access on 10,500 acres of private land for the next two years in return for a \$47,250 A&H grant. Located within the Steens Mountain Wildlife Management Unit, the property offers hunting opportunities for big game, upland birds, and predators. The ranches have participated in the A&H access program for the past seven years.

### Murphy Ranch Well Project

A well to provide a year-round water source for pronghorn, mule deer, sage grouse, and other wildlife will be constructed with funding from a \$14,928 Open Fields grant. In addition, public hunting access will be allowed on 5,000 acres of private land for the next four years. The property is located within the Wagontire Wildlife Management Unit.

Access and Habitat Board  
 Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 3406 Cherry Avenue, N.E.  
 Salem, OR 97303-4924



**For information on applying for an Access and Habitat Program grant contact A&H Program Coordinator Matt Keenan at 3406 Cherry Avenue N.E., Salem, OR 97303-4924, 503-947-6087**

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