

2017 Oregon Big Game Hunting Outlook

The winter of 2016–2017 was one for the books. According to NOAA, in parts of Oregon's Blue Mountains, it was the fourth most severe winter on record in terms of days of snow and daily temperatures. ODFW observed higher than normal mortality in deer and pronghorn herds in Baker, northern Harney and Malheur counties, and some parts of Union County, which led to [emergency tag reductions in these fall 2017 hunts](#). Hunters in these units should expect to see fewer yearling animals (spikes and 2-points) this fall.

Despite the winter, in most areas of eastern Oregon, deer and elk survival was at or slightly below average. Plus, winter's snow provided the moisture for a spring green-up and increased forage production when the weather finally warmed up, which should provide some long-term benefits to wildlife.

It could also change typical hunting techniques early in the season for archery hunters in the desert region. "There is a lot of water on the desert and forage is as good as it will ever get," said Lake County wildlife biologist Craig Foster about conditions in August. "There are many water sources available now so big game are dispersed and don't have to use a waterhole with a blind on it. My advice is if you get a shot opportunity, take it, as there may not be another one."

In Western Oregon, the winter was also generally colder and wetter than normal. Several areas set record monthly moisture amounts. Winter conditions also stuck around much later than in recent years. Deer and elk survival rates were also at or slightly below the five-year average in western Oregon.

Unfortunately, the state's wet weather did not continue into the summer. Most places are currently very dry—which is typical for the start of fall hunting seasons. Several large fires are burning, which will create great big game habitat in the years to come. However, in the short term, hunters are advised to concentrate their efforts elsewhere and stay out of the very recently burned areas.

Fire restrictions – Know before you go

While fire season is still in effect, most forests will have restrictions on activities and motorized use and some private lands will be closed to public access. Oregon's Department of Forestry's [Public Fire Restrictions Map](#) is a great place to start to find out current restrictions. ODF and the Oregon Forest Industries Council keep a [Corporate Closure List](#) about access restrictions on industrial timberland, including phone numbers of landowners to check the latest status. If you plan to hunt on public land, check with the land manager ([US Forest Service](#) or [BLM](#), [ODF](#)) for public lands information. Remember it's your responsibility to know before you go and follow any restrictions, which could include these common ones:

- Campfires are either prohibited or only allowed in approved campgrounds in many areas.
- Smoking and off road driving is also prohibited in most areas, which includes motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles.
- Vehicles must have either a gallon of water or a fully charged and operational 2½-pound fire extinguisher and shovel (except when travelling on state highways or county roads).
- ATVs must have a charged and operational 2½ pound fire extinguisher.

Once again wildlife biologists are crossing their fingers for rains in September. These early fall rains green up forage and help big game put on weight, so animals head into breeding season in good body condition and fit to reproduce.

Hunting tips

If you're new to big game hunting, or even just want a refresher, check out the new online course [Hunt for Deer and Elk in Oregon](#). The course was developed by ODFW and Oregon State University's Professional and Continuing Education Department. Do the course at your own pace or skip around to topics you are interested in, such as scouting, shot placement, and field care/meat preparation.

There are plenty of other online tools to help too. Scout from home to find good habitat using www.oregonhuntingmap.com or Google Earth. [Geomac's Wildland Fire Support Map](#) can show you historic fire perimeters; old fires can create some of the best deer and elk habitat.

Wildlife biologists share these tips for hunting in dry weather early in the season:

1. Slow down. Wear something on your feet that allows you to feel the dry sticks and twigs that are going to make noise when you step on them. You will not be able to cover as much ground, but you will get a better look at the animals you do see.
2. Plan to be at your destination early in the morning and late in the evening. When you get there, slow down or sit and use your optics to find deer.
3. Hunt areas where you can sit and glass, then develop a stalk that will get you within range without getting so close that all the noise you make getting there doesn't spook the quarry.
4. Consider drives (mainly for deer). No need to be quiet here. Generally speaking, the noisier the better when it comes to drives.
5. Hunt from a stand, either tree or ground, and minimize walking.

Take a Friend Hunting – Win a Prize

New this year, ODFW launched the Take a Friend Hunting Contest to encourage experienced hunters to take out new and lapsed hunters. Prizes will be awarded in early January 2018 and include a statewide deer tag, Leupold rifle scope, Weatherby rifle and many more. To be eligible, the experienced and new or lapsed hunter must each have a 2017 hunting license and register online by Dec. 31, 2017 with their Hunter/Angler ID#. New or lapsed hunters are those who have never purchased an Oregon hunting license, purchased for the first time in 2016, or have not purchased since 2012. More details at the contest website, <http://www.oregonhunter.info/take-a-friend/>

Regulation changes

There are just a few changes from last year:

Edible portions of game mammals is now defined and includes the meat from the front quarters, hind quarters, the loins (backstrap) and tenderloins. For elk, the meat of the neck is also included. See page 95 of the Big Game Regulations.

Hunters with a disabilities permit are reminded to check page 93 of the Big Game Regulations to see which units allow them to take any sex deer or elk. The bag limits are the same as they were last year.

Wolves are present in Oregon

ODFW is monitoring about 20 areas of known wolf activity, mostly in northeast Oregon and several in southwest Oregon. Wolves may also occur in central Oregon and the Cascades. See the [Wolf web page](#) for the latest information.

Wolves remain on the federal ESA west of Hwys 395-78-95. In the rest of eastern Oregon, wolves remain protected under the state's Wolf Management Plan and no take is allowed, except in defense of human life or by livestock producers in certain situations in the eastern third of Oregon.

Oregon has not seen any conflict or human safety problems between people and wolves, but there are [some tips online on how to avoid problems](#). [This flyer](#) also has tips on recognizing wolf sign, differentiating between wolves vs coyotes and protecting dogs from wolves.

ODFW appreciates any information about wolf sightings or encounters from hunters. Use the [online wolf reporting form](#) to share this information with wildlife managers.

ODFW is closely watching both wolf and big game populations. ODFW has not seen negative impacts from wolves requiring big game hunting tags to be reduced.

Besides annual surveys of wolves and big game, OSU and ODFW are working together on a wolf-cougar research project looking at competitive interactions and prey selection between wolves and cougars in the Mt Emily unit.

2017 East Region Deer and Elk

BAKER DISTRICT (Sumpter, Keating, Pine Creek, Lookout Mt.)

Recent wildfires this summer have remained small and contained throughout the district. Fire conditions are extreme and hunters should check with the land manager ([Wallowa-Whitman National Forest](#) or BLM) to find out the latest conditions, as they can change rapidly.

DEER

Over-winter survival was poor in all units with average fawn ratios of 9 per 100 adults counted in the spring. This was much lower than last year's count of 33 fawns per 100 adults. Adult doe mortality was just above 35% determined from GPS collared deer. The yearling buck component will be reduced drastically this season as a result of the lower survival from this winter. Dry conditions at mid to lower elevations this year will make hunting difficult early in the season. Animals will be the most active early in the morning and late in the afternoon when temperatures cool off. Hunters should concentrate their efforts in areas of good forage near north slopes that provide good bedding cover.

ELK

Elk herds in Baker County came out of the winter in good shape. Bull ratios are at management objective for all units. Calf ratios were above the average in all units. Elk populations in the Keating and Pine Creek units and Lookout Mountain units continue to grow and offer good opportunity for hunters. For the best chance at tagging an elk, get as far away from roads as possible, perhaps by hunting in one of the cooperative Travel Management Areas. Dry conditions this year could make hunting difficult. Animals will be the most active early in the morning and late in the afternoon when temperatures cool off. Hunters should concentrate their efforts in areas of good forage near north slopes that provide good bedding cover.

CROOK DISTRICT (Maury, Ochoco, Grizzly)

DEER

Buck ratios remain above management objective (MO) for the Maury and Ochoco units and below MO in the Grizzly unit, with a district-wide average of 19 bucks per 100 does. Last year's severe winter took a toll on fawn numbers, reducing over-winter fawn survival rates 30% across the district. As a result, there will be fewer yearling bucks available for harvest. Spring and summer conditions have been great, with the heavy snowpack leading to plenty of water available on the landscape. Hunter harvest of deer last

fall was about average throughout the district. Throughout the district, deer populations continue to be lower than management objectives due to habitat loss and disturbance, poaching, predation, disease, and road kill.

Archery hunters are reminded that the Maury unit is now a controlled deer archery unit requiring archers to possess a controlled entry buck tag. Hunters can expect to see larger, older age class bucks as a result of these tag reductions. Reminder to pick up a motor vehicle use map for the Ochoco and Deschutes National Forests so you know what's open vs. closed.

ELK

Elk populations and bull ratios are at or just below management objectives in all three units. Hunter harvest last fall was about average throughout the district. Calf ratios took a bit of a dip due to the severity of last winter, which is to be expected. The abundance of water on the landscape this spring and summer has been great for wildlife. Elk are in good body condition and highly mobile across their range. Depending on weather conditions, hunters should expect to find elk on north-facing and moist drainages and high elevations during archery season and more scattered during rifle seasons. Typically, elk hunting improves as you get further away from open roads. Reminder: Elk bow hunters must now have a controlled Maury Unit bull tag to hunt elk in the Maury Unit.

The Maury and Ochoco units offer the best opportunities for bagging an animal on public land, while the Grizzly unit is mostly private land where access can be difficult. Ochoco unit rifle hunters are reminded the [Rager](#) and [South Boundary](#) TMA motorized vehicle restrictions will be in effect. Maps of those areas are available on ODFW's website and from ODFW and Ochoco National Forest offices, as well as signboards as you enter the TMA's. A majority of public land cow elk tags have been eliminated in the Ochoco unit due to declining elk populations on national forests. Private land hunts for the Ochoco unit are intended to increase elk use on the national forest and eliminate elk staying on private land throughout the seasons.

DESCHUTES DISTRICT (Upper Deschutes, Paulina, North Wagontire, Northwest Fort Rock, Metolius) DEER

There should be decent numbers of both mature and yearling bucks available in most units relative to the population size. Tough winter conditions resulted in a drop in over-winter survival. Spring fawn ratios are down district wide with a ratio of 27 fawns per 100 does. Buck ratios are near, or above, management objective district wide with a ratio of 18 bucks per 100 does. Last year, both rifle and archery harvest was average. Heavy winter precipitation resulted in more dispersed available water that should help distribute wildlife throughout the district.

ELK

Relative to the number of elk, branch antlered bull opportunity will be decent in the Paulina and East Fort Rock units. Herds are at relatively low densities and cover a lot of country, so hunter success is typically low.

Elk numbers continue to grow slowly in the Cascade units. The Upper Deschutes, Metolius and West Fort Rock units are managed under the general season 'Cascade' hunt. Elk densities are moderate, but hunter densities are high in the roaded portions of the Cascade units. For solitude, seek more remote wilderness and roadless areas in the Cascades.

Elk numbers in the North Wagontire (High Desert hunts) are quite variable due to large movements these animals make. The elk are most consistent in their daily patterns near alfalfa fields. Hunters are advised to select their target animal carefully when elk are in open country in large herds to avoid wounding or hitting multiple animals.

GRANT DISTRICT (Murderers Creek, Northside, Desolation)

While the Grant District experienced a harsher winter than past years, deer and elk populations fared well. Throughout the summer, the area saw prolonged temperatures above 90 degrees so animals will be attracted to green forage on north slopes, springs and wet meadows.

DEER

Although deer populations remain below management objectives in all units, we have seen a slight increase over the past 5-6 years. Mild winters and relatively good fawn ratios have contributed to this increase. Good buck ratios were observed last fall with a good proportion of mature bucks. However, spring fawn ratios were a little lower than desired which is likely due to last year's dry summer and harder over-winter conditions. The lower fawn ratio will cause a slight decrease in yearling bucks available for harvest this year. Last year, archery and rifle hunters had average success and we expect to have similar results this year.

Deer hunters should look for areas where fire has occurred in past 5-15 years as deer tend to favor vegetation that occurs following fires. The Shake Table Fire on Aldrich Mountain is starting to show signs of increasing deer and may be a good place to find a buck.

ELK

Hunting prospects are average for the district. Elk populations are steady or increasing in most of the district and above management objective in all units except W Beulah. We have had reasonable calf ratios and good bull ratios in most of the district. Archery season in Desolation is now either-sex for elk rather than bull only.

Elk hunters should focus on areas with no open roads as elk tend to move away from traveled roads during hunting seasons.

HARNEY DISTRICT (Silvies, Malheur River, Steens Mt, Juniper, portions of Beatys Butte, Wagontire, and Whitehorse)

DEER and ELK

Habitat conditions are generally good and abundant water sources this year should disperse game populations more widely. The risk of wildfire remains a concern. Most of the large scale mega fires in our area occurred in 2012. Wildlife and hunters have been able to adapt by using different areas and pockets of areas within those fire boundaries that have started to recover.

Deer and elk populations are stable to increasing in most portions of the Harney District. Multiple efforts to improve habitat conditions and remove predators have contributed to this. The Malheur River Unit experienced some unusually high winter kill due to the heavy snow pack and prolonged cold temperatures. In response to that, biologist reduced deer tags by 35%. That was the only wildlife management unit in the Harney district that had an emergency tag reduction. Hunting prospects are good for our other units; there are plenty of animals available for harvest for all seasons and weapon choices.

All Harney units are currently below population management objective (MO) for deer although the district is seeing an increasing trend in most units over the past 6-7 years. But all units are above buck ratio MO for deer. They are also above both bull ratio and population objectives for elk.

Statistics are becoming more reliable since the implementation of mandatory reporting surveys, and they show harvest remains stable.

Hunters need to have good maps of the area and are encouraged to visit the county website for maps <http://www.co.harney.or.us/huntmaps.html>. Make some scouting trips and contact the local biologist to discuss more specifics once you have a better idea of the lay of the land.

HEPPNER DISTRICT (Heppner, Fossil, East Biggs, southern Columbia Basin)

DEER

Deer populations are decreasing in all units. Fawn survival from last year due to the hot dry summer and long cold winter was very poor in all of the units and will result in fewer yearling bucks available for harvest this hunting season. The summer has been very hot and dry with decent forage conditions in the higher elevations and poor conditions as you drop in elevation. Unless conditions change, early season hunters will want to focus on areas of good forage and water.

Public lands hunters in the Fossil unit can hunt the old Wheeler Burn, which is still producing a fair number of deer and is historically a good spot. Public hunters can also hunt the Heppner Regulated Hunt Area in the Heppner unit.

ELK

The elk population for the Heppner is still slightly above MO for the unit and the Fossil Unit's population is stable. Bull ratios have remained constant from last year for both units. The elk calf ratio for both units remains low this year. While there will be fewer spike bulls than previous years, there are still good numbers of bulls in the forest.

Even though forage conditions are better this year, the dry conditions in the forest have elk condensed in areas that have more water as many of the springs have not recharged from several years of drought. Hunters will increase their success by focusing on north slopes with good grazing available near open water. With predicted cooler weather, elk generally become more active. Hunters are reminded to check fire restrictions which usually include no campfires early in the season.

KLAMATH DISTRICT (Keno, Klamath Falls, Sprague, SW portion of Ft Rock, West portion of Silver Lake, West Interstate)

DEER

Deer populations in Klamath County are stable or slightly decreasing. An above average winter likely contributed to lower fawn survival overwinter, which will effect hunter success on yearling bucks this hunting season. Yearling bucks generally comprise over half the buck harvest. The district-wide spring fawn ratios ranged from 16 to 21 fawns per 100 adults. With the above average precipitation last winter, forage conditions this summer are good.

Hunters should concentrate efforts in areas with healthy understory vegetation or thinned areas that offer good forage availability adjacent to cover, especially if weather remains hot and dry. In the absence of significant moisture before or during the hunt, expect deer to be more nocturnal in their movements and focus on areas within a few miles of water. Summer wildfire activity has been low in

Klamath County, though conditions remain dry. Fire related restrictions to vehicle use on roads and camp fires will likely remain in place through much of the early fall hunting seasons.

For all units, buck ratios are above management objectives and a good component of older age bucks exists. The fall buck ratio in the Interstate Unit was highest among Klamath County units, with a measured ratio of 26 bucks/100 does. The Keno and Klamath Falls units are also above buck ratio management objective, however populations in these and all surrounding units remain below objective.

ELK

The Cascade Mountains (that area within Klamath County west of Hwy 97) offer the best opportunities for elk hunting in the Klamath District. The Keno Unit and those areas within the Sprague and Fort Rock Units west of Hwy 97 are included in the general season Cascade elk area. Bull ratios are above management objective and some older age bulls are available. Best prospects are in the Keno and Fort Rock Units. Elk numbers are lower in the eastern part of the county, and seasons east of Hwy 97 are limited entry. Overall population trends are stable to slightly increasing in some areas but below population management objectives like much of the region. Archery hunters will have a bull only bag limit in all units with the exception of the Fort Rock unit east of Hwy 97 where an either-sex bag limit is in effect.

LAKE DISTRICT (Warner, Interstate, Silver Lake, southern portions of Beatys Butte, Fort Rock and Wagontire)

DEER and ELK

With good winter precipitation and a wet spring, water availability is much improved over last year. In forested units, unless there are fall rains, deer will use areas with an abundant shrub component in the understory as this will be the only vegetation with any forage value. In desert units, focus on mountain shrub habitats within a few miles of water.

Deer populations have been consistent over the past few years. Hunting prospects should be fair to good as all units are above management objectives for buck ratios. Deer fawn ratios in the spring were in the high teens or low 20s which is below average and will affect hunter success on younger age bucks. Last season, hunter success was generally average. Fort Rock continues to have low hunter success for the number of deer that summer in the unit, but hunter success and satisfaction was good in all other units.

Fire activity has been moderate this year with a variety of small fires (less than 1000 acres) and only one large fire near Wagontire Mountain. The Barry Point Fire of 2012 has a lot of young shrubs and is providing some good deer habitat.

Some suggested areas to hunt for hunters less familiar with the district:

- Beatys Butte: Focus on the high elevations with mountain shrub communities
- Warner: For both North and South the forested habitats have more deer, and therefore more bucks, than the desert habitats. If you want to hunt the desert units there is a lot of private land mixed in with the BLM properties which also makes hunting these areas a challenge.
- Interstate: Hunt any of the wildfire areas which are predominately south of Hwy 140. North of 140, the edges between private timberlands and USFS properties are good spots to check; these areas generally have high quality feed on the private timber properties and good cover on the Forest properties.

- Silver Lake: The Tool Box Wildfire Complex of 2004 is still providing quality shrub habitat and good deer numbers. If we don't get fall rains outside the fire area, any of the timbered vegetation associated with shrubs in the understory will hold deer.
- Fort Rock: Natural openings or old clear cuts with shrubs in the understory are going to be the most productive.

MALHEUR DISTRICT (Whitehorse, Owyhee and Beulah Units)

DEER

The northern half of Malheur County experienced record snow over the winter of 2016-17. Snow began accumulating in early December and remained snow covered through the end of February. The harsh winter conditions had a significant negative impact on deer and pronghorn populations. The overall loss of these herds may not be fully understood until another population survey is conducted after next winter. While the southern portion of Malheur County experienced harsh winter conditions as well, the valley floors melted off between snow events providing wintering wildlife access to forage thus resulting in minimal loss of big game to winter conditions.

In the Beulah unit, fawn ratio (7/100 adults) and over winter adult mortality greater than 25% resulted in a 40% reduction in tags for the 2017 season. Additionally the management objective for the buck ratio has increased from 12 to 15 bucks per 100 does as part of the management objective review which took place in 2015. The combination of winter mortality and meeting buck ratio tag numbers means tags for this unit will remain at the reduced number for the 2018 season as well. As a result of the low fawn ratio, there will be also be very few yearling age class buck in the harvest this year.

Much of the best deer hunting is on public land near the edge of the Malheur National Forest. Other areas within the National Forest that have had recent fires or logging activity can also be productive

In Owyhee Unit, the northern portion of the unit was negatively impacted by severe winter conditions as well. Fawns ratio was 16/100 adults and above average winter mortality on adult deer resulted in a 25% cut in tags for 2017 (2018 tag numbers will remain at the reduced level as well). Wildfire and weed invasion continues to have an impact on the ability of this unit to produce deer. Even though it is a very challenging unit to hunt, hunter success remains above 50% with a majority of the bucks harvested being 3- and 4-points.

East Whitehorse Unit is another difficult unit to hunt if you are not familiar with the unit. Deer numbers are low and they can be widely scattered. The major fires of 2012 continue to have a negative effect. Winter conditions in the southern end of the county were significantly milder than in the Treasure Valley and did not appear to have a negative effect on deer populations.

In the Trout Creek Mountains, the Holloway Fire burned most of this area in 2012, except for the Oregon Canyon and Sherman Field areas. Since the fire, the higher elevations have had decent vegetation recovery. The deer population remains at similar numbers as pre-fire conditions and buck ratios are well above 40 bucks per 100 does.

ELK

E Beulah is an elk de-emphasis zone. Tag numbers are high with numerous long seasons to keep the elk population under control. Success rates are poor during early season without access to private lands. Later hunt dates can have higher success if winter conditions move elk to more accessible areas.

Whitehorse and Owyhee units are part of the High Desert hunt area. Whitehorse unit has very few elk. An increasing number of elk have been observed in the northwestern portion of the Owyhee unit. These elk are often observed in large groups and very nomadic which makes them difficult to locate consistently.

MID-COLUMBIA DISTRICT (Hood, White River, Maupin, West Biggs)

DEER

The West Biggs and Maupin Unit have seen a decline in deer numbers the last couple years, with drought and hard winter both taking a toll. Most of the reduction has been due to decreased fawn recruitment, so expect to find less young bucks on the landscape. Buck ratios are the highest in the John Day Canyon, as fewer hunters are able to access much of the landscape. Having a good map to ensure you know where you are is essential.

Deer hunting in the White River unit was poor last year, and is expected to be again this year with buck ratios below management objective. Deer are typically scattered throughout the unit with higher elevation habitats and wilderness areas the best opportunity to harvest a mature buck. There are quite a few deer on the White River Wildlife Area but most of the larger bucks move up into the higher country to summer and then migrate back down when the weather pushes them off the mountains. There are always a few nice bucks that hunters find hidden away in some of the more remote areas. However, hunting pressure can be high on the wildlife area.

Hunters headed for the Hood Unit should pay close attention to land ownership and fire restrictions. Some of the best hunting in the unit is found on private timberlands, and hunters should always check with these landowners to find out the most recent regulations. Historic burns on USFS lands around Mt. Hood have been increasing and deer numbers within the unit as well. Rainy or high pressure weather systems typically increase deer activity and the opportunity to spot a buck.

ELK

Elk numbers in the White River and Hood units are near the management objective and will be found scattered in small groups throughout the units on public lands. Herd numbers have been stable with bull numbers observed were slightly higher than last season. However, heavy cover makes harvesting a bull challenging. Most mature bulls are found at higher elevations, especially during the first season. Hunters often choose to hunt the second of the two general seasons for increased season length and a greater chance of winter weather to improve hunting conditions and success. Bull elk hunting in the Maupin and West Biggs also is general season, but the animals are almost exclusively found on private lands. Gaining landowner permission in that area could result in a successful hunt. The White River Wildlife Area has fair numbers of elk and is open to public hunting though hunting pressure will be high; remember fire restrictions are likely in effect during archery season and a wildlife area parking permit is required.

UMATILLA DISTRICT: (Walla Walla, Mt. Emily, Ukiah, eastern portion of Heppner, northern Columbia Basin)

DEER and ELK

Deer prospects in the Walla Walla, Mt. Emily, and Ukiah Units are good as the bucks/100 doe ratios are continually looking good. Even with our harsh winter with cold temperatures and record snowfall, fawn survival was nearly average. The same scenario played out for elk in these three units; bulls/100 cows are slightly up with spike hunting still a challenge in the Mt Emily and Ukiah Units with the Walla Walla Unit spike numbers looking fairly decent.

Low to mid-elevation forage is drying off quickly due to hot and dry conditions, so deer and elk may be found in higher numbers at or above mid-elevation areas. If early September rains arrive before hunting season, animal retention on national forest lands will increase over recent years, improving the hunting substantially. Additionally late summer and early fall rains will improve the chances for deer and elk to produce well, ensuring plenty of animals available for next year's hunt.

**UNION DISTRICT: (Starkey, Catherine Creek, East Mt. Emily, portions of Sled Springs, and Wenaha)
DEER and ELK**

Elk and deer numbers are stable throughout the county, in spite of the tough winter. Adult elk came through the winter well, while calf survival was down. As a result, spike hunters can expect to see fewer yearling bulls this season. All units are at or above MO for elk. Deer numbers are stable, but are below management objective in all units. Hunters may encounter fewer yearling bucks this season due to a decrease in fawn survival over the winter. Controlled hunt deer tags were reduced by 30% as a result of the harsh winter.

Hunter success last year was on par with previous years with deer hunters averaging 30% and elk hunters 30%. Hunters can expect dry conditions in the early seasons that will keep animals closer to water sources such as springs and creek bottoms. Animals move little during warm conditions and hunters will need patience to be successful. The Starkey Unit Travel Management Area is a great place to start for big game hunters new to the area; maps are available online or at the La Grande office. General spike season is a great time to elk hunt in the Starkey unit without the crowds of first season. Look for elk in the steep terrain of the Starkey and Catherine Creek units.

**WALLOWA DISTRICT (Wenaha, Sled Springs, Chesnimnus, Snake River, Minam, Imnaha)
DEER and ELK**

While deer populations are still low, buck season is expected to be fair in all units. Elk populations are doing well, and hunters can expect good prospects for bull hunting in all units. Deer populations are below MO in all units, while elk pops are above in all units except the Wenaha.

Deer and elk harvest has been stable the last few years. Archery season is expected to be warm and dry as usual, making hunting conditions a little difficult. Archers in the Sled Springs unit need to be aware of motor vehicle restrictions and no camping restrictions on Hancock Timber property during fire season.

The district has not detected any drop in deer or elk populations as a result of wolf activity.

BEAR AND COUGAR

BAKER DISTRICT (Sumpter, Keating, Pine Creek, Lookout Mt.)

Bear and cougar hunting should be good this year. The fall season started off well with the office checking in several bears during the first week of the season. Huckleberry production was good this year. Hunt for bears in high elevation open areas with the most berries. Fall bear hunters have best success in higher elevation areas of the Keating and Pine Creek Units on the Wallowa Whitman National Forest.

Find cougars just about anywhere; remember to carry a tag.

CROOK DISTRICT (Maury, Ochoco, Grizzly)

Bear and cougar populations appear to be stable, with low population density and harvest reported for bear, and better opportunities for cougar. Good quality bear habitat is limited, with the better areas being in the northern portions of the Ochoco unit, and on the Lookout Mountain and Paulina Ranger Districts of the Ochoco National Forest.

Cougars are more widely dispersed throughout all three units and generally will be associated with deer, elk, or pronghorn. Using calls during the winter, when game populations are concentrated on winter range, has been effective for some hunters. Areas to consider scouting include: Maury Mountains, Salt Creek and S.F. Crooked River (Maury unit); Lookout Mountain, upper Bridge Creek and South Fork John Day River (Ochoco); and Mill Creek and Green Mountain (Grizzly).

DESCHUTES DISTRICT (Upper Deschutes, Paulina, north Wagontire, north Fort Rock, Metolious)

Bear populations are stable in the district but due to limited suitable habitat, bear numbers are lower here than in other portions of the state. Highest bear densities are west of Hwy 97 at the higher elevations. The district is getting reports of good berry crops and abundant food at these higher elevations.

Cougar populations are healthy due to relatively abundant prey and low mortality. Cougars can be found throughout the district, but will be easier to locate once there is snow on the ground and tracking conditions improve. In particular, cougar numbers appear to be increasing at a faster rate in the Paulina unit than in adjacent units.

GRANT DISTRICT (Murderers Creek, Northside, Desolation, southeast Heppner, northwest Beulah)

Bear populations appear to be stable and hunting should be similar to past years. Look for bears around huckleberry patches in mid-August and our old orchards in mid-September. The fruit crop appears to be good because of the mild conditions. An exception is areas burned in last year's Canyon Creek Fire.

Cougar populations appear to be increasing slightly and hunters are encouraged to have a tag while out hunting other big game species, as that is where most harvest occurs. If using calls, remember cougars respond slower than coyotes and be prepared to spend more time.

HARNEY DISTRICT (Silvies, Malheur River, Steens Mt, Juniper, portions of Beatys Butte and Wagontire)

Harvest rates for both bear and cougar have been stable over the past five years. Always carry a tag, even for bear, just in case you come across one. For cougar, focus on concentrations of prey species which usually attracts predators.

HEPPNER DISTRICT (Morrow, Gilliam and Wheeler counties /Heppner, Fossil, East Biggs, southern Columbia Basin)

Hunters are still seeing plenty of cougars in the Heppner district so there is opportunity for hunters to harvest an animal. The District has low densities of bears throughout the entire forested portion of the District, but they can be encountered by deer and elk hunters so carry a tag.

KLAMATH DISTRICT (Keno, Klamath Falls, Sprague, SW portion of Ft Rock, West portion of Silver Lake, West Interstate)

The Cascade Mountains region of the Klamath District has traditionally provided the most opportunity for bear hunters in the area, though an increasing trend in harvest in the Interstate Unit has been observed in recent years. Hunters are reminded to purchase bear and cougar tags prior to opening day of buck season.

Though cougar populations appear stable, harvest in the units is generally low. Harvest of cougars is generally incidental to deer and elk hunting and is evenly distributed throughout the District. Focused cougar hunting efforts are most successful later in the year after low elevation snow events when tracks can be observed.

LAKE DISTRICT (Warner, Interstate, Silver Lake, southern portions of Beatys Butte, Fort Rock and Wagontire)

Bear numbers are up throughout the forested units, but still lower than other, more timbered portions of the state. People focusing on bear generally have the best success finding an area with fresh sign, then calling. The berry crop is good this year and bears should be using berry producing shrubs through September.

Cougar populations have been slightly increasing for many years, though administrative removal efforts designed to boost mule deer production have reduced population growth rates in the District. Harvest has been stable over the past 3-5 years, largely because most cougar harvest is incidental to other outdoor pursuits. Remember to carry a tag.

MALHEUR DISTRICT (Whitehorse, Owyhee and Beulah Units)

Bear habitat is very limited in this district. Cougar populations are healthy and distributed throughout the district in any area with a big game prey base. Cougar hunting is best following low elevation snow events when cougar tracks can be observed.

MID-COLUMBIA DISTRICT (Hood, White River, Maupin, West Biggs)

Both bear and cougar populations are abundant in the White River and Hood Units. Cougars are often observed moving throughout the canyons of the Deschutes and John Day River systems, as well as on White River Wildlife area later in the fall as deer and elk migrate in from high elevation. Predator calling and locating a fresh kill are great strategies. Bear hunters should focus on clearcuts or natural openings in the forest, especially those with good berry or acorn crops.

UMATILLA DISTRICT (Walla Walla, Mt. Emily, Ukiah, eastern portion of Heppner, northern Columbia Basin)

Getting a spring bear tag in Umatilla is not easy so fall is your chance to hunt here under a general season. Bears are high up early in the season and will pull down slowly. Look in hawthorn and elderberry concentrations to find them; early on they will be on edges of clearings and clearcuts near berry crops in high country. The best bear hunting is north of I-84 in Mt Emily and Walla Walla units.

Cougar populations are healthy; carry a tag while hunting deer or elk as you may get the chance to take a cougar while you're at it. The best cougar hunting will be north of I-84 in the Mt. Emily and Walla Walla Units. The Ukiah Unit has a lower density of cougars than the two northern units, but has been increasing in density the last year or more. A good chance of encountering a cougar will exist there also.

UNION DISTRICT (Starkey, Ukiah, Catherine Creek)

Bear and cougar numbers are strong in all units. Cougar harvest has been down for the past few years but hunters still have a good chance of finding a cougar while calling or hunting for other big game. Look for cougar sign on ridge tops in areas of high elk use.

Bear harvest has been consistent over the past several years. Hawthorns are heavy with fruit heading into September. Look for bears in the creek bottoms and valleys, feeding on Hawthorn berries and other

fruits. Road closure areas within the Catherine Creek and Starkey units will provide good walk-in access to bear habitat.

WALLOWA DISTRICT (Wenaha, Sled Springs, Chesnimnus, Snake River, parts of Minam and Imnaha)

Cougar and bear numbers are good throughout the district. Fall bear hunters should concentrate efforts around fruit orchards, and in draw and stream bottoms as bears will be using these areas feeding on berries. The huckleberry crop is spotty and generally not good this year. This will cause bears to focus more in stream bottoms where they can find a variety of berries. Cougar hunting is best sitting on a fresh cougar kill carcass, or calling with lots of patience.

East Region Big Game Hunting Locations

[Oregon Hunting Access Map](#)

[ODFW Wildlife Management Units](#)

[Travel Management Area maps](#)

BAKER DISTRICT (Sumpter, Keating, Pine Creek, Lookout Mt.)

Baker District includes the Wallowa Whitman National Forest and [Vale District BLM land](#). Hunters can also access many private lands thanks to the [A&H program](#). Remember travel management area regulations are in effect for Dark Canyon, Patrick Creek, Melhorn, Lake Fork-Dutchman, Okanogan-Fish, Summit Point and Eagle Creek.

CROOK DISTRICT (Maury, Ochoco, Grizzly)

The Maury unit is approximately 65% public lands, with BLM managing most of the public lands available to hunters. The unit does include the Maury Mountains managed by the Ochoco National Forest. The Gerry Mountain, S. Fork Crooked River, Sand Hollow Well and Hampton Butte Wilderness Study Areas are on BLM lands and offer challenging and more roadless hunting opportunities.

The Ochoco unit is approximately 50% Ochoco National Forest, 10% BLM, with the remainder private. The South Boundary and [Rager](#) Travel Management Areas (TMAs) are in this unit on Ochoco National Forest lands. Motorized vehicles are restricted to designated roads. Maps for both TMAs are available at portal signs and at Ochoco National Forest and Prineville ODFW offices. Hunters observing illegal vehicle use or any other violations are encouraged to use the TIP hotline (1-800-452-7888). The Black Canyon Wilderness, and smaller Bridge Cr Wilderness offer roadless hunting opportunities.

The Grizzly unit is mostly private, with a small portion of the Ochoco National Forest northeast of Prineville, as well as the Crooked River National Grasslands. The Mill Creek Wilderness offers a roadless hunting opportunity.

Hunters should contact the [Prineville BLM](#) or the Ochoco National Forest for maps that show public lands in these units. Pick up a motor vehicle use map so you know what's open vs. closed in the national forests.

DESCHUTES DISTRICT (Metolius, Upper Deschutes, Paulina, north Wagontire, and north Ft. Rock)

Hunters can use BLM lands as well as Deschutes, Ochoco, and Fremont-Winema National Forest lands in these units. The [Fox Butte](#) and [Walker Rim](#) TMAs will be in effect three days prior through the controlled buck deer seasons and the [Timbers and Spring Butte](#) TMAs are in effect year round.

GRANT DISTRICT (Murderers Creek, Northside, Desolation, southeast Heppner, northwest Beulah)

Hunters will find many good public land hunting opportunities in Grant County, including the Malheur National Forest and [P.W. Schneider Wildlife Area \(more info below\)](#). Hunters should look for north slopes, springs, or other areas with good forage. Roadless areas in the North Fork John Day Wilderness, Desolation and Northside travel management areas are good places to hunt big game. [Camp Creek](#) and Murderers Creek/Flagtail travel management areas are in effect, meaning no vehicle access in certain areas to protect wildlife and habitat and promote quality hunting. Please respect all road closures, gated or not.

Phillip W. Schneider Wildlife Area: Restoration projects will continue following the 2014 South Fork Complex Fire. Many other parts of the wildlife area are recovering following the fire and continue to provide good opportunity to hunt big game species including deer and elk. Phillip W. Schneider Wildlife Area is primarily big game winter range so hunters should look for animals to arrive late in the season, especially following cold snaps or early snow storms.

HARNEY DISTRICT (Silvies, Malheur River, Steens Mt, Juniper, portions of Beatys Butte and Wagontire)

The county is mostly [BLM](#) land. Silvies contains portions of the Ochoco and Malheur national forests. See the [Malheur National Forest website](#) for the latest information on closures and fire restrictions. Some private lands in Harney County are open thanks to the [Access and Habitat Program](#), contact ODFW Hines office (541) 573-6582 for more information.

HEPPNER DISTRICT (Heppner, Fossil, East Biggs, southern Columbia Basin wildlife management units)

Hunters will find most public lands opportunities in the Heppner and Fossil units and can also access private land through the Heppner Regulated Hunt Area thanks to ODFW's A&H Program. Other properties open to the public in the Columbia Basin are available through the Open Fields Program. The old Wheeler burn in the Fossil unit is still a good bet for Fossil unit deer hunters.

KLAMATH AND LAKE DISTRICTS (Klamath Falls, Keno, Srague, Silver Lake, Interstate, Warner, Fort Rock)

A high proportion of these counties are publicly-owned which results in few hunting access issues. The Klamath Falls unit may be an exception to this trend, and hunters are warned to make sure they have secured access to hunt before entering private lands. Although most of the forest habitats are managed by the [Fremont-Winema National Forest](#), there are extensive tracts of private timber lands. The majority of these properties are open to public access hunting, although hunters are strongly encouraged to respect this access as a privilege. While these landowners appreciate the value of public access hunting, continued public use of these lands may be in jeopardy if off-road vehicle use, vandalism, and littering continue. Lakeview [BLM](#) manages most of the desert habitat. Hunters can also hunt the Summer Lake Wildlife Area for some big game (archery mule deer and Silver Lake and Wagontire unit controlled hunt buck mule deer hunts with a few restrictions). Klamath Wildlife Area is closed to deer hunting.

MALHEUR DISTRICT (Whitehorse, Owyhee and Beulah)

Much of the area is BLM land and there is public land hunting opportunities for most species. Contact the Vale District BLM office for maps. Beulah contains portions of the [Malheur National Forest](#). [ODFW's Riverside Wildlife Area](#) is open to hunting for deer, elk and upland game. Please fill out a permit when

you access the Riverside Wildlife Area through one of the informational kiosks so ODFW can track use of the area. The use of motor vehicles on the area is limited to the main entrance road near the community of Riverside and the Long Siding Road near Juniper Basin, though this road is not maintained, is suitable only for high-clearance 4WD vehicles and is impassable during wet weather. There are many [Access and Habitat projects](#) opening private lands to hunters too.

MID-COLUMBIA DISTRICT (Hood, White River, Maupin, West Biggs)

Mt Hood National Forest, White River and Lower Deschutes wildlife areas offer big game hunting. Public access in the Maupin and West Biggs Units are limited to the [Lower Deschutes Wildlife Area](#) and [BLM](#) lands in the Deschutes and John Day River Canyons. In the Hood Unit, most Weyerhaeuser lands are either leased or by permit only. The following link provides information to hunters wanting to access those lands. <http://www.weyerhaeuser.com/timberlands/recreational-access/oregon/>

UMATILLA DISTRICT (Walla Walla, Mt. Emily, Ukiah, eastern portion of Heppner, northern Columbia Basin)

Hunters without access to private land can use the [Umatilla National Forest](#) and ODFW's [Bridge Creek](#) and Columbia Basin ([Irrigon](#) and [Willow Creek](#)) wildlife areas.

UNION DISTRICT (Starkey, Catherine Creek, East Mt. Emily, portions of Sled Springs, and Wenaha)

The [Wallowa-Whitman](#) and [Umatilla National Forests](#) and ODFW's [Ladd Marsh](#) and Elkhorn Wildlife Areas near La Grande are open to the public for hunting; see the Regulations for some special rules for these areas. The Dry Beaver-Ladd TMA will be in effect, meaning no vehicle access in certain areas to protect wildlife and habitat and promote quality hunting. There are seven travel management areas that exist in Union County; find maps on the ODFW website.

WALLOWA DISTRICT (Wenaha, Sled Springs, Chesnimnus, Snake River, Imnaha)

The [Wallowa-Whitman National Forest](#) and [Wenaha Wildlife Area](#) provide public hunting opportunities, though the wildlife area and much public land in the unit may be closed due to fires in late summer and early fall. Call the Oregon Department of Forestry or the US Forest Service for the latest closure information. Remember several travel management restrictions are in effect in the district including the Noregaard, Whiskey Creek and Shamrock TMAs on Hancock Forest Management lands in Sled Springs, the Chesnimnus TMA in Chesnimnus and the Grouse Lick Creeks in Imnaha during bull season. In the Snake River unit, the Lord Flat Road north of Warnock Corral and the Summit Ridge Road north of PO Saddle will not be open to motor vehicles.

West Region Deer and Elk

NORTH COAST DISTRICT (Saddle Mt., Wilson, western Trask, western Stott Mt., western Alsea, north Siuslaw wildlife management units)

DEER

Black-tailed deer on the north coast (Saddle Mt., Wilson, western Trask wildlife management units) survived a very cold, long winter with very little post winter mortality was observed. Deer densities overall are moderate as was the survival of bucks from last year's hunting season. The best bet for buck hunting will be the Wilson WMU.

There has been a lot of recent clear-cut timber harvest on state forest lands, so be sure to take a look at ODF lands if scouting for areas to hunt deer. Generally, deer densities tend to be highest in the eastern portions of these units. Most industrial forest lands will be open to at least non-motorized access once

fire season is over with the exception of Weyerhaeuser lands, most of which will be in a fee access program this fall.

In 2017, the deer bag limit for archery hunters and hunters with a disability permit will continue to be one buck deer having not less than a forked antler.

Along the mid-coast (western Stott Mt., western Alsea, north Siuslaw), overall deer numbers appear to be stable to increasing slightly in various areas and buck numbers are fair to good in most areas. The 2016 and 2017 growing seasons were very good which has likely improved overwinter survival. The prevalence of deer hair loss syndrome continues to be present in the district during late winter and into spring and mortalities continue to occur due to this syndrome. The best deer hunting opportunities are the central to eastern portions of the Alsea unit and Siuslaw unit; deer are less abundant and patchy as one gets closer to the ocean.

The Stott Mt – North Alsea Travel Management area provides some walk-in hunting opportunities. Due to private land fire season rules, the vast majority of private industrial forest lands are closed to public access for archery season. Most private lands are not expected to open public access until fire season is officially over as determined by Oregon Department of Forestry, which is typically in October. Hunters must contact the individual companies or check the [Oregon Dept. of Forestry website](http://www.ofic.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/2017-Closure-Form.pdf) for [corporate closures](http://www.ofic.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/2017-Closure-Form.pdf). <http://www.ofic.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/2017-Closure-Form.pdf>

SADDLE MOUNTAIN UNIT

Some areas to look at include Clatsop Ridge, Davis Point, the lower Klaskanine, Young's, Lewis and Clark and Necanicum Rivers in Clatsop County, and Fall and Crooked creeks in Columbia County. While much of the unit is industrial timber land, most timber companies offer plenty of walk-in access in some areas and open gates for dawn to dusk vehicular access in others, once the fire season is over. See the newly revised [North Coast Cooperative Travel Management Area map](#) from ODFW for details.

WILSON UNIT

Clear-cut habitat is increasing, with much of it occurring on state (ODF) forest lands. Areas with recent logging include the lower Wilson River, North Fork Wilson River, Standard Grade, Buck Mtn. and Camp Olson. Deer populations continue to be on the increase, with excellent buck to doe ratios.

TRASK UNIT

On state forest lands in the western portion, look in the Trask River and lower Wilson River basins. On industrial forest lands, the upper portions of the South Fork Trask River and Widow Creek, as well as Cape Lookout and Cape Meares blocks, have a lot of good habitat.

ELK

On the north coast (Saddle Mt., Wilson, western Trask) elk populations are only at moderate levels currently, and achieve their highest densities in the western portions of these WMUs. Bull elk hunting this year should be good in the Wilson and Trask due to high bull survival from last year's hunting seasons. Both WMUs have general season archery and rifle hunting opportunities. The Saddle Mountain also had good bull survival from the last several seasons, but bull rifle hunting is controlled only.

For archery elk hunters, most industrial forest lands will be open to at least non-motorized access once fire season is over with the exception of Weyerhaeuser lands, most of which will be in a fee access program this fall.

In 2017, the bag limit for elk for disabled hunters in the Saddle Mtn., Wilson and Trask WMUs will not include an antlerless elk. Please check the 2017 Oregon Big Game Regulations for details.

Along the mid-coast (western Stott Mt., western Alsea, north Siuslaw), elk population numbers are lower than management objectives for all three units. In 2017, the observed bull ratios were below 10 per 100 cows in both the Stott Mt. and Alsea units, and in 2017 the Siuslaw unit is above 10 bulls per 100 cows. The second rifle bull elk season in Siuslaw has a bag limit of one spike bull; the bull ratio there continues to be highly variable year to year but is appearing to be showing signs of increasing. .

In 2017, the elk bag limit for disabled hunters and archers hunting in the Alsea and Stott Mt. Units is “one bull elk.”

Elk will be scattered throughout the units, with larger numbers of elk close to agricultural valleys. Industrial forestlands north of Hwy 20 typically receive lots of hunting pressure, with young tree plantations providing good visibility and some travel management roads providing walk-in access. Forest Service lands south of Hwy 34 have low to moderate numbers of elk, and are much more difficult to hunt in the thick vegetation and rugged terrain. However, during archery season many industrial landowners are closed due to fire season and state and federal public lands may provide the only access for hunting. Hunters should check with landowners before hunting or check the [Oregon Dept. of Forestry’s website](#) for fire restrictions and closures.

We advise hunters to be aware that Weyerhaeuser may implement a permit/lease program on their lands for the 2018-19 hunting seasons next year and to check with Weyerhaeuser for more information (www.Wyrecreationnw.com)

SADDLE MOUNTAIN

Elk rifle hunting in this unit is all limited entry, but archery elk hunting is through a single general season. Both seasons are managed under a 3-point minimum regulation. Areas with higher elk numbers and open habitat include Tillamook Head, Davis Point, the lower Klaskanine, Young’s, Necanicum and Lewis and Clark Rivers, Ecola Creek, and upper Rock Creek.

WILSON UNIT

Bull elk rifle and archery hunting is through general seasons, and the second coast elk rifle season has a bag limit of a “spike-only” bull. Some popular hunting areas are the lower Wilson River, God’s Valley, Cook Creek, upper North Fork Nehalem River, Standard Grade, Buck Mtn. and Camp Olson.

WESTERN TRASK UNIT

For archery elk hunters the bag limit for 2017 continues to be one bull with a visible antler, and this applies to the entire unit. Like with the Wilson unit, bull elk rifle and archery hunting is through general seasons, and the second coast elk season has a bag limit of a “spike-only” bull. Some popular areas with higher numbers of elk and open habitats include Cape Lookout, Cape Meares, Wilson River tributaries, lower Nestucca River and the Trask River, especially the South Fork.

STOTT MOUNTAIN, ALSEA UNITS

Some popular areas to hunt elk in the Stott Mountain Unit include the South Fork Siletz River, Fanno Ridge, Gravel Creek, Mill Creek, Elk Creek, Euchre Creek, and the mainstem Siletz River. Popular elk hunting areas in the Alsea include the Yachats River, Five Rivers, North Fork Siuslaw River, Big Rock

Creek Road, Luckiamute River, Airlie, Burnt Woods, Grant Creek, Wolf Creek, Logsden, Pee Dee Creek, and Dunn Forest.

NORTH WILLAMETTE DISTRICT (Scappoose, eastern Trask, north Willamette, north Santiam wildlife management units)

DEER

Hunters heading to the North Willamette Watershed (Scappoose, north Willamette, eastern Trask and north Santiam Wildlife Management Units) should find good hunting opportunities for black-tailed bucks. An increase in post-season buck ratios in the Scappoose (22 buck per 100 does), and eastern Trask WMUs (30 bucks per 100 does) should increase the number of mature bucks for hunters in the Coast Range. A downturn in the buck ratios in the north Santiam WMU (19 bucks per 100 does) will make finding a legal buck a little more difficult but large, mature bucks are still frequently harvested in the unit. Regardless of which WMU you hunt, the late closure (Nov. 3) of rifle buck season should produce good hunting opportunities during the last few weeks of the season. Deer Hair Loss Syndrome continues to be more prevalent in the Scappoose Unit but only spotty in the low elevation lands in the eastern Trask and north Santiam units.

Hunters are reminded to contact local timber companies to obtain updated access information and check the [Oregon Dept. of Forestry's website](#) for fire restrictions and closures. Archery hunters may find many industrial timberlands closed to access due to fire season restrictions. State and Federal lands typically remain open during the archery season and provide the primary hunting opportunities.

Hunter access to the majority of Weyerhaeuser lands in the Scappoose, eastern Trask and north Santiam WMUs will be limited to those hunters who purchased an entry permit. Hunters can obtain a 2017 North Coast Travel Management Area map showing landownership and access opportunities at the northwest Oregon ODFW district offices. The majority of properties in the Willamette Unit are privately-owned and hunters are reminded to obtain permission before hunting on those lands. Hunters headed to the north Santiam have a variety of access opportunities from federal forestland, private timberland and agricultural properties.

SCAPPOOSE WMU

Increased buck escapement from the last two seasons should result in above average hunting this fall. While younger age class bucks typically make up the majority of the harvest, hunters should also find a few mature bucks to keep things interesting. Hunters should be looking for habitat that has a variety of plant components and associated water sources for deer concentrations. Hunters with access to agricultural lands will find higher populations of deer. Some areas to locate deer this fall include Tater Hill, Long Mt., Serafin Point, Burgdorfer Flat, Buck Mt. Bunker Hill, Baker Point, Bacona, and the hills above Pebble Creek.

EAST TRASK WMU

Deer surveys show a good increase in buck ratios and opportunities for deer hunters should be above average this fall in the eastern portion of the Trask WMU. Some of the best hunting is on private timberlands where timber harvest has occurred within the last three to five years. Hunters wanting to experience less road traffic and more walk-in hunting opportunities are encouraged to explore the Upper Tualatin-Trask Travel Management Area located west of Henry Hagg Lake. Some areas with good habitat include the upper portions of the Yamhill and Tualatin Rivers, Trask Mountain, Barney Reservoir, Pumpkinseed Mt., Green Top, and Willamina Creek.

NORTH SANTIAM WMU

The north Santiam Unit buck ratios decreased to 19 bucks per 100 does so prospects for those hunters willing to hunt thick cover where deer concentrate should be average this season. Hunters will find a wide diversity of terrain in the WMU, ranging from high elevation meadows, thick old growth forests, industrial forestlands and agricultural fields, so a variety of hunting styles can be accommodated. Whether hunters choose to still hunt, set up a tree stand, rattle antlers or conduct deer drives, scouting will be critical for success. Hunters looking to stay closer to home should consider hunting on industrial forestlands where land managers are reporting deer damage to recently planted conifer stands. Some locations to consider include the upper Collawash and Clackamas Rivers, Granite Peaks, High Rocks, Butte Creek, and Molalla River.

NORTH WILLAMETTE WMU

The long hunting season in the Willamette Unit should provide hunters with a very good opportunity to harvest a deer this season. Deer damage to agricultural crops remains high throughout the northern portion of the unit. Hunters are reminded that land within this unit is primarily privately owned. Hunters need to have established a good relationship with landowners to ensure a hunting opportunity. Hunters can find some public land hunting opportunities in the Willamette River area (http://oregonstateparks.org/index.cfm?do=parkPage.dsp_parkPage&parkId=194); many of the hunting spots are also listed on ODFW's [Hunting Access Map](#).

ELK

Bull elk hunting in the coastal mountains of the North Willamette District should be similar to last year in both the Scappoose and eastern Trask WMUs. Overall elk populations in both WMUs are below the Management Objective and antlerless elk tags available to hunters will be similar to 2016 with the exception of a few agricultural damage hunts in the southwest portions of the WMU. In the Scappoose WMU, elk are more numerous in the timberlands of the northwestern and agricultural lands along Hwy 26. In the eastern Trask, elk are widely scattered and can be found near agricultural fields and within the private timberlands.

In the north Santiam WMU, elk populations in the Mt. Hood National Forest continue to decline due to limited forage availability. Hunters will find the majority of elk on the industrial forestlands and agricultural fields at lower elevations. Hunters should concentrate their efforts on these low elevation lands for their best chance of success. Contacting private landowners prior to the hunting season will be the key to finding these elk. Hunters are reminded to always ask for permission before entering private lands.

The majority of Weyerhaeuser lands in the Scappoose, eastern Trask and northern Santiam WMU's are limited to those hunters who have a lease agreement or acquired an access permit.

SCAPPOOSE WMU

Harvest should continue to be dominated by younger age class bulls but there should be a few mature bulls available for the persistent hunter. Hunting opportunities for antlerless elk will increase slightly due to changes in a few controlled hunt boundaries (North Plains hunts 1-4) in the southwest portion of the WMU. Hunters are reminded that most of the timberland managers within this WMU participate in the North Coast Travel Management Area and hunters should read and follow all posted regulations to ensure continued access. Some areas to consider include Upper McKay Creek, Green Mountain, Buck Mt., and Bunker Hill.

EAST TRASK WMU

Bulls will be widely scattered throughout the WMU and hunters are encouraged to spend time scouting in order to locate elk before the season begins. Late season antlerless elk hunting opportunities will be similar to 2016 to address elk damage concerns in some areas. Hunters that have drawn an antlerless elk tag should still have good success if they can find elk concentrated near agricultural fields and low elevation timber stands. Hunters need to be aware of frequent changes of land ownership in the agricultural-forest fringes and always ask for permission before entering private lands. Hunters wanting to do more walk-in hunting should be looking at the [Upper Tualatin-Trask Travel Management Area](#) west of Forest Grove as a good option. Other areas to consider include Trask Mt., Stony Mt., Windy Point and Neverstill.

NORTH SANTIAM WMU

Declining elk numbers within the Mt. Hood National Forest will make for poor elk hunting on public lands and hunter success should be average on lower elevation private timberlands. Hunters heading for the Mt. Hood National Forest will find elk highly scattered and difficult to locate. Scout early and often to be successful there. Places to begin scouting include Timothy Lake, Rhododendron Ridge and Granite Peaks. At lower elevations, hunters should explore Butte Creek, Upper Molalla River and Eagle Creek.

SOUTH WILLAMETTE DISTRICT (S. Santiam, McKenzie, N. Indigo wildlife management units)

DEER and ELK

Although the long-term harvest and hunter participation trend has been declining for both deer and elk, over the last couple of years harvest has stabilized and success rates have seen a slight increase. Hunters that are knowledgeable about habitat, take the time to scout, and then hunt hard will have the best chance for success. Populations are strongly tied to habitat conditions and hunting prospects are fair to good in places with high quality habitat. Hunting prospects are poor in lower quality habitats.

Forage is key to good deer and elk habitat. Early seral (brush and forb) forest conditions provide some of the best deer and elk forage. On public lands, early seral habitat is often found in areas burned by wildfire and may be found in thinned areas if the enough trees were removed. On private timber land, forage is best in clearcuts beginning a couple years after the timber harvest.

Access to private timber land is continually changing. Hunters need to ensure they have permission before hunting on private lands. Weyerhaeuser has expanded their fee permit and lease program this year. Hunters that usually hunt Weyerhaeuser land will want to check the Weyerhaeuser website to see if the area they hunt is now included in their fee program.

Elk herds are below populations Management Objectives resulting in reduced antlerless hunting opportunities, particularly on public lands. However, herds are at or above bull ratio Management Objectives indicating opportunities for mature bulls.

Black-tailed deer populations are meeting buck ratio Management Objectives but are below population benchmarks. Rifle hunters typically find the best success in the later portions of the season when the leaves drop and the rut approaches. Archery deer hunters consistently have the best success during the late season.

S. Santiam

The old B&B Fire in the Santiam Pass area continues to hold good numbers of deer but the brush is becoming fairly thick making the hunting a bit more challenging. Still, this is a good early season place to

hunt on National Forest lands if the private lands are closed to access. Elk can be found around the edges of the burned area.

McKenzie

The Wendling TMA is still open to free public hunting access and will be in operation from Sept. 30 through Nov. 30. This time period will allow increased access for late season archery, muzzleloader, and youth hunters. The Wendling TMA is a good area for both deer and elk hunting. Refer to the kiosks located at the TMA entry points or call (541) 741-5403 prompt #6 for updated Wendling TMA access information. Please be advised that 2017 will be the last year that the Wendling TMA is in operation. Weyehaeuser, the primary landowner, is withdrawing from the TMA agreement and will be converting their lands into fee access starting in 2018. Hunters should check with the other private landowners for access information starting in 2018.

N. Indigo

In the Indigo, the Tumblebug Fire that burned in the upper Middle Fork Willamette drainage improved deer habitat and the deer population in the area is expected to improve over the next few years. Additionally, the US Forest Service and sporting organizations such as Oregon Hunters Association and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation have been hard at work thinning old clearcuts to improving forage conditions south of Hills Creek Reservoir. These habitat projects will help maintain the deer and elk populations in the area. Still, the strongest deer and elk populations occur on private lands where expansive timber harvest results in improved forage. Please remember to check access restrictions before hunting on private lands.

UMPQUA DISTRICT - COOS COUNTY (west Tioga, west Powers, north Sixes, southwest Siuslaw)

DEER

Deer population abundance appears to continue to be stable in Coos County, overall. Deer herd dynamics such as buck ratio is measured after the General Rifle Buck Season concludes each year to indicate how many bucks survived the hunting season and will be available the following season. Surveys conducted after the 2016 season indicate the buck ratio is adequate to provide good opportunities for hunters to be successful in the 2017 season. Based on those surveys, it appears buck ratio in the Tioga Unit is down some but still high enough for a good season if weather is cooperative. As in the past, surveys indicate deer densities are highest in the Sixes and Powers Units.

Hunt for deer in brushy openings, meadows and clear cuts where brush is beginning to grow up. Areas where vehicle access is limited will be the most productive. Scouting before the season will increase your odds of success.

In the past few years there have been some large tracts of private timber company lands that changed ownership. Some of the new owners have different public access policies than past owners. Hunters need to make contact with private landowners and managers to ensure they may access private land where they intend to hunt. In some cases, land owners and managers will charge a fee for access. Luckily there is still a large amount of Bureau of Land Management lands, National Forest land and the Elliott State Forest for hunters to hunt. It is imperative that hunters know what land they are accessing and what the policy is regarding access. A good way to determine whether access is allowed to a piece of land is to look for signs at access points to timberlands. Often these signs will provide information as whether public access is allowed and whether permits are required. If permits are required, there may be information on how to obtain them.

Another issue hunters need to be prepared for is restrictions for access to private lands due to fire concerns. This is especially true of hunters who want to hunt the bow season in late August and September. While the spring was quite wet in Western Oregon, the summer has dried things out. This has resulted in a situation where grass grew well and it is now dry and ready to burn easily. Hunters may find access will be restricted until the fire conditions subside.

ELK

Elk populations are above the Management Objective in the Sixes Unit and close to objective in Powers and Tioga. Bull ratios have been relatively good in all units. Generally moisture retention is best on north slopes and as a result grass growth is best there. Those hunting in bow season should concentrate their efforts on these slopes. Fall rains, when they come, will have an effect on elk distribution in the controlled bull seasons in November.

Often the most important factor that determines where elk will be found is human activity. Elk can be expected to move to places where vehicle and other human activity are minimized. During times of significant human activity, like during controlled bull seasons, human disturbance can be more important in determining elk distribution than food availability. So road closures are often the best places to find elk on a regular basis. Within these areas, hunting may be best on north-facing slopes in the early seasons. A particularly productive habitat type to hunt in the Oregon Coast Range is where foresters have thinned timber stands. Thinning the tree canopy encourages grass and brush growth on the ground, improving feed quality.

In the past few years there have been some large tracts of private timber company lands that changed ownership. Some of the new owners have different public access policies than past owners. As is the case for deer hunters, elk hunters need to make contact with private landowners and managers to ensure they may access private land the hunter intends hunt. In some cases land owners and managers will charge a fee for access. Luckily there is still a large amount of Bureau of Land Management lands, National Forest land and the Elliott State Forest for hunters to hunt. It is imperative that hunters know what land they are accessing and what the policy is regarding access. A good way to determine whether access is allowed to a piece of land is to look for signs at access points to timberlands. Often these signs will provide information as whether public access is allowed and whether permits are required. If permits are required, there may be information on how to obtain them.

Another issue hunters need to be prepared for is restrictions for access to private lands due to fire concerns. This is especially true of hunters who want to hunt the bow season in late August and September. While the spring was quite wet in Western Oregon the summer has dried things out. This has resulted in a situation where grass grew well and it is now dry and ready to burn easily. Hunters may find access will be restricted until the fire conditions subside.

UMPQUA DISTRICT - DOUGLAS COUNTY (Dixon, S. Indigo, NW Evans Creek, Melrose, SW Siuslaw, E. Tioga and NE Powers Units)

DEER and ELK

Deer hunting should be good in the Cascades and Umpqua Valley. Elk hunting in the Cascade Units should be about the same as the past few years.

Despite a prolonged winter season, spring surveys indicate good over-winter survival for deer and elk in the Douglas portion of the Umpqua District. The fawns per adult deer ratios in the Dixon, Indigo and

Melrose have been stable to increasing over the last few years. Elk numbers in the Tioga Unit are close to population management objective and doing well. Cascade deer and elk hunters will have better success hunting areas with good cover adjacent to openings. Some of the better wildlife openings are created by clearcuts, thinnings, or wildfire after several years. Hunters need to check weather forecasts frequently as that will play a key role with fire season restrictions and hunting access.

Over the past few years, Western Oregon rifle deer hunters have done fairly well in the Cascade Units (Indigo/Dixon) and recent surveys show that trend should continue as long as the weather cooperates. Cascade elk hunters have averaged about 5% success over the past few years and this year is expected to be the same.

The large amount of fire activity in the district recently will create great big game habitat in the years to come. However, in the short term, hunters may want to concentrate their efforts elsewhere and stay out of the very recently burned areas. Hunters unfamiliar with this area are advised to hunt smarter, not harder. Use Google Earth or Google Map (Satellite layer) to explore the area with a birds-eye view and get an idea of the terrain and vegetation. Get a hold of some good maps from the Forest Service/BLM/Local Fire Protection Association and use them in conjunction with Google Map to locate areas away from roads that will provide you a quality hunting experience. Another good source of information is to view historic fire perimeters online (<https://www.geomac.gov/viewer/viewer.shtml>).

These maps will give you an idea where large areas have been opened up by wildfire which enhances forage opportunities for deer and elk. Find the food, and you'll find the game.

ROGUE DISTRICT (Applegate, Chetco, Evans Creek, Rogue, portions of Dixon, and Sixes)

DEER

Overall black-tailed deer populations remain good in our district, in general the Rogue, Dixon, Evans Creek and Applegate units within Jackson County have mostly a migratory deer population. Within these units hunt in high elevation (4000+ft) during the early half of the season and hunt lower elevation (4000ft) during the late half of the season after deer have migrated. Deer in Josephine and Curry County will be found at all elevations throughout the season.

Big game hunting statistics indicate that all units within Jackson, Josephine, and Curry County had a slight increase in black-tailed deer hunter success last year. The Rogue unit had a success of 20% in 2016 which is up from 19% in 2015. Dixon is up from 27% to 31%, Evans Creek increased from 32% to 34%, Applegate is now at 31% compared to 27%, and the Chetco dropped to 37% from 39%. Most units show an increase in success compared to 2015, however over the past four years deer hunter harvest has remained roughly the same in all five units, indicating that this year should be the same.

ELK

Elk numbers in recent years are lower on most of the public lands and pre-season scouting is very important. As most private timberlands are closed until fire season restrictions are lifted, look for many hunters to be sharing our public lands. The best place to look is on lands with minimal roads and north facing slopes during periods of warm/dry weather.

Cascade General Elk season success rates have been roughly the same over recent years with the Evans Creek success slightly up and the Rogue Unit slightly down. Chetco coastal seasons hunter success was down, with first season at 25% and second season at 10%. Applegate coastal seasons were down in 2016, the first season was only a 1% success and the second season had a 6% success.

West Region Bear and Cougar

NORTH COAST DISTRICT (Saddle Mt., Wilson, western Trask, western Stott Mt., western Alsea, north Siuslaw wildlife management units)

The bear outlook looks fair to good for the north coast (Saddle Mt., Wilson, western Trask). Bear densities tend to increase from north to south and from east to west, with the highest densities in the southwestern portion of the Trask WMU. This year's berry crops appear to be fair to poor although blackberries appear to be strong, so bears will most likely be out in open areas such as clearcuts during the early part of the season. During the midday hours, predator calling can be very productive, and is best done with a calling partner to maximize calling effort and detection of bears as they approach the area.

In the mid-coast (Alsea, Siuslaw), especially the coastal slopes, bear numbers appear to be moderate and hunters usually spot bears. Fewer bears are observed or harvested in the Stott Mt unit than the Alsea and Siuslaw units to the south. Vegetation including berries can be abundant in the fall. Areas where berries and other fruits are available will be very attractive to bears. Bears are more abundant closer to the coast than the Willamette Valley side of the coastal mountains. Some areas within the Siuslaw unit are popular with hunters and may be fairly crowded at times. Most industrial forest lands are closed to access during the fire season.

Recommended units to hunt cougars are the Alsea and Siuslaw in particular, west of Dallas, west of Dawson, and south and west of Philomath. As with bears, predator calling is by far the most effective way to harvest a cougar other than spotting one while hunting deer or elk. Most cougars are harvested by hunters during the deer and elk hunting seasons so don't forget to carry a tag.

NORTH WILLAMETTE DISTRICT (Scappoose, east Trask, north Willamette, north Santiam WMUs).

Bear hunting in the eastern slopes of the Coast Range should be similar to previous years. The low densities of bears combined with the heavy vegetation in the Scappoose Unit and eastern portions of the Trask Unit will make animals difficult to locate. Overall harvest in these units is low and hunters participating in other big game hunts typically take most bears. Hunters targeting bears in these units should be looking for food sources such as blackberry patches and abandoned fruit orchards that will concentrate bears.

In the northern portion of the Santiam Unit, bear hunters will find higher densities of bears and average hunting opportunities this year. Food sources appear to have matured 2-4 weeks earlier this year and bears are concentrated on those available food sources, making it easier for hunters to key into their location and movement patterns.

Cougar densities remain low in the Scappoose and eastern portions of the Trask Unit and hunting success will be poor this year. Higher densities of cougar in the northern Santiam Unit should provide hunters with their best chance for success. Successful hunters in 2015 found using predator calls that mimic a prey species to be very effective. For safety, hunters should always have a partner along when predator calling. Tracking cougars through fresh snow near concentrations of deer and elk is another technique that has proven to be effective.

SOUTH WILLAMETTE DISTRICT (S. Santiam, McKenzie, N. Indigo wildlife management units)

Bears are abundant on both private and public lands. The key to bear hunting is to hunt their natural food sources. Bears key on berry crops during the fall hunting season including but not limited to raspberries, trailing blackberries, cascara, Armenian blackberries, huckleberries, madrone, and manzanita. Find a ripe food source and watch it both morning and evening; don't forget to consider the wind and try to avoid spooking the bear. Water sources, such as a small pond or swamp, can attract bears that want to take a swim to cool off. Overall bear prospects are good as they are abundant on both private and public lands.

Most hunters take cougars opportunistically if they have a tag. Cougars are abundant but secretive. They can be found anywhere that deer and elk are found. If you want a chance to bag a cougar, buy your tag in case you see one while you are hunting or scouting other game.

UMPQUA DISTRICT - COOS COUNTY (west Tioga, west Powers, north Sixes, southwest Siuslaw)

The highest bear densities appear to be near the Umpqua River close to the coast. Bear hunting opportunities will be best near blackberry patches and streams in the early part of the fall season. These patches can be found in creek bottoms, in clear cuts or along deactivated forest roads that are "brushing in." Conditions this spring and summer have been very good for berry production for all berry species. So, bears will be found in places with berry stands that are isolated from human activity. In August and early September, Himalayan black berries will ripen and become bears' primary food source. Blackberries appear to be coming on strong this year. Tree stand or ground blind hunting near Himalayan blackberries can be very productive when bears are feeding on this food source. Once blackberries are no longer available, bears will turn to huckleberries. This causes bears to be somewhat dispersed. Hunting bears with predator calls may be a good method to use at that time.

Cougars are difficult to locate in Coos County. The majority of cougars are taken incidentally during deer and elk seasons by hunters who have also purchased a cougar tag. Other hunters find success using predator calls in areas where the hunter finds fresh cougar sign or areas where deer and elk concentrate. Cougars will often approach calls slowly and they are easily distracted if calling is not consistent. Many cougar hunters find electric calls to be useful tools to hunt cougars. Fawn or calf distress calls may be the best choice for hunting.

UMPQUA DISTRICT - DOUGLAS COUNTY (Dixon, S. Indigo, NW Evans Creek, Melrose, SW Siuslaw, E. Tioga and NE Powers Units)

All indicators are that bear numbers remain high again this year. Bears are found throughout our units. Densities in southwest Oregon are high with Applegate producing highest harvest in the state during fall season. Those hunters picking up a SW Additional Bear Tag report higher success rates ranging from 7% to 67% over the past three years.

Berry crops in many areas are plentiful and seem to be ripening like normal. To find bears, look for all type of berry crops, such as blackberries, huckleberries, manzanita berries and acorns and for recent feeding activity by bears (fresh droppings). Depending on the weather, the bears may be at these food sources all day or towards the late afternoon when cooler weather prevails.

As the berries dwindle, hunters may take advantage of the food supply shortage by using fawn-in-distress calls to draw bears out from heavy cover. Set up in a spot that gives you a good view of the area and keeps your scent away from approaching bears. A fawn in distress call may also draw in other predators like cougar, bobcat, coyote and fox.

Cougar numbers continue to remain stable. Because of their elusiveness, cougars are best hunted during other big game season, although hunters have had success with predator calls. Cougars have large home ranges and use major ridge lines for their movements.

ROGUE DISTRICT (Applegate, Chetco, Evans Creek, Rogue, portions of Dixon, and Sixes)

Enough rains occurred this spring that berry crops are good. Locating these berry crops and looking for bear sign should be productive. Predator calling can also yield good results, focus on using a fawn distress call in early morning and late evening. Hunters can expect a good harvest year as bear numbers continue to be robust. During hot dry weather, bears will be found around cooler wet drainages, with the best times in early morning and late evenings. The Chetco and Applegate units have had the best success during the fall season, although bears are found throughout the three counties in very healthy numbers.

Cougars are found throughout the district and can be hunted all year long. They can pose a challenge to hunt, but hunters are finding the use of predator calls along major ridge lines as a way to increase their odds. Don't forget to purchase a tag since the vast majority of cougars taken today are by hunters pursuing other species.

West Region Big Game Hunting Locations

Resources to help you find a hunting location:

[Oregon Hunting Access Map](#)

[ODFW Wildlife Management Units](#)

[Oregon Travel Management Area Maps](#)

[Industrial Timberland Closures](#)

NORTH COAST DISTRICT (Saddle Mt., Wilson, western Trask, western Stott Mt., western Alsea, north Siuslaw wildlife management units)

Along the north coast (Saddle Mt, Wilson, Trask units), Saddle Mt. is 25% state forest lands, Wilson 70% state forest lands, and Trask 50% state and federal forestlands. Hunters have access to about 1 million acres of private forestland in the three units plus Scappoose through the A&H program's North Coast Access Area (map available, see page 104 of 2017 Oregon Big Game Regulations for description). Within the Wilson unit, note there is a travel management area in the greater God's Valley area on [Oregon Department of Forestry](#) lands. The [Jewell Meadows Wildlife Area](#) is open for some big game hunting; see page 108 of the Big Game Regulations for details. Take note of closures of certain areas including posted portions of the Beneke Tract during the Saddle Mt elk rifle and archery season and the entire Fishhawk tract, which is a refuge.

Gate closures in the southwestern portion of Tillamook State Forest will continue again this year; see their [website for more information](#).

Along the mid-coast, (western Stott Mt., western Alsea, north Siuslaw), the Siuslaw National Forest and [BLM](#) lands provide some quality deer and elk hunting opportunities. Try BLM lands in the eastern portion of the Siuslaw and state [Department of Forestry](#) lands in east Alsea unit for good deer hunting. Private industrial forestlands are usually very accessible to hunters outside of fire season thanks to the

A&H program including the [Stott Mt.-North Alsea TMA](#). Several travel management areas operate in the mid-coast; see the 2017 Oregon Big Game Regulations. Please respect motorized access restrictions, which help keep bull ratios healthy, protect important wintering habitat for elk and provide areas for walk-in hunting. A permanent road closure exists in western portion of Siuslaw National Forest south of Hwy 34, and in Polk County near the old Valsetz town site. There is also a large seasonal road closure on several private industrial forestlands in the north Alsea (north of Hwy 20) and Stott Mt units. Hunters using the Siuslaw National Forest should refer to their [Motor Vehicle Use Map available from the forest](#).

We advise hunters to be aware that Weyerhaeuser may implement a permit/lease program on these lands for the 2018/19 hunting seasons next year and to check with Weyerhaeuser for more information (www.Wyrecreationnw.com)

NORTH WILLAMETTE DISTRICT (Scappoose, eastern Trask, north Willamette, north Santiam wildlife management WMUs)

The [Mt Hood National Forest](#) and most BLM lands should be open to public access, even during dry fall weather. Be aware of any public use restrictions before you hunt. Hunters should always carry a shovel, fire extinguisher, and gallon of water when hunting in case you come across a smoldering campfire. There is limited road maintenance in Mt Hood NF so be careful when negotiating over-grown or water-damaged roads. If you plan to hunt deer or elk in the Mt. Hood NF, take plenty of time to scout beforehand because big game are scattered and difficult to locate in heavy vegetation and rugged terrain. Hunters heading to the coastal units of the North Willamette Watershed District should always check the access policies of industrial forestland owners before heading out into the field. Many of these timber companies have easily accessible hunter hotlines where you can gather the most up-to-date information available or see ODFW's [corporate closures webpage](#). Travel management agreements, funded by ODF's Access and Habitat Program, limit motorized access to protect wildlife and the environment and enable walk-in hunting. Hunters should look into the [Upper Tualatin-Trask Travel Management Area](#) and [North Coast Travel Management Area](#). Visit the [Access and Habitat program page](#) to learn about other opportunities. **The majority of** Weyerhaeuser lands in the Scappoose, eastern Trask and northern Santiam Units are limited to those hunters who leased property or acquired an access permit.

SOUTH WILLAMETTE DISTRICT (S. Santiam, McKenzie, N. Indigo wildlife management units)

The Abiqua Basin A&H project (mostly the N. Willamette Watershed District), [Thomas Creek A&H project](#), and the [Wendling Travel Management Area A&H project](#) allow for hunter access during the general rifle deer season. These areas are open during the week as well as on weekends. In general private timberlands are good areas to hunt if access is allowed and it will be restricted especially during archery season and even into rifle season if fire danger continues. Information regarding access to Cascade Timber Consulting lands can be obtained by calling (541) 367-2111 ext 669. On the national forest, hunters may want to try the B&B fire area that burned the Santiam Pass and Mt Jefferson Wilderness area in 2003. The burned area is recovering and producing abundant forage. In addition to the Wendling TMA, there are four additional Cooperative Travel Management Areas in the McKenzie unit. Three of these are permanent and one is September thru November. See page 104 of the Oregon Big Game Regulations. Weyerhaeuser expanded their fee permit and lease programs. Hunters that have hunted on Weyerhaeuser in the past are advised to check the Weyerhaeuser website to see if the expanded fee program affects the area they hunt.

UMPQUA DISTRICT (Tioga, Powers, north Sixes, southwest Siuslaw, Dixon, S. Indigo, NW Evans Creek, Melrose, and Powers units)

Good public hunting opportunities exist on [Forest Service](#) (Siskiyou, Siuslaw, Rogue River, Umpqua NFs) and [BLM](#) lands; some [state forest lands](#) such as the Elliott Stat Forest in Coos and Douglas counties can also be hunted. Timber company lands in the Tioga, Sixes, Rogue, Evans Creek, and Applegate may be open to public hunting opportunities when there is not high fire danger. But hunters need to contact these companies prior to hunting to obtain the latest information on open areas and any restrictions such as road or fire closures (check the [Corporate Closures page](#) first). There is public hunting opportunity on Coos County Forest in the north portion of the Sixes Unit and the Siskiyou National Forest in the south. The Jackson Travel Management Area ([JACTMA](#)), which includes private forestlands, provides quality non-motorized hunting for deer, elk, turkeys and mountain quail. This area restricts entry by motor vehicles from three days prior to General Cascade Elk season until April 30. The Upper Rogue Green Dot Travel Management program again will be in effect on the Prospect and Butte Falls Ranger Districts in the Rogue River National Forest; it restricts motorized vehicle access to designated roads during the General Cascade Elk season. The Forest Service combined and renamed the Prospect and Butte Falls Ranger Districts to the "High Cascades Ranger District." TMA maps are available at the Central Point ODFW office 541-826-8774 and online as linked above. See page 104 of the Oregon Big Game Regulations for more on locations and TMAs (travel management areas).

Hunters planning to hunt the Tioga Unit need to know the Weyerhaeuser Millicoma Tree Farm and other lands in Coos County are being managed under a permit system for public access. While public access is allowed on a portion of Weyerhaeuser ownership in the county, free of charge, most of the company's ownership may only be accessed after purchase of an access permit or through securing a lease for some properties. Information on Weyerhaeuser's new access permit system is available on the Weyerhaeuser website at www.wyrecreationnw.com Also much of the land previously owned by Menasha Campbell was sold to other companies in the past couple of years. Some of these companies also charge a fee to access their lands.

Additionally, The Coquille Valley Wildlife Area (CVWA) is closed to public access due to construction of infrastructure on CVWA and in its vicinity. ODFW anticipates opening CVWA October 1, 2017. If all goes as planned the entire ownership, including the Winter Lake Tract will be opened for public access at that time and available for bird hunting. Please contact the ODFW Charleston Field Office (541) 888-5515 to obtain the latest information on access to CVWA.