



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

Created in 1993 by the Oregon Legislative Assembly, the seven-member Access and Habitat (A&H) Board (Board) reviews project proposals that improve wildlife habitat and/or enhance public hunting access in Oregon.

The seven members of the Board are appointed by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) to a term of four years. In making its appointments, the Commission must consider recommendations from the Department Director. The Commission may reappoint a member of the Board to a second term. A member of the Board may serve only two terms consecutively. A list of current A&H Board members appoint dates and terms is presented in Attachment 2.

The A&H Board landowner representative vacancy was created when Amy Patrick was appointed as Board Chair at the March Commission meeting leaving her landowner representative position open. The Department staff and Board chair would like to fill the landowner representative position prior to the next scheduled A&H Board meeting in October.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The Department accepted applications for the vacancies from April 28 through June 30, 2022 in coordination with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) and the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF). The Department posted the opening on the website and conducted outreach through social media posts. A news release was also provided to the media and direct mailings were sent to landowner organizations. Individuals who had applied previously were called..

ISSUE

Appointment of a landowner representative to the Access and Habitat Board.

ANALYSIS

Applications for the landowner representative were submitted through ODA and ODF; a list of names was provided by the State Forester and Director of Agriculture. Applicants for landowner

representative were asked to provide information about their experience and background relative to the following criteria:

- Breadth of experience and knowledge of hunting
- Experience with fish and wildlife resource management issues
- Involvement in agriculture or forest industry organizations
- Leadership and experience on or with councils/boards/commissions and legislature
- Experience working with and/or representing the public
- Ability/interest in working collaboratively with others
- Participation in the A&H Program
- Ability to foster positive relations between landowners, hunters, and the Department

The Department received four applications by the deadline (Attachment 3). The applicants are listed below in alphabetical order.

Dan James Andrews

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Vale

Dan Andrews is a lifelong farmer in Malheur County with extensive experience hunting and trapping. He is a member of several farming and trapping organizations.

Ronald Borisch

Occupation: Timber Contract Administrator

Location: Lyons

Ronald Borisch has worked in the timber industry for 35 years, including providing access to timber company lands for hunting. He has served on numerous boards for timber organizations, including several forest protection associations, Oregon Forest Industry Council, and watershed councils. He has served in leadership positions for those organizations. Ron is a lifelong hunter, utilizing A&H properties, as well as an Oregon Hunters Association (OHA) member. Ron previously served as a Landowner Representative on the A&H Board, 2007 through 2013. Statute allows for two consecutive four year terms, but individuals can come back after taking some time away from the A&H Board.

Jeff McNerney

Occupation: Tree Fruit/Blueberry Grower & Crop Advisor

Location: Hood River

Jeff McNerney's farms produce pears, cherries, blueberries, and apples. He is a part-time consultant for Chamberlin Agriculture assisting others with recommendations on fertilizer and crop issues. Jeff is a passionate hunter and is a member of Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation,

OHA, Alaska Professional Hunters Association, and Boone and Crocket Club. He also volunteers with ODFW and OSP. Jeff served one term as a landowner representative on an A&H Regional Council. He served on the Mid-Columbia RMEF board and on the board of directors for Diamond Fruit Growers.

Roberta Valladao

Occupation: Rancher

Location: Terrebonne

Roberta Valladao has operated multiple ranches in two states, including ranches in Oregon near both Bly and Terrebonne. She served on numerous committees for both the California and Oregon Farm Bureau, including leadership positions. She is a current member of the Oregon Farm Bureau's wildlife committee. She was a member of the Cattlemen at the county, state, and national level, with leadership positions at the county and state level. Additionally, she served on committees for the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Services Agency.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

While each of the other applicants had strong backgrounds related to farming and timber businesses and have demonstrated appreciation for working lands that create and conserve wildlife habitats, the Director recommends appointing Jeff McNerney to the Access and Habitat Board as a landowner representative, to serve a four-year term. Mr. McNerney has participated as a landowner representative on a regional A&H council, is an advocate for balancing agriculture and rural communities, and is in a leadership role for a fruit growers association across Hood River and Wasco counties. Jeff is also actively involved with several hunting organizations, is an avid outdoor recreationist, and volunteers with activities through the Oregon State Police. The value of Jeff's enthusiasm for the outdoors and successful agricultural business experiences makes him an excellent candidate for the A&H Board.

DRAFT MOTION:

I move to appoint Jeff McNerney to serve a four-year term as Landowner Representative on the Access and Habitat Board.

Effective Date: September 16, 2022