

Fall 2010

# Oregon's Access & Habitat Board News



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

## A&H Program receives \$786,795 federal grant for new 'Oregon Open Fields' initiative

A \$786,795 grant from the federal Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP), which is part of the 2008 Farm Bill, will help fund the Access and Habitat Program's new 'Oregon Open Fields' initiative, created to provide more opportunities for public hunting access on private lands in Oregon. Over several years, the Open Fields initiative is expected to increase the amount of private lands open to public hunting and other recreational access by about 200,000 acres in addition to the nearly 4.5 million acres of private lands currently made available for public access by the A&H Program. In addition, these funds are expected to improve 3,000 acres of wildlife habitat, providing indirect benefits to 150,000 acres. A total of 100 to 125 new landowners will likely benefit from the Open Fields initiative.

Overall objectives are to provide new opportunities for a variety of game species including big and small game, upland game birds, waterfowl, and predators. Landowners will be encouraged to participate in the program through per-acre payments for public access to their properties, as well as assistance with posting boundary signs and informational kiosks, and providing law enforcement patrols. In addition, Open Fields funding will be used to improve wildlife habitat on access areas enrolled in A&H. Currently, there are more landowners interested in participating in the A&H Program than the program can accommodate. The Open Fields funding will help the A&H Program meet that additional demand.

The VPA-HIP funds will be focused towards three types of projects. These include the Columbia Basin Upland Initiative, which works with private landowners in Morrow, Gilliam, Umatilla, Sherman, and Wasco counties to improve upland game bird habitat and increase public hunting access; facilitating a public hunting access program to help landowners decrease goose depredation on agricultural lands in the Willamette Valley; and expanding the number of big game habitat improvement projects on current A&H Program project lands, with a particular emphasis on areas included in the Oregon Mule Deer Initiative or the Blue Mountains Elk Initiative.

A portion of the Open Fields funds may be used to hire seasonal employees to help administer the additional access programs.

VPA-HIP grant funds awarded to private landowners will go through the A&H Program's normal process, which includes an initial review by the appropriate A&H Regional Advisory Council, approval by the A&H Board, and final approval by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission.

The current VPA-HIP grant

provides one year of funding for the planned three-year Oregon Open Fields initiative. Funding for years two and three have been approved contingent on the availability of federal funds. Continued funding may be available in future years if VPA-HIP is re-authorized in the 2012 Farm Bill.



*More goose hunting opportunities funded by VPA-HIP will help address agricultural depredation issues in the Willamette Valley.*



*The Columbia Basin Upland Initiative will be among the major beneficiaries of the A&H Program's new Open Fields program.*



# 2011 A&H Auction Hunts Set

The Access and Habitat Board has selected nine sporting organizations to sponsor the 2011 A&H auction events. Nine elk and/or deer hunts will be auctioned at the various organizations' fundraising banquets and conventions between February and May 2011. Successful bidders can hunt statewide from September 1 to November 30, 2011 with the legal weapon of their choice. Ninety percent of the auction proceeds go to the A&H Program to fund hunter access and wildlife habitat projects, while 10% is retained by the hosting organization.

## 2011 A&H Auction Schedule

### Statewide Deer

February 4, 2011  
Mule Deer Foundation  
Salt Lake City, UT  
Contact: Ken Hand, (541) 281-2224

### Statewide Deer

February 5, 2011  
Santiam River Chapter  
Safari Club International  
Albany  
Contact: Glean Melow, (503) 851-6158

### Statewide Elk

February 19, 2011  
Mule Deer Foundation  
(Tag sponsored by Unlimited Pheasants)  
Klamath Falls  
Contact: Mike Romtvedt, (541) 891-3551

### Governor's Statewide Elk/Deer Combo

March 4, 2011  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
Reno, NV  
Contact: Kristy Bosworth, (406) 523-0242

### Statewide Elk

March 5, 2011  
Midwest Chapter  
Wild Sheep Foundation  
Minnetonka, MN  
Contact: Patti Murry, (507) 645-8811

### Statewide Deer

March 19, 2011  
Southwest Washington Chapter  
Safari Club International  
Vancouver, WA  
Contact: Jim McWhorter, (360) 607-1021

### Statewide Elk

April 9, 2011  
Tioga Chapter  
Oregon Hunters Association  
Coos Bay  
Contact: Marcy Fullerton, (541) 267-2577

### Statewide Elk

April 9, 2011  
Bend Chapter  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
Bend  
Contact: David Fuller, (541) 447-2804

### Statewide Deer

May 21, 2011  
State Chapter  
Oregon Hunters Association  
Lincoln City  
Contact: Duane Dungannon, (541) 772-7313

## Calendar of Events

**January 20, 2011**

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

**March 11, 2011\***

Oregon Fish and Wildlife  
Commission Meeting, Florence  
503-947-6044

**April 18-19, 2011**

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

\*Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission meetings where A&H business is being conducted.

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

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

### Northwest Region

Dave Nuzum, Tillamook 503-842-2741  
Jim Young, Corvallis 541-757-4186

### Southwest Region

Vince Oredson, 541-826-8774  
Central Point

### High Desert Region

Larry Pecenka, Bend 541-388-6444  
Meg Eden, Prineville 541-447-5111  
Scott Torland, Ontario 541-889-6975

### Northeast Region

Jon Paustian, La Grande 541-962-1838

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# A&H keeps 76,862 acres of private lands in eastern Oregon open to public hunting access

The Access and Habitat Program has opened or maintained continued public hunting access on 76,862 acres of private lands in eastern Oregon that provide hunting opportunities for a variety of game species including deer, elk, upland game birds, and predators. The public access period varies by property.

These properties include the **Forsea Ranch Access Area**, with year-round 'welcome to hunt' opportunities on 9,329 acres located within the Lookout Mountain Wildlife Management Unit through March 31, 2015. Hunting opportunities on the property include Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, mule deer, elk, bear, cougar, and upland game birds.

The **Widman Access Area** has 8,430 acres available for public hunting access from August 1 – December 1, 2010 to 2014. Located within the Lookout Mountain Wildlife Management Unit, hunting opportunities include pronghorn, mule deer, elk, predators, and upland birds.

Hunters can pursue deer, elk, pronghorn, wild turkey, upland birds, small game, and predators on the 6,336-acre **Lost Valley Ranch Regulated Hunt Area**. Located within the Fossil Wildlife Management Unit, it is open to public hunting access between August 1 and January 31 for the next five years.

The **Owsley Canyon Access Area** is open to public hunting access from April 1 to December 31, 2010 to 2014. This 435-acre property offers hunting opportunities for mule deer and white-tailed deer, elk, cougar, bear, turkey, and a variety of upland game bird species. It is located within the Mt. Emily Wildlife Management Unit.

Mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk, bear, cougar, turkey, pheasant, forest grouse, California quail, and waterfowl are found on the **Smutz Access Project** property within the Starkey Wildlife Management Unit. The 1,414-acre access area is open to public hunting from April 1 to December 31 for the next five years.

The **Refenacht Land and Cattle Company Access Area** provides hunting access to 4,727 acres from August 1, 2010 to July 31, 2015. Game species include mule deer, elk, pronghorn, wild turkey, upland birds, and predators. The property is located within the Sumpter Wildlife Management Unit.

The **Bloomer Access Area** is open to public hunting from August 1 to January 31, 2010 to 2013. This property offers opportunities for elk, mule deer, and upland game birds. The access area is 2,742 acres and is located in the Sumpter Wildlife Management Unit.

The **Imnaha River Canyon Access Area** provides hunting access to 6,673 acres from August 1, 2010 to July 31, 2012. Located within the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, mule deer, white-tailed deer, Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, turkey, upland game birds, waterfowl, and predators are found on the property.

Almost 5,700 acres of private land are available to public hunting on the **Troy Ranches Access Area** from August 1, 2010 to January 31, 2011. Hunting opportunities include deer, elk, pronghorn, upland birds, and predators. The property is located in the Sumpter and Lookout Mountain wildlife management units.

About 13,233 acres are open to public hunting access from August 1 to March 1 for the next five years on the **Jenkins Access Area**. Located within the Steens Mountain Wildlife Management Unit, it provides hunting opportunities for deer, elk, pronghorn, and sage grouse and improves access to 60,000 acres of BLM land.

Open between August 1 and March 1, from 2010 to 2013, the 7,343-acre **Palomino Access Area** offers public hunting opportunities for mule deer, elk, pronghorn, sage grouse, and coyotes. It is located within the Juniper Wildlife Management Unit.

The 400-acre **Bentz Access Area** also provides access to more than 10,000 acres of adjacent public land. Offering the primary public access to Hunter Creek and the Malheur River, the property is open from August 1 to March 31, 2010 to 2012. Hunting opportunities include big game and upland game birds.

Hunting for mule deer, pronghorn, and upland game birds is available on the 10,100-acre **McBride Access Area**, which is open from August 1, 2010 to July 31, 2014. It is located in the Malheur River basin.

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## 3 new A&H projects recently approved

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission recently approved three new A&H projects for a total of \$64,572 in funding. The grants include \$10,612 to the **Star I Trust Continuation Project** to develop three spring sites to provide year-round water sources for wildlife, which will also help keep deer and elk from concentrating on lower elevation agricultural lands. Planting native grasses and forbs, and providing hunting opportunities for disabled hunters is also planned.

The **Bennett Upland Enhancement Project** received \$3,960 to remove juniper on 80 acres of mule deer winter range to improve forage and benefit the shrub understory. The landowner, who has also participated in a previous A&H project, will provide by-permission public hunting access on 370 acres for five years.

The **Sullivan Z Ranch Habitat Improvement** project is a cooperative large-scale effort to remove juniper on more than 20,000 acres of private, US Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management lands to benefit elk and deer winter range and upland game bird habitat. This project received \$50,000 from the A&H Program.

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



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

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