

# Oregon's Access & Habitat Board News

Summer 2011



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

## A&H-Blue Mountains Elk Initiative partnership benefits Rocky Mountain elk herds

Rocky Mountain elk are magnificent animals and among the most admired and sought after by hunters. To help keep herds healthy, the Access and Habitat Program has partnered with the Blue Mountains Elk Initiative since 2006 by funding various projects designed to improve elk habitat and increase elk populations in northeastern Oregon.

The Blue Mountains Elk Initiative (BMEI) was formed in 1990 to help deal with a variety of elk management issues including population levels, habitat needs, and the various management strategies employed by federal, state, and local entities. The original partners included the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, US Forest Service, and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Starting with 11 projects and \$100,000 in funding, BMEI improved habitat on 3,000 acres in Oregon and Washington's Blue Mountains region.

Today, BMEI has more than 60 partners including federal, state, local, tribal, and private agencies and organizations and has completed hundreds of elk habitat projects. In Oregon, BMEI focuses on elk habitat and management in Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Baker, Grant, Morrow, Crook, Harney, and Malheur counties.

There are about 19 million acres in the

Blue Mountains. The majority of elk summer range and about one-third of the winter range in the region is located on national forest lands, including the Malheur, Ochoco, Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman national forests. In addition, the



*Rocky Mountain elk populations in the Blue Mountains are among the largest in North America. Access and Habitat grants help fund elk habitat improvement projects in the region. Photo by Jim Yuskavitch*

Umatilla Tribes manage lands on which thousands of elk spend the winter.

However, more than 60 percent of Blue Mountains elk winter range is on private lands, making it vital that these landowners are actively involved in improving and maintaining elk habitat.

Because most funding for BMEI comes from federal sources, it generally cannot be used for projects on private lands.

This is where the A&H Program has been able to provide critical help because part of its mission is to provide funds for

wildlife habitat on private lands.

In 2006, the A&H Program awarded BMEI an \$80,000 grant dedicated to funding elk habitat improvement projects specifically on private lands in the Blue Mountains. Since then, the A&H Program has committed \$100,000 per year to BMEI through 2012.

The original grant specified that A&H funds be used only on private lands; more recent grants permit up to 30 percent to be used on federal lands along the private-public lands interface: this allows more flexibility, especially for weed control projects.

The most recent grant was dedicated to a number of important elk habitat projects including Rush Skeleton weed control in Hells Canyon, habitat improvement on Dow and Kastor ranches in Crook County, juniper control in the Murderers Creek basin in Grant County, noxious weed control in Grant, Wallowa, and Union counties, forage enhance-

ment in Owsley Canyon in Union County, and prescribed fires on several sites in Baker County.

### Oregon Open Fields

The new Oregon Open Fields program offers Willamette Valley and Columbia Basin landowners income in exchange for public hunting access. For additional information visit:

[www.OregonOpenFields.com](http://www.OregonOpenFields.com)



## 2012 A&H big game auction tag sponsors selected at July board meeting

Nine sportsman/conservation groups were selected by the A&H Board to auction 10 A&H elk and deer tags at their 2012 banquets and conventions. The sponsoring organizations will keep 10 percent of the revenues, while the remainder will go to the A&H Program to fund wildlife habitat and hunter access projects.

Successful bidders of the special tags enjoy an extended season and expanded hunt area. A list of 2012 A&H auction big game tag sponsoring organizations follows.

### 2012 A&H Auction Tag Sponsors

#### Governor's Statewide Deer & Elk Combination

February 3, 2012  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, National  
Las Vegas, NV  
Contact: Kristy Bosworth (406) 523-0242

#### Statewide Elk

March 10, 2012  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Lincoln  
County Chapter  
Newport, OR  
Contact: Tony Pettis (541) 961-8038

#### Statewide Deer

February 10, 2012  
Mule Deer Foundation, National  
Salt Lake City, UT  
Contact: Ken Hand (541) 281-2224

#### Statewide Elk

April 21, 2012  
Foundation for North American Wild Sheep,  
Oregon Chapter  
Hillsboro, OR  
Contact: Mike Boethin (541) 480-6203

#### Statewide Elk

February 11, 2012  
Safari Club International, Santiam River Chapter  
Albany, OR  
Contact: Glean Melow (503) 851-6158

#### Statewide Elk

May 5, 2012  
Safari Club International, SW Washington  
Chapter  
Vancouver, WA  
Contact: Jim McWhorter (360) 607-1021

#### Statewide Deer

February 18, 2012  
Oregon Hunters Association, Columbia Basin  
Chapter  
Pendleton, OR  
Duane Dungannon (541) 772-7313

#### Statewide Deer

May 19, 2012  
Oregon Hunters Association, State Chapter  
Redmond, OR  
Contact: Duane Dungannon (541) 772-7313

#### Statewide Deer

February 25, 2012  
Oregon Bow Hunters, State Convention  
Lincoln City, OR  
Contact: Karen Demaris (541) 536-2252

For more details on A&H Program and other big game auction hunts visit:

[www.OregonAuctionHunts.com](http://www.OregonAuctionHunts.com)

#### Oregon's Access and Habitat Board News is now Available Online!

To subscribe to our electronic mailing list, please visit:

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

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## Calendar of Events

### December 2

Fish and Wildlife Commission  
Meeting, Portland Airport Area  
503-947-6044

### January 18-19

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

### April 23-24

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

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

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

### Northwest Region

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

### Southwest Region

Vince Oredson, 541-826-8774  
Central Point

### High Desert Region

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

### Northeast Region

Jon Paustian, La Grande 541-962-1838

## A&H on the Web

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



# Public hunting opportunities abound on private lands Access and Habitat Program projects

Oregon hunters looking for places to hunt this fall will find high-quality opportunities on millions of acres of private lands thanks to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Access and Habitat Program, which works with landowners throughout the state to provide public hunting access to private properties.

Currently there are nearly 60 A&H public hunting access projects in Oregon totalling more than 4.5 million acres, including industrial timberland, grasslands, sagebrush and canyon country, and wetlands. These diverse habitats provide hunting opportunities for virtually every game species in the state.

This includes more than 3.5 million acres on the west side of the Cascade Mountains and over 1 million acres in eastern Oregon.

Most of the participating properties are available on a Welcome-to-Hunt basis, while about 20, totalling about 83,000 acres, require permission by the landowner.

There are three basic types of A&H access projects. *Law Enforcement Patrol Projects* involve providing funds to pay for Oregon State Police, Sheriff's deputies, or ODFW staff to patrol private lands during hunting seasons. The presence of patrols helps reduce instances of vandalism, garbage dumping, and other violations. Enforcement is focused on private industrial timberlands that are open to public hunting.

Some examples of these types of projects include the 1.5-million-acre North Coast Travel Management Area, which received a \$631,069 A&H grant to fund law enforcement patrols until 2014. Two similar projects are the Willamette Private Lands Law Enforcement project, which received \$817,769 to provide public hunting access until 2014 on 1.25 million acres and a \$90,346 grant for the Jackson Cooperative Travel Management area to provide patrols on 22,000 acres until 2014. Most law enforcement projects are located in western Oregon.

The other two access project types are *Welcome to Hunt Areas* and *By-Permission Areas*. These are properties where the A&H Program has formed a cooperative agreement with the landowners to allow public hunting access during specified periods. For the Welcome to Hunt Areas, ODFW often posts signs and produces maps to help hunters find the properties. Law Enforcement Patrol Projects are Welcome to Hunt properties.

Welcome to Hunt Areas in eastern Oregon include the 12,105-acre Pine Creek Ranch, 39,624-acre Heppner Regulated Hunt Area, 1,797-acre Troy Ranches and 3,835-acre M.R. King Ranches.

ODFW does not usually produce maps for By-Permission Areas, which require hunters to obtain permission from the landowner or ODFW before hunting on the property. However, local ODFW wildlife biologists will help hunters identify nearby By-Permission properties and provide landowner contact information.



*The 435-acre Owsley Canyon Access Area near La Grande is open to public hunting on a Welcome to Hunt basis and offers opportunities to pursue mule and white-tailed deer, elk, cougar, bear, wild turkey, and a variety of game bird species. Photo by Jim Yuskavitch*

## Resources for Hunters

For more information on A&H Access Properties:

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

Oregon Hunting Map:

[www.OregonHuntingMap.com](http://www.OregonHuntingMap.com)

Other Oregon Hunting Information:

[www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting)

For a list of all A&H properties and contact information contact Matt Keenan at (503) 947-6087

## Steve McClelland re-appointed as A&H Board chair

Steve McClelland has been re-appointed as Chair and Public-at-Large Representative on the Access and Habitat Board through March 2015.

McClelland is a resident of Cove and is Rangeland Resources Manager for Forest Capitol Partners.

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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 Matthew Keenan, A&H Program Coordinator  
 Jim Yuskavitch, Design and Editing

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