

ODFW and the Coquille Indian Tribe

Frequently Asked Questions: Agreement on 2022-23 Hunting and Trapping Seasons

August 26, 2022

BACKGROUND

ODFW and the Coquille Indian Tribe recently adopted a cooperative partnership to collaborate, share resources and develop and carry out plans to protect, restore, and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitat within a five-county area of southwest Oregon. This area covers Coos, Curry, Jackson, Douglas, and Lane counties – the Tribe’s “service area” as defined by the federal government.

In June 2022, following the opportunity for public comment, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) [adopted a Memorandum of Agreement](#) (MOA) that made the partnership possible. The MOA outlines that tribal hunting, fishing, and shell fishing regulations would be discussed in further detail by the Tribe and ODFW staff then adopted by the Coquille Tribal Council. As outlined in the MOA, with concurrence by ODFW Director, the Coquille Indian Tribe is now authorized to issue licenses and permits for the 2022-23 hunting and trapping seasons.

By law, state agencies are directed to promote government-to-government policies with tribal governments that include the consideration of tribal interests in the development and application of state programs.

The federally recognized tribes in Oregon have the same government status with ODFW as with any federal agency and provide a unique opportunity for partnership different than public stakeholders.

What does the cooperative partnership do?

- It advances the government-to-government relationship between the state and the Tribe. It enhances tribal sovereignty and the Tribe's ability to contribute to positive, sustainable outcomes for fish and wildlife. A cooperative project example is the partnership between the Tribe and ODFW to rebuild Coquille River fall chinook runs.
- It gives the Tribe a stronger voice in protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife, and their habitats for future generations of Oregonians which is also ODFW’s mission.
- It allows the tribal government the ability to issue licenses and permits to tribal members to harvest fish and wildlife for cultural ceremonies and subsistence harvest. Harvest is regulated, licensed, and enforced by the tribal government in partnership with ODFW and OSP. The Tribe is committed to enforcing state laws to ensure public safety related to hunting.
 - By increasing access to first foods managed by ODFW, the state of Oregon is addressing historic losses of opportunity for the Coquille Indian Tribe and impacts to their cultural well-being.
 - Coquille tribal members who already participate in hunting, fishing, or trapping are likely to shift to tribal licenses and tags instead of state licenses and tags.

- The Tribe's data shows an average of 200-250 members engage in fishing and/or hunting activities each year through previous purchases of ODFW license products.
- Within the Tribe's service area, ODFW sells approximately 100,000 hunting, angling, and shellfish licenses. Tribal members participating in harvest will be a very small fraction of the hunting and fishing occurring in Southwest Oregon.

The Coquille Tribal Council adopted hunting and trapping regulations to create opportunities for tribal members to harvest wildlife beginning August 13, 2022. The Tribe and ODFW worked to develop these subsistence harvest opportunities and associated harvest reporting.

FAQs on Coquille Indian Tribal 2022-23 Hunting and Trapping Seasons:

Where can Coquille Tribal members hunt?

Licensed tribal members may hunt on state and federally owned lands where hunting is permitted in Coos, Curry, Jackson, Douglas, and Lane counties. With landowner permission, tribal hunting can also occur on private lands in these counties.

What is subsistence harvest, and can tribal members hunt for both recreational and subsistence harvest?

Subsistence harvest is harvest consistent with tribal cultural practices for acquiring traditional foods and other resources for personal, familial or community sharing. Subsistence harvest provides the opportunity for traditional foods to be central to the diet of tribal members.

Subsistence harvest must be reported per agreement between ODFW and the Tribe. As with recreational hunting, harvest reporting helps ODFW monitor and adaptively manage big game and game birds. Yes, licensed tribal members could also continue to purchase license products for other recreational purposes.

What are the game species regulations for subsistence hunting?

- **Roosevelt elk:** one elk/year during these open seasons:
 - **Aug. 13 – 26:** cows and spike bulls, any legal weapon.
 - **Aug. 27 – Sept. 25:** any elk, archery only.
 - **Sept. 26 – Nov. 30:** any elk, any legal weapon.
 - **Dec. 1 – 31:** bull only, any legal weapon.
- **Black-tailed deer general season:** three deer/year, no more than one antlerless during the appropriate open season:
 - **Aug. 13 – 26:** bucks, (visible antler), any legal weapon.
 - **Aug. 27 – Sept. 25:** bucks, (visible antler), archery only.
 - **Sept. 26 – Nov. 30:** bucks (visible antler) and antlerless, any legal weapon.
 - **Dec. 1 – 31:** bucks only (visible antler), any legal weapon.

- **Black bear general season:** year-round, unlimited bag limit, any legal weapon. No harvest of cubs less than one year old or sows with cubs less than one year old.
- **Cougar general season:** year-round, unlimited bag limit, any legal weapon. No harvest of spotted kittens or females with spotted kittens.
- **Furbearer hunting and trapping:** the Tribe will follow ODFW regulations for July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2024, until superseded by future tribal regulations.
- **Turkey:** eight birds any sex, shotgun and archery equipment.
 - **Aug. 13, 2022 – June 30, 2023:** hunters are encouraged to voluntarily avoid taking hens with immature poults.
- **Forest grouse/quail:** no limit, shotgun and archery equipment.
 - **Aug. 13, 2022 – June 30, 2023.**
- **Eurasian collared dove and rock pigeon:** year-round, no limit, shotgun and archery equipment.
- **Other game birds not listed above:** the Tribe will follow ODFW regulations for 2022-23 and future years unless and until superseded by tribal regulations. ODFW stamps/validations are not required, however a federal stamp is required when hunting species requiring a federal stamp.

How do subsistence hunting seasons line up with ODFW set seasons?

Licensed tribal hunters began subsistence harvest on Aug. 13, two weeks before the opening of archery deer and elk season. Many other hunts occur yearly before archery hunting including youth elk hunts, bear and cougar any legal weapon hunts, and premium tag holders in every Wildlife Management Unit across the Service Area.

Tribal hunters will be able to harvest deer and elk with any legal weapon before the archery season begins but will be restricted to archery equipment through the standard ODFW general archery season.

Why are tribal members allowed to harvest three deer?

Licensed tribal members can take three deer (not more than one can be antlerless) for subsistence. This gives tribal members a culturally important wild game food source high in protein to feed their families. Wild game has historically been an important part of the tribal diet.

Will the Tribe be required to submit all bear and cougar biological samples and harvest information as required?

Tribal subsistence harvest of bear and cougar requires hunters to submit harvest information and the skull for premolar extraction to the Tribe's Natural Resource Department within 21 days of harvest.

Will tribal subsistence cougar harvest be counted towards the harvest quota for each cougar management zone? Will tribal harvest be curtailed when the quota for that zone has been reached?

Yes. Tribal subsistence harvest counts toward the harvest quota for each cougar management zone. When the quota is met, both tribal and recreational harvest end as directed by the Commission, and cougars may only be taken to address damage or safety concerns.

Will there be a cap on the number of Coquille tribal hunters?

No, any enrolled tribal member, regardless of residency location is eligible to participate in subsistence and ceremonial harvest. Privileges begin when an enrolled member is nine years old.

What about ceremonial harvest?

Traditional foods, such as deer, elk, and bear are integral to ceremonies and cultural practices and traditions of the Tribe. The Tribal Council may issue separate ceremonial harvest tags to select tribal members to harvest on behalf of the Tribe for these events.

The number of these tags is dependent on community need and the Tribe does not anticipate issuing more than a few each year. These can be issued year-round and ODFW/OSP will be notified at least two days in advance of a ceremonial hunt.