

by ODFW

OPEN: Cougar, coyote, selected furbearers (see regulations)

Remember there is a youth (age 17 and under) TURKEY hunt April 11-12; see the Game Bird Regulations for more details. General spring turkey season opens April 15. See this PDF online brochure for more information about turkey hunting in Oregon.

PRINEVILLE/OCHOCO WILDLIFE DISTRICT

Accumulated snow has been receding, but is present at mid and high elevations across the Ochoco National Forest. Outdoor enthusiasts should be prepared for rapidly changing weather and be equipped for difficult driving. Dress and be equipped to for walking and/or driving through everything from dry surfaces, to mud and snow. Deer, elk and pronghorn are beginning the move to higher elevation southern slopes as the spring thaw progresses. .

COUGARS are tied to deer, elk, and pronghorn and will be following dispersing animals as they move to higher elevations. Areas to consider include BLM lands on the south side of Maury Mountains and S. Fork Crooked River in the Maury; N. Fork Crooked River and S. Fork John Day River in the Ochoco; and upper Mill, Trout, and McKay Creeks in the Grizzly unit. Remember cougars must be checked in at an ODFW office within 10 days after harvest; please bring them in thawed and with mouths propped open for easier tissue sampling, teeth collection and tagging.

TURKEY hunters scouting hunting areas are reminded to consult with local BLM and Ochoco National Forest offices regarding access as motorized access may be restricted to avoid soil damage and to protect wildlife habitat.

COYOTE are plentiful throughout the district, but the Maury and Ochoco units offer better opportunities on public land. Hunters should scout at lower elevations for concentrations of deer or pronghorn as coyotes will likely be present as well.

GROUND SQUIRRELS are active in hay fields and pastures. The best hunting will be on private lands, particularly along the Crooked River between Prineville and Paulina. Having permission from landowners is a must before hunting.

THE DALLES WILDLIFE DISTRICT

The LOWER DESCHUTES WILDLIFE AREA is still accepting comments on its draft management plan which will guide management for the next 10 years. More information.

For hunters wishing to pursue COUGAR, the best opportunity will be in areas where deer and elk are congregating. One of the better areas is generally around White River Wildlife area, where both deer and elk are present in fair numbers. As spring conditions continue to show themselves, deer and elk are spending more time on open hillsides taking advantage of green-up. Cougar will be in close proximity. Successful cougar hunters, remember check-in is mandatory; please bring them in thawed and with mouths propped open for easier tissue sampling, teeth collection and tagging.

Those wishing to pursue COYOTE will find the best success near agricultural lands. Be sure to ask permission to hunt private lands. Limited opportunities may also be found at White River Wildlife area.

California Ground SQUIRRELS, or gray diggers, start to come out of hibernation this time of year as temperatures start to increase. The best time of the day to find active squirrels is in the afternoon, when temperatures are the warmest. Make sure to ask permission to hunt on private lands.

Now is a good time to begin scouting TURKEYS as they will move out of wintering areas with increasing temperatures. Finding areas the birds are using now may improve hunter success when April rolls around. Remember there is a youth (age 17 and under) hunt April 11-12; see the Game Bird Regulations for more details.

WHITE RIVER WILDLIFE AREA

COYOTE and COUGAR hunters can find success in open areas along the eastern perimeter of the wildlife area. Please take caution to reduce disturbances to wintering wildlife in the area. Remember cougars must be checked in at an ODFW office within 10 days after harvest; please bring them in thawed and with mouths propped open for easier tissue sampling, teeth collection and tagging.

The wildlife area is a vehicle regulated use area. Open roads have a green dot on them. Hunters bringing their ATVs are reminded that all vehicles are to stay on roads; cross country travel is prohibited. The roads for through vehicle travel have been closed for the winter and most of the roads will reopen April 1, 2009.