

Oregon Fish & Wildlife approves 145,000 big game hunting tags

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission this week approved just over 145,000 hunting tags for controlled fall big game hunts.

The number of controlled or limited-entry tags is virtually the same as 2006 tag numbers, reflecting the following:

- 5 percent decrease in antlerless tags due to continuing Deer Hair Loss Syndrome disease concerns in black-tailed deer in western Oregon
- 1 percent decrease in bull and either-sex elk tags
- 50 percent increase in western Oregon deer youth hunts
- 2 percent decrease in antlerless elk tags
- 12 percent increase in bighorn sheep tags
- 2 percent increase in pronghorn tags

To set the numbers, the Commission adopted ODFW staff recommendations which were crafted by using the latest population data available, results of hunter harvest surveys from last year, input from 24 public meetings held throughout Oregon in May and public correspondence.

The controlled hunt drawing process will now begin to award tags to hunters who applied by the May 15 application deadline. Results will be available by June 20. Hunters who were unsuccessful in the controlled hunt drawing may choose to hunt in a general season for elk and / or western Oregon deer. There is no limit on the number of general season tags sold. Cougar and fall bear hunting seasons also are managed as general seasons.

The following summarizes the Commission's actions. More detailed information on what the Commission adopted is available at the link below.

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/07/june/index.asp>

Deer:

80,463 deer tags, virtually the same number as last season.

Elk:

53,851 total elk tags, a 1 percent decrease form last season.

Pronghorn (Antelope):

3,094 pronghorn tags, a 2 percent increase from last season.

Bighorn Sheep:

92 bighorn sheep tags, a 12 percent increase from last season.

Rocky Mountain goat:

7 tags, a 17 percent increase from last season.

Spring bear

7,375 tags, a 1 percent increase from last season and 1 percent decrease in youth tags.

Change for western Oregon youth buck hunts

The Commission changed administrative rules so that adults with valid tags for the western Oregon firearms buck season can hunt with youth during eight specific hunts that have the same general seasons as the adult hunts: Chetco, Saddle Mountain, Scappoose, Wilson, Trask, Stott Mt., Alsea, & N. Siuslaw.

The Commission also approved several "concepts" for future big game hunting in the state. These ideas will be considered for adoption at the Oct. 12 Commission meeting in Salem.

Commercial Dungeness crab fishery

The Commission also adopted a rule to prohibit Oregon commercial ocean Dungeness crab permit holders from fishing off California and authorized the ODFW director to issue replacement crab buoy tags in extraordinary circumstances.

R&E, A&H projects

The Commission also approved \$1.5 million in funding for 29 Fish Restoration and Enhancement (R&E) Program projects and \$1.6 million in funding for 15 Access and Habitat (A&H) projects. The R&E projects meet a variety of goals like providing fishing access, education, fish passage, habitat restoration, hatchery maintenance, research and monitoring, and fish propagation. The A&H projects provide public access or improve wildlife habitat on private lands in Oregon.

2008 big game raffles and auctions

Big game tags are auctioned and raffled off annually to raise money for wildlife management and the A&H program. The Commission adopted allocations that are unchanged from 2006, meaning a total of 25 tags will be auctioned or raffled next year.

The Commission is the policy making body for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. The seven-member panel meets monthly.

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