



OREGON HUNTERS ASSOCIATION

Protecting Oregon's Wildlife, Habitat and Hunting Heritage

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Chair Witt and Members of the House Committee on Natural Resources:

For the record, I am Ken McCall, Resource Director for the Oregon Hunters Association. The Oregon Hunters Association (OHA) opposes House Bill 3227, as it does not consider elk biological factors, environmental conditions, most hunters interests, or the effectiveness of collaborative efforts. It places elk management in the hands of landowners rather than with trained professionals within ODFW. Elk distribution issues are complex, and a one-sided approach is not the answer. Some points to consider from each perspective:

- The past winter has been a prolonged one in much of Eastern Oregon. In year's like this the elk – agriculture conflict is especially severe as elk get trapped in places where they are not wanted (private land), or where there is no natural winter range nearby. Once in these places, the options to move elk are limited to hazing them elsewhere, feeding them, or killing them. ***Each of these is a burden to the private landowner.***
- Chasing or hazing elk elsewhere means they need a suitable place to go, such as lower elevation public land, and these places must have security and food to hold them or keep them from starving. ***Improved winter range is the responsibility of the federal public land managers.***
- Maintaining a healthy population of elk is the interest of hunters in our state, and the responsibility of ODFW. Elk hunters are an important seasonal boost to several rural counties in Oregon. ***Elk hunting is a time-honored recreational activity in our state, enjoyed by tens of thousands of hunters.***
- Balancing the social/biological aspects of elk populations involves establishing effective management objectives per wildlife management unit. ***With all factors considered, this needs to be in the hands of the state management agency – ODFW.***

Given the above variables, it is obvious that a one-size-fits-all approach does not work for Oregonians. OHA supports a collaborative approach, we have effective examples in Wallowa and Umatilla Counties that take multi-faceted collaborative approach – let's stick with that example!

That concludes my testimony I will be glad to answer any questions.