

To whom it may concern

My name is Pete DeHaan, I farm in Yamhill and Washington counties with my wife Jennifer and my son Pete DeHaan III. Currently transitioning from dairy, to seed crops, along with alfalfa and grass hay to feed our small herd of beef cows and operate a small farmstore in McMinnville Oregon where we market our beef, and other local products.

The farm in Washington County near the small town of Gaston has always had a herd of elk that have come to our property, this herd is also known as the Mill Herd, this herd is mostly protected majority of the year while on Stimson Lumber property near their mill near Henry Hagg Lake. I have operated this farm since late 2004, at that time it was used for dairy, along with corn for silage, and grass or triticale as winter cover crops, that were spring harvested to feed the cows before corn was planted. When we originally started operations at this location we might see this herd of roughly 40 head come through our property a few times a year. Then after a few years this herd began to grow, and as it did and as the forage at their protected site at Stimson Lumber could no longer sustain the growth of the herd they began to come over the hill from their protected site to my property. At first it was just the edges of the corn fields that would be damaged by them coming in late summer and eating the cobs of the corn plants, then that was followed by them coming in to my field in the early spring as my winter crops began to grow. As this problem began to escalate over the following years as the herd went from 40 to over 100 head what was a small nuisance was becoming a problem that was starting to cost my farming operation significant value. At that time I had reached out to ODFW to help me with the growing herd and growing losses that were due to this herd that were coming to my property evermore frequently. At that time all we could do is get LOP tags to harvest an occasional elk. Over time this herd continued to grow, and no other viable resources were offered by ODFW Biologist to manage this herd.

Now fast forward to 2015, the elk had not only destroyed roughly 20% of my corn crop, they also destroyed 50% of my winter crop. These losses were approaching nearly \$50,000 per year. As time went on more calls to ODFW biologists and with help from area hunters we were able to get more LOP tags, but it wasn't enough to keep up with a herd of elk that was nearing 200 head. My frustration had reached a boiling point in the summer of 2018, and started to go beyond the ODFW biologists and reached out to Kurt Melcher, director of ODFW. To my surprise when Director Melcher, and Doug Cottom came to visit my farm in early August of 2018, they were surprised to find out how many elk were in this herd, and offered to find other tools to deal with the problem that was now costing me a significant amount of money in losses that I had no way of recovering. Unfortunately those tools did little to help stop a growing herd that is now been counted to be nearly 300 head.

The issues of elk depredation are far reaching and unfortunately there are no easy or quick solutions. However, it is my belief that as individual land owners we can manage the problem much more effectively than those at ODFW, whom suffer no losses due to poor management. Private property owners are being decimated by expanding elk herds. I urge the Committee to pass SB 301, SB 303 and SB 398 to make as many tools available as possible. The existing tools available to ODFW are insufficient to address this expanding crisis.

Sincerely

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