



OREGON HUNTERS ASSOCIATION

Protecting Oregon's Wildlife, Habitat and Hunting Heritage

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Senate Committee on Natural Resources
RE: SB 199

Chair Golden, Vice-chair Girod, Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Hunters Association (OHA) is Oregon's largest state-centric hunter conservation organization, representing 10,000 sportsmen and women throughout 26 chapters in the state. Our mission statement is 'to protect Oregon's wildlife, habitat, and hunting heritage' and we have a strong history of advocating for science-based wildlife management.

OHA is opposed to SB 199.

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) is vested the authority for regulation of predatory animals as defined in ORS 610.002. The predatory animal designation is tied to the destruction of agricultural crops, products, and activities and therefore the regulating entity is correctly identified as ODA.

SB 199's request to transfer authority from ODA to Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW) raises the question of what, if any, definitive issues or concerns warrant a change, not only in agency authority, but also the shift of workload from one agency to another?

ODFW currently has multiple large-scale wildlife and conversation management projects in process, such as the mule deer management plan revision and increased sampling and testing for Chronic Wasting Disease. In addition to these much needed and timely projects, there are several other potentially long-term undertakings on the horizon such as the wolf management plan revision. The workload associated with the vast amount of rule-making required with SB 199 would obligate the department to set aside or postpone these important projects. In addition to the rule-making process, the increase in staff time needed to interface with landowners and producers to deal with issues associated with the destruction of agricultural crops and products would, by necessity, reduce the amount of time available to focus on wildlife management and conservation efforts.

Currently, ODFW staff is operating at capacity in each of its divisions to fulfill their mandated requirements relating to wildlife and fisheries management and conservation. OHA is gravely concerned that adding ODA's workload related to agricultural crop and product damage would slow or halt the important work ODFW staff is currently undertaking.

We urge the committee to allow ODFW to remain focused on the numerous wildlife management and conservation efforts under the agency's purview and continue ODA's authority over the destruction of agricultural crops and products by predatory animals by not moving SB 199 forward.

Thank you,
Amy Patrick
OHA Policy Director