



Oregon

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To: The Honorable Brad Witt, Chair
House Committee on Natural Resources



House Bill 2068
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Dr. Doug Cottam, Wildlife Division Administrator
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

The Department appreciates the opportunity to discuss House Bill 2068 with you today. House Bill 2068 would amend ORS 497.112 to increase the percentage of controlled black bear, cougar, and pronghorn antelope tags that the commission may issue to nonresidents from 3% to 5%.

During hunting regulation simplification efforts, Department of Fish and Wildlife staff identified the inconsistency in non-resident controlled hunt tag caps among game species. By raising the cap on nonresident tags from 3% to 5% for pronghorn antelope, cougar and bear controlled hunts; the caps will be consistent across all controlled hunt species excluding once-in-a-lifetime hunts. This consistency will improve and streamline the controlled hunt draw process and simplify the hunting regulation synopsis language to a degree.

Nonresident tags for these species are not set aside or “guaranteed” for nonresidents. Nonresidents and residents participate in the same structured draw process, but if the nonresident limitation is reached in an individual controlled hunt, no additional nonresident tags will be awarded for that hunt. Any increase of nonresident spring bear or pronghorn antelope tags awarded in the random draw could have a corresponding reduction of tags awarded to residents for some controlled hunts.

Although the current nonresident limitation of spring bear and pronghorn antelope tags is 3%, overall, in 2018 only 2% of spring bear tags and 2% of pronghorn antelope tags were drawn by nonresidents. Typically not all non-resident tags are drawn for spring bear and pronghorn antelope. Based on previous years, we estimate that increasing the non-resident tag limitation from 3% to 5% would increase the number of non-resident spring black bear tags by less than 188 and pronghorn antelope tags by less than 42. In 2018, we issued 9,221 spring bear tags and 2,330 antelope tags. Currently there are no controlled hunts for cougar, so there will be no impact to tag allocation to residents or non-residents.

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1