



OREGON HUNTERS ASSOCIATION

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Testimony on SB-398
Paul Donheffner, OHA Legislative Chairman

OHA, with 10,000 members statewide, appreciates the fact that elk damage to farmers and ranchers is a very real issue across many parts of our state. Elk are also very near and dear to Oregon's 264,000 hunters, who pay over \$26 million in license fees, and \$17 million in PR funds to support hunting and wildlife conservation. Simply put, elk are a very big deal for us.

Oregon already has an elk damage tag program, which is the subject of 3 other bills that we've previously discussed. SB-398 creates a new type of tag for killing elk. Currently, landowners get Landowner Preference Tags (LOP) depending on acreage. They can also obtain elk damage tags for antlerless hunts, and can obtain "emergency" kill permits. OHA believes these are more than enough tag tools to address landowners concerns.

SB398 grants additional tags, one for every 50 elk, that can be used to kill bull elk. And it commercializes these tags by allowing the sale of the tags. This is completely unacceptable to public land hunters who often have to wait several years to gain enough preference points to draw a general season tag. And this new exclusive tag is good for two years!

This is completely wrong. This bill violates Oregon's Wildlife Policy and the North American Wildlife Conservation Model and it negatively impacts the ability of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to manage elk according to biological objectives.

OHA cannot accept SB398 in any way.