

# Roadkill: It's what's for dinner under new law

By Andrew Selsky  
Associated Press

SALEM (AP) — Some folks in Oregon might not want to ask, when served an elk burger or a venison steak, where the meat came from. Under a roadkill bill passed overwhelmingly by the Legislature and signed by the governor, motorists who crash into the animals can now harvest the meat to eat.

And it's not as unusual as people might think. About 20 other states also allow people to take meat from animals killed by vehicles. Aficionados say roadkill can be high-quality, grass-fed grub.

Washington state began allowing the salvaging of deer and elk carcasses a year ago. Pennsylvania might top the country in road kills, with Oregon wildlife officials telling lawmakers that the eastern state had over 126,000 vehicle-wildlife accidents in 2015.

Gov. Kate Brown signed Oregon's bill last week after the Senate and House passed it without a single "nay" vote.

But a few Oregonians voiced opposition.

Vivian Kirkpatrick-Pilger, a Republican Party official in mountainous, forested Josephine County, told legislators that people have been

salvaging roadkill meat in Oregon for years — since vehicles and animals have been colliding — and they never needed a law or permit to do it.

Actually, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife said that before last week, the only people allowed to keep roadkill were licensed furtakers, and no one — not even licensed hunters — could keep game animals found as roadkill.

"A lot of who people don't hunt hear the word 'roadkill' and they get turned off," Toven said. "We're talking perfectly clean, cold meat."

Oregon's new law calls for the state Fish and Wildlife Commission to adopt rules for the issuance of permits for the purpose of salvaging meat for human consumption from deer or elk that have been accidentally killed in a vehicle collision.

The first permits are to be issued no later than Jan. 1, 2019. The antlers must be handed over to the state's wildlife agency.

## LETTERS

Continued from page 2

Wilt Road need to remember a few things: This road goes through National Grasslands and is EXTREMELY dry, and susceptible to wildfire.

No one should attempt to camp out here, smoke out here, or park a vehicle on the side of the road out here for fear of igniting grasses with the bottom of a hot car. This is not just empty land, but family ranches, with livestock. We don't need ya'll burning us out.

There is only sporadic cell service. Verizon is the only one I know of that gets any moderate connection in certain places out here. Even so, it is sketchy at best.

It is a difficult road and not suitable for "cars" but more for SUVs and other vehicles with high clearance due to rocks, ruts and wild grasses.

Enter this area with extreme caution. It would probably be wisest not to attempt to access this area, unless you know what you're doing.

Michelle Ehr

To the Editor:

Public lands generate a lot of income for local economies. Lodging, restaurants, campgrounds, outdoor equipment stores, guides, souvenir shops, etc. spring up nearby. In fact, household income increases following designation of a National Monument. Communities leading into our National Parks benefit the most with jobs and economic activity. By one estimate, every tax dollar invested in the National Park Service returns \$10 to the U.S. economy. This is a big deal.

I've been lucky enough to visit wild and

isolated public lands in central and eastern Oregon that many people have never heard of—the Pillars of Rome, Crack in the Ground, Mickey Hot Springs, etc. Most of us love these wild places and want to keep them forever. They support the growing outdoor recreation economy, and they are very popular. Millions of Americans visit them every year, and those of us living in the West love them more than most. Just a couple of numbers say it all: Almost 95% of us visit public lands and over 80 percent believe funding for these lands should not be cut.

Sadly, some lawmakers don't want to support these rare and special places. They want to "dispose of excess" public lands by handing them over to the states. At first this might sound like a great idea. Here in Oregon we love our wild lands and could take care of them very well. But where would the money come from? Oregon has ongoing budget problems, and other states are in similar situations.

If states are forced to take over management of public lands, they might have to raise taxes or sell these lands to the highest bidder. No more hunting, fishing, mountain biking, hiking, camping, climbing, swimming, soaking, picnicking, animal watching, meditating, or enjoying our wild lands. Right now, we all own the land and have the right to enjoy these beautiful places. Not for much longer if greed wins over common sense.

Make sure your representative in Congress, Greg Walden, knows how you feel about protecting our public lands. Call him in Bend at 541-389-4408 or email him via this website: <https://walden.house.gov/contact-greg/email-me>.

Paula Surmann

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