

RECREATION
REPORT

Sale of leftover big game tags delayed until August 1

SALEM — The sale of about 200 leftover controlled big game hunt tags will be delayed until Thursday, Aug. 1.

The process for these tags is changing this year due to ODFW's new electronic licensing system, with leftover tags being sold exclusively online, rather than at license sale agents/vendors.

ODFW is delaying the date of the sale (from July 1 to Aug. 1 at 10 a.m.) to allow more time for staff to complete User Acceptance Testing of the new process before the sale takes place.

The delay also provides additional time for hunters who want to try for a leftover tag to get ready for the new process. Hunters will need to have an active and verified MyODFW online licensing account, including a username and password, to purchase a leftover tag this year. (If you don't have an online account yet, visit MyODFW.com and click "Buy a License" and then follow the steps to verify your account.)

Tips for applying for a leftover tag:

- Check the list of tags available first. Note some of the hunts are on private land, and permission from the landowner is required to hunt with the tag. See the 2019 Big Game Regulations for more information about each hunt.

- Be logged in by 10 a.m. on Aug. 1. Leftover tags sell out in minutes and in the past, hunters needed to be first or second in line at a vendor at 10 a.m. for a reasonable chance of purchasing one. ODFW anticipates leftover tags will sell out quickly online.

Group hike on Elkhorn Crest Trail July 14

The Powder Basin Watershed Council in Baker City is organizing a group hike on a section of the Elkhorn Crest National Recreation Trail, with transportation provided to the Marble Creek Pass trailhead at the south end of the trail.

The 8.5-mile hike follows the Crest Trail to Twin Lakes saddle, then down to Twin Lakes and along Lake Creek to the Twin Lakes trailhead, where the shuttle vehicle will pick up the hikers. Hikers are likely to see mountain goats.

Cost is \$25 per hiker, which can be paid on the day of the hike. Space is limited, and people interested in the hike should RSVP by calling 541-523-7288. The trip is slated to run from about 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Misplaced moose

■ Lone bull roams near ponds just east of Interstate 84 in Baker City

By Jayson Jacoby
Baker City Herald

Kathryn Talada was looking for a couple of lost dogs Tuesday evening.

What she found was a moose.

(She also tracked down the dogs.)

This was rather a surprise. "That's not something you see in Baker," said Talada, 60, who has lived here at various times since she was in seventh grade.

Talada said she was accustomed to seeing the distinctively gangly animals — the largest member of the deer family — while living in Wyoming.

From her vantage point about 400 to 500 feet away, Talada couldn't tell whether the moose had the plate-like antlers of a bull.

Casey Vanderwiele, however, had no difficulties with distance.

Vanderwiele, who lives on Atwood Road near the pond, said he saw the moose just before dark Tuesday, and again Wednesday morning while walking his dog.

On the latter encounter Vanderwiele said he was within about 40 feet of the animal.

"I was looking right in his eyes," Vanderwiele said.

The antlers were conspicuous, although relatively small compared to the massive racks that mature bulls boast, he said.

Vanderwiele said the bull didn't appear perturbed by the presence of a human.

(And a canine.)

"He didn't seem bothered at all," Vanderwiele said.

Talada's experience started when she was searching for a couple of missing dogs along Atwood Road.

Her nephew, Cody Hansen, a UPS driver, called her from the company's nearby warehouse along Best Frontage Road, just east of Interstate 84.

Hansen, who was also assisting in the search for the wayward dogs, said his sister, Jenna Hansen, was in a separate vehicle. She stopped along Best Frontage Road, and when Cody pulled alongside she pointed toward an animal near the pond on the east side of the road.

"That's not my dog," was Cody's initial response.

The siblings then watched the animal swim north across the pond, emerge from the water and shake itself to fling drops from its hide.

Cody said he recognized the species immediately.



Photo courtesy of Pattie Vanderwiele

This young bull moose was spotted Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning near Baker City.

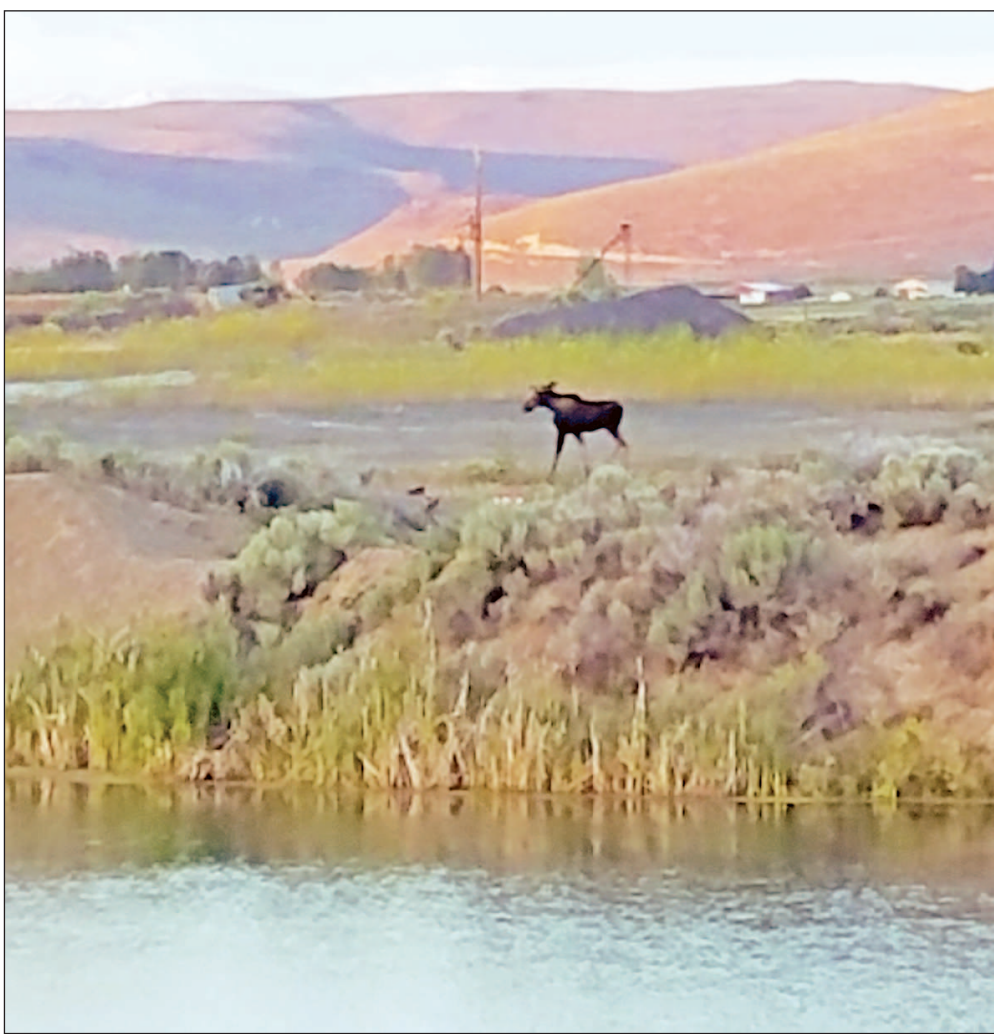


Photo by Kathryn Talada

A lone moose photographed Tuesday evening beside a pond near Baker City.

"I said, 'heck, that's a moose,'" he said in an interview Wednesday morning.

He called Talada, who is his wife's aunt, and when she arrived the moose was just climbing out of the pond, one of several in the area created during construction of the freeway.

The presence of a moose in

that area is unusual but not shocking, said Pat Matthews, district wildlife biologist at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) office in Enterprise.

Although Oregon's only confirmed resident moose herd — consisting of an estimated 50 to 70 animals — lives mainly in the Blue Mountains north of Elgin, individual young moose of both genders are prone to wandering, Matthews said.

"They're out pioneering new areas and looking for new habitat," he said.

The Oregon moose herd tends to roam in the Wenaha unit but animals have been seen in the north part of the Chesnimnus and southern Snake River units, Matthews said.

Individual moose also occasionally wander through the Wallowa Valley, he said.

Over the past decade lone moose have been seen in Baker Valley, near Medi-

cal Springs and, perhaps most improbably, along the Oregon shore of Brownlee Reservoir about 15 miles north of Huntington.

The latter area is atypical of moose habitat because it lacks forest, which moose need to keep cool during summer because they don't tolerate heat, Matthews said. (There are forested areas within several miles of Brownlee.)

Cody Hansen, Talada and Vanderwiele all said they watched the moose munch on low-hanging branches from deciduous trees.

That's a favorite meal for moose — willows in particular, Matthews said.

He said research from Rocky Mountain states indicates moose seem to be spreading south. That's opposite of the movement of some plant and animals species that researchers believe are shifting north to avoid a warming climate.

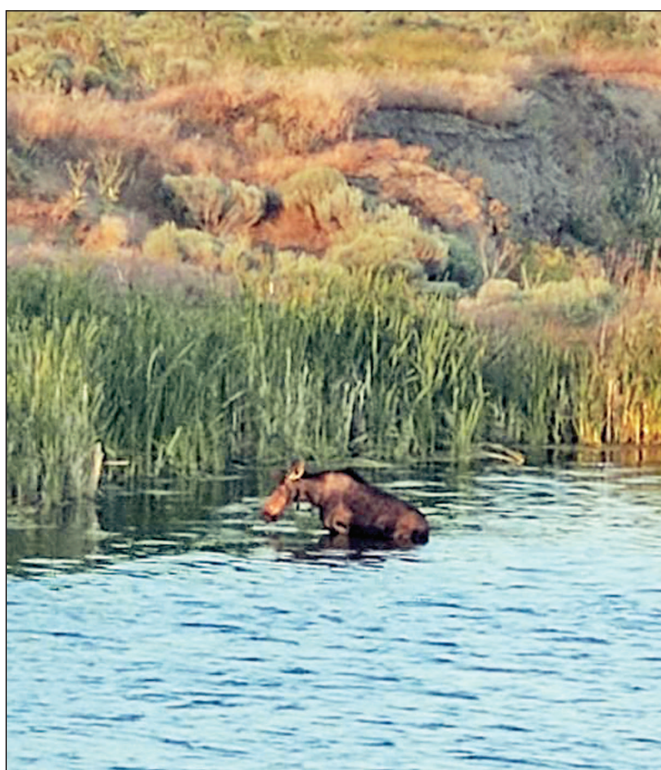


Photo courtesy of Pattie Vanderwiele

A young bull moose takes a dip in a pond near Baker City Tuesday evening.

Olive Lake camp sites limited

GRANITE — Forest officials on the North Fork John Day Ranger District of the Umatilla National Forest have opened a limited number of campsites at Olive Lake Campground near Granite due to hazard trees surrounding the campground.

Trees within the campground have been impacted by a recent Mountain Pine Beetle infestation that has caused tree mortality within the area. These trees have been identified as hazardous and must be removed prior to opening the campsites to the public. All closed campsites within Olive Lake Campground are clearly marked by a sign on the site number post that states "Campsite Closed Due To Hazard" in orange and red lettering. The limited number of campsites that have already been cleared of hazard trees are open to the public for camping. A volunteer camp host is onsite and available to help answer questions or assist forest visitors with identifying available camping locations.

Olive Lake is a popular mountain lake and campground 12 miles west of Granite.

Hells Canyon boat ramp work planned

The Oregon State Marine Board has approved \$206,350 to match the Forest Service contribution of the same amount to repair the boat ramp at the Hells Canyon Creek launch just below Hells Canyon Dam.

The \$412,700 project will also include installation of a new boarding dock.

The current ramp was damaged in a 2012 flood, and the Forest Service reports that visitors have damaged boat trailers while trying to use the ramp. Boats longer than 26 feet — which represent 26% of recreational boaters visiting the site — have had to travel instead to Pittsburg Landing, three hours away.

The contract for the work is slated to be awarded in October.

The Hells Canyon Creek site also includes a visitors center built in the early 1990s.