



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife/Contributed Photo

A trail camera photo shows an adult wolf with five pups in the Upper Deschutes Wildlife Management Area in Central Oregon. ODFW has designated a new "Area of Known Wolf Activity" in the area, including parts of Deschutes and northern Klamath counties.

## New wolf area designated in Central Oregon

By GEORGE PLAVERN

Capital Press

BEND — A new group of wolves has taken up residence in Central Oregon, including parts of Deschutes and northern Klamath counties.

State wildlife officials designated an "Area of Known Wolf Activity" in the Upper Deschutes Wildlife Management Unit, which extends from near Bend south to Crescent along Highway 97 and west to the Pacific Crest Trail.

Ranchers in the area should consider nonlethal measures to protect their livestock, according to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, such as hiring range riders or using flashing lights and alarms to scare away wolves.

ODFW also recommends removing any carcasses or bone piles that might attract wolves. Other deterrents may include guard dogs, electrified fencing of small pastures and fladry.

While Oregon's wolf management plan does allow for killing wolves in the event of repeated attacks on livestock, this does not apply west of highways 395, 78 and 95, where wolves remain federally protected under the Endangered Species Act. That includes the Upper Deschutes area.

The minimum known

### MORE INFORMATION

Wolf sightings from the public can be reported to ODFW online at [www.dfw.state.or.us/wolves](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/wolves).

wolf population in Oregon based on verified evidence was at least 175 at the end of 2021, though ODFW acknowledges the actual population is likely higher.

Biologists began monitoring reports of a single wolf in the area in August 2021, and one wolf was counted during ODFW's annual winter survey.

Earlier this year, tracks of four wolves were found in the area, though it wasn't immediately clear if they came from a new group of wolves or from the Indigo Pack, which occupies territory just to the south.

On July 4, a trail camera in the area snapped a photo of an adult wolf with five pups, confirming the new group.

Depending on how many wolves are in the group by year's end, it may be designated the Upper Deschutes Pack, with a pack being defined as having at least four wolves traveling together in winter — typically with at least two adults and their offspring.

ODFW says additional surveys will be conducted to learn more about the Upper Deschutes wolves' home range.

## Report: Health care costs rose 49% in Oregon from 2013-19

By HILLARY BORRUD

The Oregonian

SALEM — Oregonians' health care costs rose 49% over a six-year period, with the increase largely driven by a huge jump in drug prices, according to a new state report.

Prescription pharmaceutical costs "grew the most of any service category from 2013 to 2019, driven by a 20% annual growth in Medicare" drug costs, according to the report issued by the Oregon Health Authority.

Prescription drug costs rose 185% over the six-year period for patients on Medicare to more than \$2,200 per person, annually. Prescription drug costs rose 92.8% for people with commercial insurance and 79.4% for those on Medicaid, according to the state.

Inpatient care remained the most expensive category of health care in Oregon, but prescription drug costs sur-

passed per-person outpatient care costs in 2018 to become the third-most costly service, according to the state.

Last year, lawmakers in the Democratically controlled Oregon Legislature considered a proposal to set upper limits on how much companies could charge for prescription drugs, but ultimately gutted the plan after the pharmaceutical industry spent nearly \$2 million lobbying against it. Lawmakers did pass a bipartisan law to limit patients' copays for insulin to \$900 a year.

After prescription drug costs, the category of professional services, which covers primary care visits and medical procedures at doctors' offices, was the second major driver of increasing health care costs, according to the state. Those costs increased 75.9% for people with commercial insurance, 56.7% for patients on Medicare and 41.8% for people with Medicaid.



The Observer, File

Jocelyn Brown, right, and Ausha Beckrich, students of the Oregon Health & Science University School of Nursing at Eastern Oregon University, La Grande, demonstrate usage of a tablet computer for use in telemedicine on Monday, May 11, 2021.

# Oregonians to vote on gun control

By CATALINA GAITÁN

The Oregonian

SALEM — Oregonians will get to vote on statewide gun-control legislation this November, the Oregon Secretary of State's office confirmed earlier this week.

Initiative Petition 17, also known as the Reduction of Gun Violence Act, earned enough valid signatures to qualify for the general election.

The petition garnered 131,671 valid signatures, almost 20,000 more than it needed to land on the ballot.

The measure would require people to get a permit and pass a background check before buying a gun, and it would prevent the sale of gun magazines that hold more than 10 rounds.

Rabbi Michael Cahana, of Congregation Beth Israel, one of the initiative's chief petitioners, said on July 19 that he is feeling "very confident" that voters will pass the measure in November.

"I am not going to be complacent — none of us are," Cahana said. "We're working very hard to educate Oregon voters because we know there will be a lot of misinformation. But I know people want to see change."

A caravan of gun-control advocates drove from Portland to Salem July 8 to hand deliver the initiative's final batch of signatures to the state Capitol. Rev. W.J. Mark Knutson of Augustana Lutheran Church, also one of the initiative's chief petitioners, sat aboard a school bus crowded with volunteers.

"Today has to be a day of joy," Knutson said that day. "Because this will give Oregonians a chance to step out in the nation with the most progressive piece of legislation this year for public safety."

The effort to push for stricter gun laws in Oregon has also led to pushback from pro-gun organizations.

In a July 1 statement, the Oregon Firearms Federation said the new



Dean Guernsey/The Bulletin, File

A large group rallies during March for Our Lives, a gun-violence protest in Bend on Saturday, June 11, 2022. An initiative that would require permits and background checks before allowing a gun purchase has qualified for the November ballot.

permitting process required by the measure, which would include completion of a firearms safety training and a background check, would be "far more onerous."

The organization asked its supporters to send their input on the measure to the Oregon Secretary of State Shemia Fagan, who will approve the text explaining the initiative on the ballot.

Lift Every Voice Oregon, the lobbying group behind Initiative Petition 17, launched shortly after the 2018 mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

Support for Initiative Petition 17 started small but grew exponentially this year, skyrocketing from less than

3,000 signatures in March to almost 100,000 three months later. About 1,600 volunteers helped gather signatures across the state. A wave of gun violence, including mass shootings at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, and a grocery store in Buffalo, New York, "spurred people to action," Cahana said.

"There was a strong sense that we've had for decades now that nothing is going to happen, that things aren't going to change, and people are fed up. They really want to see substantive change," he said. "This is how democracy works — we actually care and can change our country. We can change the direction, we can turn away from hopelessness, and that just lifts my spirit."

## HIV isn't just a big city issue.

More than half of Oregonians with HIV live outside of Portland, often in suburbs and small towns like this one.

Good neighbors chip in to get the job done. And we've got work to do on HIV prevention. People in rural Oregon are more likely to get a late-stage diagnosis, and a lack of HIV treatment may harm your health, or your partner's. Detected early, HIV is more easily managed and you can live a long, healthy life. Getting tested is a sign of strength, not weakness.

Learn more and find free testing at [endhivoregon.org](http://endhivoregon.org)

