

Oregon

FFA honors board member for going 'extra mile'

By CRAIG REED
For the Capital Press

UMPQUA, Ore. — Elin Miller was a seven-year member of FFA as a young adult. She said those FFA experiences were strong influences on her future, providing her the skills that led to a successful business career with major corporations and government agencies.

For the past 20 years, Miller has been giving back to that program that helped set her future.

The National FFA Organization will recognize Miller's volunteer efforts by presenting her with the VIP Citation at the 89th National FFA Convention and Expo in Indianapolis, Ind. The honor was to be awarded to Miller on Friday. It recognizes "individuals who have provided exceptional support of school-based agricultural education and FFA."

Miller was a four-year member of FFA at Westwood High School in Mesa, Ariz., and then a three-year member while attending the University of Arizona in Tucson.

"FFA changed my life personally," said Miller, who with her husband, Bill, owns and works a hazelnut orchard in the Umpqua area. "I would not have had the career opportunities if not for the leadership skills and the technical aspects of agriculture that FFA taught me."

"I learned as much in high school through FFA competing in contests as I did in advance classes at the university," she added.

Miller's career included working for Shell Oil in its agriculture division, for Dow Chemical in its public affairs global division and for Dow AgroSciences. She was also executive director of Western Agricultural Chemicals Association and was a presidential appointee to the Environmental Protection Agency for Region 10, which includes Oregon, Idaho, Washing-



Elin Miller

ton and Alaska. She serves on several company boards, both locally and nationally.

Her past 20 years with FFA have included being a member of the National FFA Foundation board for the last seven years. She chaired the board for one year.

Miller helped establish the Individual Giving Council that is part of the national foundation.

"That council has put more emphasis on reaching back to FFA alumni and to other supporters and sponsors for contributions," Miller explained. "Most of the contributions to FFA had come from corporations, small and large, like 85 percent. Now we're starting to move in the direction of seeking contributions from individuals."

At the end of this year, Miller will be stepping down from the national board.

"I'm very surprised," she said of being recognized with the VIP Citation honor. "It's a bit of a capstone and a culmination of having reconnected with FFA over the last 20 years. I've put a lot of effort back into the organization."

Miller, however, plans to continue to support FFA by helping the Oregon FFA Foundation with its fundraising.

The National FFA Organization has about 630,000 members.

A news release from the national office credited Miller with going "the extra mile" for FFA.

"Outstanding dedicated people like you deserve most of the credit for changing the lives of these young people," Steve Brown, National FFA adviser and board chairman, wrote in a statement to Miller. "It is an honor to publicly recognize your outstanding support of our youth and agricultural education."

Poll shows Oregonians favor wolf deterrence, not death

By ERIC MORTENSON
Capital Press

An opinion poll commissioned by conservation groups shows a clear majority of Oregonians favor non-lethal means of deterring wolves from attacking livestock and don't believe the state should allow sport hunting of wolves.

The results come as the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is reviewing its wolf management plan, a work in progress that in 2015 saw the ODFW Commission remove wolves from the state's endangered species list. Conservation groups such as Oregon Wild, Cascadia Wildlands and the Center for Biological Diversity believe the state acted hastily and maintain the wolf population is too fragile for delisting or allowing hunting.

The commission began the review work earlier this month at a public meeting in La Grande, Ore. Even though the commission wasn't scheduled to take action during the meeting, 54 people showed up to testify. ODFW staff will present a draft plan to the commission in December.

Among the poll highlights:

- 74 percent of respondents favor compensating ranchers for livestock losses, as is now done.
- 72 percent approve of killing wolves responsible for repeated livestock attacks.
- Almost 82 percent believe poachers pose a greater threat to Oregon's deer and elk populations than wolves. Rural residents were strongest in that belief, nearly 88 percent. Oregon State Police this week reported two cases of poachers shooting bull elk.
- 67 percent oppose hunting wolves as a means to protect deer and elk, and 72 percent oppose "trophy hunting" of wolves.

The issue of hunting wolves is likely to come up as the ODFW Commission reviews the management plan. Hunting groups are concerned about game population; others point out that Oregon allows hunting of cougars, another predator that takes deer and elk.

In 2015, a retired ODFW wildlife biologist told the Capital Press that



Courtesy of Oregon State Police

A state trooper shows a bull elk shot dead and left to waste in Douglas County, the second case of elk poaching in the county in October. Conservation groups opposed to hunting wolves say poachers are a far greater threat to Oregon's elk and deer.

healthy deer and elk populations serve as a buffer between livestock and Oregon's predators, which include 25,000 to 30,000 bears, an estimated 6,200 cougars and wolves, which have grown from 14 in 2009 to more than 100 in 2015.

The survey also probed some misconceptions. Presented a range of zero to more than 1,000, respondents were asked how many cattle were killed by Oregon wolves in 2015. Among Portland-area residents, 29 percent thought the number was 100 to 999.

Informed in a follow-up question that only four cows were killed in 2015, 67 percent of those surveyed said wolves do not pose an economic threat to the cattle industry.

Oregon ranchers, however, have always maintained that far more cattle are killed by wolves than are confirmed by ODFW investigators. They say grazing cattle sometimes simply disappear.

The state's annual wolf report listed three calves killed and two others injured by wolves in 2015. Wolves also killed a herd guard dog, eight

ewes and two lambs, according to the report.

The state conducted 33 livestock "depredation" investigations in five counties during 2015. Nine were confirmed as wolf attacks; two were listed as probable; 13 were categorized as possible or unknown; and eight were considered "other" incidents.

The poll was commissioned by the Pacific Wolf Coalition and was conducted Sept. 20-22 by Mason-Dixon Polling & Research Inc. of Washington, D.C.

The company conducted telephone interviews with 800 registered Oregon voters who were selected at random from voter registration files. Responses were broken down by age, sex, political party affiliation, and residence: Rural, Willamette Valley and Portland metro area.

Mason-Dixon estimated the poll's margin of error at plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. The website FiveThirtyEight, which analyzes opinion polls, in 2016 gave Mason-Dixon a B+ for accuracy in its political polling work.

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ROP-43-3-1/#4