

Chronic wasting disease prompts ban on deer urine

Oregon trying to keep the elk and deer disease out of the state

By **MICHAEL KOHN**
EO Media Group

BEND — Spritzing urine from a doe in heat on the forest floor is an old hunter’s trick for luring a buck. But starting Jan. 1, Oregon hunters will no longer be allowed to employ the practice, the latest attempt by state officials to prevent the spread of chronic wasting disease, which is killing elk and deer in large numbers in the U.S. and Canada.

House Bill 2294, passed this year by the Oregon Legislature, bans the possession and use of scent lures that contain urine produced by deer, elk and other members of the cervid family. While the lures can still be used during the autumn hunting season, stores across Oregon are phasing them off shelves.

Chronic wasting disease has not been detected in Oregon but has been seen in more than 20 states and in Canada. The disease is spread by nose-to-nose contact between cervid animals and through urine, feces, blood and saliva.



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife staff check an elk for chronic wasting disease in 2017.

Submitted photo

Once an animal is infected it goes through behavioral changes, followed by weight loss, weakness, stumbling and death.

The disease was first identified in Colorado in 1967 and has marched steadily through the Rocky Mountain states, the Midwest and as far east as New York. It has also been found in Norway, Finland and South Korea. The disease is caused by malfunctioning proteins called prions.

There is no evidence humans can contract chronic

wasting disease, but the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife advises people not to eat infected animals. Studies suggest the disease poses a risk to nonhuman primates that eat meat from infected animals, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“(Chronic wasting disease) is one of the most concerning diseases for wildlife biologists because once it gets into the free range it can’t be stopped or treated,” said Michelle Dennehy, an

ODFW spokeswoman. “If we have early detection we have a better chance to stop it. We want to prevent it from getting here in the first place.”

Oregon hunters traveling out of state are prohibited from bringing home the parts of the animal known to harbor the disease, including eyes, brains, spinal columns, lymph nodes, tonsils and spleens. Any illegal animal part brought into Oregon will be confiscated and the responsible party will be

charged for the cost of incineration, according to the department.

New rules also apply to roadkill in Oregon. Drivers are permitted to salvage the remains of deer or elk, but they must also surrender the antlers and head to ODFW within five days. The heads are tested for chronic wasting disease.

The ban will only affect a small portion of Oregon hunters as the scents are used primarily when hunting white-tail deer during

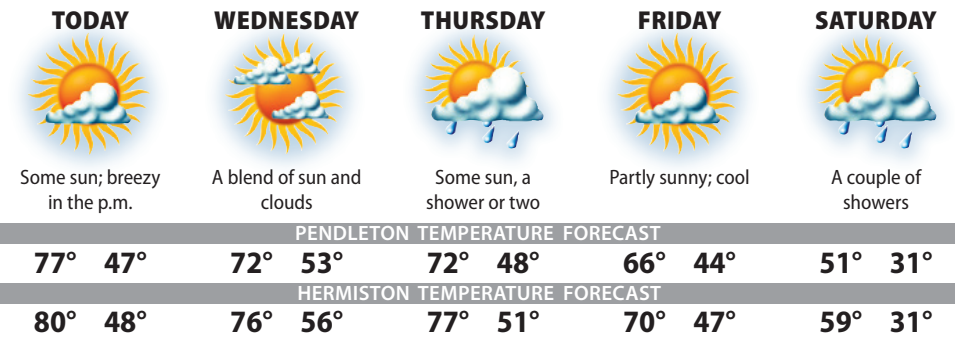
the rutting season, said Karl Findling, conservation director for the Oregon Hunters Association.

“Archers that hunt elk may be affected, but they make up a very small number of hunters in Oregon,” Findling said. “Hunting white-tail deer in rut is primarily a Midwest or East Coast phenomenon. There are not many white-tail deer in Oregon, and when they are hunted it’s not when they are in rut.”

Roadside sampling stations will test deer and elk for the disease in Central and Eastern Oregon. The stations will be set up at Interstate 84 west of Biggs Junction and the Prineville weigh station just east of Prineville on U.S. Highway 26. Opening times for the stations are from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sept. 29-30 and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Nov. 3-4. The Prineville station will also be open Sept. 28 in the afternoon.

Hunters or businesses, who already have these cervid urine-scented products in their possession, are asked not to pour them on the ground or down the drain. Instead, the products can be brought to a local ODFW district office for safe disposal. The scents will be collected and incinerated in an 1,800-degree oven, a temperature known to destroy the protein that causes the disease.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



University study says wind turbines threaten migrating bats

Associated Press

BEND — A Pacific Northwest bat that migrates south for the winter faces a serious threat from wind turbines, according to a study by the by Oregon State University-Cascades.

The study concludes that the hoary bat faces an uncertain future because its numbers have declined by 2% per year, the *Bend Bulletin* reports.

Collisions with propellers on wind farms kill bats, said Tom Rodhouse, one of the authors, an ecologist with the National Park Service and a courtesy faculty member at OSU-Cascades.

Another cause is barotrauma, which occurs when bats fly through low pressure zones created by the spinning blades of a wind turbine. The sudden change in pressure causes their lungs to expand faster than the bats can exhale, result-

ing in burst vessels that fill their tiny lungs with blood, Rodhouse said.

“This and direct collisions with the turbines has resulted in millions of bat deaths over the last two decades,” said Rodhouse.

Oregon and Washington have 3,600 wind turbines generating capacity of 6,300 megawatts. Most wind farms are clustered near the Columbia River Gorge. Others are near Ellensburg and Walla Walla in Washington and Baker City in Oregon.

While migrating, hoary bats fly into danger zones because their sophisticated sonar capabilities do not detect the pressure drops, Rodhouse said.

Barotrauma has similarities to decompression sickness experienced by divers. Lungs of birds are more rigid, with strong capillaries, making them less vulnerable to the pressure changes near wind turbines.

White-nose syndrome, a disease that has killed bats elsewhere, is not affecting the hoary bat, Rodhouse said.

Hoary bats are named after their white-tipped fur coats, which look frosty. They hunt at night and feed on pests that eat crops. The animals are slow to reproduce in the Pacific Northwest, with females producing just one to three pups per year, Rodhouse said.

Cris Hein of the U.S. Department of Energy’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory said there are ways to combat the problem.

Technology to protect the bats includes ultrasonic deterrents that may prevent bats from approaching the wind turbines. Another option is to turn off turbines in late summer and fall when bats are migrating.

The study was published in *Ecology and Evolution*.

BRIEFLY

Court of Appeals: Director not fired for whistleblowing

SALEM — The former chief executive of the Oregon Travel Experience was not wrongfully terminated for whistleblowing, the Oregon Court of Appeals has ruled, reversing a trial court’s judgment which allowed a jury to awarded her \$1.26 million in 2016.

The *Statesman Journal* reported that instead, the court said the circumstances that led to Kyle Walker’s termination did not fulfill the qualifications for a common-law wrongful discharge claim and a jury should not have been allowed by the trial court to consider her claim.

The court also re-denied on appeal Walker’s statutory claim of wrongful discharge for whistleblowing.

Walker was the chief executive of the semi-independent state agency Oregon Travel Information Council, which does business as Oregon Travel Experience, for two years until being fired in 2014.

Walker alleged that she was fired after alerting the Department of Justice that the council was not following public meetings law and was not in compliance with its “roles and authorities.”

Lawmaker says daughter was racially profiled at mall

PORTLAND — An Oregon state representative is encouraging people to loiter at Clackamas Town Center after she says her teenage daughter was harassed and racially profiled by mall security for sitting in her car with friends.

State Rep. Janelle Bynum, a Democrat from Clackamas, said her 17-year-old daughter was in a parked car with two other friends Friday, trying to decide what to do because they couldn’t get into an R-rated movie when one friend didn’t have a license with her to prove her age.

Bynum said the encounter occurred about 5 p.m. She said her daughter and friends were sitting in the car for about 10 minutes when the mall security officer parked, walked up to them and told them the mall had strict “no loitering” policies.

The *Oregonian*/OregonLive reported that by Sunday, Bynum urged others on Facebook to participate in what she called a weeklong “loiter-in” at the mall for her daughter.

Messages left for Clackamas Town Center management and security were not returned.

— Associated Press

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)

High 103° in El Centro, Calif. Low 16° in Angel Fire, N.M.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

