

ODFW needs consistent state funding

Changes in social behavior and public financing will increasingly affect how we fund the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and whether some of the Pacific Northwest's outdoor traditions are able to continue.

Our Capital Bureau reported Tuesday that a task force charged with finding sustainable funding for ODFW is considering holding off on scheduled license fee increases. It wants to see if the Legislature approves either an income tax surcharge or a surcharge on beverage containers to fund the department.

GUEST EDITORIAL

From the Daily Astorian

About a third of the agency's budget — roughly \$60 million a year — is generated by selling hunting and fishing licenses. State and federal funds account for two-thirds.

Like many other states, Oregon has experienced a gradual but inexorable decline in the number of people still interested in harvesting their own wild fish and game. And like other states, Oregon has partially offset this decline in participation by raising license fees on those who remain. This results in a cycle of less financially advantaged residents being squeezed out of hunting and fishing, along with those who have only marginal enthusiasm for rod and gun sports.

As much or perhaps more than other recreational activities, interest in hunting and fishing typically is established in childhood or not at all. Fish and Wildlife and its peers around the nation have taken a variety of steps to encourage parents to get kids engaged in the outdoors, offering free or discounted license options, special events and other incentives. But if parents can't afford to go hunting or fishing themselves, it's unlikely their children will.

This leads to the kinds of internal struggles evidenced by the state's task force, which is reluctantly eying two license fee increases — one in 2018 and another in 2020, with future increases indexed to inflation.

These increases come at the same time other hunting and fishing costs also are on the rise. In addition to the constant struggle to afford insurance and upkeep on vehicles and vessels, hunters in particular face steep increases in fees they must pay for access to many previously free forestlands. Weyerhaeuser and other corporations have been aggressively raising access fees — ostensibly as a way to pay for forest upkeep.

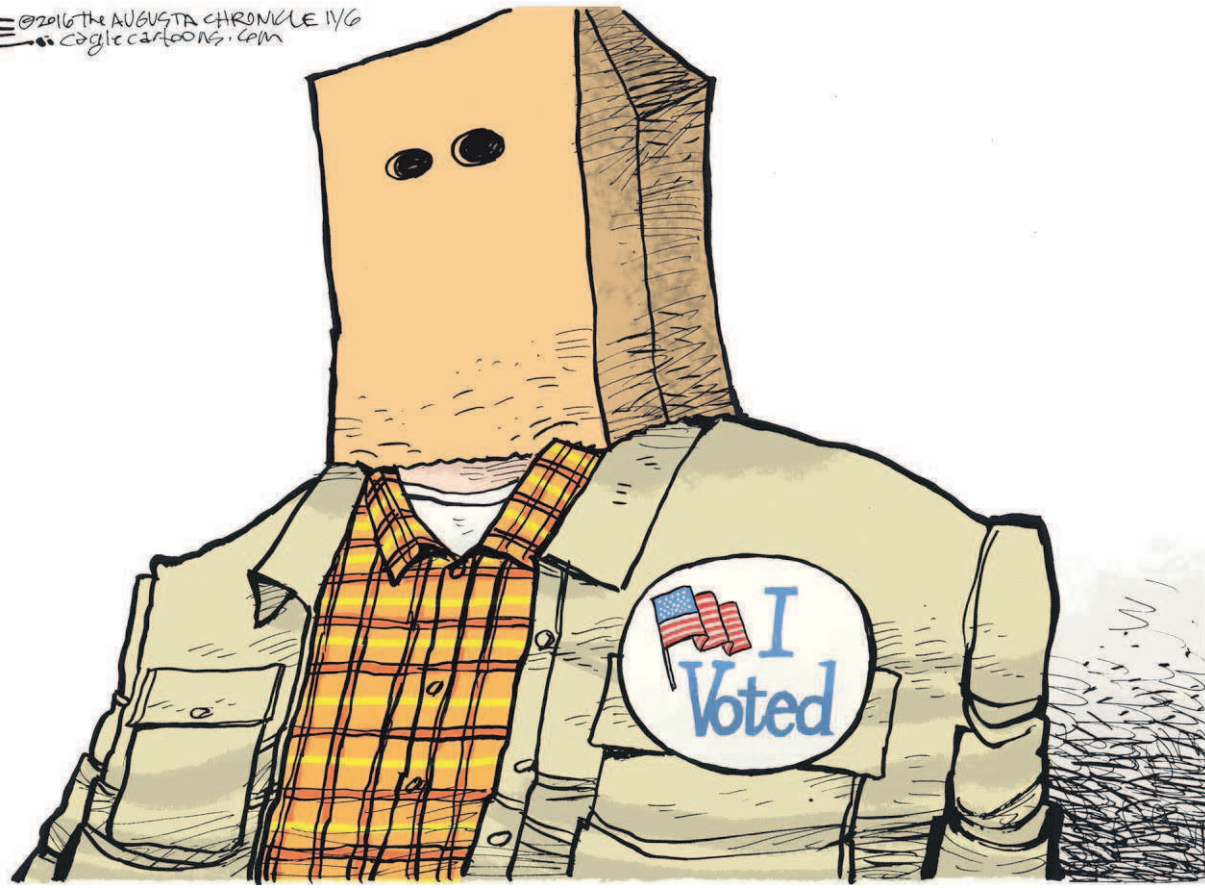
Why should the majority of citizens who neither fish nor hunt care about any of this? Many who enjoy nature in ways that do not require licenses — everything from birdwatching to the satisfaction of knowing wild places exist — individually pay a few dollars in taxes a year to ODFW operations, as opposed to \$180 for a full combination adult license fee.

Oregon Public Broadcasting reported this week on the difficulties Fish and wildlife has in funding conservation measures for nongame species — everything from bats to frogs. Problems like this will get nothing but worse if hunting and fishing participation rates and license income continue to languish.

What can we do? Certainly support legislative efforts to establish a reliable safety net for ODFW funding. Other voluntary options already exist and are fully described at <http://bit.ly/2f8YQ1Q>. One of the easiest is buying \$20 habitat conservation stamps via the internet or at any location that sell fishing and hunting licenses.

If we care about Oregon wildlife — and surveys show we strongly do — we have to figure out new ways to pay for the vital work performed by Fish and Wildlife.

RMATE ©2016 THE ASTORIA CHRONICLE IVG
a eagle cartoons.com



Getting around, circa 1947

On a recent trip to Saskatchewan with my brother I took a picture of an abandoned grain elevator that sat by an abandoned rail line. The rail line was not only abandoned, it had the ties and rails removed. The CPR main line is still functioning but most of the spur lines that used to serve communities north and south of the main line are gone. The unique thing about the picture of the elevator is that the shipping corrals were still standing complete with loading chute. For years thousands of cattle were shipped via rail from all over the West to eastern destinations like Chicago and Kansas City. Local ranchers, Krebs livestock, used to ship thousands of sheep from Central Oregon to summer grass on the Blackfeet Reservation bordering Glacier Park in Montana. That stopped when the rail lines quit the practice. The last cattle cars I recall seeing were on a branch line in central Montana about 1975 and looked awfully lonesome.



Barrie Qualle

An abandoned grain elevator with shipping corrals beside an old rail line.

When I was about 7 or 8 I talked my folks into letting me ride a branch line train to visit my cousins that lived close to the Montana line about 80 miles south of us. This required taking a Hooterville Trolley that ran the spur line down and back daily. Dad bought me a ticket and pinned it to my jacket and put me on the train and told me not to get off until I got to Glen Bain. The train consisted of an engine, coal car, water car, box cars, cattle cars, a mail car, a baggage car, a passenger car and a caboose. At each small town we came to empty box cars were dropped on a siding by the elevators and the mail



OPEN RANGE
Barrie Qualle

and passengers were dropped.

After a couple of towns I got tired of the passenger car and visited the guy in the mail car. When he tired of me and my questions he directed me to the caboose, where the brakeman who doubled as conductor let me ride in cupola where you could see the tops of all the cars. After about a six-hour ride with several stops we arrived in Glen Bain and I headed for my cousins' house.

I noticed the train had dropped about eight cattle cars on the Glen Bain siding and a couple of days later two herds of steers arrived at the corrals. One herd occupied the corrals and the other held up on the flat next to the tracks. The cattle cars were hauled to the loading chute by a team of work horses loaded and moved on down the siding. When the first herd was loaded the second filled the corrals and were loaded also.

It turned out this was the day for me and the loaded steers to head back to the main line. The train picked me up along with the cattle and at each subsequent town added box cars, now full of grain from the elevators. My

dad met me up at the main line station and the cattle and grain were dropped on a siding to await the next east-bound train.

The branch lines along with most elevators are all but gone now and cattle are only transported by truck. Grain is still shipped by rail but only on the main lines. The local grain elevators that used to serve small towns on the prairie have been replaced by big terminals on main lines and the grain is transported to them by truck. A lot of the thriving small towns with their elevators have disappeared or are pretty much ghost towns. All in my lifetime.

Columnist Barrie Qualle is a working cowboy in Wal-

Raising a toast to our veterans and their families

The first time I met fellow veteran Dawson Officer, we bonded over a whiskey that was smooth and subtle, with flavors of vanilla, caramel and spice. But we weren't at a bar and didn't even share a drink.

Instead, we were at the Oregon National Guard's Camp Withycombe and Dawson was the keynote speaker at a conference to help veterans start, sustain and grow their businesses. A combat veteran, Dawson is also the founder and owner of 4 Spirits Distillery, a small batch operation in Adair Village.

When starting his business, Dawson was troubled that even as we had thousands serving overseas, the conflicts in the Middle East barely registered as a concern in public opinion polls.

Dawson felt compelled to act and dedicated his new business in honor of four soldiers with whom he served in the Oregon National Guard: Lt. Erik McCrae, Sgt. Justin Eyerly, Sgt. Justin Linden, and Sgt. David Roustum. Four soldiers who were his brothers in arms and gave their lives in Baghdad. He continues to give back today with a share of proceeds going to support local veteran services.



GUEST COLUMN
Cameron Smith

The essence of Dawson's distillery captures the meaning of Veterans' Day: a day where we honor military service and sacrifice, but also celebrate how veterans from the greatest generation of World War II to the latest generation of Iraq and Afghanistan continue to serve and build our communities.

At the same time, we must also have an honest appraisal of the impacts of war upon return and our shared commitment to support those who have borne the battle.

As a Marine, I spent almost two years in the sands of Iraq. When I left the military, the transition was a challenge. I missed the higher calling of a shared mission. I missed the close connections forged in the long stretches of boredom and intense adrenaline surges on deployment. I also struggled to explain to em-

ployers how I could add value.

But my experiences pale in comparison to that of many veterans who are challenged by the visible and invisible wounds of war. We must understand that those most impacted by their service have a tenacious spirit and resiliency. They deserve the best in care, resources and support as an investment in their continued leadership for our state and nation.

This Veterans Day, we will not add any new names to the state's Afghan/Iraqi Freedom Memorial Wall in Salem. But as Dawson would remind us, we are still a nation at war, with our Armed Forces deployed around the world.

Please join me Nov. 11 in raising a toast to salute our fallen and their families, veterans of all eras, and those still in uniform serving around the world. Let us recognize them on this one day and commit to partnering throughout the year to ensure that our military, veterans and their families thrive in Oregon.

Cameron Smith served three tours in Iraq as a U.S. Marine and is the director of the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs.

WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN
USPS No. 665-100

P.O. Box 338 • Enterprise, OR 97828
Office: 209 NW First St., Enterprise, Ore.
Phone: 541-426-4567 • Fax: 541-426-3921

Wallowa County's Newspaper Since 1884
Enterprise, Oregon

MEMBER OREGON NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

PUBLISHER Marissa Williams, marissa@bmeagle.com
EDITOR Scot Heisel, editor@wallowa.com
REPORTER Stephen Tool, stool@wallowa.com
REPORTER Kathleen Ellyn, kellyn@wallowa.com
NEWSROOM ASSISTANT editor@wallowa.com
AD SALES CONSULTANT Jennifer Powell, jpowell@wallowa.com
OFFICE MANAGER Cheryl Jenkins, cjenkins@wallowa.com

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY BY:
EO Media Group

Periodical Postage Paid at Enterprise and additional mailing offices

Subscription rates (includes online access)	1 Year
Wallowa County	\$40.00
Out-of-County	\$57.00

Subscriptions must be paid prior to delivery

See the Wallowa County Chieftain on the Internet
www.wallowa.com
facebook.com/Wallowa | twitter.com/wcchieftain

POSTMASTER — Send address changes to
Wallowa County Chieftain
P.O. Box 338
Enterprise, OR 97828

Contents copyright © 2016. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited.

Volume 134

Letters to the Editor are subject to editing and should be limited to 275 words. Writers should also include a phone number with

their signature so we can call to verify identity. The Chieftain does not run anonymous letters.

You can submit a letter to

the Wallowa County Chieftain in person; by mail to P.O. Box 338, Enterprise, OR 97828; by email to editor@wallowa.com; or via the submission

form at the newspaper's website, located at wallowa.com. (Drop down the "Opinion" menu on the navigation bar to see the relevant link).