

Tips for trouble free hunting

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private tag by completely removing the month and day the animal was harvested and securely attaching the tag to a portion of the animal.

- **Please be Careful with Fire** – Practice fire safety at all times. This year has been a busy fire season so be aware of any fire restrictions for the area you intend to hunt. You wouldn't want to lose your home to a fire, and neither does the wildlife that call Oregon's outdoors their home. Check with the land manager and see Oregon Department of Forestry's webpage on private lands access and phone numbers of local districts to check fire restrictions.

- **Respect Road Closures** – Road closures are in place to conserve wildlife and improve the hunting experience. It's very important to respect closures on private land so access to hunters remains open.

- **Report Wildlife Violations** – You can help protect Oregon's wildlife and natural resources by reporting violations. If you observe someone violating the law in the field please call the Turn in Poachers (TIP) line at 1-800-452-7888. Helpful infor-

mation includes the date, time, location, type of violation, a description of the subject(s), and any information if a vehicle is involved, including a license plate number if possible. Rewards may be offered for information leading to the prosecution of violators through the TIP Reward Fund sponsored by the Oregon Hunter's Association.

- **Alcohol & Firearms Don't Mix** – Many hunting accidents in Oregon each year are preventable, and alcohol is often a factor in these incidents. Wait to celebrate your daily hunting adventures at the end of the day when weapons are safely secured at home or in camp. Always remember and practice basic firearms safety:

- Keep your firearm's muzzle pointed in a safe direction.
- Keep your finger outside of the trigger guard until ready to shoot.
- Treat every firearm as if it were loaded.
- Be sure of your target and what is in front of it and beyond it.
- Wear blaze orange.

Questions can be directed to your local office of the Oregon State Police or Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife.

Power of the People

By W. Marc Farmer, General Manager, West Oregon Electric Cooperative



National Cooperative Month

October is National Cooperative Month and celebrates the long history of Cooperatives and their vital role in communities and the lives of its members. Cooperatives were a central hub in a lot of communities, bringing people, products, services and resources together for the betterment of all. It is this spirit of community that has been a driving force in our own electric Cooperative.

West Oregon Electric Cooperative has been in existence now for over 68 years. It was formed to provide electricity to those who were left without power in the rural areas. The large investor-owned utilities would not extend power unless the return was there for shareholders, and rural areas didn't provide enough financial incentive for them. The area that West Oregon serves didn't make much financial sense to them then, and that continues to be the case now. For this reason we still exist to make sure the members of our electric Cooperative receive the same opportunities and power as their more densely populated neighbors.

The most unique difference that separates us from other utilities and makes us a Cooperative is the fact we are owned by our members, who elect a seven member Board of Directors to represent them. This process continues to be an integral part of our Co-op and was evidenced in this year's election as two of the three

board positions up for election had challengers, with one of the challengers being the successful candidate. The Board of Directors meets monthly to provide the direction, policies, budget and goals of the Co-op, and oversees management of the utility. Ownership, direction, management and employment are all locally controlled and operated. The margins made all stay with the Co-op and its members, not sent to shareholders who reside somewhere else. This system has served us well for over 68 years, and we strive to protect this important heritage for our members.

In keeping with the theme of working for the benefit of our members, it is important for our members to know that during these turbulent economic times, we are being diligent in watching over the financial condition of the Co-op. We are doing our best to keep the cost of doing business in check. We have refinanced all of our loans possible, which will result in savings of over \$640,000 during the remaining terms of the loans. Budgets have been bare bones over the last three years; we implemented wage freezes for all employees for one year and two years for management staff. By keeping our budgets so tight, we reduced our ability to replenish our reserve fund for storm events, so we had little left when hit by the snow storm this year. The Board has approved a 4% rate increase to recapture the storm expenses and loss to tree trimming dollars which will take effect on October 1. The board voted to put \$4 on the base charge and the remainder on the kilowatt hour charge. The average member using 1,200 kWh will see a monthly increase of \$6.41. We would not have increased our rates this year had this event not occurred. We are carefully watching the economy as we begin budget preparations for 2013.

Our members can be assured that Staff and the Board of Directors elected by the membership take their roles seriously, and carefully weigh each decision we make. We carefully balance the needs of the Cooperative to operate as a successful business with the needs of the members. Keeping the lights on and serving our members continues to be our top priority.

Military can hunt for free while on leave

Active members of the U.S. Armed Forces may now be able to get a controlled deer or elk tag so they are able to hunt with family and friends while home in Oregon.

On September 26, ODFW filed a temporary rule that gives each of its wildlife districts the chance to authorize up to 20 controlled deer and 20 controlled elk tags. These tags would be available on a first-come, first-serve basis to Oregon residents who are active members of the Armed Forces currently stationed outside of Oregon, but home in the state on temporary leave during hunting season.

Active members of the U.S. Armed Forces who are interested need to call one of ODFW's four regional offices in the district where they want to hunt: Northwest Region in Clackamas, 971-673-6000; Southwest Region in Roseburg, 541-440-3353; Northeast Region in La Grande, 541-963-2138; or High Desert Region in Bend, 541-388-6363. To get a

tag, they will need to show a copy of an active duty military ID, a copy of current leave papers to document they are currently stationed outside of Oregon and a valid Oregon resident hunting license.

Only certain hunts are eligible for the program. For controlled deer or elk hunts with a bag limit of "antlerless," "spike only" or "antlerless or spike," the hunt needs to have had a minimum of 20 tags available

for the 2012 controlled hunt draw. For hunts that allow an animal with two or more points on the antler, the hunt must have had a minimum of 60 tags available for the 2012 draw. (These hunts will have a bag limit of "one bull elk," "one 3 pt+ elk," "one elk," "buck with visible antler," "buck 2pt+," "one deer," and "one white-tailed deer.") Information on tag numbers and bag limits for the 2012

See Military on page 14

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