



Oregon

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April 11, 2017

**To: The Honorable Brian Clem, Chair
House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee**



**House Bill 2030
Shannon Hurn, Deputy Director for Fish and Wildlife Programs
Derek Broman, Carnivore-Furbearer Coordinator**

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on HB 2030.

House Bill 2030 would amend ORS 497.112 and eliminate the three percent limitation on nonresident general season bear tags. The three percent limitation on nonresident tags for the controlled and limited bear hunts would remain in place in ORS 497.112.

Removal of the three percent limitation could result in an increased number of nonresident general season bear hunters. An increase in nonresident participation will not affect the black bear population status in Oregon and will not impact hunting opportunities for resident hunters during these general seasons. There are four nonresident, general bear hunting zones in Oregon. Only once in over 20 years has the three percent limit been reached in any zone and that occurred in the eastern zone just last year in 2016. It is likely the limitation was reached because the cost of a nonresident bear tag was reduced which increased nonresident participation. Despite the increase in purchased nonresident bear tags, a minimal increase in nonresident general season bear harvest occurred. That low harvest is likely to continue due to low success rates for bear hunters and bear hunting restrictions during many controlled deer and elk hunts.

The Oregon Black Bear Management Plan requires the Department monitor bear mortalities to ensure sustainable harvest. These data indicate the current bear populations across the state are stable or growing. An increase in bear harvest during the general season is not expected to have a negative biological impact on bear populations nor exceed harvest limits identified in the Plan.

In addition to providing some additional nonresident hunting opportunity, if adopted, HB 2030 will streamline Department business processes and reduce the complexity of the bear hunting regulations.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony.

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