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State Endangered Species Act Statutes:

Oregon



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Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act §§ 496.171 – 496.200; §§ 496.992 – 496.996; § 498.026

Current through Chapter 19 of the 2020 First Special Session

§ 496.171. Definitions; date applicable.

Notwithstanding ORS 496.004, with respect to state agency actions taken under ORS 496.171 to 496.182 after July 17, 1995, as used in ORS 496.171 to 496.182:

(1) "Conservation" means the use of methods and procedures necessary to bring a species to the point at which the measures provided under ORS 496.171 to 496.182 are no longer necessary. Such methods and procedures include, but are not limited to, activities associated with scientific resource management such as research, census taking, law enforcement, habitat acquisition and maintenance, propagation and transplantation.

(2) "Native" means indigenous to Oregon, not introduced.

(3) "Species" means any group or population of wildlife that interbreeds and is substantially reproductively isolated.

(4) "Verifiable" means scientific information reviewed by a scientific peer review panel of outside experts who do not otherwise have a vested interest in the process.

§ 496.172. Management authority of commission; duties and responsibilities

In carrying out the provisions of the wildlife laws with regard to the management of wildlife that is a threatened species or an endangered species, the State Fish and Wildlife Commission:

(1) Shall conduct investigations of wildlife species native to this state and shall determine whether any such species is a threatened species or an endangered species.

(2) By rule, shall establish and publish, and from time to time may revise, a list of wildlife species that are threatened species or endangered species. Listed threatened species or endangered species shall be protected as provided in ORS 496.182.

(3) Shall work cooperatively with state agencies that have land management authority or regulatory authority to determine their roles within their statutory obligations in the conservation of endangered species, as described in ORS 496.182 (8).

(4) By rule, shall establish a system of permits for scientific taking of threatened species and endangered species and shall establish a system of state permits for incidental



taking of state-designated threatened species and endangered species not listed by the federal government under such terms and conditions as the commission determines will minimize the impact on the species taken. An incidental taking permit or statement issued by a federal agency for a species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (P.L. 93- 205, 16 U.S.C. 1531), as amended, shall be recognized by the state as a waiver of any state protection measures or requirements otherwise applicable to the actions allowed under the federal permit.

(5) Shall cooperate with the State Department of Agriculture in carrying out the provisions of ORS 564.105.

(6) Shall adopt administrative rules to carry out the provisions of ORS 496.171 to 496.182 and 498.026.

§ 496.176. Threatened or endangered species list; content; periodic review

(1) The lists of threatened species or endangered species established pursuant to ORS 496.172 (2) shall include:

(a) Those species of wildlife listed as of May 15, 1987, as a threatened species or an endangered species pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-205, 16 U.S.C. 1531), as amended; and

(b) Those species determined as of May 15, 1987, by the State Fish and Wildlife Commission to be threatened species or endangered species.

(2) The commission, by rule, may add or remove any wildlife species from either list, or change the status of any species on the lists, upon a determination that the species is or is not a threatened species or an endangered species.

(3) A determination that a species is a threatened species or an endangered species shall be based on documented and verifiable scientific information about the species' biological status. To list a species as a threatened species or an endangered species under ORS 496.004 and 496.171 to 496.182, the commission shall determine that the natural reproductive potential of the species is in danger of failure due to limited population numbers, disease, predation or other natural or human actions affecting its continued existence and, to the extent possible, assess the relative impact of human actions. In addition, the commission shall determine that one or more of the following factors exists:

(a) That most populations are undergoing imminent or active deterioration of their range or primary habitat;

(b) That overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific or educational purposes is occurring or is likely to occur; or

(c) That existing state or federal programs or regulations are inadequate to protect the species or its habitat.

(4) Determinations required by subsection (3) of this section shall be made by the commission on the basis of verifiable scientific and other data after consultation with



federal agencies, other interested state agencies, private landowners, affected cities, affected counties, affected local service districts as defined in ORS 174.116, other states having a common interest in the species and interested persons and organizations.

(5)(a) Any person may petition the commission to, by rule, add, remove or change the status of a species on the list.

(b) A petition shall clearly indicate the action sought and shall include documented scientific information about the species' biological status to justify the requested action.

(c) Within 90 days of receipt of a petition, the commission shall respond in writing to the petitioner indicating whether the petition presents substantial scientific information to warrant the action requested.

(d) If the petition is found to present such information, the commission shall commence rulemaking.

(e) A final determination by the commission concerning the action requested in a petition shall be provided within one year from the date of receipt of the petition, with the option for an additional 12-month extension of time to complete the listing if the commission determines that limited information or other appropriate considerations require the extension.

(f) If the petition is denied, the petitioner may seek judicial review as provided in ORS 183.484.

(6) The commission may determine not to list a species as a threatened species or an endangered species in any of the following cases:

(a) If the species has been listed pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-205, 16 U.S.C. 1531), as amended.

(b) If the species is currently on the list as a sensitive species, or is a candidate species or has been petitioned for listing pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-205, 16 U.S.C. 1531), as amended.

(c) If the species has been determined, pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-205, 16 U.S.C. 1531), as amended, to not qualify as a threatened species or an endangered species.

(7)(a) Notwithstanding subsections (1) to (5) of this section, the commission shall take emergency action to add a species to the list of threatened species or endangered species if it determines there is a significant threat to the continued existence of the species within the state.

(b) The commission shall publish notice of such addition in the Secretary of State's bulletin and shall mail notice to affected or interested persons whose names are included on the commission's mailing list for such purposes.

(c) Such emergency addition shall take effect immediately upon publication in the Secretary of State's bulletin and shall remain valid for a period no longer than one year,



unless during the period the commission completes rulemaking procedures as provided in subsection (5) of this section.

(8) The commission shall periodically review the status of all threatened species and endangered species listed under ORS 496.171 to 496.192. Each species shall be reviewed at least once every five years to determine whether verifiable scientific information exists to justify its reclassification or removal from the list, according to the criteria listed under subsections (3) and (4) of this section. If a determination is made to reclassify a species or remove it from the list, the commission, within 90 days, shall commence rulemaking to change the status of the species.

(9) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, the commission:

(a) May decide not to list a species that otherwise qualifies as a threatened or endangered species within this state if the commission determines that the species is secure outside this state or the species is not of cultural, scientific or commercial significance to the people of this state.

(b) May not include *Branta canadensis leucopareia*, commonly known as the Aleutian Canada goose, on the lists of threatened species or endangered species.

§ 496.182. Programs for protection and conservation; state agency compliance

(1) The burden of protecting and recovering threatened species or endangered species can be a significant cost to the citizens of this state and it is therefore the policy of this state to minimize duplication and overlap between state and federal laws dealing with threatened species or endangered species. To this end, nothing in this section is intended to prevent the adoption of cooperative state or federal programs when such programs provide protection for listed species without significant impact on the primary uses of state lands.

(2)(a) At the time the State Fish and Wildlife Commission adds a species to the list of threatened species or endangered species under ORS 496.172, the commission shall establish by rule quantifiable and measurable guidelines that it considers necessary to ensure the survival of individual members of the species. These guidelines may include take avoidance and protecting resource sites such as spawning beds, nest sites, nesting colonies or other sites critical to the survival of individual members of the species.

(b) The commission shall work with private landowners, affected cities, affected counties and affected local service districts, as defined in ORS 174.116, to mitigate the adverse impact on local economies when the commission adds a species to the list of threatened species or endangered species pursuant to ORS 496.172.

(3) For threatened species listed under ORS 496.172 and in the absence of an approved endangered species management plan described in subsection (8) of this section for an endangered species, if a state agency determines that a proposed action on land it owns or leases, or for which it holds a recorded easement, has the potential to violate the guidelines established under subsection (2) of this section, it shall notify the State Department of Fish and Wildlife. Within 90 days of such notice, the department shall recommend reasonable and



prudent alternatives, if any, to the proposed action which are consistent with the guidelines.

(4) If a state agency fails to adopt the recommendations made under subsection (3) of this section, it shall, after consultation with the department, demonstrate that:

(a) The potential public benefits of the proposed action outweigh the potential harm from failure to adopt the recommendations; and

(b) Reasonable mitigation and enhancement measures shall be taken, to the extent practicable, to minimize the adverse impact of the action on the affected species.

(5) When an action under this section is initiated by a person other than a state agency, the agency shall provide final approval or denial of the proposed action within 120 days of receipt of a written request for final determination.

(6) The provisions of this section do not apply to lands acquired through foreclosures of loans made pursuant to programs of the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

(7) State land owning or managing agencies shall set priorities for establishing endangered species management plans required by subsection (8) of this section after consultation with the commission on the level of biological threat and, in consideration of available funds, the immediacy and seriousness of the threat to any listed species.

(8)(a)(A) Within four months of the listing of an endangered species, the commission, in consultation and cooperation with the state land owning or managing agency, shall determine if state land can play a role in the conservation of endangered species. The commission and the land owning or managing agency shall consider species biology and geography of the land base to determine if the species or its habitat is found on state land. If the species or its habitat is not found on state land, the commission shall determine that state land has no role to play in the conservation of the species.

(B) If the species or its habitat is found on state land, the land owning or managing agency, in consultation with the State Department of Fish and Wildlife, shall determine the role its state land shall serve in the conservation of the endangered species. This role may include, but is not limited to conservation, contribution toward conservation or take avoidance. To carry out its consulting role under this subsection, the department shall provide state agencies with an assessment of the conservation needs of the endangered species. In making this determination, the land owning or managing agency shall balance the statutory requirements, rules and policies applicable to the agency's programs, the social and economic impacts that conservation would have on the state, the conservation needs of the species, the purpose of the land and the roles of other ownership categories. The agency shall balance these factors consistent with the commission's rules related to the biological aspects of species management and the statutory obligations of the land owning or managing agency, including the statutory purpose of the land.

(C) After determining the role its state land shall serve in conservation of the species, the land owning or managing agency, in consultation with the State Department of Fish and Wildlife and consistent with the commission's rules related to endangered species management plans, shall develop and approve an endangered species management plan within 18 months from the date the species is first listed as endangered. Endangered species



management plans shall be based on the statutes, rules and policies applicable to the agency's programs and shall take into account any social or economic impacts that the plan may have on the state. The land owning or managing agency shall submit the plan to the commission for review and approval as provided in subparagraph (D) of this paragraph.

(D) The commission shall review the endangered species management plan approved by the land owning or managing agency under subparagraph (C) of this paragraph to determine whether the plan achieves the role defined for the land under subparagraph (B) of this paragraph. Based on the biology of the endangered species the commission may modify the endangered species management plan if necessary to be consistent with the role the land owning or managing agency has defined for the land under subparagraph (B) of this paragraph and shall approve the plan as submitted or modified within 24 months from the date the species is listed as endangered.

(b) For state agencies other than land owning or managing agencies, the commission, in consultation and cooperation with the agency, shall determine whether the agency can serve a role in the conservation of endangered species. If the commission determines that the agency has a role to play in conservation of the endangered species, the agency shall determine what role it shall serve in conservation of the endangered species. The agency shall make this determination as provided in the commission's rules related to the biological aspects of species management and in a manner consistent with the agency's statutory obligations.

§ 496.192. Effect on commercial forestland or other private land; effect on other laws.

(1) Nothing in ORS 496.004, 496.171 to 496.182 or 498.026 is intended, by itself, to require an owner of any commercial forestland or other private land to take action to protect a threatened species or endangered species, or to impose additional requirements or restrictions on the use of private land.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, other statutes may authorize administrative rules or programs to protect wildlife species, including threatened species or endangered species, and nothing in ORS 496.004, 496.171 to 496.182 or 498.026 shall diminish the force or effect of such rules or programs.

§ 496.992. Penalties

(1) Except as otherwise provided by this section or other law, a violation of any provision of the wildlife laws, or any rule adopted pursuant to the wildlife laws, is a Class A misdemeanor if the offense is committed with a culpable mental state.

(2) Except as otherwise provided by this section or other law, a violation of a provision of the wildlife laws, or a rule adopted pursuant to the wildlife laws, that does not involve the taking of wildlife is a Class D violation if the offense is committed without a culpable mental state.

(3) A violation of a provision of the wildlife laws, or a rule adopted pursuant to the wildlife laws, that involves the taking of wildlife, other than nongame mammals and game birds, is a Class A violation if the offense is committed without a culpable mental state.



(4) A violation of a provision of the wildlife laws, or a rule adopted pursuant to the wildlife laws, that involves the taking of nongame mammals or game birds is a Class C violation if the offense is committed without a culpable mental state.

(5) A violation of a provision of the wildlife laws, or a rule adopted pursuant to the wildlife laws, that involves the size or quantity limits for salmon, steelhead trout and sturgeon is a Class A violation if the offense is committed without a culpable mental state.

(6) A violation of a provision of the wildlife laws, or a rule adopted pursuant to the wildlife laws, relating to the size or quantity limits for fish or shellfish, other than size and quantity limits for salmon, steelhead trout and sturgeon, is a Class C violation if the offense is committed without a culpable mental state.

(7) A violation of the nonresident licensing provisions of ORS 497.102 or 497.121 is a Class A violation if the offense is committed without a culpable mental state.

(8) A violation of ORS 496.994 is a Class A violation if the offense is committed without a culpable mental state.

(9) A violation of ORS 498.136, 498.142 or 498.146 is a Class A violation if the offense is committed without a culpable mental state.

(10) The second and each subsequent conviction within a 10-year period for the taking of a raptor or the taking of game fish with a total value of \$200 or more or the taking of antelope, black bear, cougar, deer, elk, moose, mountain goat or mountain sheep in violation of any provision of the wildlife laws, or any rule adopted pursuant thereto, that occurs more than one hour prior to, or more than one hour subsequent to, a season established for the lawful taking of such game mammals or game fish is a Class C felony if the offense is committed with a culpable mental state.

(11) A violation of a provision of the wildlife laws, or a rule adopted pursuant to the wildlife laws, is a Class C felony if the offense involves any of the following and is committed intentionally, knowingly or recklessly:

(a) The unlawful taking of wildlife with the intent to sell or to barter, trade, import, export or otherwise exchange the wildlife or a part of the wildlife.

(b) Except as provided in this paragraph, the second and each subsequent unlawful taking of a game mammal during a 12-month period. This paragraph does not apply to the taking of silver gray squirrel.

(c) The unlawful taking of a moose, mountain sheep, Rocky Mountain goat or wolf.

(d) The third and each subsequent taking of a game fish in excess of a bag limit during a 12-month period.



(e) The second and each subsequent unlawful taking of nonadipose clipped steelhead during a 12-month period.

(f) The unlawful taking of members of the family Acipenseridae that are commonly known as green sturgeon or that are oversized and commonly known as white sturgeon.

(g) The unlawful taking of wildlife that is a threatened species or endangered species.

(12) If a person is convicted of a Class A misdemeanor under subsection (1) of this section, in addition to any other penalty authorized by law, the court shall impose a fine that is:

(a) Equal to the maximum fine described in ORS 161.635 (1)(a), if the person has two or more previous convictions for a Class A misdemeanor under subsection (1) of this section or if the offense involves taking three or more times the daily bag limit of any wildlife.

(b) Not less than one-half of the maximum fine described in ORS 161.635 (1)(a), if the offense involves:

(A) Failing to release a sturgeon more than six feet in length;

(B) Unlawfully taking wildlife to sell, barter, trade, import or export the wildlife, or parts thereof, or selling, bartering, trading, importing or exporting unlawfully taken wildlife, or parts thereof; or

(C) Taking a raptor and the person has a previous conviction for taking a raptor.

(c) Not less than one-fourth of the maximum fine described in ORS 161.635 (1)(a), if the offense involves taking a raptor and the person does not have a previous conviction for taking a raptor.

(13) If more than one minimum fine described in subsection (12) of this section applies, the court shall impose a fine in an amount that is not less than the highest of the applicable minimum fines.

(14)(a) If a court imposes a fine as penalty for an offense under the wildlife laws that involves the unlawful taking or killing of wildlife listed under ORS 496.705 (2), the court shall order that the defendant pay all or a portion of the fine separately to the clerk of the court for paying over to the State Fish and Wildlife Commission. The clerk shall pay over to the commission the amount that the court ordered the defendant to pay separately for that purpose. The amount that the court orders to be paid separately to the clerk for paying over to the commission shall be the lesser of:

(A) The amount of the fine imposed; or

(B) The amount that the commission could recover under ORS 496.705 (2) as damages for the unlawful taking or killing.



(b) If the amount that the commission could recover under ORS 496.705 (2) as damages for the unlawful taking or killing of wildlife is more than the maximum fine established for the offense under ORS 153.018, 161.625 or 161.635 or a specific fine statute, notwithstanding ORS 153.018, 161.625 or 161.635 or any specific fine statute, the maximum fine for the offense is the amount that the commission could recover under ORS 496.705 (2) as damages for the unlawful taking or killing.

(c) If an amount paid over to the commission under this subsection is less than the amount that the commission could recover under ORS 496.705 (2) as damages for the unlawful taking or killing of wildlife, payment of the amount does not prevent the commission from bringing an action under ORS 496.705 (2) to recover damages for the unlawful taking or killing. However, notwithstanding ORS 496.705, the amount recoverable under ORS 496.705 (2) by the commission as damages for the unlawful taking or killing shall be reduced by the amount paid to the commission under this subsection from a fine imposed for the unlawful taking or killing.

(15)(a) In addition to any other penalty authorized by law, the court shall order the State Fish and Wildlife Commission to revoke all licenses, tags and permits issued to a person in the manner provided for in ORS 497.415 (3), (5) and (6) if the person is convicted of:

(A) A Class A misdemeanor under subsection (1) of this section if the offense involves:

(i) A violation of ORS 498.042; or

(ii) The unlawful taking of wildlife to sell, barter, trade, import or export the wildlife, or parts thereof, or selling, bartering, trading, importing or exporting unlawfully taken wildlife, or parts thereof; or

(B) A Class C felony under subsection (10) of this section.

(b) Notwithstanding ORS 497.415 (5), upon having a license, tag or permit revoked under paragraph (a)(A)(i) of this subsection for the second time in a 10-year period, a person is prohibited from applying for or obtaining another such license, tag or permit.

(16) Upon the third conviction within a 10-year period for violation of a provision of the wildlife laws, or a rule adopted pursuant to the wildlife laws, the court shall order all guns, boats, vehicles, traps, fishing apparatus, electronic devices and other implements used in committing the third or subsequent offense to be seized and forfeited to the State of Oregon, to be turned over to the State Fish and Wildlife Commission for disposal in the manner provided for in ORS 496.680.

(17) As used in this section:

(a) "Culpable mental state" has the meaning given that term in ORS 161.085.



(b) "Previous conviction" includes a conviction entered in the same sentencing proceeding if the conviction is for a separate criminal episode as defined in ORS 131.505.

(c) "Raptor" means a member of the order Falconiformes or Strigiformes and includes owls, hawks, falcons, eagles, osprey and harriers.

§ 496.994. Unlawful to obstruct the taking of wildlife

(1) A person commits the offense of obstructing the taking of wildlife if the person, having no right to do so, interferes with the lawful taking, or the process of taking, of wildlife by another with the intent to prevent the taking.

(2) Obstructing the taking of wildlife is a Class A misdemeanor.

§ 496.996. Attempting to take wildlife decoy deemed unlawful taking of wildlife

(1) A person commits the crime of unlawful taking of wildlife if:

(a) The person discharges a firearm or other hunting device, traps, or acts toward a wildlife decoy in any manner consistent with an unlawful taking of wildlife; and

(b) The wildlife decoy is under the control of law enforcement officials.

(2) As used in this section, "wildlife decoy" means any simulation or replication of wildlife, in whole or in part, used by law enforcement officials for purposes of enforcing state wildlife laws.

§ 498.026. Prohibited transactions in threatened or endangered wildlife species

(1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, no person shall take, import, export, transport, purchase or sell, or attempt to take, import, export, transport, purchase or sell, any threatened species or endangered species, or the skin, hides or other parts thereof, or any article made in whole or in part from the skin, hide or other parts of any threatened species or endangered species.

(2) Nothing in subsection (1) of this section is intended to prevent the taking, importation, transportation or sale of any threatened species or endangered species in such manner as may be authorized in ORS 496.172, 497.218 to 497.238, 497.298 or 497.308.

(3) Nothing in this section applies to the resale of used skins, hides or other parts of a threatened species or endangered species or an article made in whole or part thereof if the seller acquired the item sold prior to October 5, 1973.

