



April 8, 2020

The Honorable Kate Brown
Governor of Oregon
State Capitol Building
900 Court Street NE, Suite 254
Salem, OR 97301

Governor Brown,

Thank you for your leadership responding to the evolving challenges of COVID-19. With the public's health being the utmost priority and in keeping with your Emergency Orders, we would like to request you retain, to the greatest extent possible, opportunities for Oregonians to responsibly enjoy our outdoors. Hunting, fishing, recreational shooting, and being outside allow people to better cope with the emergency restrictions and provide healthy mental and physical outlets.

Outdoor sporting traditions are cherished activities of Oregonians and the Oregon Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus appreciates how you are safeguarding these traditions during this unprecedented time. To this end, we would like to make the following requests regarding hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting.

Hunting

Spring turkey season is quickly approaching, and the hunting community is eagerly anticipating its arrival. We request that you keep hunting seasons open as scheduled, continue to allow access to our state's vast array of wildlife management areas and other public lands, and to encourage sportsmen and women to be afield in their local areas. Social distancing is a part of the turkey hunting experience as hunters often go out on their own or, if with a partner, separate themselves from each other more than the recommended 6-foot distance.

Fishing & Shellfish

Recreational fishing is an excellent opportunity for people to practice social distancing while procuring meals for their families and enjoying the associated mental and physical health benefits. For this reason, we request fishing tackle retailers and manufacturers be considered essential businesses ensuring people have access to necessary equipment to participate.

Recreational Shooting

Shooting ranges serve a wide array of recreational citizen groups in this country. It is well-recognized that recreational shooters are the financial backbone for the American System of Conservation Funding (ASCF), a "user-pays, public-benefits" structure, in which those that consumptively use public resources pay for the privilege, and in some cases the right, to do so. Private shooting ranges have the capability to easily put into practice social distancing guidelines outlined by the CDC while continuing to operate. We encourage you to also keep public shooting ranges that are owned and/or operated by the state open for business during this time. Allowing sportsmen and women access to these facilities is essential to the funding of our nation's conservation efforts.

During particularly stressful times, many sportsmen and women turn to some of America's most time-honored traditions as an avenue of maintaining mental and physical health. We hope you will consider taking steps to promote hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting, by encouraging these constituents to enjoy the outdoors in a safe and healthy manner consistent with the safe distancing guideline put forth by your Emergency Orders.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this critical matter. Should you require additional information on this, or other sportsmen-related topics, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,



Oregon Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus
Co-Chair Representative Brad Witt



Oregon Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus
Co-Chair Representative Sherrie Sprenger