

Habitat management for

# PRONGHORN ANTELOPE

*pronghorn antelope*



In the State of Oregon

The pronghorn antelope (*Antilocarpa americana*) is a big game animal of lesser importance in Oregon because of its limited distribution and numbers. It inhabits the high desert areas and sagebrush lands of southeastern Oregon. Hunting is limited to special permits only. The State Game Commission has been annually issuing about 500 to 600 permits.

## HABITAT NEEDS

Food. The foods eaten by antelope, on a yearly basis, are about 64 percent browse, 32 percent forbs, and 4 percent grasses.

Choice foods of antelope include alfalfa, dandelion, oats, poverty weed, prickly lettuce, sagebrush (big, black, and silver), saltbrush (four-wing), sweet clover, and wheat.

Fair foods include balsamroot, biscuitroot, bitterbrush, eriogonum, groundsel, juniper, rabbitbrush, rose, skunkbrush, snakeweed, sunflower, wheatgrass and winterfat.

Cover. Antelope normally do not depend upon cover for escape but rely upon good eyesight and speed. Antelope normally avoid cover which is more than 24 inches high. Antelope kids are generally hidden in cover. An innate curiosity has led to the downfall of many an antelope.

Water. Antelope require water and will travel considerable distances for it. Seasonal water supplies often affect antelope distribution.

## MANAGEMENT

Competition for food is greatest between antelope and sheep. Antelope feed is probably enhanced by good grazing practices by cattle and horses because tender green feed is encouraged. Alfalfa and wheat are very desirable to antelope. A few acres will attract and feed antelope.

Fences are important in antelope management. Antelope usually go through or under fences rather than over the top. If freedom of movement is desired, about 15 inch spacings should be provided in the fence. If keeping antelope out of crop fields is desired, then fences should consist of woven wire over 35 inches in height with barb wire spaced no more than 11 inches above the woven wire. Antelope easily cross cattle guards.

The location and development of dependable water supplies can also enhance antelope numbers.