

**HUNTER EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING NOTES
July 31, 2021, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Teams Meeting**

IAC Members - Representing		WDFW Staff	Guests
Region 1	Hal Sims (excused)	Dave Whipple Hunter Education Division Manager	
	Sam Grubbs		
Region 2	Eric Lauver	Kris Thorson Hunter Education Division Specialist	
	Jen Syrowicz		
Region 3	James Conway (excused)	Aaron Garcia Region 3 Hunter Education Field Coordinator	
	Rich Mann (excused)		
	Randy Absolon		
Region 4	John Malek (absent)	Steve Dazey Region 4 Hunter Education Field Coordinator	
	Bob Palmer		
	Mikel Edwards		
Region 5	Steve Mills	Amy Elliott Region 5 Hunter Education Field Coordinator	
	Jim Sevier		
Region 6	Jim Gleiter	Bill Montgomery Region 6 Hunter Education Field Coordinator	
	Marty Kotzke		
	Larry Lufkin		
HERO	Butch Buffaloe	Mick Cope Wildlife Program Deputy Director	

⦿ **Welcome & General Interest Announcements (20 minutes)**

- ⊕ Introduction of members

⦿ **IAC Recruitment Debrief (5 minutes)**

- ⊕ Eleven applications were received this year.
- ⊕ No region 1 applications were received in 2021.
- ⊕ Four current IAC members reapplied for the IAC.
- ⊕ Members who were appointed are:
 - Eric Lauver
 - Jim Conway
 - Jim Sevier
 - Marty Kotzke
 - Herb Jessen

⦿ **IAC Member Roundtable and Communications with Regional Instructors (15 minutes)**

- ⊕ Has anyone been in communication with their HEI and have information to report?
 - Sam received responses from a couple HEI about not wanting to continue as an instructor for various reasons.
 - Sam also heard that the Pend Oreille team wont hold classes this year.
 - Butch lost an instructor because he moved back east and has heard of another instructor moving back east as well.
 - Mikel suggested holding in person get-togethers with HEI to talk about restarting etc.
 - Bob suggested we have a brush up guide or some other means to restart in-person teaching.

⦿ **A few words from Wildlife Program Management (15 minutes)**

- ⊕ Mick Cope joined the meeting to share a few words of thanks to the IAC and instructors in general for their work.
- ⊕ The IAC members introduced themselves to Mick.
- ⊕ Mick expressed his thanks and awe at the amount of time the IAC members and all HEI give to teach the next generation of hunters.
- ⊕ Mick also wanted to touch on the COVID protocols and the SOP briefly and discussed the difficult task that restarting classes is and how it may change.
- ⊕ Changes will be based on Department of Health and Labor and Industries guidance to keep people safe and healthy.

⦿ **WDFW Updates (30 minutes)**

- ⊕ Student manual update
 - Kris and Amy had a meeting in early July with the Kalkomey publication team regarding the new manual and the changes.
 - The publication team had questions on some of the changes.
 - The publication team will work on the new manual and send WDFW a draft to review later this year.

- Hunter education staff will review the draft and will ask the IAC members to review the draft for completeness as well.
 - Kris set the date WDFW will need the manual as January 1, 2022 because a lot of traditional materials are currently in circulation and instructor teams most likely have the manuals they will need for traditional classes once they can be held.
- ⊕ Student statistics
- As of July 29, 8,623 students completed the online only course.
 - In 2020, January through July saw 10,687 students complete hunter education.
 - The 2021 student certifications are 81 percent of the 2020 certifications for the same timeframe.
 - Jim Sevier asked what the 2019 statistics were for the same timeframe and there were 4,904 certification January through July in 2019.
- ⊕ Instructors & Instructor Applicants
- There have not been any certifications of applicants due to COVID restrictions.
 - Kris was unsure of how many instructor applications WDFW has received in the last three months.
- ⊕ Brief Regional Field Coordinator Updates
- Aaron Garcia – Region 3 Field Coordinator
 - Aaron has been in contact with a Washington national guard commander and will be getting four new venues and certifying more instructors.
 - Aaron had an instructor call him and let him know with the current restrictions that their team was not going to teach in 2021.
 - He is also planning on going to meet with the teams that are planning on teaching in 2021 in regions 1, 2, and 3 when he can.
 - Aaron is also working with the First Hunt Foundation folks on a mentored deer hunt for youth hunters in region 1.
 - Steve Dazey – Region 4 Field Coordinator
 - Steve has been in contact with a new venue on Whidbey Island and he will be visiting the location next week.
 - Another venue has completed some upgrades and will have an air rifle range so the team that uses the venue can now have a live-fire component.
 - Steve has also had to pick up equipment from some instructors because they are moving or retiring.
 - Steve met with the new Captain in region 4, Captain Maurstad, and she has set a mandate that each of her officers will attend a hunter education class each quarter.

- Larry had a comment that the instructors might give the officer a heads up on what is being covered or what items the officer could possibly cover.
 - Amy Elliott – Region 5 Field Coordinator
 - Amy is starting to connect Master Hunters to volunteer projects.
 - She is keeping in contact with her applicants to keep them engaged.
 - Amy is also holding field skills evaluations and collecting equipment from instructors who are retiring.
 - Bill Montgomery – Region 6 Field Coordinator
 - Bill is working on a new venue in Olalla.
 - He has worked on in-person field skills evaluations as well.
- ⊙ **WDFW Budget and Legislative Update (15 minutes)**
- ⊕ There have not been any budget or legislative updates of note.
- ⊙ **COVID update and Standard Operating Procedures (60 minutes)**
- ⊕ Dave is working with the safety office on how to craft the SOP and how it will affect the Hunter Education Program.
 - ⊕ There will be several SOPs that will be a part of the program moving forward in conjunction with the Hunter Education SOP to restart classes.
 - ⊕ He is working on making the SOP as clear and concise as possible for the HEI.
 - ⊕ Dave wanted to remind the IAC that the HEI are considered non-paid employees and are held to the same requirements as paid staff.
 - ⊕ Before HEI can start teaching they need to go through a couple steps and review some other SOPs and a PowerPoint presentation.
 - ⊕ Once the SOP is completed and the process is finalized, WDFW will send an email and post the information onto the HEI website.
 - ⊕ Also, the HEI will need to complete the acknowledgement form acknowledging they attest they completed the training and will abide by WDFW COVID restrictions etc.
 - ⊕ HEI will be able to verify their COVID vaccination so they can follow vaccination verified instructor guidelines.
 - ⊕ It is the HEIs personal choice on if they want to verify their vaccination status or not.
 - ⊕ The vaccination verification will only be visual and WDFW will only identify the instructors vaccination card was viewed on XX/XX/XXXX date and is now verified.
 - ⊕ Instructors are not to take pictures of the vaccination card and email them to the field coordinators because this would create a public record of a HIPPA protected record.
 - ⊕ Butch noted that asking about a person’s vaccination is possibly not appropriate due to HIPPA.
 - This would be a voluntary program and WDFW would not be asking the HEI or requiring an HEI to prove vaccination to start teaching again.

- ⊕ Butch brought up the verification will create separate rules to the HEI that are verified vs those that are not verified.
 - Dave initially was creating the rules for all HEI in class having to hold themselves to the same non-vaccinated or not-verified instructor to not create ambiguity but has changed his thinking based on some HEI feedback.
- ⊕ Bob had a question about deviations based on counties vs the state regarding COVID restrictions and what this may do to the SOP.
 - Dave is not sure what would happen if a county was to backslide into a different phase of the governor's plan, but the state may have to default to the most restrictive guidelines.
- ⊕ Steve Mills asked, what if an instructor was to go around with no mask, what should the other team members do while awaiting further contact with their field coordinator.
 - The guidance is to not ask the HEI their vaccination status, but Dave is also not sure what the process may be at that point but will get back to the IAC on the answer.
- ⊕ Mikel thinks that WDFW is on the right track with the vaccination verification because it is something he has seen at his place of work.
- ⊕ Jim Sevier had a question about what the process will be for students who do not wear masks, but we cannot ask if they have been vaccinated or if an instructor is not wearing a mask and asked about their vaccination status.
 - WDFW has a sign that instructs students that are not vaccinated that they are required to wear a mask, but instructors cannot require students to wear masks or ask about student's vaccination status.
- ⊕ Sam has concerns about going forward with changes based on the current state of COVID.
- ⊕ Sam asked if the students would have to sign off on an attestation form and will a temperature be required before admitting students.
 - The attestation from the public and temperatures will not be required from the public. Instructors must attest before they start the class through an online portal before they report for each day of class.
- ⊕ Larry has concerns about being a vaccination police like the airlines are having to deal with currently regarding mask requirements or other challenges and what do we do if an instructor decides not to complete the requirements to teach or does not follow the protocols.
 - WDFW's SOP clearly identifies that HEI must complete the required trainings and a couple other requirements to be able to teach hunter education. If an instructor doesn't complete the trainings or complete the attestation, WDFW will have to have a conversation with the instructor.
- ⊕ Sam asked when we are going to start the vaccination verification process.
 - Dave is not sure when this may be started but he hopes this will be soon.
- ⊕ Butch asked about the final portion of the email Dave sent out in that noted WDFW would not decertify based on teaching and if this was carved in stone.

- Dave said yes, if someone does not teach in 2021 for whatever reason they will not be decertified.
- ⊕ Butch also had a question on moving forward, is WDFW going to remove the online only course and return to pre-COVID classes.
 - The short answer is no because we do not have a handle on how many classes may be held and we do not know the public demand for the class at this time.
- ⊕ Butch asked a follow up to see if the under 9 students will be required to have a field skills evaluation with a field coordinator as it has been or are they able to take a class.
 - The under 9 students can sign up for a class and should use that way to complete the field skills evaluation requirement.
- ⊕ Butch received comments from other instructors that have plans already set or the range they use is booked up and traditional classes may be extremely difficult to hold.
 - WDFW is giving those instructors who want to teach the ability to teach.
- ⊕ Randy commented that the rules WDFW has laid out is very similar to his workplace.
- ⊕ WDFW is sending out the boxes of personal protective equipment (PPE) to those instructors who have contacted John Wisner or their field coordinator and are planning on holding a class in 2021.
 - Randy received his box today so the boxes may already be on the way.
- ⊕ In the PPE box, WDFW is sending 10 signs instructors can post at classes.
- ⊕ The Kalkomey email to students will cover the requirements for attendance.
- ⊕ Jim Sevier asked if the PPE boxes are being sent to all chiefs or just those that have posted classes.
 - WDFW is sending the PPE to those instructors who have requested the box from John or their field coordinator.
- ⊕ Currently the SOP has no class capacity.
- ⊕ The classes will have different requirements based on indoor vs outdoor.
- ⊕ Potlucks or open food is not allowed currently. Teams may provide single serve prepackaged snacks if they choose.
- ⊕ The team will have to designate a COVID monitor to help remind students and instructors about the protocols.
- ⊕ There will also be instructions on what to do if a student starts to feel sick at class or develops symptoms within 48 hours after the class.
- ⊕ There will also be a checklist or attestation page that the HEI will follow the SOP.
- ⊕ The agency has crafted the SOP to help protect employees and volunteers who are working for WDFW.
- ⊕ Jim Gleiter asked when the classes will start to be approved by field coordinators.
 - Dave thinks that this will happen very soon. He will work on Monday to get the final questions and guidance completed before the information is posted.

- ⊕ Dave brought up a field skills evaluation may get sticky because students 9 and over will still become certified when they complete the online course, however some students may choose to take a field skills evaluation for the in-person interaction with HEI.
- ⊕ If certified students decide to attend a field skills evaluation and do not pass the quiz or have muzzle control issues, the instructors should use this as a teaching moment.
- ⊕ Dave indicated that if an instructor feels they cannot use the instance as a teaching moment and an instructor decides to fail a student then WDFW will work to remove their certification.

⊙ **Lunch (30 minutes)**

⊙ **Proposed policy manual changes (45 minutes)**

- ⊕ Kris sent the proposed changes out to the IAC members at the start of July for review.
- ⊕ No questions, comments, or concerns were heard from IAC.
- ⊕ Kris proposed sending out the updated manual to HEI and to have it go into effect on January 1, 2022 and the IAC agreed.

⊙ **Debrief of 2021 IHEA-USA meeting (45 minutes)**

- ⊕ The IAC was asked if they attended the IHEA-USA conference.
- ⊕ Only Bob Palmer attended but he had issues with his audio and video.
- ⊕ The after-class presentations were reviewed by Bob and there were some positive pieces of information and some were not beneficial.
- ⊕ Dave feels the new executive director of IHEA-USA is steering the group in a positive direction.
- ⊕ Amy felt that she got more out of the program than she had anticipated because the short description was maybe misleading.

⊙ **Instructor recruitment marketing for pamphlets (15 minutes)**

- ⊕ Kris notes that this was a good idea but there has been a change of vendor and we do not know what the space and feasibility is.
- ⊕ Kris will talk to the internal staff to determine if this is possible.
- ⊕ We can revisit this if the pamphlet has room at our next meeting.

⊙ **Instructor incentive permits drawing presentation (30 minutes)**

- ⊕ There have been rumblings from instructors over the years about the permit draws and the fairness of the draws.
- ⊕ Amy put together information on how the process is complete and presented the information about the draw process to the IAC.
- ⊕ The multi-season drawings are completed through licensing by using the same draw system as the other special hunt drawings.
- ⊕ Pre 2021, WDFW completed the draw process manually by drawing names for each table at the Natural Resources Building in Olympia.

- ⊕ In 2021, Jan checked to confirm eligibility for the applicable tables, verified to eliminate duplicates, etc. as the applications were received.
- ⊕ Applications are then numbered in the order received (first received in each table is #1, next is #2, and so on).
- ⊕ WDFW used the online program Random.org to randomly draw numbers.
- ⊕ For each table, WDFW draws one set of non-repeating numbers.
- ⊕ We pull the winners and alternates all at the same time, so we don't get potential repeats by doing two separate drawings.
- ⊕ We take the numbered applications that correspond to the drawn numbers to verify the winners.
- ⊕ Each table is drawn separately.
- ⊕ Generally, there are at least 4 people in attendance for the drawing: Jan, at least one other HE staff member, a WDFW staff member outside HE, and a volunteer instructor (which changes every year and rotates regions).
- ⊕ In 2021, due to Covid, we were limited in our capacity to have staff and volunteers together for the drawing.
- ⊕ As a result, the instructor incentive permit draw was held at the WDFW Warehouse, administered online by Amy Elliott, and witnessed by Jan Ulijohn and John Wisner.
- ⊕ In future years there will also be a WDFW staff member from outside Hunter Education and a volunteer instructor will also be invited.
- ⊕ WDFW is planning on putting out the information presented to IAC about how the draw process is completed and what the percentage of drawing a permit in the future.
- ⊕ Dave asked for input from IAC about how to get this information to instructors.
- ⊕ WDFW decided to send the information out to instructors via broadcast message and posting it to the website as well as adding the process into the incentive permits background.

⊙ **Adjourn**