



MASTER HUNTER ADVISORY GROUP
WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, W 98501-1091

Notes for MHAG Meeting #40
October 6, 2017 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Washington Cattlemen’s Association, Ellensburg

MHAG Members		WDFW Staff	Guests / Coordinators
Region 1	Marji Bobiak (excused)	Dave Whipple Hunter Education Division Manager Kris Thorson Hunter Education Division Specialist Aaron Garcia Region 3 Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator Steve Dazey Region 4 Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator Bill Montgomery Region 6 Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator Captain Bob Weaver Region 3 Enforcement	
	Shawn Woodard		
	Tim Bruya		
Region 2	Carissa Craghead, Secretary		
	Jim Hope		
Region 3	Kyle Smith		
	Tom Conrads		
Region 4	David Floyd (excused)		
	Jeff Larsen		
	John McAuliffe, Vice		
Region 5	Chris Brong		
	George Dennis, Chair		
Region 6	Scott Vousboukis		
	James Zimmerman		
	Howard “Shane” Briel (excused)		

Procedural Business

- Call to order and announcements
- Introduction of members and guests
- Approval of Meeting #39 notes from April 28, 2017
 - Moved to approve by Jim Zimmerman
 - Seconded by Chris Brong
 - Approved unanimously

Old Business

- **Social Media Discussion (Kris Thorson)**
 - WDFW appreciates the presentation given by John and Jeff at the last meeting.
 - Dave and Kris haven't had a chance to connect with the correct staff regarding social media.
 - Kris will place this topic on the agenda for the January meeting.
 - Scott proposed taking baby steps and start with a closed Facebook group.

New Business

- **WDFW Reports and Updates (Kris Thorson)**
 - MHPP 2017 Applicants (*Kris Thorson*)
 - There are 350 Master Hunter Applicants for 2017.
 - Of those, 97 Applicants have taken the test to date (28%).
 - Of those 97, 58 passed on the first time (60%).
 - Of the 39 who failed the first time, 22 have retaken the test (56%)
 - Of those 22, 17 passed the test the second time (77%).
 - Forty-five applicants have completed all requirements to date (13%).
 - Region 3 Volunteer Projects & Coordination (*Aaron Garcia*)
 - Aaron had many little projects this year.
 - He has received less interest in MH projects than in years past.
 - Aaron worked with several MH on a Wenas shooting area project to count shooters at the current site.
 - He has a woody debris project coming up this fall.
 - Aaron also worked with Jeff Bernatowitz to hold a mentored dove hunt in September.
 - He has been working on mentored turkey hunt logistics and scheduling.
 - There was also a mentored youth hunt for pheasants at Reds fly shop Aaron helped facilitate.
 - There are tentative plans for a waterfowl clinic and hunt this fall.

- He is also looking into the feasibility of mentored deer hunts in the future.
- Aaron is always looking for private lands for future mentor hunts.
- Region 4 Volunteer Projects & Coordination (*Steve Dazey*)
 - The Snoqualmie wildlife area manager has been in the process of reworking the wildlife area planning document.
 - Steve has had some volunteers on the Skagit river area to complete some fence replacements.
 - There have also been requests to help haze elk in the North Bend area.
- Region 6 Volunteer Projects & Coordination (*Bill Montgomery*)
 - Bill has had a lot of small projects lately.
 - He has had MH cutting canary grass.
 - Bill is working on a pheasant clinic and hunt going this season.
 - There will be work parties this fall to replant/reseed the burned area of the scatter creek wildlife area.
- Hunter Education Division Specialist (*Kris Thorson*)
 - Kris worked on National Hunting and Fishing Day (NHFD) planning for the past several months.
 - He also worked on updating the trapper education PowerPoint.
 - Kris has worked with George on the new Master Hunter materials that will be presented later in the meeting.
- **MHAG Member Updates (*MHAG members*)**
 - MHAG member volunteer work/activities, news/issues from your region, etc.
 - Jeff Larsen
 - Jeff is working on becoming a hunter education instructor.
 - He also volunteered at NHFD.
 - Tom Conrads
 - Tom proctored a MH test in August and no applicants showed.
 - Carissa Craghead
 - Carissa volunteered at NHFD on the archery range.
 - She also taught a traditional class at the Sportsman's Warehouse in Moses Lake.
 - Jim Zimmerman
 - Jim volunteered at NHFD.
 - John McCauliffe
 - John has taught five hunter education classes since September.
 - Scott Vousboukis

- Scott has taught one traditional class and six online classes.
 - He also volunteers a lot with releasing pheasants on Olympic Peninsula pheasant release areas.
 - Scott also takes youth out pheasant hunting.
- Tim Bruya
 - Tim is going to start working on Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge volunteer efforts
- Kyle Smith
 - Kyle has worked on a couple projects in the Teanaway area.
 - He worked with The Ruffed Grouse Society to place a fence to save a riparian area.
 - Kyle also worked with back country hunters and anglers and removed about 5 miles of fencing materials from a back county area.
- Shawn Woodard
 - Shawn worked with mentoring MH applicants recently.
- Chris Brong
 - Chris volunteered at NHFD
- Jim Hope
 - Jim taught a few online classes.
 - He had a MH depredation tag and removed a deer after several days of hunting.
 - Jim also helped a disabled hunter with dressing his deer on the property in which he was hunting with the depredation tag.
- George Dennis
 - George volunteered at NHFD
 - He also worked with Kris Thorson on the new MH study materials.
- **NHFD 2017 recap (*Kris Thorson and Steve Dazey*)**
 - There were 750 youth registered with an average age of 9.5 years old.
 - Only 443 had shot a bow or firearm previously, which was 59%.
 - Only 72 had previously taken Hunter Education, which is 9.6%
 - WDFW Fish Program stocked 850 1-1/2 lb. trout in the lake.
 - WDFW had 100+ volunteers at the event.
 - There were 14 non-government organizations that participated in the festivities.
 - Major donors were Stillaguamish Indian Tribe, NRA Foundation, Don Curtis and Volterra Restaurant, as well as Camp Pigott.

- **Group special hunt submission discussion (*Kris Thorson*)**
 - Currently MHs are allowed to submit for a Master Hunter Special Permit as a group.
 - This poses some challenges when deploying MHs equitably using the draw list, as well as expectations by MHs to be allowed on the property at the same time.
 - WDFW is proposing to remove this option and only allow individual submissions to the MH Special Hunt Category.
 - MHAG is in consensus on recommending that the department remove the group option for Master Hunter Hunts.
 - There was a request to add into the MH Newsletter information on how the draw system works.
- **New MHPP Materials (*Kris Thorson*)**
 - These study materials are proposed by Kris to replace the current materials.
 - Members are requested to review the materials over the next few months with a critical eye to ensure the department is presenting the right information.
 - The membership will have an in depth discussion of the new materials at the January meeting. We will go over the materials and possibly take the proposed updated test that George and Kris have worked on.
- **MHAG Strategic Plan (*George D./Kris T./Capt. Weaver*)**
 - Dave wanted to make sure to note that a lot of the issues, challenges, and improvements we are currently working on and discussing at the meetings touch the MHAG Strategic Plan.
- **MHPP Improvements Tracking Document (*Kris Thorson*)**
 - This document was put together to track what is being done to address challenges within the MHPP.
 - The information that is identified in the document is from a meeting with hunter education staff members, wildlife conflict staff, private lands biologists, and regional program managers.
 - The tracking document will allow easy tracking of when changes were made in the program and if the changes created the intended change in behavior.
 - Some of these suggestions will be implemented and some may not.
 - Initial comments on this document are due to Kris by December 31.
- **Master Hunter Orientation PowerPoint (*Kris Thorson*)**
 - The PowerPoint is intended to be used to orient new applicants to the MHPP, as well as reinforce the goals, objectives, requirements, administration, etc. of the program with all current MH who attend.
 - It is designed to incorporate some of the suggestions in the MHPP Improvements Tracking Document.

- The MHAG and WDFW staff members went through the PowerPoint and made changes and additions per suggestions.
- MHAG member comments are due by October 26 to Kris.
- **CORT update (*Shane Briel*) – Reported by Scott Vousboukis**
 - The Matheny habitat project will kick off again at the end of January and will start with sawyer training.
 - Eyes in the woods is still looking for a volunteer with a piece of heavy equipment capable of digging/installing a gate in the Matheny area.
 - The Matheny habitat appreciation weekend occurred over the summer and involved volunteer efforts followed by a BBQ to thank those who made the effort a success so far.
 - Clearwater cabin maintenance event occurred over the summer. WDFW's cabin continues to see vast improvements.
 - No CORT issues have been reported. There is still the problem of no region 1 CORT Coordinator but that may be resolved soon. We may have a volunteer who will assume the duties.

Conclusion

- **Recap Action Items (*Secretary Craghead*)**
 - WDFW to internally discuss social media information
 - MHPP Orientation comments from MHAG due by Oct 26.
 - MHAG to read and make comments to Kris on the improvements tracking document by Dec 31.
- **Agenda Topics for Next Meeting**
 - Social media
 - MH study materials critical discussion
 - MHPP test by MHAG members
 - MHPP tracking document status update
- **Good of the Order (*All; General discussion items by MHAG*)**
 - George encouraged MHAG members to submit an inspirational article or information to the MHPP newsletter that would be appropriate for Master Hunters.
 - Washington Cattleman's Association has a new Executive Vice President and she was happy to have been recognized in the MHPP newsletter.
 - Meetings dates for 2018
 - January 19
 - April 20
 - July 20
 - Oct 26

- **Adjourn**