



**WDFW Enforcement Program Advisory Committee
March 1, 2008
1000-1500
Ellensburg, WA**

Members in Attendance	
Dave Akehurst	Ray Boone
George Brady	Dave Croonquist, Co-Chair
Pat Hatchel	Ray Hansen, Chair
Bob Holtfreter	Jim Kujala
Chris Marlahan	Ed Owens
Josh Pearson	Gary Terrell
WDFW Staff:	
Bruce Bjork, Chief	Rich Mann, Region 3 Captain
Sean Carrell, Problem Wildlife Coord.	
Members Absent:	
Rex Anderson	Vince Hawkins
Holly Ledgerwood	Brad Manchas

Chair Ray Hansen Convened Meeting at 1000

[January Meeting Minutes](#) Reviewed and Approved

George Brady commented on the discussion of “approved absences.” He wants to ensure members are not removed from the advisory committee for legitimate absences. Discussion ensued and it was decided that legitimate absences would not be grounds for removal from the committee.

Agenda Reviewed and Revised

Additions to the agenda were made by: George Brady (NWCO program), Jim Kujala (Web site and poaching rewards), and Gary Terrell (violations/tickets).

Chief’s Report

Law Enforcement Staffing

There is currently only one vacant position. Enforcement hired one officer from Idaho Fish and Game on February 3, and a Sergeant from the Stevens County Sheriff’s Office. There are two retirement announcements for July



and August. Enforcement is also anticipating four more retirements that have not yet been announced.

The Enforcement Program is working with other private vendors to receive funding. PacifiCorp is providing funding for one fulltime officer position, and they will fund three more in the future. One will start April 1 in Woodland and the other two will be in Cowlitz and Skamania Counties for the Merwin Reservoir and those county areas.

All of the 154.6 staff are state funded, except three of the marine positions are funded with federal dollars. The Enforcement Program is working with the Bureau of Reclamation as well.

Enforcement is testing and recruiting heavily for new officers. There is a full-page recruitment ad in the *International Game Warden* magazine. In the next hiring round, we will have one candidate from New Mexico, one from Idaho, two from Montana, and a few from eastern states. The program is looking at lateral transfers, but candidates still must complete the physical, written test, and equivalency at the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC). A suggestion was made that it would be good idea to post announcements at colleges as well. Captain Rich Mann advised the group that over the last several years, the Enforcement Program has tried to recruit two months before graduation. This approach has worked well. There are two test cycles, with 21 individuals in the testing process.

Wildlife Conflict

Enforcement is involved with a stakeholder group in cooperation with the Wildlife Program to revise the wildlife damage statute. There are 50 different stakeholders looking at proposed legislation to change RCW Title 77.36.

WDFW pays for damages caused by deer/elk to agricultural and horticultural crops. *Does WDFW pays for other wildlife loss?* Chief Bjork advised that there are no other payments allowed under statute.

There are topics on expanding the Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator (NWCO) program and the group will be talking about trapping and Initiative-713. Chief Bjork advised that information from this committee would be provided to the Enforcement Advisory Committee.

Bob Holtfreter asked about the elk damage case in Yakima, where a landowner was cited, but has sued the department. Captain Mann explained that the officer was working with the landowner. The landowner was encouraging the elk with feeding, and then the landowner planted cherry trees and there was a conflict. The landowner had shot the 12 elk and let them lay. Only two bullets were found when the ballistics was done. Chief Bjork



explained that the landowner had the right to protect property and that WDFW didn't respond appropriately. This will also be discussed in the wildlife damage committee. Captain Mann explained that he has a few landowners now saying that they are going to "blast the elk" because of property damage. Ed Owens said that the committee would try to rewrite the statute to make it absolutely clear.

Boating Safety

The funding for boating safety is from both federal and state dollars (vessel registration tax). However, WDFW has never received boating safety dollars. WDFW does quite a bit of work already, and we are working with the sheriffs and state parks for qualifying funds. WDFW would train officers in all the state standards and boating safety statutes. Most accidents involve hunters/fishers, so there is quite a big need for officers to do this enforcement. This will begin in the next few months.

The amount of funding would be significant; it is based on the number of contacts and hours on waters. *If the officer contacts an angler and he or she is cited for a violation, will that time involving the violation be counted toward boating safety?* Josh Pearson explained that the Lacey Police Department receives about \$20K for the boating safety program. They made 260 contacts, and about 65% "failed on equipment." Only one did not have a life preserver and there was one DUI.

George Brady explained that the boating safety program has worked in Georgia, but he is concerned that the current amount of officers may not have time for the added responsibility. Chief Bjork explained that the checks would only be when contacts are made. Ed Owens stated that we're already doing this and we will be funded and paid for those contacts. Additionally, aquatic nuisance species require us to check as well. *Is there an interface with this program in marine waters?* Chief Bjork advised that WDFW is really the only law enforcement entity that is checking. Chief Bjork asked to table this topic until a later meeting.

Canadian/Tribal Enforcement Efforts

Deputy Chief Mike Cenci is working on obtaining law enforcement statistics.

Director's Work Plan (see attached)

There are a number of objectives that impact Enforcement and some tasks have already been started. Chief Bjork advised that these objectives are: prevent aquatic nuisance species, work with agencies, participate in international forums such as Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) and the north of falcon process, improve crop damage process by making



program modifications to develop departmental strategies and conducting an outside peer review with those that conduct damage assessments already. Additional objectives are: tribal hunting rights and increasing hunting opportunities on hunting, re-defining the master hunter program, ensuring fish and wildlife opportunities (expanding opportunities and maximize general hunting season opportunities), and developing an allocation study to quantify the number of officers needed.

Guides/Outfitters

Dave Croonquist inquired with other states and completed a rough draft on guides/outfitters. The states contacted are interested in learning what we develop. There will be legislative interest, and it may raise some eyebrows. Ed Owens said that we may be one meeting away from having something developed, and it will be 2010 before something can be taken to the legislature. Some groundwork may be done in 2009. Ed Owens encourages that this committee work on this issue relatively quickly. Ed suggested that there is framework in Title 77 already and the design aspect will come from this committee. The WAC should be short and sweet to implement those changes. George Brady indicates that \$180 is fine, but if you attach too much, it may put folks out of business. Dave Croonquist explained there a lot of people who aren't paying to utilize the resources. Chief Bjork stated that the Commission and the Director want to address this issue. Chief Bjork advised that we need the proposal, and Bob Holtfreter agreed. Motion approved to discuss this topic at a later date, and the committee will provide the Director with some recommendations.

Master Hunter Program (see attached)

Ray Boone and Bob Holtfreter discussed three handouts. Starting January 1, the advanced hunter education program became the master hunter education program. Applications are being accepted through April and all advanced hunters must re-apply. Bob Holtfreter explained that meetings had taken place with Mik Mikitik and staff, and between Chief Bjork and himself. There had been some concerns within the big game management table and those participating in the program, including the advanced hunters. Bob Holtfreter talked about the process and discussed the handout on how this evolved. Ray Boone talked about the Web site and what it looks like.

Legislative Updates

2008 Session Update: Ed Owens discussed the tribal police authority bill ([EHB 2476](#)). Ed advised that another big issue pertains to wolves and the bill to classify hybrids as dangerous animals. Despite opposition from animal rights groups, the cougar pilot has been expanded statewide, but is limited for another three more years.



The 2009 legislative session will be a big year. The issue regarding infractions for fish and wildlife violations may be revisited ([HB 2493](#)). Chief Bjork stated the biggest problem was too much decriminalization. The bill added an inadvertency clause, and gave officers the ability to charge for another infraction or misdemeanor.

Bob Holtfreter asked if there is going to be a suggestion proposing a full-time master hunter education position. Chief Bjork explained that it is an option.

Ed Owens explained that there is a \$2.4B deficit, including the reserve. The last time we saw a deficit was in 2000, and WDFW's funding base went down 17%. This was a combination of lost revenue and other issues.

Points System and License Suspension

Bob Holtfreter and Dave Croonquist have been working on a draft, and the feedback they've received is that the state needs a better system. As discussed in the past, Dave Croonquist suggested a point system (such as five points for a fish over the limit, and after so many points the person is revoked).

Dave Croonquist advised that in Colorado all the citations are bail forfeited or a penalty assessment is sent to Headquarters. The Enforcement division handles the information and staff enters the ticket data and all other pertinent information. If there were prior convictions, then the information would pop up. A repeat offender was red flagged and then those citation packages were sent to the hearings officer governed by commission recommendations. As tickets were written and assigned to the officer, those were sent into Headquarters.

Chief Bjork explained that our problem is not with getting copies of dispositions, but that they are hand filed alphabetically. The current system does not work, but our new records management system will resolve the problems.

Chief Bjork advised that the DISCIS printout provides readout for all months, other than those caught in the field by the officer. County violations under RCW Title 77 are not seen. Citation tracking in WSP is the same (assigning out the citations). The officers are getting their citations in; the courts are causing the delay. A deferral does not count against a guilty disposition. The officer keeps the tickets: one copy is given to the court and one is given to the violator. Bob Holtfreter suggested that officers electronically scan and send their copy to the office.

Dave Croonquist asked whether or not a point system works or if we should move forward. George Brady suggested that if there is two billion dollar shortfall, what do you sacrifice in terms of officers in the field? We'll need to be cognizant of what we may take away from the field.



Josh Pearson stated that this is unique to WDFW; all others don't have dispositions involved with the citations when revoking hunters/fishers. Both fishing/hunting may carry multiple revocations (all privileges). If you shoot an animal then it should be stiffer than just two years. The group agreed to continue this discussion at future meetings.

No New Committee Reports

Old/New Business

NWCO Program

George Brady discussed the NWCO program regarding permit and reporting issues. George advised that he has already had discussions with Sean Carrell and that it was being worked on. He will report based on active or inactive movement. Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators are a faction of Wildlife Management, and it was discussed whether or not it really is an Enforcement issue. It was discussed within the group whether or not the recommendation to move it out of Enforcement and into Wildlife should go forward to the Director

Committee Member Absences

The group approved George Brady's recommendation that "will" be struck and "may" be inserted into the meeting minutes from January 5 regarding excused absences. Chief Bjork advised that the group talked about keeping 15 members. There are two members who have never shown up: Joseph Broz and Thomas Tillman. The group approved removing them and sending new appointment letters to existing members for another year beginning January 1, 2008.

Holly Ledgerwood expressed that she would exercise the thought of leaving the committee due to current demands. Ray Hansen suggested that those that have served be given a certificate of appreciation with a letter to recognize their service to this agency. The Chair and Vice Chair acknowledge members' service to this committee and also to the citizens they represent.

Web Site

Jim Kujala suggested that we not have e-mail on the Web site and thought that was not going to be posted. Additionally, Jim has not received any e-mail as a part of this committee and would like that resolved in order to keep up with distributed material from this group.

Poaching Rewards



Jim Kujala and Ed Owens will be posting those entities that offer money for reporting poachers, i.e. Rocky Mt. Elk Foundation. The Turkey Federation would provide information as well. A suggestion was made to link directly to those entities from the Web page. It was discussed that a statewide pool, and coordinated effort with WDFW, could have information mutually shared. Ed Owens commented that his constituents would be in favor of this pool. Ultimately, this list would be included into the pamphlet. Having something like crime stoppers would be a good program.

Law Enforcement Contacts

Jim Kujala advised that he had contacts regarding law enforcement and recent activity involving positive press regarding the moose issues in Region 1.

Violation Statistics

Gary Terrell advised that the crab numbers and data did not compute (Deputy Chief Mike Cenci and Rich Childers' presentation) at the Commission meeting. The violation history did not show how many people violated the rules. It was broken down into percentages; failure to record crab was reported as 245, but was actually 165. *How many people were contacted, and how many people violated?* There was no idea on compliance. The data needs to reflect 799 violations, the 96 finfish violations, and the 43 vessel safety violations. It appears that there is a 50% violation rate. For 1,400 contacts, 799 charges were cited. Each citation has room for 3 violations. Chief Bjork advised Gary Terrell that he would need to speak with Deputy Chief Mike Cenci. George Brady suggested that all violations should be separated as well to reflect that accurate information.

Requested Action Items:

- *None.*

Topics for Future Discussion:

- *Boating Safety*
- *Guides/Outfitters*
- *Points System and License Suspension*

Next meeting: *Saturday, June 7, from 1000-1500, at the Ellensburg Quality Inn. The agenda will be sent out before the meeting with information on topics for discussion.*

