

## **Master Hunter Information and Outreach Meeting March 14, 2009 – Kennewick, Washington**

### Questionnaire Response Summary

1. How many years have you been a Washington certified Master Hunter? **Responses ranged from 1 year to 17 years. The average of all responses was 7 years.**

2. How many times have you participated in a Master Hunter hunt? **Four Master Hunters who have been in the program for 2 to 4 years said they have not participated in a MH hunt. Other responses ranged from as low as 2 to a high of 17. Most responses were 5 to 6 hunts, with a few noticeable higher.**

3. Have you visited the Master Hunter website? Y N Did you find your information? Y N **All respondents said they had visited the web site. All but two said that they found the information they were looking for.**

4. Your suggestions for improving the Master Hunter Website?

- **Projects, points of contact, and approximate dates for the projects by WDFW Region.**
- **More frequent updates on elk movement in Elk Areas 3911 and 3912.**

5. Was this Information and Outreach meeting of value to you? Y N **All responded “Yes”.**

6. Were your concerns and questions answered satisfactorily? Y N **All responded “Yes”.**

7. Do you favor the newly adopted “No Tolerance” stance concerning game violations? Y N Why? **All responses were “Yes” except two, as indicated below.**

- **Perception is everything. We should be held to a higher standard.**
- **If your kid throws in an extra fish and you don’t realize it, should you lose your Master Hunter certification? (Circled both “Yes” and “No”.)**
- **This should be an elite program with participants exhibiting the highest level of ethics. Otherwise, the program has no meaning. One negative issue or incident invalidates the value and intent of the program.**
- **We are suppose to set examples as ethical individuals.**
- **Misunderstandings can still occur through nobody’s fault of their own.**
- **If the same rules applied to game wardens some of them would lose their job. Some ought to anyway. (Answered “No” to the question.)**

8. What is your opinion of the increased service hours for Master Hunter certification?

- **Seems excessive.**
- **Would like to see fish and wildlife volunteer hours both to be counted.**
- **Good idea. (Drew and arrow to and circled “What can I give?” in next question.)**
- **I would support more hours. I think service is one of the most important parts of the program.**
- **I think 40 hours is sufficient. It will probably weed out some.**
- **8 hours per year is a paltry amount of time to volunteer.**
- **No problem.**
- **No problem – not too much to expect of us.**

**(Note: One of the suggestions during discussion was to increase the service hours but give credit for attending meetings like the I&O session. Perhaps even make attendance at one or more meetings per renewal period mandatory,)**

9. What is your opinion of the shift in emphasis from “What can I get?” to “What can I give?”
- **Good shift.**
  - **No problem.**
  - **The presentation makes it seem like “getting” is a crime or not ethical. Take away the “getting” portion and the program will all but disappear.**
  - **This should be the essence of the program.**
  - **I think it’s the major philosophy of the program.**
  - **Excellent.**
  - **Fair.**
  - **Neutral.**
10. Have you ever mentored an inexperienced hunter? Y N **All responses but one were “Yes”.**
11. Would you be willing to mentor an inexperienced hunter? Y N **All responses were “Yes”.**
12. Would you be willing to assist a hunter with disability? Y N **All responses but one were “Yes”.**
13. Do you have any suggestions for how to improve the Master Hunter program?
- **Perks.**
  - **Make this meeting and the CORT training yearly and count towards hours.**
  - **Sounds as if WDFW and other agency personnel and Master Hunters need to interface more to develop interfaces satisfying both hunter and agency needs.**
  - **It sounds like the current status has been very well thought out.**
  - **Continue to provide additional opportunity which can increase the forum for input.**
14. Do you have any suggestions or opportunities for service projects not listed on the website?
- **RMEF, DU, etc. could list service opportunities.**
  - **Have not checked them out, BUT volunteers should plan well in advance for a project rather than wait until their deadline is approaching.**
  - **DU and NRA banquets/fundraisers used to qualify. Now they do not? (Note: MHAG facilitator owes this person a response / clarification.)**
15. Anything you would like to say to the Master Hunter Advisory Group?
- **Deer/elk points – certain % open to MH. Any weapon choice open to MH.**
  - **How can I be a member of a MH Advisory Group? (MHAG facilitator has the person’s name and phone number and will make a follow up call.)**

#### Notes from Session Leader

- MHAG members Mike Estes and Bill Madison facilitated the meeting.
- Assistance was provided by Sergeant Jim Nelson, WDFW Enforcement, and Mike Livingston, WDFW Region 3 Wildlife Biologist.
- There were 21 attendees, not counting presenters, three of whom have received their MH application packets but are not certified Master Hunters.
- Attendees traveled to the meeting from Entiat, Yakima, Pullman, Moses Lake, Desert Aire, and locations throughout the Tri-Cities.
- The mood of attendees, taken as a whole, was very positive. Nearly everyone took time at the end of the meeting to shake our hands and thank us and to comment about how good the presentation was.
- There were two attendees who had topics for discussion that were beyond the scope of this meeting. Both held their comments to the end of the meeting. One of the issues was tribal hunting of deer on the Yakima Training Center and tribal harvest of mature bull elk from the Colockum herd. The other issue was a personal matter that occurred nearly twenty years ago between the individual and a Washington game officer, over which the individual is still upset.

- Bill Madison summarized the extensive hunting opportunities available to Master Hunters from the 2008 hunting pamphlet and identified some of the variances between Master Hunter open hunts, permit hunts, and second tag hunts.
- Mike Livingston discussed the Rattlesnake Hills Master Hunter hunt, including variances in opportunity between hunt areas and from year to year. He also discussed private land hunts in Benton County, Blackrock and Silver Dollar, and the role of the Hunt Master in the Rattlesnake Hills hunt.
- Sgt. Nelson spoke about his expectation of a higher standard for Master Hunters. He shared some experiences from encounters with Master Hunters and said that he expects them to know the regulations and abide by them.
- The hot topic of the day was identification of projects for conservation service. The expectation of most attendees is that Regional WDFW offices should have a list of projects available for which people could sign up to help. Office staff (the receptionist) should have a list of names and phone numbers that volunteers could contact. Attendees complained that they have contacted the regional offices in Ephrata and Spokane and have been told that they have no projects and that the caller should contact the Olympia office.
- Most attendees felt that the Conservation Projects page on the Master Hunter web site that details wildlife conservation volunteer activities should be improved to identify the “private and public partners” that are mentioned but not named. Some attendees were not aware that they could volunteer for U.S. Forest Service, Corps of Engineers, BLM, USFWS and other agency projects and activities. Or that they could volunteer for DU, RMEF, NWTF, Pheasants Forever, or local sporting organizations for habitat and wildlife related projects. They were under the belief that the volunteer service had to be on a WDFW sponsored activity.
- The meeting lasted three hours and adjourned right on time but many attendees hung around for an additional 15 to 30 minutes to chat; an indication that they valued the opportunity to meet and talk with other Master Hunters.

Submitted by Mike Estes