

The new Master Hunter Permit Program statutes, effective July 26, 2009:

A new section is added to chapter 77.32 RCW to read as follows:

(1) In order to effectively manage wildlife in areas or at times when a higher proficiency and demonstrated skill level are needed for resource protection or public safety, the department establishes the master hunter permit program. The master hunter permit program emphasizes safe, ethical, responsible, and lawful hunting practices. Program goals include improving the public's perception of hunting and perpetuating the highest hunting standards.

(2) A master hunter permit is required to participate in controlled hunts to eliminate problem animals that damage property or threaten public safety. The commission may establish by rule the requirements an applicant must comply with when applying for or renewing a master hunter permit, including but not limited to a criminal background check. The director may establish an advisory group to assist the department with administering the master hunter program.

(3) The fee for an initial master hunter permit may not exceed fifty dollars, and the cost of renewing a master hunter permit may not exceed twenty-five dollars. Funds generated under this section must be deposited into the fish and wildlife enforcement reward account established in RCW 77.15.425, and the funds must be used exclusively to administer the master hunter program.

A new section is added to chapter 77.15 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The department may suspend a person's master hunter permit for the following reasons and corresponding lengths of time:

(a) If the person pays the required fine or is found to have committed an infraction under this chapter or the department's rules, the department shall suspend the person's master hunter permit for two years;

(b) If the person pays the required fine or is convicted of a misdemeanor, gross misdemeanor, or felony under this chapter, the department shall suspend the person's master hunter permit for life;

(c) If the person pays the required fine or is convicted of criminal trespass, reckless endangerment, criminal conspiracy, or making a false statement to law enforcement while hunting, fishing, or engaging in any activity regulated by the department, the department shall suspend the person's master hunter permit for life;

(d) If the person pays the required fine or is convicted of a felony prohibiting the possession of firearms, unless firearm possession is reinstated, the department shall suspend the person's master hunter permit for life;

(e) If the person has a hunting or fishing license revoked or has hunting or fishing license privileges suspended in Washington or in another state, the department shall suspend the person's master hunter permit for life;

(f) If the person is cited, or charged by complaint, for an offense under this chapter; or for criminal trespass, reckless endangerment, criminal conspiracy, or making a false statement to law enforcement while hunting, fishing, or engaging in any activity regulated by the department, the department may immediately suspend the person's master hunter permit until the offense has

been adjudicated; or

(g) If the person submits fraudulent information to the department, the department shall suspend the person's master hunter permit for life.

(2) Any master hunter who is notified of an intended suspension may request an appeal hearing under chapter 34.05 RCW.