

Landowner Hunting Permits

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WAC: 220-412-100
Landowner hunting permits.

Outline

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- Private Lands Access Program Overview
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- Additional Background Information
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The Landowner Hunting Permit Program operates under Commission Policy [C-6002](#).

Excerpt from Policy C-6002:

- LHP Permits authorized only by the Commission.
- Customized Seasons.
- Permit Allocation:
 - ❖ 50% of antlerless
 - ❖ 25% of bull or buck
 - ❖ Exceptions only by Commission
- Equal opportunity for all hunters with permits.
- Owners charging access fees waive damage claims.
- Landowners shall make provisions for significant public benefit.
- General hunting season opportunity is encouraged.
- Landowner incentives may include the following:
 - ❖ Customized hunting seasons
 - ❖ Second tag opportunity
 - ❖ Technical services to the landowner



Private Lands Access Program – An Overview

- The LHP program is just one of the access opportunities under the broader Private Lands Program
- Other hunting opportunities:
 - ❖ Feel Free to Hunt
 - ❖ Register to Hunt
 - ❖ Hunt by Written Permission
 - ❖ Hunt by Reservation (Online)
- Similar opportunities also exist for fishing and other wildlife related recreation



History of the LHP Program

- Provides public access to larger private land parcels that were otherwise inaccessible by the general public.
- New way to incentivize landowners.
- Conflict mitigation was a secondary benefit.
- Historically, there has never been more than seven properties in the LHP program statewide. Currently, we are proposing five.
- LHP portion of Commission policy C-6002 was added in 2005.
- In 2018, program staff requested from the Commission to commence with a revision of the LHP Program. That revision was completed in late 2019 and the first application period under the revised program was completed in Aug. 2020.
- The properties being proposed today are the successful applicants during this application period.



Additional Background Information

- All potential LHP properties/landowners were required to re-apply to the program following the revision that occurred during 2018-2019.
- WDFW received a total of six applications, five of which are being proposed for admittance into the LHP Program. These properties will be discussed in upcoming slides.
- Once approved, these five properties will be enrolled into the LHP Program for the 2021-2023 hunting seasons.
- After the April Commission meeting, new contracts will be drafted, landowner signatures acquired, and documents will be finalized by WDFW staff.
- 2021-2023 will involve assessment and monitoring of the revisions made in 2019. Further revisions may be required as we continue to monitor program success.
- A copy of the final LHP Standard Operating Procedure and the corresponding appendices, including the initial application packet can be found [HERE](#).



Proposed LHP Properties for 2021-23



WAC Permit Changes

Buckrun:

- No changes to permits or season dates.

Silver Dollar Association:

- No changes to permits or season dates.

Blackrock Ranches:

- Increasing the landowner portion of permits by 2 to a total of 8 for the Any Elk category.
 - ❖ No changes to season dates.
- Increasing the public portion of permits by 1 to a total of 2 for the Any Elk category.
 - ❖ No changes to season dates.



WAC Permit Changes

CPWMA:

- No changes to permits or season dates.

Centralia Mine: NEW LHP Property;

- Landowners receive:
 - ❖ 5 permit Antlerless Elk permits during Sept. 1 – Dec. 31.
- Public receives:
 - ❖ 5 Antlerless Elk permits designated as Senior only for Sept. 4-12.
 - ❖ 5 Antlerless Elk permits designated as Disabled only for Sept. 18-26.
 - ❖ 1 Any Bull permit designated as Youth only during Oct. 2-10.
 - ❖ All hunts will be granted on a single weekend during the hunt dates listed.



WAC Language Changes

- Introductory Language Section (2) It is unlawful to participate in a landowner ((~~hunter~~)) hunting permit (LHP) hunt without a landowner LHP permit from the landowner or a public LHP permit from the department for the species covered under the landowner's contract and possess an unfilled tag for said species.
 - ❖ Justification: Clarity and Correctness.
- Acceptance Guidelines Section(3)(b) WDFW ((~~will~~)) may deny LHP applications that do not provide substantial public access benefit beyond the allotted WDFW public permit opportunity.
 - ❖ Justification: Depending on the total number of applications and certain circumstances, it is not definitive that WDFW will deny an application based on this.



WAC Language Changes

- Acceptance Guidelines Section(3)(b) At a minimum, the LHP property ((~~must~~) should attempt to allow access for at least two types of recreational opportunity outside of the designated LHP permit seasons for deer and elk.
 - ❖ Justification:
 - Would require some landowners to allow public access during prime agricultural/harvest seasons.
 - Potential safety risk to the public.
 - Land use/property restrictions may prevent this from being possible.



WAC Language Changes

- Acceptance Guidelines (3)(e) In addition to LHP hunts, "no-fee" general public access opportunity is (~~required~~) strongly encouraged (e.g., general deer, elk, turkey, upland hunting, or other opportunities as stated in (b) of this subsection).
 - ❖ Justification:
 - Would require landowners to allow public access during prime agricultural/harvest seasons.
 - Potential safety risk to the public.
 - Land use/property restrictions may prevent this from being possible.
 - During the application process, landowners score higher when they agree to allow additional recreational opportunity. Looking into the future, if the LHP program becomes more competitive, the only way that landowners will be able to rank high enough to get LHP permits is if they allow additional recreational opportunity. This provides an additional incentive for both current and future LHP landowners to allow more public opportunity.



WAC Language Changes

- Program Guidelines (4)(d) Landowners may sell access associated with landowner LHP permits, but then (~~must~~) may be required to waive the right to claims for wildlife damage.
 - ❖ Justification: Changed to use similar language and to also identify that there are situations where landowners do not sell their permits, so they are still entitled to submit damage claims if they qualify.
- Program Guidelines (4)(n) LHP permits will be allocated annually. WDFW regional staff will provide permit recommendations to the private lands section manager by (~~mid-November~~) November of each year.
 - ❖ Justification: Timelines shift so November is more accurate.



WAC Language Changes

- Program Guidelines (4)(r)... Reports are due back to the private lands section manager no later than May 1st of the following year. Failing to mail/send completed (~~harvest~~) annual reports may result in a delay in issuing permits the following hunting season.
 - ❖ Justification: Incorrectly stated as “harvest” reports. Both the harvest and recreational reports are now included in a broader “annual” report.
- Removal of Pine Mountain Ranch LHP.
 - ❖ Justification: It was discovered that this LHP property had violated the Standard Operating Procedure and the Commission Policy.
- Addition of new LHP Applicant and corresponding descriptive language: Centralia Mine.
 - ❖ Justification: Clarity and Consistency.



Recommended Adjustments

- After the initial filing, it was discovered that the original name of the new LHP property (Hanaford, now Centralia Mine) was in conflict with existing special permit hunts also named Hanaford. This would have resulted in several hunts that all had the same name but different hunt locations. To avoid additional confusion, all references to “Hanaford” in WAC 220-412-100 were changed to “Centralia Mine”.
- After the initial filing, it was discovered that the “public” portion heading was improperly titled as “landowner”. This was corrected to match the rest of the WAC headers.



Public Comment – online survey

There were a **total of 1,331** public responses for **WAC 220-412-100**.

747 generally **agreed** with the proposed changes (56%)

411 were **neutral** (31%)

173 generally **disagreed** with the proposed changes (13%)

No written comments were received.

A summary of the responses included:

- Concern over the privatization of wildlife.
- Support for the opportunities for youth that LHP provides.
- Difficult to get landowners to return phone calls.
- Waste of points if drawn for LHP opportunity.
- Desire for more public hunting opportunities on private land.
- Comments against some of the language changes proposed.
- LHP program is abused and should be eliminated.
- Concern over landowners only allowing friends and family to hunt on their lands.
- Lots of comments regarding the payment of landowners, but LHP landowners are not paid by WDFW.



Questions?

