

Landowner Hunting Permit Program Standard Operating Procedure

The Landowner Hunting Permit (LHP) program is a private lands access program that provides public hunting access to private property, allows for specialized hunting seasons on LHP cooperator lands, and, in some cases, helps landowners manage deer and/or elk damage to agricultural crops. The LHP program is designed to complement, not replace, other WDFW private lands access programs (e.g., Feel Free to Hunt, Register to Hunt, Hunt by Reservation and Hunt by Written Permission). This standard operating procedure is consistent with Fish and Wildlife Commission Policy C-6002.



Table of Contents

1.	Landowner Application Procedure	4
2.	Acceptance Guidelines.....	4
3.	Program Guidelines	5
4.	Procedures for Initial Consultation... ..	7
5.	Boundary Posting Requirements.....	7
6.	Hunting License, Tags, Permits and Season Regulations	8
7.	Public Benefit.....	8

Appendices

Appendix A. Landowner Hunting Permit (LHP) Application

Appendix B LHP Field Consultation Checklist

Appendix C Annual Report Outline

Appendix D LHP Acceptance Evaluation Criteria

Appendix E Private Lands Access Policy C-6002

Excerpt from Fish and Wildlife Commission Policy C-6002

Landowner Hunting Permits:

- *Landowner Hunting Permits are designed for private lands held by an individual or corporation that provides a hunting opportunity for the public which otherwise would not exist and/or that helps resolve crop damage problems.*
- *Landowner Hunting Permits may only be authorized by Fish and Wildlife Commission rule.*
- *Those receiving Landowner Hunting Permits shall make provisions for significant public benefit and participation. General hunting season opportunity is encouraged as well as special accommodation for hunters with disabilities, youth, senior, and Advanced Hunter Education designated Master Hunters.*
- *Equitable allocation of Landowner Hunting Permit opportunity between cooperating landowners and WDFW will be as follows:*
 1. *Antlerless deer or elk - minimum of 50% allocated by WDFW.*
 2. *Buck deer or bull elk - minimum of 25% allocated by WDFW.*
 3. *Exceptions to these minimums may only be provided through Commission rule.*
 - *Cooperators must allow equal hunting opportunity whether the hunter received a permit allocated by the Department or the cooperator.*
 - *Cooperators wishing to sell access associated with the landowner's portion of the special hunting permits must waive all claims for wildlife damage that may occur on their lands.*
 - *Landowner incentives may include the following:*
 - *Customized hunting seasons.*
 - *Second tag opportunity.*
 - *Technical services to the landowner.*
 - *Landowner Hunting Permit levels, number of cooperators enrolled, and implementation of this program are subject to funding, availability of staff, ability to meet management objectives, and Department priorities.*

LHP Standard Operating Procedure

1. Landowner Application Procedure:

- a) Local WDFW Wildlife Program Staff are the primary contact for landowners interested in developing an LHP. Applicants must contact the local District Wildlife Biologist or Private Land Biologist to ensure LHP hunting opportunity is consistent with local management objectives and to complete the LHP Consultation Checklist (Appendix B).
- b) LHP applications will be reviewed once every three years, matching the three-year season setting cycle. Landowners must submit a standard LHP application to the Private Lands Section Manager (Appendix A) by August 1 prior to the first year of the three-year season setting cycle (example: Aug. 1, 2020 for the 2021 – 2023 three-year package).
- c) WDFW Regional Staff will review applications. Review will be based upon the LHP Acceptance Evaluation Criteria (Appendix D), the LHP Consultation Checklist (Appendix B), and local professional knowledge. The top-ranking applicants will then be recommended to the Private Lands Section Manager. Recommendations will be made to the Fish and Wildlife Commission in March and final versions will be adopted as rule by the Commission in April. All LHP hunting seasons adopted by the Commission in April will be implemented that hunting license year.

2. Acceptance Guidelines:

- a) LHP contracts must provide one or both of the hunting opportunities listed below for the public via Landowner permits and Public permits:
 - Hunting opportunity that otherwise would not exist
 - Hunting opportunity that helps resolve chronic crop damage problems that have been documented by WDFW.
- b) WDFW may deny LHP applications that do not provide substantial public access benefit beyond the allotted WDFW public permit opportunity.
 - For the purposes of this program, “substantial public benefit” will be defined as; access for the general public to the property outside of the designated LHP permit season, for any of the following activities: general season or special permit hunting access for deer, elk, bear, cougar, sheep, goat, moose, upland game birds, turkey, waterfowl, dove or other non-hunting activities such as wildlife viewing or fishing. At a minimum, the LHP property should attempt to allow access for at least **two** types of recreational opportunity outside of the designated LHP permit seasons for deer and elk. Each LHP agreement must demonstrate a substantial public benefit to the citizens of the State and the wildlife resources of the area. For further information regarding public benefit, please see section 7 below.
- c) Lands in a single LHP must have a minimum huntable acreage of 1,000 acres.
 - Lands that are contiguous can span GMU boundaries
 - Lands that are not contiguous have to reside within the same GMU

- d) Only 2 LHP contracts will be active at the same time in each WDFW district (Appendix B). If an LHP crosses district boundaries, the LHP will be considered to be in the district containing the majority of the land and/or hunting opportunity.
- e) WDFW will prioritize LHP applications that score the highest using the scoring matrix (Criteria - Appendix D). In addition to LHP hunts, “No-fee” general public access opportunity is strongly encouraged (e.g., general deer, elk, turkey, upland hunting, or other opportunities as stated in 2(b) above). Special accommodations for hunters with disabilities, youth, seniors, and designated Master Hunters are also strongly encouraged, as well as “no-fee” access for special permit holders (e.g., elk, bear, moose and bighorn sheep).
- f) To ensure predictability for landowners, hunters, and WDFW, all landowners who enter into an LHP contract in April are required to abide by the conditions of the LHP contract for the term of the contract. Any changes in property ownership, total acreage or management practices on the land(s) enrolled in the LHP will require an amendment to the contract. WDFW reserves the right to alter conditions to the contract if an amendment is required. It is the responsibility of the landowner to inform the proper WDFW regional staff of any changes. Not providing accurate information may result in the termination of the contract.
- g) Landowners may only be involved in one LHP statewide.

3. Program Guidelines:

- a) Policy C-6002 divides hunting on LHP cooperator lands into Public and Landowner permit opportunities. Public opportunity is defined as permits that are drawn through the WDFW permit drawing system or are drawn through a public raffle. Landowner opportunity is defined as those permits allocated to and distributed by the LHP cooperator(s).
- b) No LHP permits for elk will be issued in those GMUs where branch-antlered bull elk hunting is by Quality or Bull Elk Special Permits only.
- c) No LHP permits for deer will be issued in those GMUs where antlered deer hunting is by Quality or Buck Deer Special Permits only.
- d) Landowners may sell access associated with Landowner LHP permits, but then may be required to waive the right to claims for wildlife damage. Selling access may also affect landowner liability as described in RCW 4.24.200 and RCW 4.24.210. It is the responsibility of the landowner to ensure they are protected against liability claims.
- e) WDFW will draw permits for public hunting opportunity through the Licensing permit drawing system or through a public raffle. Public raffles must be conducted according to state laws and regulations including but not limited to WAC 220-412-050 and as outlined in the Commission Policy C-6002.

- f) Access to LHP property and associated hunting will be free of charge for individuals who draw a Public LHP permit. Hunting opportunity (i.e., location, length of time, season of the hunt and hunting area) must be equivalent for Public permit holders and Landowner permit holders. Landowners not meeting this requirement will have their LHP contract voided. Landowners in an LHP may be required to provide evidence verifying equitability between both the Public and Landowner permits.
- g) Lands in an LHP contract will be identified on the WDFW website, along with other private and public hunting lands. The cooperator or WDFW may create additional detailed maps to better inform the public. Any additional maps or materials may also be posted on the WDFW website.
- h) LHP boundaries will be posted with WDFW approved signs in accordance with Boundary Posting Requirements Section below.
- i) LHP properties may not have fences that alter or prevent the natural movement of wildlife.
- j) All LHP permits are only valid within the identified LHP property boundaries. Any wildlife harvested outside the boundaries of the LHP using an LHP permit will be considered a “closed season” violation. LHP permits are not valid on private or public in-holdings that are not included in the LHP contract.
- k) Any cost to implement the program, other than costs typically covered by WDFW (e.g., WDFW staff time and LHP signage), will be the responsibility of the landowner.
- l) Damage prevention permits authorized under [WAC 220-440-060](#) will be issued to LHP cooperators only if WDFW deems it necessary to control damage.
- m) All LHP contracts will be tied to the three-year season setting cycle.
- n) LHP permits will be allocated annually. WDFW regional staff will provide permit recommendations to the Private Lands Section Manager by November of each year.
- o) A cooperator who does not comply with their LHP contract may have their contract voided by the Department. If their contract is voided, they will not be able to re-apply until the next application cycle and forfeit any remaining permits to WDFW. If a contract is voided, the LHP property may be enrolled in another WDFW access program without having to wait until the next LHP application cycle.
- p) WDFW at its discretion may deny any LHP application for biological or social reasons.
- q) LHPs shall not be authorized in areas where other access opportunities may be jeopardized.
- r) Due to the limited availability of habitat funding, LHP properties will not be prioritized for any funding available to the Private Lands Access Program for the purposes of habitat enhancement, restoration or other habitat related activities. This does not include Federal programs, where WDFW staff provide technical assistance.

- s) Annual Reports (Appendix C) will be required for all LHP properties. The annual report form will be mailed to the landowners with their LHP permits each year. Reports are due back to the Private Lands Section Manager no later than May 1st of the following year. Failing to mail/send completed annual reports may result in a delay in issuing permits the following hunting season. Chronic failure to submit reports will lead to voiding of the LHP contract.

4. Procedures for Initial Consultation

Once an applicant has received an application packet, they will need to schedule an initial consultation with the local Private Lands Biologist and/or the local District Wildlife Biologist. The consultation will include an office (over the phone or in person) and a field portion. The office portion of the consultation gives WDFW personnel an opportunity to determine whether the applicant's goals for their property are suited to the program and meet program guidelines. It also gives department personnel the opportunity to clarify any of the program's elements to the applicant and answer any questions to clarify the program's intent and requirements.

The field consultation will include the landowner(s) and applicant (if different people), the District Wildlife Biologist, the Private Lands Biologist or other WDFW program staff as necessary. WDFW staff and the applicant/landowner(s) will conduct a tour of the property. This tour provides an opportunity for WDFW personnel to become familiar with the property, existing natural resources, and discuss any potential habitat improvements the landowner is planning. Items WDFW staff will consider and discuss with the applicant during the tour will include, but are not limited to:

- Long-term goals and objectives for the property
- Current and primary use of the property
- Adjacent property ownership and land use
- Presence of game, nongame, sensitive, threatened, or endangered species if known
- General condition and trend of habitat that currently exists on the land proposed for inclusion in the LHP
- Identified wildlife habitat enhancements or maintenance actions
- Current hunter and other recreational uses of the property
- Maps that are available for the property
- Current posting of the property and any potential issues with LHP posting
- Any other potential problems or conflicts

After completing the consultation, the Private Lands Biologist and the District Wildlife Biologist will complete the LHP Consultation Checklist (Appendix B) and send a copy to the landowner and the Private Lands Section Manager.

5. Boundary Posting Requirements

Adequate signage on an LHP property is essential and required. Accurate and highly visible signs reduce potential trespass conflicts, assist wildlife enforcement personnel, and identify LHP boundaries to permitted participants in the LHP. Historic or landowner signage that limit access to the property must be completely removed.

Posting of LHP properties is the responsibility of the landowner. Signs will be ordered and paid for by WDFW at the beginning of the three-year period (as needed). Permits will not be issued until the proper signage has been installed. Any other signage used to identify the LHP boundaries, must follow the Private Lands Access Program signage specifications and be approved by the Private Lands Section Manager.

WDFW requires cooperators to install signs on their property according to the following specifications:

1. Signs must be 9x13 and be posted in a manner that allows full visibility.
2. Signs must be metal, or some other material that allows for full visibility in all weather conditions.
3. All signs will contain the LHP name and LHP contact information.
4. Installation of signs must be completed in such a way as to ensure that all boundaries and access roads are clearly marked, and that no public access roads or areas appear to be closed to the public.
5. All exterior boundaries must be posted with a sign at a minimum every quarter of a mile.
6. Installation of signs must be completed at least 14 days prior to the opening of identified hunting season listed in the contract and WAC.
7. Properties should remain posted year-round through the duration of the contract.

It is also the responsibility of the cooperator to remove and return all signage to WDFW if the property is removed from, or voluntarily leaves the LHP program. All LHP signage must be returned to WDFW within 60 days of being removed from the LHP program. WDFW reserves the right to retrieve all signage if the landowner does not comply. WDFW will keep all signage for three years in the event the property is re-enrolled into the LHP program.

6. Hunting License, Tags, Permits and Season Regulations

Every person hunting on a LHP is required to have in their possession a valid Washington hunting license, a transport tag if pursuing big game or turkey, and hunters who are authorized to hunt on a LHP by Special Permit (including raffle/auction permit) must have in their possession the specific permit while hunting. Provision of WAC 220-412-080 Special Hunting Seasons apply to LHP as authorized by the Fish and Wildlife Commission. The Department may revoke LHP permits for a violation of any Fish and Wildlife laws, regulations, or the terms and conditions of the LHP agreement.

7. Public Benefit

Each LHP agreement must demonstrate a substantial public benefit to the citizens of the State and the wildlife resources of the area. There is a need to show at the onset that an LHP property will have a positive outcome for wildlife, the public, and the landowner. If WDFW determines there is a failure to achieve any meaningful benefit for the public and/or wildlife on a designated LHP property, the agreement will be voided.

For the purposes of this program, “substantial public benefit” will be defined as; access for the general public to the property outside of the designated LHP permit season, for any of the following activities: general season or special permit hunting access for deer, elk, bear, cougar, sheep, goat, moose, upland game birds, turkey, waterfowl, dove or other non-hunting activities such as wildlife viewing or fishing. At a minimum, the LHP property must allow access for at least **two** types of recreational opportunity outside of the designated LHP permit seasons for deer

and elk (e.g. waterfowl hunting and general elk, OR fishing and special permit moose, OR upland bird hunting and general deer etc.). Allowing access for more types of recreation will allow an LHP property to score higher in the Evaluation Criteria (Appendix D). Failure to allow access with substantial public benefit may lead to a voided LHP agreement.

All allowed access must be tracked on the Annual Recreation Report Form (Appendix C) and sent to the Private Lands Section Manager. Access will be measured based upon the number of users (while accounting for property size and safety) accessing the property outside of the designated LHP permit season.

Appendix A



Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Landowner Hunting Permit Application

Applicant's Name _____ Telephone _____

Mailing address _____

Street address _____

County _____ Game Management Unit(s)* _____ Total Acres** _____

* Where the proposed LHP is located.

** In the proposed LHP.

Using additional sheets, please provide:

1. A detailed description of proposed provisions to provide public access for hunting and other wildlife related recreational use of the lands in the proposed LHP, including whether these lands are currently available for public access and how many people or user days are proposed to be accommodated. Applicants must work with WDFW regional staff so proposed hunting opportunity is within herd management objectives. Proposals must meet the requirements described in the LHP Program Guidelines. The attached LHP Acceptance Evaluation Criteria and results from the LHP Consultation will be used to evaluate this application.
2. All owners/lessees of property in the proposed LHP are required to sign below. By signing this application, the owners/lessees agree to allow the applicant to fulfill the terms and conditions of the agreement and certifies that all provisions will be completed as agreed.
3. A list of parcels included in the proposed LHP.

Signature of Applicant

Title (owner, manager, etc.)
(Parcel A)

Date

Signature of owner/lessee (if different from applicant)

Date

For signatures of additional landowners in LHP, use second page of this application.

Send the completed application packet, including a copy of the LHP general location map, and any other supportive material to the WDFW Private Lands Section Manager. This application packet may also be completed online.

Additional Landowner Signatures

Signature of owner/lessee (if different from applicant) (Parcel B) _____
Date _____

Signature of owner/lessee (if different from applicant) (Parcel C) _____
Date _____

Signature of owner/lessee (if different from applicant) (Parcel) _____
Date _____

Signature of owner/lessee (if different from applicant) (Parcel) _____
Date _____

Signature of owner/lessee (if different from applicant) (Parcel) _____
Date _____

Signature of owner/lessee (if different from applicant) (Parcel) _____
Date _____

Signature of owner/lessee (if different from applicant) (Parcel) _____
Date _____

Signature of owner/lessee (if different from applicant) (Parcel) _____
Date _____

Signature of owner/lessee (if different from applicant) (Parcel) _____
Date _____

Signature of owner/lessee (if different from applicant) (Parcel) _____
Date _____

Signature of owner/lessee (if different from applicant) (Parcel) _____
Date _____

Appendix B

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife LHP Consultation Checklist

Applicant's Name: _____

Phone: _____

Proposed LHP's Name: _____ Acres: _____

Proposed LHP is in District: _____ GMUs:

County: _____

Physical Attributes

1. Are land parcels contiguous? Yes ___ No ___. If not, are they all in the same GMU? Yes ___ No ___.
2. Are property boundaries easily identifiable? Yes ___ No ___. If not, what measures will be taken to insure that people both inside and outside of the proposed LHP can clearly understand the boundaries?
3. Is there already an LHP property in this district? Yes ___ No ___.
4. Does public or private easements within the property conflict with the ability of the proposed LHP to be successful? Yes ___ No ___. If yes, explain why and whether it can be resolved.
5. Is the land presently (signed)? Yes ___ No ___. Can it be (signed) clearly to comply WDFW specification? Yes ___ No ___. If not, explain why.

Recreation

6. Will the LHP provide hunting opportunities that otherwise would not exist? Yes ___ No ___.
7. Does the LHP help resolve chronic crop damage problems that have been documented by WDFW? Yes ___ No ___.
8. Will previous public access to parcels within the proposed LHP be affected? Yes ___ No ___. If previous access is to be reduced, explain why and to what extent?
9. How is the applicant going to provide substantial public access benefit beyond the allotted WDFW public permit opportunity?

10. Is the proposed seasons, timing, area, etc. for public and landowner LHP permit holders equitable? Yes____No____. If No explain why the applicant should still be considered.
11. Has a physical inspection of all land within the proposed LHP been made appropriate local WDFW staff? Yes____No____. If no, explain why.
12. What game, nongame, sensitive, threatened or endangered species are known or believed to be present? Please List:
13. What general habitat types are present and what is the rough acreage:
 - a. Dryland Agriculture____%
 - b. Sub-irrigated and/or manual irrigated Agriculture____%
 - c. Shrubsteppe/grassland ____%
 - d. Forest____%
 - e. Riparian____%
 - f. Open Water____%
14. Have any habitat restorations or wildlife enhancements been completed or planned? If so describe what, where, how much, etc.

Administration

15. Are the operators of all land in the proposed LHP legal owners of the land? Yes ____ No____. If not, do they have the consent of the landowners, and the legal right to complete habitat and other management objectives? Yes____No____.
16. Does the operator have a clear understanding of the regulations that apply to the LHP program? Yes____No____. Has a copy of the program standard operating procedure and Commission Policy been provided to the operator? Yes____No____.
17. Will the operator provide maps of the proposed LHP to property users? Yes ____ No____.

Appendix C



PRIVATE LANDS LHP Annual Report

Hunt License Year Reported: _____

LHP: _____

Any change to total acreage? Yes: _____ No: _____

Prepared by: _____

Date: _____

Management Activities during the year (measurable objectives):

- Hunting and harvest management – Report the following:
 1. Provide detailed LHP harvest information in the LHP Annual Harvest Report Form and attach to this report.
 2. Provide detailed non-LHP hunter information in the NON-LHP Annual Recreation Report Form and attach to this report.
 3. Provide a description of non-LHP hunting seasons offered for the license year reported on and any significant changes from the previous license year or for the coming year.
 4. Report any hunter complaints received.
 5. Report any incidences of illegal hunting activity, trespass, poaching, etc.

- Habitat and land management - Report the following:
 1. Describe any significant changes in wildlife habitat that occurred on the LHP during the year reported.
 2. Describe any habitat management activities, including enhancements, proposed for the coming year.
 3. Acres of land added or removed from LHP during the year. Reminder any additions to the LHP must be identified and authorized by WDFW prior to hunting with special LHP permits and seasons. An updated LHP map will need to be provided if there were any changes.

Any recommended changes, unresolved issues, conflicts and needs concerning administration of the program?

Annual Recreation Report Form



Washington Department of Fish and
Wildlife
Wildlife Program
PO Box 43141, Olympia, WA 98504-3141

LHP NAME
2021 License Year

Date(s)	Name	Email	Phone Number	Recreational Activity ^a	Species Pursued ^b	Weapon Type (if hunting)	Harvest (if applicable)	Sex	Antler Points

^a Only note those recreational activities **not** associated with the LHP special permit hunts. Recreational Activities include, but are not limited to: hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife viewing etc.

^b Note which species were pursued (e.g. deer, trout, pheasant, birding, etc.)

Appendix D

LHP ACCEPTANCE EVALUATION CRITERIA

FACTOR	POINTS
1. Total Amount of Public Hunter Access/Opportunity compared to other applicants in a District. If no other applicants, this factor will not be scored, and maximum score will be adjusted accordingly.	
Low	0
Medium	15
High	30
2. Hunting Resource Quality/Quantity compared to other applicants in a District. If no other applicants, this factor will not be scored, and maximum score will be adjusted accordingly.	
Low	0
Medium	15
High	30
3. Percent of Public Opportunity – LHP Antlered Permits	
25% Public/75% Landowner	0
26% to 50% Public	15
51% to 75% Public	30
76% to 100% Public	45
4. Percent of Public Opportunity – LHP Antlerless Permits	
50% Public/50% Landowner	0
51% to 75% Public	5
76% to 100% Public	10
5. Non LHP Season “No-Fee” Public Access – Deer and Elk	
No general season deer and/or elk “no-fee” public access	0
Landowner allows “no-fee” hunter access for either deer or elk , for all weapon types and at a level appropriate for the LHP land base and the wildlife resource.	15
Landowner allows “no-fee” hunter access for both deer and elk , for all weapon types and at a level appropriate for the LHP land base and the wildlife resource.	30
6. General Season “No-Fee” Public Access – Small Game (e.g., turkey, pheasant)	
No general season small game “no-fee” public access	0
Yes, Landowner allows general season “no-fee” hunter access at a level appropriate for the LHP land base and the wildlife resource.	15
7. “No-Fee” Public Access for big game other than deer and elk (e.g., sheep, moose, bear)	
No	0
Yes, Landowner allows general season “no-fee” hunter access at a level appropriate for the LHP land base and the wildlife resource.	15
8. “No-Fee” Public Access – Fishing or other recreational opportunity (e.g. wildlife viewing)	
No	0
Yes	5
10. How Landowner LHP Permits are Distributed.	
Given to family and friends or sold outside of public auction or raffle.	0
Auction that is open to the general public to participate in.	15
Raffle that is open to the general public to participate in.	30
11. Provides special accommodation for Youth, Senior or Hunters with Disabilities	
No	0
Yes	5
12. Huntible Acres Available (minimum 1000 acres)	
Up to 1000	0
1000-2000	5
2000 +	10
13. Allows Camping for Permitted Hunters During Their Hunt	
No	0
Yes	2
14. Allows Pre-Hunt Scouting for Permitted Hunters	
No	0
Yes	3
15. Assists/mitigates wildlife damage issues	
No	0
Yes	15
MAXIMUM POINTS POSSIBLE	215

Appendix E

POLICY TITLE:	Private Lands Access	POLICY NUMBER:	C-6002
Supersedes:	C-6002 dated Dec. 6, 1996	Effective Date:	Nov. 19, 2005
		Termination Date:	N/A
See Also:	RCW 77.04.055 RCW 77.12.320 RCW 77.32.535 WAC 232-28-260 WAC 232-28-271	Approved by:	<u>/s/ Ron Ozment</u> Fish and Wildlife Commission Chair

DOWNLOAD: [Signed copy of Policy C-6002 \(PDF\)](#)

A

Policy

Over half the state of Washington is privately owned, and some of the most important fish and wildlife resources are found on private lands. It is the policy of the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission to maintain a viable private lands access program that encourages formal partnership agreements with private landowners:

- To secure public access for hunting, fishing, and other wildlife associated recreation.
- To provide recognition and incentives for participating landowners.
- To encourage protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat.

Nothing in this policy or the private lands program shall be construed to infringe on the treaty rights of Native Americans. As stated in Commission policy C-3607: "The Department of Fish and Wildlife will engage tribal representatives in its decision making processes relative to wildlife management issues that affect tribal hunting."

Minimum Operating Standards and Guidelines of the Access Program:

The Department will develop a variety of public access options for landowners. It is the Commission's highest priority to encourage partnership opportunities that provide general public hunting opportunity and those with passive restrictions rather than requiring special permits or additional access fees for hunters.

- The Department will clearly communicate program expectations to cooperators and the general public and will have a contract with each cooperator.
- Fish and wildlife are the property of the state (RCW 77.12.010) and nothing in any contract should be construed as transferring ownership from the public to the private sector. The Fish and Wildlife Commission authorizes hunting seasons, including time, place and manner as directed in RCW 77.04.012.
- Fencing or other activities designed to control natural wildlife movement or migrations will not be permitted.
- Fish and wildlife management on lands under contract will be limited to endemic fish and wildlife, including currently managed introduced fish and wildlife species.
 - Every person hunting or fishing on private lands under contract must have in possession valid licenses, tags, and permits.
 - Persons hunting on lands under contract with the Department for restricted access (e.g. Hunt By Written Permission and Register To Hunt) must also possess a valid access permit (permission slip).
- Hunting programs will be conducted within the highest standards of fair chase and ethical behavior.
 - Cooperators must provide a report as required by the Department no later than March 31 each year.
 - The boundaries of lands under contract must be clearly defined and/or marked as required by the Department.
 - Locations of lands under contract must be made available to the public.
 - The Department may develop procedures to implement and manage the private lands access program within the guidelines of this policy.

Landowner Hunting Permits:

- Landowner Hunting Permits are designed for private lands held by an individual or corporation that provides a hunting opportunity for the public which otherwise would not exist and/or that helps resolve crop damage problems.
- Landowner Hunting Permits may only be authorized by Fish and Wildlife Commission rule.
- Those receiving Landowner Hunting Permits shall make provisions for significant public benefit and participation. General hunting season opportunity is encouraged as well as special accommodation for hunters with disabilities, youth, senior, and Advanced Hunter Education designated Master Hunters.
- Equitable allocation of Landowner Hunting Permit opportunity between cooperating landowners and WDFW will be as follows:
 1. Antlerless deer or elk - minimum of 50% allocated by WDFW.
 2. Buck deer or bull elk - minimum of 25% allocated by WDFW.
 3. Exceptions to these minimums may only be provided through Commission rule.
 - Cooperators must allow equal hunting opportunity whether the hunter received a permit allocated by the Department or the cooperator.
 - Cooperators wishing to sell access associated with the landowner's portion of the special hunting permits must waive all claims for wildlife damage that may occur on their lands.
 - Landowner incentives may include the following;
 1. Customized hunting seasons.
 2. Second tag opportunity.
 3. Technical services to the landowner.

Landowner Hunting Permit levels, number of cooperators enrolled, and implementation of this program are subject to funding, availability of staff, ability to meet management objectives, and Department priorities.