

HUNTER EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING NOTES
April 11, 2020, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Skype Meeting

⊙ **Welcome & General Interest Announcements (60 minutes)**

⊕ IAC Member Roundtable

- Rich Mann
 - Rich helped Jim Conway with a class early in the year.
 - He also helped Stacy Wilson with two online classes.
- Jim Conway
 - Jim had one class so far.
 - He had to cancel the next three classes due to COVID-19.
 - Jim also had two Master Hunter proctored tests he has to reschedule.
- Randy Absolon
 - Randy's team did a January traditional class.
 - He had online classes in February and March.
 - His next class is scheduled for May 9.
- Butch Buffalo
 - Butch had his first traditional and online classes early this year.
 - His team is discussing contacting people from his cancelled class and inviting them to the next class.
- Jeff Bull
 - Jeff's first class had to be cancelled due to the shutdown.
 - He tentatively scheduled a traditional class in June.
- Eric Lauver
 - Eric has not had a class yet due to COVID-19.
 - He will wait until the shutdown is lifted before posting a class.
- Bob Palmer
 - Bob cancelled classes due to COVID-19.
- John Malek
 - John held classes in February and early-March.
 - Both classes were well attended.
 - John's next class is not scheduled until August.
- Larry Lufkin
 - Larry cancelled a class in Olympia due to the COVID-19 shutdown.
 - He sent the Directors report out to his instructors and had one instructor upset about the fishing closure.
- Steve Mills
 - Steve had a class scheduled with Centralia college for college students, but it was cancelled due to COVID-19.
 - He will work on holding the college class after the shutdown lifts.

- Jim Gleiter
 - Jim’s classes are scheduled for June, July, and August.
 - Sam Grubbs
 - Sam missed the last IAC meeting because he was helping another instructor.
 - He had a class in March before the shutdown.
 - He and his team are working on an orange gun video, but it is on hold until after the shutdown.
 - Jim Sevier
 - Jim had one class in February.
 - He had a class in March and April get cancelled.
 - Jim helped Steven Dazey with the range safety officer class at the Ridgefield office.
 - Jim also took the online class to see what it was all about.
- ⊕ IAC Member Communications with Regional Instructors
- Jeff Bull
 - Jeff heard from Ray Boone about the department purchasing toy guns for handling practices.
 - Sam Grubbs didn’t get a list, so he did not contact anyone.
 - Bob Palmer
 - Are we going to allow students who passed online to go back and have a field day?
 - The department may market the online field skills evaluation to those people who have completed the virtual field day.

⊙ **WDFW Updates (45 Minutes)**

⊕ Student statistics

- 2019 stats through March were as follows:

Total Classes	121
Capacity	2,907
Registered	2,341
Total Pass	1,926
Total Fail	58
Total Incomplete	26
Total No-show	331
Total % Fail	3
Total % NS	14

- 2020 stats through March are as follows:

Total Classes	98
Capacity	2,215

Registered	1,827
Total Pass	1,519
Total Fail	35
Total Incomplete	40
Total No-show	233
Total % Fail	2
Total % NS	13

- The difference between 2020 and 2019 classes through March are as follows:

Total Classes	-23
Capacity	-692
Registered	-514
Total Pass	-407
Total Fail	-23
Total Incomplete	14
Total No-show	-98
Total % Fail	-1
Total % NS	-1

⊕ Instructors & Instructor Applicants

- As of March 23, 2020, WDFW has 1,041 certified instructors.
- WDFW certified one instructor in January 2020.

⊕ Brief Regional Field Coordinator Updates

- Mike Whorton
 - WDFW is holding the National Hunting and Fishing Day celebration on Sept 26 at Camp Cowles in Newport.
 - WDFW will need volunteers for the event.
- Aaron Garcia
 - Aaron will be cleaning out his trailer this next week.
 - He has cancelled spring turkey hunt mentoring.
 - Aaron has also been emailing and calling his instructors
 - He is working on a new Master Hunter database with Kris.
- Steve Dazey
 - Steve completed five range safety officer classes.
 - He had to postpone the last two classes.
 - He worked with a new chief instructor on the administrative processes required.
 - He assisted the department with the inventory check for five Skagit instructors.
 - He had an instructor move during the shutdown and he facilitated her inventory transfer digitally.

- Steve had to cancel a pre-service training class for 15 applicants before the shutdown.
- He is working with the Civil Air Patrol staff to hold a hunter education class and a basic rifle class to certify those members.
- He has been contacting his chief instructors to see how they are doing and what they may need during the COVID-19 closure.
- Amy Elliott
 - Amy had one instructor who was teaching a traditional class that had to be cancelled midstream.
 - She had a women-oriented shotgun clinic scheduled on March 14 but cancelled the clinic due to weather and COVID-19 concerns.
 - She helped with the range safety officer class at the Ridgefield office.
 - Amy has 12 applicants waiting on a pre-service training.
 - She is making lots of contacts with her instructors.
 - Amy is also working with Kris on updates on the student manual.
- Bill Montgomery
 - Bill has been contacting his instructors.
 - He had a couple of traditional classes in progress when the shutdown happened.
 - Bill is also working on organizing his work truck.

⊙ **WDFW Budget and Legislative Update (15 Minutes)**

- ⊕ Dave reminded IAC about the information previously provided on the budget and why WDFW faced such a large funding gap this past legislative session.
 - Please refer to WDFW's budget and finance webpage for that operating budget background information:
<https://wdfw.wa.gov/about/administration/budget/operating>
- ⊕ WDFW's supplemental budget request was for \$26 million of State General Fund (money that comes from general taxpayers across the state).
- ⊕ Most of the \$26 million was requested as an ongoing appropriation, so WDFW wouldn't have to request funding to back-fill the budget in the future.
- ⊕ The \$26 million would maintain core and essential services as well as \$6.8 million for new emergent needs.
 - WDFW did not request a recreational license fee bill in 2020 to generate additional revenue.
 - WDFW also requested \$21.3 million for five projects through a capital budget supplemental request.
- ⊕ The legislature appropriated WDFW \$27 million in State General Fund in this supplemental operating budget.
 - This will fund WDFW's core services through June 2021 and allocates significant resources for new work.
 - The ongoing dollars are close to fully funding today's needs in outyears. This is a huge improvement, especially in a supplemental year.

- ⊕ WDFW also received \$4.6 million in the capital budget, including funding for the Soos Creek Hatchery, the Pier 86 marine terminal, and the Wiley Slough dike raising.
- ⊕ The governor vetoed approximately \$445 million within the supplemental budget in anticipation of future revenue losses due to COVID-19.
- ⊕ WDFW's structural deficit was not affected by the vetoes.
- ⊕ The governor's vetoes did affect the following WDFW work without directly affecting staff:
 - A reduction to WDFW's spending authority from the State Wildlife Account, which allows WDFW to utilize existing revenue in that account.
 - \$800,000 to create a Hydraulic Permit Application permittee assistance program.
 - \$573,000 for a reverse auction of Columbia River salmon gill net licenses.
 - \$95,000 of pass-through funding to the Woodland Park Zoo to investigate shell disease in western pond turtles.
 - \$300,000 provided for elk fencing and other conflict management tools in the Skagit Valley.
- ⊕ The Governor also vetoed an ongoing \$400K proviso for aquatic invasive species inspections. While this would have enhanced our capacity, it does not impact current FTE capacity.
- ⊕ Vetoes of Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) funding affecting WDFW are:
 - \$300,000 to work with state land management agencies to develop a standardized method to measure and report land stewardship needs and costs on parcels purchased with state capital funding through the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program.
 - \$75,000 for DNR, Parks, WDFW, and broad stakeholders, to develop a vision and legislative strategy to invest in, promote, and support outdoor recreation.
- ⊕ Bob had a question about the lead ammunition legislation, but the bill did not pass in the short session.
- ⊕ Both of WDFW's agency-request bills ([HB 2571](#) and [SB 6072](#)) passed.

⊙ **COVID-19 and Hunter Ed Processes Update (30 minutes)**

- ⊕ WDFW is posting COVID-19 updates at <https://wdfw.wa.gov/about/covid-19-updates>
- ⊕ Youth spring turkey season was cancelled.
- ⊕ Spring turkey season and spring bear seasons have been postponed. WDFW will reassess in early May.
 - Local health departments have been consulted & support the cancellations & postponements
- ⊕ Temporarily, WDFW has transitioned to an all online class format and replaced our field skills evaluations with a virtual field day on March 16.

- ⊕ This meets the Revised Code of Washington requirement of more than ten hours of instruction.
- ⊕ There was some abuse of that opportunity, whereby some very young students were certified.
- ⊕ WDFW implemented a minimum age of 9 to take the online class and virtual field day on March 31 (Kalkomey made the change soon after).
- ⊕ As of April 9, 98 people under 9 years old completed the online and virtual field day.
- ⊕ WDFW is assessing possible actions for students under 9 who were certified during the all online class.
- ⊕ Currently, all classes with a start date thru May 4 have been cancelled.
- ⊕ Demand for classes after May 4 is unknown and will likely depend on the COVID situation and possible changes to hunting seasons.
- ⊕ There may be instructor and venue availability issues for holding classes.
- ⊕ WDFW will assess whether it would be beneficial to slowly phase out the online class and virtual field day to help meet public demand, especially for older students.
- ⊕ WDFW may actively promote and offer field skills evaluations to students who completed the online class and virtual field day to improve knowledge and skills.
 - This would likely need to be grade-free and voluntary since the students already completed the required course.
- ⊕ A suggestion was made to contact students who were registered for a cancelled class but didn't take the online and virtual field day and let them know when classes are again available.
- ⊕ John Malek asked how many people took the online course since the transition.
 - As of April 9, a little over 1,900 have taken the online class.
- ⊕ Hal asked if we can flag the 1900 participants to see if there is a spike in issues associated with the online only classes.
- ⊕ Butch asked about the age ranges of folks who took the virtual online field skills.
 - Dave shared the certification data by sharing his screen so the members could see the data.
- ⊕ Bob asked if people who are becoming certified that obviously couldn't complete the class will be removed from the hunter education database.
 - Dave is working with Eric Gardner, Program Director on this issue and will most likely decertify some individuals.
- ⊕ Bob had questions on the excessive wait times on the virtual field day.
 - The timers are set to meet the 10-hour requirement by law.
- ⊕ Bob also had sections where his instructors could select multiple review quizzes.
 - Kris did not have this happen to him but he will go back to review it.
- ⊕ Hunter education instructor incentive permits may be affected this year.
- ⊕ The two incentive permits for the 2020 spring turkey season has currently been shortened from 8 weeks to at most 4 weeks.
- ⊕ WDFW is considering options we might be to offer to the permit recipients.
- ⊕ We will wait and see if the fall big game incentive permits are affected.

- ⊕ WDFW may have to alter the 2021 incentive permit requirements if there are large COVID impacts on the number of classes taught this year.
- ⊕ Similarly, instructor certification retention will consider COVID impacts (e.g. if instructors couldn't teach in 2020).
- ⊕ IAC will be consulted on changes whenever possible, possibly via email.
- ⊕ There may be other considerations not contemplated yet (WDFW's focus has been on current COVID issues)
- ⊕ We still hope to be able to offer ISTs this year, but time will tell.
- ⊕ Kris is tracking the possible dates and making the necessary adjustments.

⊙ **Student Manual Update Discussion (90 minutes)**

- ⊕ WDFW is working on updating the current traditional student manual.
- ⊕ The IAC was emailed three PDFs, one of the current manual, one of Kalkomey's Today's Hunter, and one of the New Mexico student manual.
- ⊕ Kris started the discussion by asking the IAC which version they preferred and why as well as any suggestions they had to their preferred manual.
- ⊕ Below are the members suggestions:
 - Jeff Bull
 - Take out the strict regulations and leave in referrals to RCWs and WACs because they change so often.
 - Wildlife ID is long and we could choose to not print that section.
 - Jeff likes the Today's Hunter and suggested WDFW go that route.
 - Also, make a downloadable version for students to be able to use on a computer or tablet.
 - Jim Gleiter
 - Jim likes the New Mexico version.
 - He sent some suggestions to Kris on the booklet.
 - He like the suicide prevention information.
 - Jim thinks we need to add handgun shooting techniques to chapter 3.
 - We also need to have some of the Washington specific information in the book.
 - Wildlife ID is a good bit of information and should continue.
 - WDFW needs to add a glossary section like New Mexico.
 - He also thinks we need to add the "Pass It On" section from the New Mexico book.
 - Larry Lufkin
 - He agrees with Jeff Bull.
 - Jim Sevier
 - He feels that if we were to go digital students could put the information on their phones.
 - They can then reference the material whenever they want.
 - Steve Mills
 - Steve likes Today's Hunter.

- He also likes the idea of a downloadable version of the manual for students.
- Bob Palmer
 - Bob thinks we need to update the suicide prevention information and safe storage information in the New Mexico manual and add to the Washington manual.
 - He liked the New Mexico book but also likes the Washington hunter platform.
- John Malek
 - John likes the New Mexico booklet.
 - He also thinks parts of the Today's Hunter book presented the information better.
 - He has been handing out the manual to online students as well as traditional students.
 - John thinks the online link to the manual would also be a step in the right direction.
- Jim Conway
 - Jim doesn't do traditional classes at this point.
 - He thinks it might be good to give the books to all students.
 - Jim suggested we make use of the available white space.
- Rich Mann
 - Rich prefers the Washington book.
 - New Mexico is ok with him as well.
 - He likes the ability to have digital version for students.
 - Rich thinks the wildlife ID section could be condensed.
 - WDFW could point students to online publications like "Ducks at a Distance."
- Randy Absolon
 - Randy agrees with adding suicide prevention into the booklet as well as safe storage.
 - He has students each year that do not have internet.
 - He thinks the pistol shooting is beyond the class.
- Eric Lauver
 - Eric prefers the Washington Hunter.
 - He feels we need to add in hunting skills like Today's Hunter and/or New Mexico hunter.
 - Eric likes the wildlife identification information in the manual.
 - Digital vs paper copy is something he likes for the student to be able to choose but likes the paper booklet more.
- Hal Sims
 - Hal would pick Today's Hunter.
 - He would leave some white space to allow for note taking.
 - He thinks the basic information is good and allow the instructors to teach the material.

- He thinks wildlife ID can be covered other ways.
- Digital information is needed to be able to cater to those folks who require it.
- Sam Grubbs
 - Sam likes the Washington Hunter.
 - He tells his students that they need to know everything about their firearm, and they need to know about the animal they are hunting.
 - Sam likes to have the RCWs and WACs in the manual to allow students to research the more information.
 - He doesn't think we should include too much pistol shooting since there is not a lot of handgun hunting occurring.
 - He thinks we need to add how to check for obstructions.
- Butch Buffaloe
 - Butch thinks we need to update the current regulations in the Washington hunter.
 - Wildlife ID needs to be included.
- ⊕ Amy thanked the IAC members for their input into the decision.
- ⊕ She wanted to add the following:
 - The online class is now mirroring Today's Hunter.
 - WDFW would add the Washington specific information to the PowerPoint if we went away from the Washington Hunter.
 - The Today's Hunter bulleted points layout is more along the route of how students learn now.

⊙ **For the good of the order**

⊕ **IAC recruitment**

- Members whose terms are expiring are Sam Grubbs, Jeff Bull, Rich Mann, Cathy Lynch, and Jim Gleiter.
- WDFW opened the recruitment for IAC members on March 18, 2020.
- Currently there are four applicants.
- Kris encouraged the current IAC members whose terms are expiring to reapply for the IAC.

⊙ **Adjourn** – Next meeting is July 25, 2020.