



MASTER HUNTER ADVISORY GROUP
WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, W 98501-1091

Notes for MHAG Meeting #45
January 11, 2019 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Washington Cattlemen’s Association, Ellensburg

MHAG Members		WDFW Staff	Guests
Region 1	Marji Bobiak	Dave Whipple Hunter Education Division Manager Kris Thorson Hunter Education Division Specialist Aaron Garcia Region 3 Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator Steve Dazey Region 4 Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator Amy Elliott Region 5 Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator Bill Montgomery Region 6 Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator Ben Maletzke Statewide Wolf Specialist	
	Shawn Woodard		
Region 2	Carissa Craghead, Secretary (excused)		
	Jim Hope		
Region 3	Kyle Smith		
	Tom Conrads		
Region 4	David Floyd (excused)		
	Jeff Larsen, Vice Chair (excused)		
	John McAuliffe		
	Ian Stewart		
Region 5	George Dennis, Chair		
	Keith Pfeifer (excused)		
Region 6	Scott Vousboukis (absent)		
	James Zimmerman (absent)		
	Howard “Shane” Briel (absent)		

Procedural Business

- **Call to order and announcements (*George Dennis, 5 minutes*)**
- **Introduction of members and guests (*George Dennis, 5 minutes*)**
- **Approval of Meeting #44 notes from October 26, 2018 (*George Dennis, 5 minutes*)**
 - Approved unanimously.

Old Business

- **Budget News/Update (*David Whipple, 30 minutes*)**
 - The governor released his 2019 budget and the proposed WDFW budget fully funded the \$31 million shortfall.
 - Dave explained the comparison by category budget handout.
 - There was a question on Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and why the department pays these funds. WDFW pays PILT instead of property taxes on public lands it manages. PILT rates are set by the Legislature, and had previously been reduced due to state budget shortfalls. The Governor's biennial budget proposes to increase and fund PILT.
 - Dave explained how the MHPP is funded:
 - The program receives approximately \$45,000 per biennium from application and renewal fees.
 - The biennial spending authority is around \$70,000.
 - Other costs for the program are roughly \$325,000 per year, which are funded by Hunter Education Division Pittman-Robertson Act funds.
 - The MHPP applicants and current Master Hunter base give an estimated 15,000 hours each year (at a minimum).
 - The value of a volunteer hour is \$30 an hour.
 - That means there is \$450,000 hours of volunteer service donated each year, which equates to roughly 3.0 full time staff.
- **Draft WAC Report (*Kris Thorson, 30 minutes*)**
 - Kris read over the draft WAC and explained why each item was listed on the draft.
 - Kris asked the group if they could think of any additions to the draft.
 - The MHAG will have until January 22, 2019 to review and suggest possible items to add to the proposed WAC.
 - There was a suggestion to have a written instruction document that a Master Hunter needs to sign and return based on each property.

New Business

- **Wolf Update (*Ben Maletzke, 1 hour*)**
 - Ben is the statewide wolf specialist.
 - He presented the 2017 data since the 2018 data is not completed at this time.
 - This presentation can be found on the commission meeting notes at https://wdfw.wa.gov/commission/meetings/2018/03/mar_1518_27_presentation.pdf.

- Ben went over the wolf plan objectives.
- He reported that wolves were not released in Washington State, but were normal dispersals from Idaho and Canada.
- He informed MHAG that wolves are federally delisted from the Endangered Species Act in the eastern third of the state.
- Wolves remain federally listed under the Endangered Species Act in the western two thirds of state.
- They are currently listed as endangered at the state level.
- Generally, there are five wolves per pack and a pack's general area is 350 square miles.
- Ben will send a copy of the scientific paper regarding the reduction of ungulates in northern Yellowstone to Kris for distribution to the MHAG.
- **Hoof Disease Update (*George Dennis, 30 minutes*)**
 - George contacted Kyle Garrison about the hoof disease issue to present an update to MHAG.
 - George gave a quick update on the status of hoof disease in Washington.
 - In 2017, the legislature gave WSU a onetime funding for the school of veterinary medicine to become the lead research organization.
 - At this time, Kyle does not know of any more talk within the legislature to fund the research into the future.
 - The current WDFW Hoof Disease Coordinator position is a possible cut as part of the budget shortfall.
 - If the Hoof Coordinator Position were cut, the monitoring of the disease, its prevalence, etc. would decrease because there would not be a dedicated person to complete the research.
- **WDFW Reports and Updates (*Kris Thorson, 30 minutes*)**
 - As of January 4, 2019, here are the Master Hunter statistics:
 - There are 1671 Master Hunters.
 - There were 310 applicants to the program in 2018.
 - Of those applicants 104 (34%) completed all of the requirements and became Master Hunters.
 - Of the 310 applicants, 126 (41%) took the exam.
 - Of the 126, 86 (68%) passed the exam on their first attempt.
 - Of the 40 who did not pass on their first attempt, 25 (63%) took the exam a second time.
 - Of the 25 who took the test a second time, 22 (88%) passed on their second attempt.
 - Region 3 Volunteer Projects & Coordination (*Aaron Garcia*)
 - Aaron worked with the NWTF WITO to have a turkey workshop where 10 participants were taken on mentored hunts.
 - He held several youth pheasant hunts in Regions 2 and 3.
 - There were also general upland bird clinics and hunts in Regions 2 and 3.
 - The fall turkey mentoring was slow this year and there were not as many mentored as requested mentorship.

- Region 1 has approached Aaron to start doing waterfowl and upland bird clinics/hunts.
- He has spoken with Matt Wilson about waterfowl clinics and we will work with regional staff and Washington Waterfowl Association to set them up for next season.
- Chris White, WDFW's pheasant farmer, is advocating for the pheasant clinics and working with the game division manager to work on easing restrictions to make it easier to hold them. He participated in the two clinics/hunts in December and was very happy with the way hunter education was doing them.
- Aaron will be upping his effort to secure private properties, to allow more mentored turkey hunters in the future.
- He needs to put together a group to work with Dave Woodall on the 4-0 ranch.
- He is working on Region 3 projects in the LT Murray, Teanaway, and Cle Elum areas coming this year.
- Mark Teske is working to secure a large amount of the small fence line reflectors and Aaron will be looking for volunteers to install them.
- The department is cutting back on the number of volunteers at sportsmen shows, only 2 per shift, and they will be asked to work the hunter education booth.
- Region 4 Volunteer Projects & Coordination (*Kris Thorson for Steve Dazey*)
 - Steve is working on recruiting volunteers for the removal of invasive plants at Fortuna properties for habitat enhancement.
 - He also had a low impact Mylar prep project where Master Hunters affixed Mylar to zip ties for hazing waterfowl, primarily in high lead concentrated areas in Whatcom County.
- Region 5 Volunteer Projects & Coordination (*Amy Elliott*)
 - Amy had a fence-building project outside White Salmon in late October.
 - She is working with Keith Pfeifer and Dave Whipple on having a presence at a Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation banquet in Vancouver.
 - She is collaborating with Vancouver Wildlife League to assist in holding a fall pheasant hunt at Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge each year. Amy has many Master Hunters who work with this group and help with the hunt.
 - Amy has been answering questions from Master Hunters on the budget and the future of the program.
- Region 6 Volunteer Projects & Coordination (*Bill Montgomery*)
 - Bill worked on soliciting volunteers for a couple of fencing projects.
 - He had a pheasant clinic near Oakville in November.
 - He worked with the Ness brothers, three Master Hunters, on 10 more new and improved mountain goat crates.
- Hunter Education Division Specialist (*Kris Thorson*)

- Kris has been working with Christine and Bill on National Hunting and Fishing Day (NHFD).
 - He has also been working with Dave on the new information that will be posted in the TIP trailer in the future.
 - Kris has been answering questions about the budget and the MHPP future.
 - The recruitment period for the MHAG has concluded and the subcommittee members have received their packets for consideration.
 - Next step will be a meeting of the subcommittee to recommend members to the director's office.
- **MHAG Member Updates (*George Dennis, 30 minutes*)**
 - MHAG member volunteer work/activities, news/issues from your region, etc.
 - George Dennis
 - George helped with a hunter education class in the fall.
 - He is planning on working at the Portland sportsman's show.
 - Jim Hope
 - Jim volunteered at the NHFD event in Wenatchee.
 - He assisted a disabled hunter with a hunt in October.
 - Jim also took a tour of elk area 3911 with Aaron.
 - Tom Conrads
 - Tom is a range safety officer at his club.
 - He is hearing information at the club about WDFW budget.
 - Kyle Smith
 - Kyle has heard about complaints from non-Master Hunters about Master Hunters shooting cows in an area for a special permit hunt.
 - He assisted at a youth pheasant clinic/hunt with Aaron.
 - Shawn Woodard
 - Shawn has received questions on the programs future.
 - He also assisted with a pheasant hunt at a hunting preserve.
 - Marji Bobiak
 - Marji mentored new hunters hunting deer last fall.
 - John McAuliffe
 - John is setting his hunter education classes for this year.
 - Ian Stewart
 - Ian assisted at a hunter education class.
 - He corresponded with Master Hunters on the budget and the program future.
- **NHFD Update (*Christine Redmond, 30 minutes*)**
 - Christine informed the MHAG that we are starting to plan for NHFD 2019.
 - She talked about the number of partners and known events at this point.
 - Christine asked if MHAG had any input for possible partners and/or events for the 2019 event.

- **Proposed Rule Changes and Public Process (*Kris Thorson, 30 minutes*)**
 - Kris went over the basic rule making process.
 - He identified how to get involved with the rulemaking process.
 - Kris went over the proposed rulemaking for 2019 that effected Master Hunters directly.

- **CORT Update (*Shane Briel, 5 minutes*)**
 - Shane was not in attendance so this agenda item was not discussed.

Conclusion

- **Recap Action Items (*Secretary Craghead, 5 minutes*)**
 - Send out decision packages.
 - Send out information on the overpass on I-90.
 - Send Kris comments on proposed Master Hunter WAC.
 - Send in comments on the NHFD event activities and NGOs.
 - Send to MHAG the legislative contacts information.
- **Agenda Topics for Next Meeting(*George Dennis, 5 minutes*)**
 - MHPP Annual Report
 - Cougar status and trends
- **Good of the Order (*All; General discussion items by MHAG, 5 minutes*)**
 - Next meeting on May 17.
- **Adjourn**