



# MASTER HUNTER ADVISORY GROUP

## WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

**Notes for MHAG Meeting #49**  
**March 13, 2020 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**  
**Skype Meeting**

<b>MHAG Members</b>		<b>WDFW Staff</b>	<b>Guests</b>
Region 1	Marji Bobiak	Dave Whipple Hunter Education Division Manager  Kris Thorson Hunter Education Division Specialist  Steve Dazey Region 4 Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator  Amy Elliott Region 5 Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator  Bill Montgomery Region 6 Hunter Education/Volunteer Coordinator	
	Shawn Woodard		
Region 2	Carissa Craghead, Secretary		
	Jim Hope (excused)		
Region 3	Kyle Smith		
	Tom Conrads (absent)		
	Jonathan Barr		
Region 4	David Floyd		
	Jeff Larsen, Vice Chair		
	John McAuliffe, Chair		
	Ian Stewart		
Region 5	George Dennis		
	Keith Pfeifer		
Region 6	Jim Gleiter		
	Thomas Woodruff (excused)		

## Procedural Business

- **Call to order and announcements (*John McAuliffe, 5 minutes*)**
- **Introduction of members and guests (*John McAuliffe, 5 minutes*)**
- **Recognition of members whose terms are expiring (*David Whipple, 15 minutes*)**
  - Members whose terms are expiring are: Marji Bobiak, Carissa Craghead, Kyle Smith, Jonathan Barr, and George Dennis.
  - Tom Conrads has also resigned his seat.

## Old Business

- **Budget News/Update (*David Whipple, 30 minutes*)**
  - WDFW has been operating at close to 2008 funding since the great recession.
  - The 2019 Legislature provided a healthy amount of funding from the State General Fund, but most was designated as one-time (not ongoing) for only the first year of the biennium. The Legislature and Governor's Office fully expected a large Supplemental Budget request from WDFW during this past session. The legislature also approved new costs in 2019 that weren't backed by revenue, which deepened WDFW's hole even more.
  - WDFW proposed a supplemental budget request in 2020 for \$26 million. WDFW did not propose a recreational fee bill in 2020 to generate additional revenue.
  - The legislature appropriated the department with the \$27 million in general funds, which will fund the Department's core services through June of 2021 and allocates significant resources for new work. The ongoing dollars are close to fully funding today's needs in outyears. It is a huge improvement, especially in a supplemental year.
  - Over 60 different organizations signed letters supporting the Department's budget.
  - Federal Pittman-Robertson funds are down about eight percent this year.
  - WDFW also had some agency request legislation that was passed, House Bill 2571 and Senate Bill 6072.
  - House Bill 2571 will change some lower level wildlife violations from a misdemeanor to an infraction versus referring a misdemeanor case to a prosecutor. This was requested because sometimes prosecutors were not prosecuting hunters who received misdemeanors. Dave suggested covering the ramifications on HB 2571 in the next MHPP newsletter.
  - Senate Bill 6072 separated the wildlife account into a flexible spending account and a non-flexible account which will help with the visibility of structural budget challenges in the future. This action was recommended by WDFW's stakeholder Budget and Policy Advisory Group.

## New Business

- **WDFW Reports and Updates (*Kris Thorson, 30 minutes*)**
  - MHPP Participation update
    - In 2019 there were 110 applicants.

- As of March 1, 2020, there were 1454 Master Hunters.
    - Sixteen applicants or 15 percent of applicants have taken the exam so far.
    - Three of the 16 passed on their first attempt or 19 percent.
    - Five applicants have attempted the exam a second time and all five passed on their second attempt.
    - We have six new Master Hunters from the 2019 applicant pool as of March 1.
  - Bill Montgomery – Region 6
    - Bill completed a pre-service training and had several women in the class.
    - He worked with a group at the Jamestown S’Klallam tribe for a hunter education class.
  - Steve Dazey – Region 1 north, region 2 north, and region 4
    - Steve has a project coming up helping biologists in the San Juan islands with possible harvest report confusion.
    - He received a report on the Cherry Valley net pens for the western Washington pheasant release program.
  - Amy Elliott – Region 5
    - Amy had a MH who was upset about being passed over on a hunt because he didn’t answer.
    - She dealt with a MH applicant who was upset he couldn’t know what questions he missed on the test so he could study those topics.
    - Amy went to a RMEF banquet and worked with Keith on talking to RMEF members about the MHPP.
    - She has a project coming up in the spring tree planting on the Mount St Helens wildlife area.
  - Kris Thorson – Program specialist
    - Kris has been working on the administrative duties associated with the MHPP.
    - He worked with the MHAG selection subcommittee on the recommendations for appointment to the MHAG.
- **MHAG Member Updates (*John McAuliffe, 60 minutes*)**
  - Marji Bobiak
    - Marji noted that the RMEF banquet is moving forward in her area.
    - She is working on a volunteer project to clean up a shooting range once the snow melts.
  - Shawn Woodard
    - Shawn has been working on the Bighorn show in Spokane.
  - John McAuliffe
    - John’s shooting group in Seattle is having to cancel shoots based on Governor Inslee’s directive to cancel groups over 250.
  - Carissa Craghead
    - Carissa has a possible class she wants to schedule in the future, but she is waiting on direction from Dave.

- Jon Barr
  - Jon has been working with a landowner in Cle Elum on possible mentored turkey hunts.
- David Floyd
  - David had a test date last week and had no requests for a proctored exam.
- Ian Stewart
  - Ian attended a Range Safety Officer class.
  - His next hunter education class was cancelled.
- Keith Pfeifer
  - Keith attended the RMEF banquet with Amy this year.
- George Dennis
  - George mentored a 14-year-old new hunter on an antlerless hunt in January and the new hunter harvested an elk.
  - He proctored a Master Hunter test this past Monday.
  - He is going to assist an 84-year-old Master Hunter to fill an antlerless permit next week when there's a new moon.
- Jim Gleiter
  - Jim has a hunter education class scheduled for June.
  - He was deployed on a Master Hunter hunt, but weather provided some challenges.
  - Jim was redeployed to a parcel in Elma, and the parcel was only about 35 acres.
  - He harvested an elk for himself and was given authorization to harvest a second elk to be donated to the local foodbank.
- Jeff Larsen
  - Jeff proctored four tests with two more scheduled in March.
  - He helped with noxious weed abatement in Lincoln county.
  - He harvested a juvenile ram in Yakima county, and completed field pneumonia tests and biological sampling for study.
- **MHAG Communications with Master Hunters (*Kris Thorson, 10 minutes*)**
  - During previous discussions with MHAG, we identified that we need good communication channels with the current Master Hunters to ensure they are represented by MHAG.
  - Every member will be expected to send out a communication to current Master Hunters before meetings to ensure they are representing the Master Hunters as best as they can.
  - Kris will set up a list for each member to use as for their communications to Master Hunters.
- **2019 Annual Report Review (*Kris Thorson, 30 minutes*)**
  - Kris asked the MHAG if there were any changes/edits needed for the annual report.

- The group had no edits to the current draft.
- **Hunt Coordinator Guidelines Discussion (*Kris Thorson, 30 minutes*)**
  - Keith was contacted by a Master Hunter about being passed over by the conflict staff due to not answering his phone.
  - The Master Hunter was contacted but did not answer the phone when contacted because he was at the gym. When he contacted the coordinator back he was told the conflict staff had moved onto the next Master Hunter on the list.
  - Kris talked about the history of the guidelines and the compounding timeframes if there was a specific timeframe to wait for a return call.
  - Jon Barr suggested the conflict staff possibly text a Master Hunter before calling to make sure they know the call is coming.
- **Proposed Master Hunter General Season for GMU 371 (*Kris Thorson, 30 minutes*)**
  - The Game division proposed changing the general season of GMU 371 Master Hunter only season from August 1 – January 31 to August 1 – October 15.
  - This was proposed for three reasons:
    - The MH season in GMU 371 was initiated as a way for military personnel to hunt the installation.
    - WDFW now issues "damage permits" to landowner who turn them over to the military.
    - In recent years, there is indication that Colockum elk (below objectives) are wintering on YTC.
  - John asked about the public input to the proposed rule.
  - Kris was not sure but would check.
- **Open Application Period Discussion (*Kris Thorson, 30 minutes*)**
  - Kris has proposed the application period to move to July 1 – August 15.
  - There are three reasons for the proposed change.
    - The opening date of January 1 occurs while there are still hunting seasons open and applicants could be participating and not thinking about applying to the MHPP.
    - In the past two years WDFW has postponed the application period due to budget issues until at least the legislative sessions ended.
    - Applicants would most likely not be able to complete the requirements before the special permit deadline in May, this change would allow new Master Hunters apply for permits at the end of the completion period.
  - MHAG members did not oppose the change.
  - The MHAG members noted that the MHPP Orientations should start back up.
- **NHFD Briefing (*Bill Montgomery, 30 minutes*)**
  - Bill gave a quick recap on the Tacoma event.
  - The 2020 event will be held at Camp Cowles in Newport.
  - The MHAG membership was invited to come participate at the event.

- **Public Comments (*John McAuliffe, 15 minutes*)**
  - No comments heard.

### **Conclusion**

- **Recap Action Items (*Secretary Craghead, 5 minutes*)**
- **Agenda Topics for Next Meeting (*John McAuliffe, 5 minutes*)**
- **Good of the Order (*All; General discussion items by MHAG, 5 minutes*)**
- **Adjourn**