

MEETING NOTES
WDFW Master Hunter Advisory Group
Meeting Number 2
May 15, 2008
Ellensburg

The meeting was called to order by Mike Estes, Chair, at 9:00 AM. The attached agenda was followed in order.

Attending were:

Bill Vincent	Ray Boone
Mike Estes	Mike Parris
Dustin Albright	Mike Britton
Brian Davern	Francis Benjamin
George Coulbourn	

Jerry Gutzwiler, WDFW Commission Chair
Bobbie Thorniley, GMAC
Mike Kuttel *
John Wisner *
Sean Carrell *
Sgt. Mike Sprecher *
Off. Mike Hobbs *
Anthony Novack *

* WDFW Staff

Absent: Bill Madison
Bob Holtfreter

1. Call to order and Announcements

MHAG Chair Estes advised the Group that Mr. Christensen had resigned due to business conflicts. Commission Chair Gutzwiler and incoming GMAC Chair Thorniley were introduced.

2. Bylaws

The MHAG Bylaws were approved as written, having been discussed at the prior meeting.

3. Roles & Responsibilities

The MHAG Roles & Responsibilities, were approved as written, having also been discussed at the prior meeting.

4. Master Hunter Program Vision Statement

A proposed Vision Statement had been circulated among MHAG members prior to the meeting. This was discussed in detail, after which Group adopted the following:

Vision Statement

Develop a Corps of sportsmen dedicated to preserving the heritage of hunting by giving back to the sport, displaying the highest standards of conduct, and working to conserve wildlife habitat and hunting opportunity.

5. Motto

The Group also adopted the following:

Motto

Giving Back

6. Approval of Notes from Meeting of March 27, 2008

The Notes were approved as distributed.

7. Reports on Action Items

Action Items from the prior meeting were reviewed. Items 1 & 2 continue as work in progress and were discussed in detail during the meeting (see below). Items 3, 4 & 5 were completed prior to the meeting.

8. Status reports from Committee & Initiative Chairs

a. Applicant Orientation Meetings: Mr. Coulbourn advised that three meetings were planned for next year, to be held during the application period. There will be one meeting each in the eastern, central and western parts of the State. The format is expected to be similar to the meetings held this year, updated to incorporate new information.

b. Information & Outreach Meetings: Mr Albright reported that the first in the series of I&O Meetings will be held in Spokane on June 14th at the Inland Northwest Wildlife

Council Headquarters from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. I&O meetings will also be held this summer in the Longview/Kelso and Wenatchee areas. Discussion of the objectives and scope of the Meetings produced the following tentative agenda:

Tentative I&O Meeting Agenda

- 1) Introduction (MHAG Lead)
- 2) WDFW discussion on history, status of new Master Hunter program and changes, AHE Transition update, and future directions (MHAG Liaison)
- 3) WDFW staff discussion of Master Hunter opportunities in Region One and answer related questions (Region One Wildlife Program Manager)
- 4) General Q & A session (MHAG Lead)
- 5) Break
- 6) Formal break-out group discussions
- 7) Reports from break-out sessions (Break-out facilitators)
- 8) Final interaction and summary (MHAG Lead)

Potential topics for breakout sessions were discussed. A wide range of topics resulted.

Action Item No. 1: Mr. Estes will adapt the questionnaire he developed for the Orientation Meeting for use at the I&O Meeting.

Action Item No. 2: Mr. Kuttel will prepare a statewide news release for the June 14 I&O Meeting and arrange for Enforcement Program and Wildlife Program staff from Region One to attend and participate.

c. Special Hunt Coordination Meetings: The scope of these Meetings was discussed. It was recognized that the Group currently lacks the resources to conduct as many Meetings as desired. It was agreed to conduct one 3911 SHC Meeting by late July of this year. This Meeting should be conducted in cooperation with the Big Game Management Roundtable. Mr. Novack will assist Mr. Boone and Mr. Holtfreter in making arrangements.

It was recognized that similar types of Special Hunt issues arise state-wide and that development of a standardized agenda and involvement of Regional WDFW personnel would be beneficial.

d. Ways & Means Committee: Funds remain adequate for the Group's current needs.

9. Update on Peer Review process / Status of the WAC

Mr. Kuttel reported that work continued on both the Peer Review process and the update to WAC 232-12-073. Recent direction from the Attorney General's Office resulted in Criminal Background Checks only focusing on game-related convictions, with convictions on fish, shellfish, Department lands, and access decal not being considered as

a basis for admission of former AHE members into the new Master Hunter program. Although the intent of the Commission, Department, and MHAG was to be inclusive of all these convictions, the official definition of the work “Wildlife” was not used per direction.

10. Test Development and Proctoring

Mr. Davern conducted an exercise with the Group to gather input needed to develop several new tests for use in 2009. This work produced 6 weighted categories for test questions. Details within the categories were discussed. The importance of developing “fair and balanced” sets of questions was stressed. It was also stressed that questions must conform to the information provided Applicants.

It was decided that the higher priority was to produce Study Questions for this year and to work on the next round of tests afterwards.

Mr. Wisner reported that early results of testing indicated a high rate of failure. He noted that the 2nd test is considered to be somewhat more difficult than the 1st. Mr Estes reported that all 5 of the people who took the test that he recently proctored in the Tri-Cities failed. In both instances, Applicants reported that they had not studied the necessary materials or had not studied areas that did not interest them. For example: “I’m a bird hunter. I didn’t spend any time on the big game information.”

Mr. Coulbourn noted that he will proctor a test in Black Diamond on June 17. In his instructions to Applicants when they register, Mr. Coulbourn is advising them of the high failure rate and urging them to study all of the materials thoroughly.

Mr. Kuttel distributed copies of the test proctoring instructions. Instructions for test takers and test proctors are posted on the Master Hunter web site.

Action Item No. 3: Mr. Wisner will provide Mr. Davern with copies of all Hunter Education tests produced to date. This information may have useful examples for some of the test categories.

Action Item No. 4: Mr. Davern will develop practice questions for the current two Master Hunter tests for posting on the web site in the future.

Action Item No. 5: Mr. Davern will work with Mr. Holtfreter on the development of two new tests for use in 2009.

11. Elk Area 3911 Conservation Projects

Mr Kuttel distributed a collection of potential initiatives that the Master Hunter Program might consider in order to deal with some of the issues for this high visibility damage hunt. Such activities as posting, map development, access, and potential further modifications of the season were discussed.

Officer Hobbs observed that boundary issues were not a major source of infraction, rather the principle law enforcement issues had to do with tagging and misrepresentation. Hunter behavior was the primary complaint.

Action Item No. 6: Mr. Kuttel and Mr. Estes will meet with Region Three staff to pursue the development of a free east-end map for distribution to Master Hunters hunting in Elk Area 3911.

Mr. Kuttel, the MHAG Liaison, made a formal request to the MHAG to conduct a full analysis of the 3911 Master Hunter elk season.

Action Item No. 7: Mr. Estes will appoint a member to lead the effort in evaluation of the 3911 Master Hunter elk season per approved Roles and Responsibilities, bullet #15. This report should be completed by the end of November, 2008.

Mr. Novack informed the Group that there would be an elk study of the Colockum herd focusing on the problem elk. He also reported that there was a pattern regarding the seasonal intrusion of elk into damage areas.

Mr. Novack announced that he will be leading an Elk Area 3912 work party on July 12. He noted that around two dozen workers had participated in the two previous work parties.

In response to questions from the Group, Region 3 staff estimated that around 150 elk had been removed during the 3911 hunt in 2007, down from around 170 in 2006.

Mr. Novack noted that the Colockum herd appeared to number around 4000 currently, up from its low of 3400. 4500 is considered the current herd management objective.

12. New Master Hunter shoulder patch

Mr. Kuttel had staff produce a variety of attractive shoulder patch designs for consideration by the Group. By a large majority, the Group adopted a patch design featuring the WDFW logo in full color surrounded by a "halo" containing the words "Washington Master Hunter" on the top, and the motto "Giving Back" on the bottom.

Both new and existing Master Hunters will receive the new patch.

Action Item No. 8: Mr. Wisner will conduct a cost analysis and gather quotes for the new patch/logo.

13. Future use of the BLOG

The BLOG had been closed because of the lack of resources to make effective use of it and because the new web site contains a rich collection of information. It was

recognized that as the Program grows, the BLOG could be re-instated, but it was agreed that this was not the time to do so.

Mr. Novack noted that the BLOG had been useful to him in updating Master Hunters on elk locations. It was agreed to add a link on the web site for this purpose.

Action Item No 9: Mr. Kuttel will work with Mr. Novak to add a link to the Master Hunter web site for “Special Hunt Updates”, and will unplug the BLOG from the old Master Hunter web site.

14. Liaison Report

Mr. Kuttel reported that approximately 1450 Master Hunters had now been posted to the WILD ID system. Of the nearly 1800 AHE Master Hunters, around 250 did not submit re-qualification forms, 50 had failed the Criminal Background Check, and 50 had expired certifications. There are 1030 new Applicants.

Mr. Kuttel has submitted a list of Master Hunters in good standing to the Captains and Sergeants of all Regions. In the future it is hoped that Regions will develop a close relationship with local Master Hunters.

A letter is in preparation from the Chief to the various public land management agencies urging them to consider using Master Hunters for their wildlife habitat projects.

15. Presentations by others

Commission Chair Gutzwiler noted that the Commission was strongly supportive of the efforts undertaken by the Group. He stated a desire for the Group to work more closely with the Regions and other elements in the Department. The Group concurred.

Mr. Gutzwiler also indicated a desire for the Commission to hear directly from the Group. Mr. Estes noted that the Group has a requirement to provide semi-annual reports to the Director.

There were no other presentations.

Next meeting:

Thursday, June 26, Ellensburg Quality Inn: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm. This will be the third meeting of the MHAG.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
George Coulbourn

Attachments:

Action Items

MHAG Bylaws

MHAG Roles and Responsibilities

Agenda for May 15, 2008

Draft Agenda for June 26, 2008

MHAG Action Items

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DRAFT
BYLAWS
MASTER HUNTER ADVISORY GROUP
(Updated 03/31/08)

- Elected officers will include Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary.
- Summary notes for each meeting will be taken and distributed.
- The Chair and Vice-Chair will each serve one-year terms. The Vice-Chair will normally succeed the Chair but must be approved by a majority of appointed Advisory Group members.
- The Secretary will serve a two-year term.
- Coincidental with the formation of the Advisory Group, all members will receive one-year appointments. After the first year of service, members may be re-appointed for staggered term lengths of one, two, or three-years. Subsequent appointments will then be for three-year terms.
- The Chair will determine the order of business at meetings. Robert's Rule of Order will be used as a guide.
- Advisory Group business will only be conducted if a quorum of appointed members is present (half of the appointed members plus one member). The preference for decision making will be by consensus. However, if a consensus cannot be achieved, majority vote of the quorum will form the basis of formal decisions and recommendations.
- Amendments to the Bylaws and Roles and Responsibilities must be approved by a majority of appointed Advisory Group members.
- All Advisory Group members must be Certified Master Hunters in good standing.
- By January 2010, membership will include at least two Master Hunter representatives per Region, and a maximum of 15 members in total.
- Meetings will be open to the general public.
- Standing Committees will include: 1) Peer Review (Committee to be established when deemed appropriate by the Department), and 2) Ways and Means. Leads for Standing Committees will be appointed by the Chair, and must be members of the Advisory Group.
- Temporary Committees may be established and terminated by the Chair, at any time. Temporary Committees may be lead by a Certified Master Hunter that is not an appointed member of the Advisory Group.
- Standing Committees and Temporary Committees have no standing or official authority to represent the Advisory Group as a body. All Committee Leads, except for the Peer Review Committee, must report back to the full Advisory Group where formal decisions and recommendations to the Department are subsequently approved.
- The Advisory Group, as a body, will not communicate with the Fish and Wildlife Commission, Director, Chief of Enforcement, or elected officials without providing advance notification to the Master Hunter Advisory Group Liaison, and the Master Hunter Program Coordinator.

- Formal testimony and interviews with the news media made on behalf of the Advisory Group, as a body, will not include personal opinions. The Master Hunter Advisory Group Liaison, and Master Hunter Program Coordinator will be briefed, in advance, of such communications..
- Meetings will be held in Ellensburg, unless weather conditions or other factors dictate an alternate location or the use of teleconference or phone conference technology.
- There will be a minimum of four Advisory Group business meetings held annually.
- The Chair and Master Hunter Advisory Group Liaison will jointly develop each meeting agenda and determine meeting dates.
- The Chair may recommend to the Department that appointed members be terminated if they a) are absent without excuse from two or more scheduled meetings in any 12 month period; b) violate the provisions and intent of Bylaws; c) are unable to fulfill their responsibilities as a member; d) have failed to meet obligations to which they have volunteered to perform or to which they have been assigned to perform; or e) have used abusive language and/or shown disrespect for other members, the Department, or the public.
- All scheduled Master Hunter Advisory Group meetings, Master Hunter Orientation meetings, Master Hunter Outreach and Information meetings, and Master Hunter Special Hunt Management meetings will be held at locations that provide reasonable accommodations to persons-of-disability.

DRAFT
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
MASTER HUNTER ADVISORY GROUP
(Updated 4/3/08)

- Copies of corrected meeting notes, reports, and recommendations made to the Department, will be provided to, but not limited to, the following individuals and groups: Fish and Wildlife Commission, Director, Deputy Directors, Chief of Enforcement, Master Hunter Advisory Group Liaison, Master Hunter Program Coordinator, members of the Game Management Advisory Group, and members of the Enforcement Advisory Group. Corrected meeting notes will also be posted by the Department on the Master Hunter website and blog.
- Assist the Department with the development and implementation of communications mechanisms for Certified Master Hunters. The Chair will establish as many Temporary Communications Committees as deemed necessary.
- Conduct, in cooperation with the Department, a minimum of two Master Hunter Orientation meetings each year, targeting potential new applicants. The Chair will appoint a Temporary Committee Lead to facilitate these meetings. Recommendations will be made, as necessary, to the Department.
- Conduct, in cooperation with the Department, a minimum of two Master Hunter Outreach and Information meetings each year, targeting Certified Master Hunters. The Chair will appoint a Temporary Committee Lead to facilitate these meetings. Recommendations will be made, as necessary, to the Department.
- Conduct, in cooperation with the Department, Master Hunter Special Hunt Management meetings targeting communities and stakeholders where issues and concerns dictate. The Chair will appoint a Temporary Committee Lead to facilitate these meetings. Recommendations will be made, as necessary, to the Department.
- When deemed appropriate by the Department, establish a Master Hunter Peer Review Committee, per WAC 232-12-073, and provide recommendations to the Department concerning all complaints referred by the Department. In partnership with the Department, create protocols under which work will be performed by the Peer Review Committee and develop recommended evaluation criteria to be used by the Peer Review Committee for deliberations.
- Provide recommendations on Master Hunter program policy, as requested by the Department.
- Provide recommendations on statutes and rules associated with the Master Hunter Program, as requested by the Department.
- Assist the Department in the development of Master Hunter curriculum, pre-requisites, tests, and requirements. Assist the Department with the possible development of supervised scheduled Master Hunter testing at sites throughout the state.
- Routinely evaluate Master Hunter materials (forms, curriculum, study materials, identification items, etc.) and make recommendations to the Department.
- Develop Master Hunter Advisory Group processes to improve qualifications, monitoring, and administration of the Master Hunter program.

- Routinely evaluate the Master Hunter website and make recommendations to the Department.
- Provide Master Hunter communication conduits in each of the six administrative Regions of the Department. Master Hunter Advisory Group members residing in each Region will assist the Department by handling contacts and inquiries from Master Hunter applicants and Certified Master Hunters about enrollment, certification requirements, re-certification, conservation projects, issues, complaints, violations, and other topics. Advisory Group members will also assist with Master Hunter meetings in their area, interface with local Department personnel, promote and advocate for the Master Hunter program, and help with the evaluation of local Master Hunter seasons, when necessary. Advisory Group e-mail addresses will be displayed on the Master Hunter website and arranged by geographic area.
- Establish a Ways and Means Standing Committee to assist the Department with funding and funding related needs of the Master Hunter Advisory Group and its initiatives.
- Conduct evaluations of Master Hunter general seasons and permit seasons as requested by the Department. Make recommendations to the Department. Evaluations will reflect consultations with participating Master Hunters; Hunt Masters, if applicable; associated private and public landowners; and appropriate Department field personnel with responsibilities for the area. Evaluations will also comment on the effectiveness and efficiency of hunts in achieving stated Department management objectives. Reports will also include any pertinent regulatory or ethical violations by Master Hunters that have been reported.
- In partnership with the Department, prepare two Master Hunter reports each year for submittal to the Director and possible presentation before the full Commission and/or Wildlife Subcommittee.
- Sponsor and promote selected wildlife conservation volunteer projects for Master Hunters designed to benefit the image of Master Hunters, the hunting heritage, landowner-sportsmen relations, the control of game damage, and to provide direct benefits to the recreational hunting public.
- Assist the Department with the design and implementation of a recruitment process for future members of the Master Hunter Advisory Group.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ELECTED OFFICERS, AND STANDING COMMITTEES

Chair: Presides over formal Advisory Group business meetings; cooperatively works with the Department to set meetings and formulate agendas; represents the Advisory Group during formal testimony, and during scheduled meetings with the Chief of Enforcement, Director, and Commission members; serves as primary Advisory Group

contact for the Master Hunter Advisory Group Liaison and Master Hunter Program Coordinator; and assists the Department with the writing of two annual Master Hunter Program reports and necessary briefings.

Vice-Chair: Acts on behalf of the Chair, when the Chair is unable to perform his/her duties; serves as “sergeant at arms” during business meetings.

Secretary: Prepares and distributes business meeting notes.

Peer Review Standing Committee: To be established when deemed appropriate by the Department. Makes timely recommendations to the Department concerning submitted Title 77 violations that do not result in convictions, ethical violations that do not rise to the level of criminal law or regulatory violations, and formal complaints, consistent with WAC 232-12-073, Master Hunter Program; recommendations regarding the suspension of Master Hunter privileges will be based upon evaluation criteria developed jointly by the Advisory Group and Department; the Department will consult with the State Attorney General’s Office in the development of Committee operating protocols; the Committee will include a maximum of three members.

Ways and Means Standing Committee: Pursue and administer grants to help fund the operations of the Master Hunter Advisory Group, and to implement its initiatives on-the-ground. Facilitate the reimbursement of travel and per diem costs of Advisory Group members using available grant funding. Provide updated financial status reports to the Advisory Group, as requested.

Agenda MHAG Meeting #2

Ellensburg Quality Inn, Fireside room

May 15, 2008

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Procedural Business

1. Call to order and announcements
2. Discussion & confirmation of Bylaws
3. Discussion & confirmation of Roles & Responsibilities
4. Master Hunter Program Vision Statement
5. Motto – Giving Back

Old Business

1. Approval of Notes from Meeting of March 27, 2008
2. Reports on Action Items (Coulbourn)
3. Status reports from Committee & Initiative Chairs
 - Applicant Orientation Meetings (Coulbourn)
 - Information & Outreach Meetings (Albright)
 - Special Hunt Coordination (Boone)
 - Ways & Means Committee (Holtfreter)
4. Update on Peer Review process / Status of the WAC (Kuttel)
5. Test development, proctoring and scheduling

New Business

1. Area 3911 Elk Hunt Conservation Project
2. Information and Outreach Meetings for 2008
3. Planning for the 3911 SHC meeting(s)
4. MH shoulder patches and other personal gear
5. Future of the BLOG

6. Presentations by others

7. Other New Business

8. Update by Liaison

Conclusion

1. Action Items

2. Next meeting

Draft Agenda MHAG Meeting #3

Ellensburg Quality Inn, Fireside room

June 26, 2008

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Procedural Business

1. Call to order and announcements
2. Approval of Notes from Meeting of May 15, 2008

Old Business

3. Reports on Action Items
4. Status reports from Committee & Initiative Chairs
 - Applicant Orientation Meetings (Coulbourn)
 - Information & Outreach Meetings (Albright)
 - Special Hunt Coordination (Boone)
 - Ways & Means Committee (Holtfreter)
5. Update on test development, proctoring, and scheduling (Davern and Wisner)

New Business

6. Database Status (Mikitik and Loveless)
7. Update by Liaison
8. Other New Business
 - Review of draft Master Hunter progress report to the Director/Commission. (Estes/Kuttel)
 - Recruitment process for replacement and additional members.
 - Discussion about Hunt Master protocols in contacting hunters.
 - Master Hunter fulfillment process for clothing and other items.
 - Strategic planning for mission, goals, and objectives for the future.
 - Drawing point accumulation issue for Master Hunters drawing Hunt Master permits.
9. Presentations by others

Conclusion

10. Action Items

11. Next meeting