



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

MHAG Meeting #33, Meeting Notes  
 October 9, 2015, 2015, 9:00 a.m.– 3:00 p.m.  
 Washington Cattlemen’s Association, Ellensburg

<b>MHAG Members</b>		<b>WDFW Staff</b>	<b>Guests / Coordinators</b>
Region 1	John Glenewinkel	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  Captain Rich Mann Region 3 Enforcement  Christine Redmond Volunteer Program Manager  Donny Martorello WDFW Wolf Policy Lead  Ralf Schreiner Conflict Specialist	Phillip Aigner Master Hunter Region 1
	Shawn Woodard		
	Tim Bruya		
Region 2	Carissa Craghead, Secretary		
	Bernard Brown		
Region 3	Lance Ostrom		
	Tom Conrads		
	Robert Cernick		
Region 4	Jim Fitzgerald, Chair		
	John McGlenn		
	Jim Slyfield		
	John McAuliffe		
Region 5	Chris Brong		
	George Dennis, Vice Chair		
Region 6	James Zimmerman (absent)		

## Procedural Business

- Call to order and announcements
- Introduction of members and guests
- Approval of Meeting #32 notes from July 17, 2015
  - Meeting notes were approved.

## New Business

- **WDFW Reports and Updates (*Dave Whipple*)**
  - Master Hunter Permit Program (MHPP) 2015: 375 applicants this year, with 51 (13.5%) certified to-date. November 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for completion of all requirements.
  - MHAG members discussed concerns with some questions on the applicant exam. Dave, Tracy, and Kris will review and discuss the MHPP applicant exam, potential rewriting of questions, and report at next the meeting.
- **Volunteer Program Update (*Christine Redmond*)**
  - CERVIS use and updates were discussed. MHAG Appreciation Day.
- **Region 3 Volunteer Projects & Coordination (*Aaron Garcia*)**
  - Recent and ongoing projects include continued fencing projects (building, removing, GPS'ing burned sections), wildfire recovery/restoration projects, more in the works, emergency elk hazing in elk area 3911. There was a youth pheasant hunt on the Sunnyside Wildlife Area that was completed successfully. Planning a waterfowl clinic in November and a female-only turkey hunting clinic and hunt; "Thanksgiving Dinner, From Field to Table". Had Hunter Education & MHPP informational booth at the National Hunting and Fishing Day celebration at the Tri-Cities Shooting Association/Rattlesnake Hills Range.
- **Region 4 Volunteer Projects & Coordination (*Steve Dazey*)**
  - Recent and ongoing projects include a successful National Hunting and Fishing Day booth at Holiday Sports (Burlington); Hunter Education/MHPP awareness and information presented to public. A Super Volunteer has been instrumental in helping and creating many volunteering opportunities in the area.
- **Region 6 Volunteer Projects & Coordination (*Dave Whipple for Bill Montgomery*)**
  - Recent and ongoing projects include: Spotted Frog project in works (canary reed grass removal). Super Volunteer Dan Tucker (Sequim) is very busy with activities in his area. Elk Hoof Disease hoof collection for continued studies is still in process. Had some elk hazing in Buckley area. Relationships between landowners and MH's continue to grow and be positive. Bass Pro Shop hosted National Hunting and Fishing Day activities.
- **Hunter Education Division Specialist (*Kris Thorson*)**
  - Kris provided a Blue Tongue update and handout of the News Release.

- New educational pamphlets have been developed for National Hunting and Fishing Day events, sports shows, hunting clinics, etc. on the MHPP, Hunter Education program, and Basic Firearm Safety. Distribution has begun.
- MHAG suggested mailing the new MHPP pamphlet to all MHs if not cost prohibitive. WDFW will include it in the MHPP applicant packets next year.
- **MHAG Member Updates (MHAG members)**
  - MHAG member volunteer work/activities, news/issues from your region, etc.
  - John Glenewinkel
    - HE on-line class; good turn-out
  - Carissa Craghead
    - HE Classes; Ephrata, Othello, Moses Lake sheriff's office substation
    - National Hunting and Fishing Day – Tri-Cities
    - Ephrata gun range - archery range construction
    - Ephrata landowner orchardist; deer damage issues; LO will contact Conflict Bio
  - Bernard Brown
    - None
  - Lance Ostrom
    - Nothing, but has an issue to bring up later in meeting
  - Tom Conrads
    - National Hunting and Fishing Day, Tri-Cities Shooting Assoc.
  - Robert Cernick
    - Teanaway trail maintenance work
  - Jim Fitzgerald
    - MHPP Strategic Plan
    - Tracy meetings; status of MHPP, issues, etc.
    - Joining Hunter Ed instructor team in Shelton area
  - John McGlenn
    - MHPP Strategic Plan
    - Washington Outdoor Women event
  - Jim Slyfield
    - Renewed MH certification
    - Bat surveys
    - Sammamish River Stewards
  - John McAuliffe
    - MHPP Strategic Plan
    - 5 Hunter Ed classes, 113 new hunters certified
  - Chris Brong
    - National Hunting and Fishing event, Cowlitz Game & Anglers Range
  - George Dennis
    - National Hunting and Fishing event, Cowlitz Game & Anglers Range
  - James Zimmerman
    - Absent

- **3911 Early Season Update (*Aaron Garcia*)**
  - Elk Area 3911 Orientation on July 31<sup>st</sup> was well received and may become an annual event. Fewer elk conflicts than typical thus-far, minimal enforcement issues reported to date in 3911.
  
- **MHAG Strategic Plan (*John M./Jim F./Dave W./Capt. Mann*)**
  - Jim Fitzgerald, John McGlenn, John McAuliffe, Jim Slyfield and John Glenewinkel (the “Jimmy John Committee”) had a conference call to work on the strategic plan. Further the discussions and updates to be held and presented at next meeting.
    - Developing opportunities on private land where youth and parent or guardian would be able to hunt with a good chance of success. The role of the MH would be to utilize their skills and contacts with private landowners to facilitate these youth hunts, and possibly coach the youth and parent/guardian pair during the hunt. Proposed Youth Hunt Opportunities form has been drafted
    - Development of MH opportunities to participate in educational and training activities such as hunting clinics, sports show seminars, sporting goods outlets, non-governmental organization events (RMEF, DU, etc) Hunter Ed classes and continuing education events, Washington Outdoor Women, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, school presentations, specific state and national events such as National Hunting and Fishing Day, etc
    - Make the benefits and accomplishments of the MHs and the MHPP more visible to the hunting public, general public, WDFW and Fish and Wildlife Commission
  
- **MHPP Website Updates (*Kris Thorson*)**
  - WDFW is revising the MHPP web page, to focus more on what it means to the MH, vs. what MHs can expect to get from the program. Kris will send the current and proposed language in an email to for comment. Please email Kris Thorson with feedback to proposals by October 23<sup>rd</sup> to [kristopher.thorson@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:kristopher.thorson@dfw.wa.gov)
  
- **Potential Updating of MH Implement Certification Standards (*Kris Thorson*)**
  - Currently, a MH does not need to qualify with the specific implement required during a damage permit hunt. The decision on whether to accept a damage permit requiring a specific implement is left to the individual MH. The question is whether MHs should be required to qualify with specific implements required for specific hunts.
  - MHAG:
    - Supports specific implement qualification
    - If WDFW requires implement qualification, should phase it in
    - Implement Qualification
      - There are likely logistical issues w/ requiring specific individuals to certify MH qualification (e.g. LEO, RSO, etc.)

- The point was also made that WDFW should trust the MH to make wise/ethical decisions regarding if they are proficient with an implement and not put more hurdles in place.
  - Kris and Dave to report back on WDFW position on specific hunting implement use for a particular hunt.
- **The Status of Washington's Wolves (*Donny Martorello*) – (Approx. 12:00 p.m.)**
  - A presentation was given on Washington's wolf population and management, direction of the Wolf Advisory Group, etc.
  - The presentation can be found at [http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/advisory/mhag/handouts\\_100915\\_MHAG.pdf](http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/advisory/mhag/handouts_100915_MHAG.pdf)
  - Goals of the Wolf Management Plan: Restore self-sustaining wolf populations, manage wolf-livestock conflict, maintain a healthy prey base, develop public understanding and promote coexistence.
  - As Master Hunters are ambassadors for the department, some of the key take-home messages for MHAG members and Master Hunters are that 1) no state or federal agency has ever reintroduced wolves to Washington; 2) the wolf population is increasing similar to other western states, 2) management flexibility will be enhanced once the species is recovered; 3) WDFW is working very hard at wolf conservation and management, including addressing damage situations.
- **Small Forest Landowner Bear Damage & Possible MH Role (*Ralf Schreiner*) (Approx. 1:00 p.m.)**
  - The Spring Bear Hunt Program developed to deal with timber damage. MH participation has been minimal but is currently an objective in the WDFW Game Management Plan. WDFW is investigating whether and how to engage MHs to help address bear damage on small forest landowner parcels.
  - The presentation can be found at [http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/advisory/mhag/handouts\\_100915\\_MHAG.pdf](http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/advisory/mhag/handouts_100915_MHAG.pdf)
  - Dave and Kris to give an update on this at the next meeting.
- **CORT Updates (*Dave Whipple for Shane Briel*)**
  - It is anticipated that there will be more fixed schedule classes held next year to improve availability. These classes may be in conjunction with individual chapters of the Mule Deer Foundation, etc.
  - Dave is working with Enforcement on issues associated with officer presence at CORT classes, as well as with Shane and Kyle Winton on issues associated with classes being cancelled, class availability, etc.
  - If we cannot resolve the issues satisfactorily, WDFW will be investigating alternative CORT delivery mechanisms.
  - MHAG supports alternative delivery mechanisms, such as online, video, etc., in conjunction w/ a possible field day component.

## **Conclusion**

- **Recap Action Items (*Secretary Craghead*)**
  - WDFW will review the MHPP applicant test to check for patterns of missed questions (possibly indicating problematic or confusing questions) & provide update at next meeting.
  - The Strategic Plan Subgroup will meet and continue working on the plan. Update will be provided at the next meeting, with possible finalization of the high priorities.
  - Comments on the MHPP website updates are due to Kris by Oct. 23.
  - Kris & Dave to report on assessment of possible implement requirements for specific hunts
  - Kris & Dave will report on potentially using MHs to help address bear damage on small forest landowner property
  
- **Agenda Topics for Next Meeting**
  - MHPP applicant test questions WDFW will scrub test Qs to check for patterns & provide at next meeting
    - Develop subgroup if needed to review exam for changes
  - Strategic Plan update and potential finalization
  - Update on the MHPP website changes
  - Assessment of possible implement requirements for specific hunts
  - Update on potential use of MHs to help address bear damage on small forest landowner property
  
- **Next Meeting Date and Location –**
  - **January 29, 2016 at 0900-1500 Cattleman’s Association, Ellensburg**
  
- **Good of the Order (*All; General discussion items by MHAG*)**
  - **WDFW Hoof Disease Efforts (George Dennis)**
    - Prevalence: It has been determined that the prevalence may be under reported. Several studies are in progress to help more accurate reporting tactics in the way of online reporting, and surveys of both harvested animals and collared animals.
      - Hoof collection this hunting season
      - WDFW will assess whether public can accurately determine level of hoof disease by observing limping elk. If effective, the tool may be used in the future to track prevalence.
    - Survival
      - 78 elk have been collared (~50% w/ HD, 50% w/o HD)
      - All mortalities will be examined for HD by a Colorado laboratory
  
  - **Lance Ostrom**
    - 3911 Boundary Change Issue
      - MHAG was not consulted on the change
      - Colockum Herd is over target population of 4,500

- Dave again apologized to MHAG for not having opportunity to discuss the boundary change; there was a communication issue within WDFW. However, the boundary change excludes formerly private land that has been purchased over the years by the state, specifically for elk winter range and sage grouse habitat. The goal of Master Hunter general season in Elk Area 3911 is to help WDFW address elk damage. Therefore, allowing MHs access to elk on public land would only push the animals back on to private land, defeating the purpose of the winter range.
- **Adjourn at 1530**