

MEETING NOTES
WDFW Master Hunter Advisory Group
Meeting Number 5
October 23, 2008
Ellensburg

The meeting was called to order by Bill Vincent, Vice Chair, at 9:00 AM. The attached agenda was followed.

Attending were:

Ray Boone	George Coulbourn
Dustin Albright	Mike Britton
Bill Madison	Brian Davern
Bill Vincent	Mike Parris
Bob Holtfreter	

Absent: Mike Estes

Capt Rich Mann *
Mike Kuttel *
Sean Carrell *
Tracey Loveless *
Anthony Novack (part time) *

* WDFW Staff

1. Call to order and Announcements

MHAG Vice Chair Vincent called the Meeting to order at 9 AM. He reviewed the day's agenda and discussed administrative matters related to the Meeting.

2. Telephone interviews of MHAG candidates.

From a total of 16 original applicants, 5 candidates were selected by the MHAG Executive Committee and Department Liaison after review and ranking of all applications, and telephone conversations with highest ranking applicants. Candidates were interviewed by teleconference with the MHAG. All candidates were accepted. Recommendation to the Director for appointment to the MHAG will follow immediately. Successful candidates will be notified by Mr Kuttel.

Appointments will be for 3 years. New members will begin their service at the December 18, 2008 MHAG Meeting in Ellensburg.

3. Approval of Notes from Meeting of August 28, 2008

The Notes were approved as distributed.

4. Reports on Action Items

Action Items from the prior Meeting (attached) were reviewed.

Action Item No. 1 (I&O Meeting summary) and Action Item No. 4 (distribution of recruitment announcement) were completed.

Action Item No. 2 (memo of appreciation) and Action Item No.3 (ALEA grant) are continuing items.

5. Status reports from Committee & Initiative Chairs

See Agenda Item No. 12 below.

6. Status of new MH test

Mr Davern provided a master plan for the development of a 100 question examination reflecting the subject matter weighting previously developed by the Advisory Group. The current pool of potential questions numbers around 500. Sources for these questions include the Hunter Education tests, old AHE tests, and questions prepared by individual members of the Advisory Group. The master plan will form the basis of a Study Guide for future applicants.

Next steps: 1) consolidate and reformat questions into a single consistent document, 2) convert to electronic format, 3) map to master plan, 4) generate additional questions if required, 5) validate.

Mr Davern reaffirmed his commitment to have the process completed by February 1, 2009.

Mr Kuttel advised that the Hunter Education Student Manual will be added to the package of applicant study materials, as it contains Conservation, Sportsmanship, Ethics and Safety as well as general information.

Action Item No.1: Mr Coulbourn will reformat the master plan for issuance as a Study Guide. (Action item completed. See attachment

7. Update on Colockum elk study and landowner survey

Mr Novack advised that 6 elk cows now had been collared with GPS tracking devices. An additional 40 collars will be deployed in December. The collars will disclose

movement on both a daily and seasonal basis to provide data related to the effectiveness of the 3911 depredation hunt program, road closure benefits, and perhaps other behavior among the herd.

Mr Novack provided an overview of the recent landowner survey. The survey shows considerable progress in the acceptance and effectiveness of the 3911 Program and provides a baseline for future evaluations. It also shows marked regional differences. Reasons for differences and certain negative inputs were discussed. This survey and original questions will be posted on the Master Hunter web site.

Mr Novack provided updated copies of two new 3911 boundary maps (Middle County and Upper County). Now maps covering the entire Elk Area 3911 Unit are available and downloadable. Maps were prepared with the support of the BGMR. These updates will be posted on the Master Hunter web site.

Action Item No 2: Mr Kuttel will post the updated 3911 maps and landowner survey on the web site.

8. Approval of new Master Hunter Patch

The recommended patch was presented to the MHAG and received approval. The Department will order 5000 patches, because the price break between 5000 and 10,000 is insufficient to warrant the larger expenditure. All current and new Master Hunters will receive a single patch at no charge.

The Advisory Group recommended that the price for additional patches be set at a level to allow full cost recovery plus a modest amount of contingency to be applied to future patch orders. This will be a topic of discussion at the next MHAG session.

9. Status of ALEA grant application

Mr Britton reported that a ALEA draft application had been prepared. Details regarding amounts, durations and focus were needed. These matters were discussed. This is a continuing item

Action Item No 3: Mr Britton will develop the grant application as discussed.

10. Dates and locations for 2009 Meetings

MHAG: The MHAG will plan for 4 meetings in 2009; one per quarter. Discussion of other times and places led to the unanimous decision to continue to meet in Ellensburg on a Thursday. As a general rule, it was decided to meet in the middle month of each quarter, on the middle Thursday of the month. (**Agenda Item No. 12**) Accordingly, provisional dates for 2009 MHAG meetings are: February 19, May 21, August 20 and November 19. It was agreed to revisit this plan once the five new MHAG members are formally appointed and attending business meetings.

Action Item No 4: Mr Madison will investigate potential Ellensburg meeting locations and report to the Group at the next meeting.

New Applicant Orientation Meetings: Three of these meetings will be held in 2009, before the end of February. Locations will be in the vicinity of Olympia (led by Mr Coulbourn and Mr Parris), Yakima (led by Mr Madison and Mr Holtfretter) and Spokane (led by Mr Britton). Actual dates and locations will be determined by the organizers.

Information and Outreach Meetings: Three of these meetings will be held in 2009, during March and April. Where appropriate these meetings will be combined with Special Hunt Meetings. Mr Albright and Mr Boone are responsible for these meetings. Actual dates and locations will be determined by the organizers

Action item No 5: Meeting organizers will provide dates and locations by next MHAG meeting.

11. Timing and process for election of MHAG officers

By secret ballot, the Advisory Group unanimously confirmed the elevation of Mr Vincent, Vice Chair, to the Chair for the next year. His term of service will begin following the February MHAG meeting. Mr Coulbourn will serve as Secretary during the next term (2 year position). The Vice Chair position will be open for the next term. Nominations for Vice Chair will be made during the December meeting, and elections will be held during the February meeting. Per MHAG Bylaws, the expectation is that the Vice Chair will succeed the outgoing Chair subject to formal confirmation by the Advisory Group in each instance. Nominations for Vice Chair should have 2 or 3 years remaining on their appointments since it is not the intent of the Department to appoint current members to additional 3-year terms in the future.

12. Meeting locations and dates

See Agenda Item No. 10 above.

13. Focus on issues affecting the image of hunting and the hunter

Mr Coulbourn observed that there had been a series of recent events that reflected negatively on the image of hunting. These include hunting accidents, a poaching ring and a high profile trophy hunt involving the Governor's Elk Tag. It is the nature of hunting that such events will occasionally occur.

All Master Hunters sign a pledge to be "Stewards of the Hunt". The MHAG was chartered to provide advice to the Director on issues and opportunities affecting Master Hunters and the Master Hunter Program. In particular, the MHAG focus is on improving the public's perception of hunting and perpetuating the highest standards of hunting. In

that capacity the MHAG might address issues of this nature if an opinion may be of benefit to the Department.

Consideration of such an initiative was deferred to a future meeting, after the Advisory Group is at full strength.

Mr. Kuttel recommended that the MHAG work in concert with the Enforcement Advisory Group (EAG) and Game Management Advisory Committee (GMAC) to address corresponding concerns. It was noted that the MHAG has members that also participate on both the EAG and GMAC.

14. Department Liaison update

Mr Kuttel led a detailed discussion of the current markup of the WAC revision. This version is still a work in progress and is being crafted with input from the Attorney General's office and reflects changes to ensure the rule's enforceability. It is important that the rationale for the current wording be understood by the Advisory Group in order to retain the corporate knowledge for the future.

Mr Kuttel reported that of 1034 Master Hunter applicants in 2008, 210 had been tested at least once, and that 132 had passed. Since the 9 month period for completion of all requirements is nearing, it is unlikely that many more 2008 applicants will be successful. Less than 10% of applicants had completed all requirements by October 16th.

Mr Kuttel provided a draft Peer Review Evaluation Form. It features a matrix that allows objective evaluation and scoring of the seriousness of an ethical complaint against a Master Hunter. The current concept for Peer Review is that the evaluation result will be either a recommendation for suspension for 2 years or no further action, based on how egregious the incident may be.

Mr Kuttel confirmed that the Department faces serious budget shortfalls for the coming biennium. Possible impacts of programs of interest to the Advisory Group were discussed. Due to the current hiring freeze, Mr. Kuttel's services may not be continued past the end of this year.

Upcoming meetings:

Meeting No. 5: Thursday, December 18, Ellensburg Quality Inn: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
George Coulbourn

Attachments:

Action Items, Meeting No 4

Action Items, Meeting No 5

Agenda for October 23, 2008

Master Question Plan/Study Guide

MHAG Action Items Meeting No 4

Action Item No. 1: Mr Albright will provide a composite summary of the three Information and Outreach Meetings for posting on the web site.

Action Item No. 2: Mr Estes will prepare an e-mail memo to the management of the Regions 1, 2, 3 and 4 expressing appreciation for their strong support of the various meetings.

Action Item No. 3: Mr Britton will begin the application process for an ALEA grant to continue funding the Group's activities. Submission is required by March, 2009.

Action Item No. 4: All MHAG members were requested to distribute the recruitment announcement as broadly as possible within their areas.

MHAG Action Items Meeting No 5

Action Item No.1: Mr Coulbourn will reformat the master plan for issuance as a Study Guide. (Attached)

Action Item No 2: Mr Kuttel will post the updated 3911 maps and landowner survey on the web site.

Action Item No 3: Mr Britton will develop the grant application as discussed.

Action Item No 4: Mr Madison will investigate potential Ellensburg meeting locations and report to the Group at the next meeting.

Action item No 5: Meeting organizers will provide dates and locations by next MHAG meeting.



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

Agenda for MHAG Meeting #5
Ellensburg Quality Inn, Fireside Room
October 23, 2008
9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Order of Business

1. Call to order and announcements
2. Telephone interviews of MHAG Candidates
3. Approval of Notes from Meeting of August 28, 2008
4. Reports on Action Items (Coulbourn)
5. Status reports from Committee & Initiative Chairs
 - Information & Outreach Meetings (Albright)
 - Special Hunt Coordination- (Boone and Holtfreter)
 - Ways & Means Committee (Holtfreter)
 - MH Candidate Orientation (Coulbourn)
6. Progress on development of new validated MH test (Davern)
7. Update on Colockum Elk Study and Landowner Survey (Novack)
8. Approval/Modification of Master Hunter shoulder patch (Wisner)
9. Planning for 2009-2010 ALEA Grant (Kuttel and Britton)
10. Establish dates and locations for 2009 Orientation meetings and I&O meetings. (Kuttel)
11. Timing and process for election of MHAG officer (Kuttel)
12. Changes to meeting locations and meeting dates? (Kuttel and Madison)

13. Governor's Tag: Taking the High Ground (Coulbourn)

14. Department/Liaison Updates (Kuttel and Wisner)

Conclusion

15. Recap Action Items (Coulbourn)

12. Next meeting: Decide date and location, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

13. Adjourn

Additional Topics (as time allows, or for December meeting)

- a. What should be the future niche of the MHAG? (Advisory only; focus on Giving Back through identification of projects; promotion of better access for hunters; promotion of improved levels of ethical, responsible, safe, and legal hunting by all sportspersons; promotion of better game management on behalf of recreational hunters; promotion of the Heritage of Hunting through mentoring.)

Scoping of the Master Hunter access issue. (Need for consistent protocols by Hunt

Master Hunter Study Guide / Test Question Outline

1 Ethics (25%)

History of ethical standards (5)

Hunter's role in society (5)

Responsibility to:

Wildlife (8)

Landowners, public, WDFW, other hunters (5)

CORT (2)

2. Laws, regulations and administration (20%)

Beneficial laws & regulation (15)

Administration (5)

3. Wildlife and habitat (20%)

Wildlife (10)

Habitat (10)

4. Politics and demographics of hunting (15%)

Laws and legislation (5)

Organizations (pro and con) and their stated missions (5)

Hunting demographics and economics (5)

5. Woodsmanship (10%)

Leave No Trace (2)

Route finding and wilderness navigation (5)

Survival and First Aid (3)

6. Firearms and technology (10%)

Safety and accident data (4)

Operation of firearms, handling and shooting (6)