



Washington Department of
FISH and WILDLIFE

Washington Fish and Wildlife
Commission's
ADA Advisory Committee (ADAAC)

Committee Charter and 16-18 Work Plan

December 8, 2016

Overview

Washington State is recognized for its wide array of outdoor recreational activities and wildlife. The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) encourages all persons with a disability to experience recreation in Washington's wonderful outdoors. Numerous opportunities are offered for hunters and anglers with disabilities through legislative mandates, statutes, and policies complying with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The ADA Advisory Committee to the Fish and Wildlife Commission (ADAAC) consists of Washington residents with disabilities representing each region. This committee advises the Commission on matters including, but not limited to special hunts, modified sporting equipment, access to public land, and hunting and fishing opportunities.

WDFW also partners with cities, counties, other state agencies, the US Forest Service (USFS), private landowners, and timber companies to develop hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing opportunities. Our programs and projects are good examples of accomplishments through the cooperative efforts of public-private partnerships and the many dedicated members of non-governmental organizations, sporting clubs, and WDFW personnel who have all volunteered their time, money and effort to make these many programs and projects successful.

This charter is intended to define roles/responsibilities of the ADAAC and establish a biennial work plan. It was developed from material within previous ADAAC reports and the discussion at the ADAAC March 8, 2014 meeting.

Committee's Mission Statement, Goals, Objectives

Mission Statement:

The ADAAC will advise and make recommendations to the Washington State Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) regarding the needs of persons with disabilities as they seek to enjoy equal opportunity to access all the programs provided by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Goals:

- Provide advice and recommendations to the Fish and Wildlife Commission; and
- Provide advice and recommendations to Department Staff regarding ADA projects and activities in the Regions.

Objectives:

- Actively engage on the ADA Advisory Committee's Work Plan, and make recommendations to the Commission;
- Develop and maintain a collaborative working relationship with the Regional Biologists and Land Managers in each region in order to achieve access to Fish and Wildlife lands for persons with disabilities to hunt, fish, and view wildlife;
- Serve as subject matter advisor to the Commission on matters pertaining to access by persons with disabilities; and
- Identify and establish a working network of organizations that advocate for the various communities of people with disabilities.

Authorities

RCW 77.04.150: Hunters and fishers with disabilities — Advisory committee — Composition — Terms — Report to the legislature.

(1.) The commission must appoint an advisory committee to generally represent the interests of hunters and fishers with disabilities on matters including, but not limited to, special hunts, modified sporting equipment, access to public land, and hunting and fishing opportunities. The advisory committee is composed of seven members, each being an individual with a disability. The advisory committee members must represent the entire state. The members must be appointed so that each of the six department administrative regions, as they existed on January 1, 2007, are represented with one resident on the advisory committee. One additional member must be appointed at large. The chair of the advisory committee must be a member of the advisory committee and shall be selected by the members of the advisory committee.

(2) For the purposes of this section, an individual with a disability includes but is not limited to:

- a) An individual with a permanent disability who is not ambulatory over natural terrain without a prosthesis or assistive device;
- b) An individual with a permanent disability who is unable to walk without the use of assistance from a brace, cane, crutch, wheelchair, scooter, walker, or other assistive device;
- c) An individual who has a cardiac condition to the extent that the individual's functional limitations are severe;
- d) An individual who is restricted by lung disease to the extent that the individual's functional limitations are severe;
- e) An individual who is totally blind or visually impaired; or

f) An individual with a permanent disability with upper or lower extremity impairments who does not have the use of one or both upper or lower extremities.

(3.) The members of the advisory committee are appointed for a four-year term. If a vacancy occurs on the advisory committee prior to the expiration of a term, the commission must appoint a replacement within sixty days to complete the term.

(4.) The advisory committee must meet at least semiannually, and may meet at other times as requested by a majority of the advisory committee members for any express purpose that directly relates to the duties set forth in subsection (1) of this section. A majority of members currently serving on the advisory committee constitutes a quorum. The department must provide staff support for all official advisory committee meetings.

(5.) Each member of the advisory committee shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for travel expenses as authorized in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

(6) The members of the advisory committee, or individuals acting on their behalf, are immune from civil liability for official acts performed in the course of their duties.

(7.) Beginning December 1, 2011, and again at least once every four years, the commission shall present a report to the appropriate legislative committees detailing the effectiveness of the advisory committee including, but not limited to, the participation levels, general interest, quality of advice, and recommendations as to the advisory committee's continuance or modification.

Roles and Responsibilities

This section is intended to clarify and define roles and responsibilities of ADAAC members and staff to enhance communication and ensure ADAAC work plan is developed and implemented.

ADAAC Chairperson

- Coordinate agenda development with designated Advisory Committee staff;
- Facilitates ADAAC meetings and ensures protocols are followed; and
- Presents Advisory Committee recommendations and concerns to the Fish and Wildlife Commission.

ADAAC Members

- See agency Advisory Committee Handbook for general expectations for Advisory Committee members;
- Coordinates with Agency's regional personnel to provide input/awareness of any on-going ADA access issues in the region;
- Bring their creativity/interest/energy and assist in making WDFW programs accessible to persons with disabilities;
- Will not be asked to adjudicate complaints, nor make decisions for or on behalf of the Department of Fish and Wildlife;

- Will endeavor to assist efforts to enhance access opportunities in the regions for persons with disabilities;
- In order to promote the effectiveness and efficiency of the ADA Advisory Committee, ADAAC members must maintain a high degree of neutrality at all times when performing their duties and serving on the ADAAC. Promoting and preserving ADAAC neutrality will enable ADAAC members to work more effectively with the Commission, WDFW employees, and with members of the general public; and
- Recommend awards that recognize outstanding effort to improve accessibility.

Designated Committee Staff

- Coordinates with Committee Chair for ADAAC agenda development;
- Attends ADAAC meetings, and monitors ADAAC work plan/status of activities;
- Brings forward emerging issues to Committee Chair, prepares Committee meeting summaries/minutes, and communicates recommendations on behalf of the Advisory Committee to the Commission;
- Serves as *ex officio* member of Committee for expertise on ADA issues and support to the Committee;
- Maintains ADAAC website on Department's webpage of advisory groups;
- Coordinates ADAAC meeting logistics and scheduling;
- Prepares Commission's Report to the Legislature on the Committee's activities; and
- Ensures appropriate policy/technical staff support Committee meetings, when appropriate.

Commission Executive Assistant

- Processes travel reimbursement for ADAAC members.

ADAAC Operations

Members are selected to four-year terms. Per RCW 77.04.050(1), the Chair of ADAAC would be selected by ADAAC members. Appointment of Chair will be completed at the first meeting of the calendar year.

Designated Committee staff person will take notes of ADAAC meetings. The official records of the ADAAC shall be retained by WDFW. Any writing that is prepared, owned, used in the possession of or retained by the ADAAC in the performance of an official function may be subject to the Public Records Act. Minutes of the ADAAC meeting shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to any Public Records Act exemptions. Audio recordings will not occur. Minutes from ADAAC meetings will be posted to the ADAAC Advisory Committee webpage.

Designated Committee staff person will arrange for a room for meetings of the Committee. Members of the public may observe ADAAC deliberations and will be provided seating, based on availability. This Committee is not subject to the Open Public Meetings Act (RCW 42.30),

but transparency is encouraged. The Committee may meet in person, by telephone, or by electronic means, at the Committee Chair's discretion.

ADAAC Chair will facilitate the ADAAC meeting, be responsible for the agenda, and approval of previous meeting minutes. Time may be provided for members of the public to address ADAAC at the close of the meeting. Time limits may be established for public testimony, depending on number of attendees and time remaining in the agenda. ADAAC Chair may ask for executive sessions of only ADAAC members and staff should confidential matters need to be discussed, or for other reasons as provided by the Agency Advisory Committee handbook; and members of the public may be excused and a time may be provided when the ADAAC agenda would resume.

Removal

The Commission may remove an ADAAC member who does not attend three (3) consecutive meetings, or for cause as determined by the Commission.