



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

Notes for MHAG Meeting #19

March 23, 2012 - 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Washington Cattlemen's Association Offices, Ellensburg

Procedural Business

1. Call to order by Chair Mike Estes at 9:00a.m. Announcements noted for restroom location, lunch arrangements, Roberts Rules of Order (moderately enforced), agenda adjustments for guests and advisory to new members of going into greater detail on some issues for their benefit.
2. Introduction of New Members and Guests – self introductions given

Members present:

Mike Estes, Chair	Ron Poppe
Mike Britton, Vice Chair	Harold Costa
Jim Zimmerman	Dennis Clay
Jim Fitzgerald	Jim Reinbold, Secretary

New Members present:

Chris Brong	John McGlenn
Robert Scoville	Jim Sutton
Wayne Ward	George Dennis
Greg Yonemura	

Members excused:

Craig Broadhead	Roger Hurst- new member
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WDFW Staff present:

Carl Klein, Sgt.	Mike Kuttel
Anthony Novack	

Guests:

Howard Briel	Dave Duncan - GMAC
Steve Douglas	Kyle Winton – EITW
Kelly Sutton	

Each person gave a brief background and interest.
Name tags were given to the new members by the chair.

John McGlenn moved and Ron Poppe seconded to excuse members Craig Broadhead and Roger Hurst. Motion passes unanimously.

Chair Estes noted that Chief Bjork had planned to attend but had a conflict that prohibited him from attending the meeting.

Chair Estes also noted the expectation of member participation both at the meetings and through other correspondence as needed.

3. Approval of Meeting #18 Notes from January 13, 2012 – Mike Britton moved and Ron Poppe seconded a motion for approval of the meeting #18 notes. Passed unanimously.

Old Business

4. Reports from Committee Chairs

- Information & Outreach – Chair Estes gave a brief description of the I&O program and noted that it was originally for two way communications and updating information between Master Hunters and the Master Hunter Advisory Group and WDFW. Participation in previous public I&O meetings was very low, so another method was considered via a survey through Survey Monkey with WDFW. There were concerns from WDFW about the questions, results, and what the information was going to be used for. There was also concern about transferring e-mail addresses to MHAG. It was determined at a past meeting that MHAG would establish a G-Mail account. It was decided that a committee be formed of Mike Estes, Dennis Clay, Robert Scoville, John McGlenn, Jim Sutton and Mike Kuttel to look into a means of communicating with MH members. Dennis Clay moved and Harold Costa seconded a motion to give the I&O committee the responsibility to activate the e-mail account and/or add the latest news for MH on the website.

ACTION ITEM 19 – 1 – I&O committee determine means of communication with MH via website and/or G-mail account.

- Ways & Means – Vice Chair Mike Britton gave a briefing on last year's grant with ALEA for the purposes of enhancement of recreational access to private land, and landowner-sportsmen relationships. There were no volunteer projects available for landowner access or register to hunt programs and it appeared that WDFW did not have any projects as well. MHAG will work towards another application for next year.

5. Reports on Action Items

- ACTION ITEM 17-2 – Dennis Clay to write an article to post on the MHPP web page for the 20th anniversary of the Master Hunter Program. Chair Estes gave a brief summary of this project and Dennis Clay will pattern his article as to how this program got started and what was accomplished. Item to continue with Dennis to complete the draft the next week and distribute it for comment.
ACTION ITEM 19-2 – to continue with action item 17-2 with a different direction.
- ACTION ITEM 17-3 – Review and post new FAQ's. Chair Estes reported that Craig Broadhead had submitted two questions which were answered by Mike Kuttel for use on the MH webpage under FAQ's. Chair Estes added another question concerning depredation hunt permits, lists and points. The answer is being considered at this point.
This action item is a continuing action but WDFW did already post the first two FAQs.

- ACTION ITEM 18-1 - Chair Estes, with assistance from Mike Kuttel, write a letter to Director Anderson with formal request for volunteer projects. Item completed. Refer to agenda item 10 of this agenda. ACTION ITEM 18-1 has been modified as reflected in new ACTION ITEM 19-3.
- ACTION ITEM 18-2 – Mike Britton submit a grant application for improved hunting access to private lands and addressing game depredation issues. MHAG chose not to apply for an ALEA grant for February due to no viable projects. Completed.
- ACTION ITEM 18-3 – Mike Kuttel submit MHAG recommendations for appointment to Chief Bjork and Director Anderson. Completed.
- ACTION ITEM 18-4 – Chair Estes invite Kyle Winton of EITW to next meeting to discuss the CORT program. Completed.
- ACTION ITEM 18-5 – Chair Estes draft a proposal to Dave Ware concerning MH Hunt guidelines, MH Hunt opportunities and MH Hot Spots/Ranked List. Completed.

6. Hunt Behavior Study and MOU / Elk Area 3911 Partnership – Anthony Novack presented and explained the MH behavior study, survey and Memorandum of Understanding between WDFW, Central Washington University and MHAG. The program has yet to be completed but some results have been submitted to Colorado State University for review and results. The study will be conducted again in five years for comparison. The purpose of the study was to establish a baseline for hunter behavior, and determine the value of the Master Hunter program. ACTION ITEM 19-4-- WDFW to post Hunt Behavior Study MOU on the MHPP webpage.

7. GMAC Interface: 2/10/2012 GMAC Meeting – Jim Sutton stated he had attended the GMAC meeting mainly for an archery issue but felt there was a cooperative and positive interaction. Dave Duncan, GMAC representative sitting in for Walter Christensen, GMAC's Chair, stated he felt there was some push back by MH being considered a user group. It was suggested that both groups continue to work together.

8. March 9-10 Fish & Wildlife Commission Meeting Review – Chair Estes noted that several MH attended the commission meeting along with himself – Mike Britton, Dennis Clay and Jim Reinbold. He stated that he presented to the commission the 20th year History of MHPP. He also stated that there was discussion and testimony on the MH general seasons in GMU 127-142 and that both deer and elk MH hunts were being recommended by WDFW staff to be eliminated in most of those units. It was suggested that GMU 130 remain as an antlerless hunt only for Master Hunters. It was also suggested by MHAG that all noted GMU's remain the same. There was discussion at the Commission meeting of the intent to use "ranked lists" rather than hot spot hunts as well as a commitment to eliminate unlimited permit hunts, retain 4 permit hunt choices and retain the preference point system for Master Hunter hunts.

New Business

9. Eyes In The Woods Update - Kyle Winton explained that 10 people were needed to schedule a CORT training session so as to not waste the WDFW Officer's time. Some register and don't show up while some do not register and show up expecting to be trained in CORT. Kyle did say there was a new website to be launched which should

help with information and registration. There is to be a calendar program and on line registration as well as some physical registrations at local stores. EITW have put together a slide presentation with a voice-over to further assist WDFW Enforcement Officers. There may be some coordination with the Department of Natural Resources with their Forest Watch program. Mr. Winton stated that it was important to have people meet the WDFW officers and establish a good relationship. He also suggested the possibility of a one stop ability to take the MH exam and CORT training on the same day. Mr. Winton noted that there will be a project calendar as a pilot program. He also stated that there are some covert projects with cameras and personnel with special training. That program is called OWL (Observation Witness League). He also announced the June 4 will be a cleanup day. He also noted that April 14 is designed for internal training. Chair Estes suggested that MHAG support and possibly partner with EITW on ALEA grants.

10. Volunteer Opportunities - Status and Process – Chair Estes stated he had previously sent a letter to the Director with concerns about lack of opportunities for volunteers on projects for the department. Mike Kuttel suggested that there be a summit meeting between 2-3 EITW representatives, 2-3 MHAG representatives, and WDFW (Chief Bjork, Wildlife Program Assistant Director Nate Pamplin, Lt. Steve Crown) to discuss volunteer opportunities for improving recreational access to private lands, first-time hunter mentoring, damage control issues, and improving landowner-sportsmen relations. Also, to be discussed would be the difficulties associated with WDFW policies for volunteers as well as the apparent lack of interest and motivation by WDFW staff in offering or coordinating/directing volunteer projects. The discussion should also include the recruitment of MH as local volunteer coordinators to assist WDFW field staff. Mike Kuttel strongly encouraged the MHAG and EITW to work as partners whereby WITW could provide coordination, training, and registration services and basically engage MHPP members as a volunteer work force for specific projects meeting WDFW priorities.

ACTION ITEM 19-3 – Volunteer Summit with MHAG, EITW, WDFW to discuss volunteer programs.

11. MHAG Engagement in WDFW Regional Communications Plans – Sgt. Klein gave a presentation on his communications plan for coordinating volunteer efforts in the regions. He suggested that a place be established in WDFW offices to house a volunteer coordinator. This would also establish a good relationship with the WDFW staff in the region. He felt that MH hours could be granted for this effort. The effort would benefit the agency rather than strictly the project. Jim Sutton stated he was the MH volunteer coordinator for the Inland Wildlife Council and it appeared to be working well. It was suggested that other wildlife groups could follow suit as well. Sgt. Klein stated he had hoped to have this program set for regional meeting in April or May. He would have more information by the next MHAG meeting.

12. Liaison Report – Mike Kuttel reported there is about 2000 MH with 1605 e-mail addresses of which 267 were not good. Hunt coordinator guideline and MH guidelines, meeting #18 notes, Clay/Mann situational ethics and new FAQ's were posted on the Website. Coordinated with WDFW Biologist manager Dave Ware to correspond with MH and proposed MH hunt changes posted. Application period closed on February 15 with 509 applicants (708 in 2011) of which 6 are pending denial based on background

checks. New members are encouraged to become Test Proctors for MH tests. There was some previous discussion as to where the MHPP should be assigned whether in the Wildlife Program or Enforcement Program. That discussion was in response to the budget process. No further discussion at this point. Sgt. Klein discussed there are a growing number of plea deals being made in violations where a MH might plea to a non-Title 77 RCW violation just to retain his/her MH status. The WDFW is looking at means of closing the loop hole but it is mainly prosecutors who are making the deals. The Master Hunter spring black bear damage control hunt has been put on hold due to the lack of success during last year's pilot program.

ACTION ITEM 19-5—Mike Kuttel to determine whether e-mail contact information for the MHPP can be provided to MHAG members as long as such information is not used for personal gain or for commercial purposes. If sharing such information is deemed appropriate it will be provided to MHAG members requesting it for respective Regions.

13. Election of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary – Chair Estes explained that the normal progression to the chair is via the vice chair. With that in mind Jim Sutton nominated Mike Britton to be Chair. Greg Yonemura moved and Jim Sutton seconded that nominations be closed.. Vote was unanimous with Mike Britton being elected as chair. The vice chair should have experience and two years of his term remaining. Mike Britton nominated Jim Fitzgerald for vice Chair. Greg Yonemura moved and Dennis Clay seconded that nominations be closed. Vote was unanimous and Jim Fitzgerald was elected Vice Chair which he accepted.

Secretary is a two year term. Chair Estes stated he had talked with Craig Broadhead and was told he would serve where needed. Mike Estes moved with Dennis Clay seconding the motion that nominations be closed. Craig Broadhead be elected to the position of secretary. Vote was unanimous.

14. Awards and Recognitions – Chair Estes and Sgt. Klein handed out plaques to retiring members Ron Poppe and Harold Costa and thanked them for their service as MHAG members for the past 3 years. Each also thanked the group for the work that has been done. Sgt. Klein also handed out plaques to the outgoing officers Chair Mike Estes, Vice Chair Mike Britton and Secretary Jim Reinbold and thanked them for their service as officers for MHAG.

15. Other Topics – NO DISCUSSION HAD AT THIS TIME.

- Potential for MHPP move from Enforcement to the Wildlife Program
- Development of a Master Hunter “Wall of Excellence”
- Master Hunter program 20th Anniversary Recognition Events
- Loss of Master Hunter points when drawn for a hunt but not called to participate
- Continuing education concepts for all hunters (Advanced Hunter Training)
- Maintenance and Update of the MHPP web page

Conclusion

16. Recap Action Items – Secretary Reinbold noted the following action items from this meeting:

Action Item 19-1 – MHAG form a I&O committee to be responsible for activating the g-mail account and/or add the latest news for MH on the website.

Action Item 19-2 – Dennis Clay continue with the article of the MHAG 20th year anniversary.

Action Item 19-3- MHAG, EITW and WDFW conduct a volunteer summit to discuss programs and project with the department.

Action Item 19-4 - WDFW to post the Hunting Behavior Study MOU on the MHPP webpage.

Action Item 19-5—Mike Kuttel to determine whether e-mail contact information for the MHPP can be provided to MHAG members as long as such information is not used for personal gain or for commercial purposes. If sharing such information is deemed appropriate, it will be provided to MHAG members requesting it for respective Regions.

17. Agenda Topics for June Meeting – none noted.

18. Next meeting Date and Location – June 15, 2012 at Cattlemen’s Association in Ellensburg. It was suggested to invite Chief Bjork to that meeting.

19. Good of the Order –

Jim Zimmerman suggested that e-mail addresses could become a legal issue when contacted by someone asking for expert information as a MHAG member. Issues dealing with WDFW should be forwarded to them. Other issues should be handled delicately and possibly not at all. This is public information and available to the public upon request.

John McGlenn reported the Washington Outdoor Women will be holding a workshop on September 14-16, 2012 at a location near Carnation, WA.

Chris Brong pledged his assistance to Mike Britton on the volunteer issue.

Dave Duncan- GMAC questioned the possibility of MH giving up the second tag in 3911 to see if there would be enough hunters to handle the problems. Anthony Novack will be researching.

Jim Fitzgerald noted that past member Bob Cromwell has really helped him.

Jim Sutton reported the Inland Wildlife Council has designated April 14 and 15 for cleanup as well as a need for volunteers for handicap children hunts.

Ron Poppe thanked everyone again and suggested that volunteer hours be looked at again. He also wanted to be included in the alumnus contacts.

Mike Britton asked for assistance with the MHAG and MHPP.

Carl Klein stated that MHAG is really appreciated by WDFW. He also noted that there may be some elk hazing projects coming up.

Mike Kuttel stated he was really impressed with the new members and the interactions.

Wayne Ward stated he felt good about the meeting and was glad to be selected to be a part of it.

Harold Costa thanks everyone again.

George Dennis said he was glad to be a part of this organization.

Greg Yonemura noted the website had good information and awareness should be done for everyone. He also suggested that identification of and use of the website be noted on MH materials and messages.

Mike Estes spoke of the commission meeting and that all should strive to make contacts with the commissioners and WDFW staff.

20. Adjourn – 3:50 p.m.