



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

**MHAG Meeting #21**

August 29, 2012

Washington Cattlemen's Association Offices, Ellensburg

Procedural Business

1. Call to order Chair Mike Britton at 9:10 AM.

2. Introduction of Members and Guests.

**Members present:**

Mike Britton, Chair	
Craig Broadhead, Secretary	James Reinbold
Chris Brong	Robert Scoville
Dennis Clay	Jim Sutton
George Dennis	Greg Yonemura
Mike Estes	Jim Zimmerman
Jim Fitzgerald, Vice Chair	

**Members excused:**

Roger Hurst	Wayne Ward
John McGlenn	

**WDFW Staff present:**

Sgt. Carl Klein	Mike Kuttel
Anthony Novak	

**Guests:**

Jim Gildersleeve, MH

The absences of Roger Hurst, John McGlenn, and Wayne Ward were excused.

3. Approval of Meeting #20 Notes from June 15, 2012 – There were no corrections to the Meeting #20 notes that were previously reviewed and are already posted on the WDFW Master Hunter webpage.

4. Reports from Committees.

- Chair Britton reported on recent correspondence and activities.
  - a. An article about the first 20 years of the Master Hunter program has been posted on the WDFW Master Hunter webpage. It is not likely that there will be a News Release about the anniversary as decided by WDFW Public Affairs. A shortened version will be posted on the WDFW Law

- Enforcement Program Facebook page. Thanks to Dennis Clay and Mike Kuttel for their efforts on this project.
- b. Six meetings were held in five WDFW regions in five days to discuss WDFW use of volunteers. The meetings were attended by Sgt. Klein, Mike Kuttel, and various MHAG members and regional staff. A follow up meeting with Chief Bjork and Wildlife Assistant Director Nate Pamplin occurred to summarize and discuss information learned from the meetings with regional staff.
  - c. Chris Brong and George Dennis reached out to Master Hunters in Region 5 via e-mail and culminated in a trap shoot and BBQ event. (See Item 12.a. for additional information.)
  - d. Dennis Clay, Jim Reinbold and Officer Dan Klump met with Region 2 landowners to discuss improvements in the MHPP after transition from the AHE Program four years ago. Dennis said the issues are a lack of trust in the program, the landowners do not agree on the extent of need for damage control, some landowners would like to see more youth hunt activities, and they want hunters on private land to be supervised by Enforcement or the landowner. If there are future MHPP hunts in the area WDFW will follow the ranked list process. Landowners were pleased that MHAG members had reached out to them to improve landowner-sportsman relations. Dennis sent an e-mail message to a sampling of MH's for whom he has e-mail addresses in Region 2 to initiate communications. He has had favorable response so far to his outreach efforts.
  - e. Jim Sutton created an e-mail notification system for volunteer projects in Region 1 using the WDFW supplied e-mail list for Region 1 Master Hunters. Interested individuals can respond to a special e-mail address identified for the particular project. Current projects include extensive elk hazing. Jim feels that the volunteer response is improving relations with landowners and noted that WDFW Region 1 personnel are appreciative of the assistance.
  - f. Jim Fitzgerald will hold the first combined CORT and MH exam in September. Jim has also suggested bilingual ecology training for brush pickers and gatherers in western Washington.
  - g. Mike Kuttel and others are researching opportunities for Master Hunters to mentor and assist others. One example is continuing education classes for persons who have completed the basic Hunter Education course but need assistance in developing specialized hunting and woodsmanship skills that will promote success and consequently life-long participation.
- Information & Outreach – Mike Estes said that he is enthused about the approaches being tried by MHAG members in Regions 1, 2, and 5 to engage Master Hunters. Without funding for organized outreach meetings throughout the state, e-mail and local activities may be MHAG's best opportunity to communicate with Master Hunters now and in the future. WDFW is sharing Master Hunter e-mail lists by Region with MHAG members. Establishing WDFW e-mail accounts for MHAG use would make those accounts subject to WDFW policy and the communications would be subject to WDFW review. The methods being used by Jim Sutton, Dennis Clay, George Dennis, and Chris Brong for communicating with Master Hunters appears to be effective and do not require

WDFW involvement other than to provide the regional MH e-mail lists. Any of the approaches being tried could serve as a model for use in other regions or a different approach can be developed based on local need. MHAG members in every region should initiate and maintain contact with local MH's and WDFW staff to plan, develop, and coordinate projects. Mike Kuttel concurred and noted that the use of e-mail lists by MHAG members was one of the most positive developments he has seen since creation of the new MHPP in 2008-2009.

**ACTION ITEM 20 – 1** – Sgt. Klein to verify with WDFW IT Staff if permissions are possible for six separate “...@dfw.wa.gov” email accounts, one for each Region, for official MHAG business. **ACTION ITEM 20-1 FOR PURSUING WDFW EMAIL ADDRESS FOR OUTREACH EFFORT IS CLOSED.**

- Ways & Means – Chair Britton requested volunteers for identifying and refining possible MHAG grant application projects for the next ALEA cycle. The deadline for applications is February 2013. The group discussed that partnerships (GMAC, EITW, etc.) may improve our chance of success. Possible ALEA applications are pilot hunter training clinics, pilot volunteer coordinator projects, and Brush Picker environmental education. Chair Britton selected a Ways and Means committee consisting of himself, Jim Fitzgerald, and Mike Estes to pursue potential ALEA projects.

#### 5. Reports on Action Items

- **ACTION ITEM 19 – 1** – I&O committee determine means of communication with MH via website and/or G-mail account. ONGOING.
- **ACTION ITEM 20-1** – Sgt. Klein verify use of WDFW e-mail accounts for use by MHAG to communicate with Master Hunters by region. CLOSED.
- **ACTION ITEM 20-2** – Mike Kuttel to review, edit, and post the Dennis Clay article for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Master Hunter Program to the MHPP webpage. COMPLETED.
- **ACTION ITEM 20-3** – Mike Kuttel has a commitment of a link between the “Conservation” Master hunter web page and link to the CERVIS program from Mike O’Malley and James Chandler. ONGOING. (See Item 9.a for details.)
- **ACTION ITEM 20-4** – Jim Fitzgerald will update the group as to how the dual-proctoring (joint session) of MH exams and CORT training is working. Jim reported that the first joint class will occur in September. COMPLETED.
- **ACTION ITEM 20-5** – MHAG members that attend one of the meetings with WDFW regional staff to discuss the use of volunteers are to email a summary of the meeting to other MHAG members. COMPLETED. (See Item 10.b for additional information.)
- **ACTION ITEM 20-6** – Mike Kuttel and Sgt. Klein to brief group on summit discussions pertaining to WDFW use of volunteers. COMPLETED. (See Item 10.b for additional information).
- **ACTION ITEM 20-7** – Mike Kuttel to investigate California Advanced Hunter Training for our applicability. Information provided. CLOSED.

6. Hunt Behavior Study and MOU / Elk Area 3911 Partnership – Anthony Novack provided updated hunter survey preliminary results. Only 139 Master Hunters were identified among the 2383 hunters who completed the survey. Due to the small MH sampling and resultant large sampling error rate, about 750 – 800 surveys were mailed to MHs. The response rate was nearly 50%, which is an unusually high response. An

Central Washington University graduate student may use the MH survey versus the general survey (comparing the survey methods) for her thesis. Some analysis of survey results will be ready to be reported by next MHAG meeting. Anthony also briefly discussed the effects of the Taylor Bridge fire on local wildlife.

7. GMAC Interface: Tony Wells has resigned as GMAC chair. The new chair is Rob McCoy, a biologist with the Makah tribe. No GMAC representative was available to attend this MHAG meeting.

- a. GMAC now has single year term appointments,
- b. DFW is currently taking applications through August 31 for appointments to GMAC.
- c. The next GMAC meeting is Saturday, December 1, from 9AM to 4:30PM (location unknown at this time).
- d. Dave Ware is looking for an MHAG member to attend the GMAC Allocation Committee meeting on September 26. A key issue presented at GMAC was the need to increase youth hunting opportunities. GMAC endorses the idea of Master Hunters expanding youth hunting opportunities.

8. EITW Update – Lee Davis planned to attend this meeting but was unable to do so.

### New Business

9. Volunteer Opportunities – Status and Process

- a. WDFW CERVIS Program – Mike Kuttel reported there has not been much progress by James Chandler (Wildlife Program) in creating project proponent profiles so that MHPP Conservation Page volunteer projects can be posted on CERVIS. It was noted by MHAG members that volunteers are experiencing some difficulty registering in CERVIS. Mike explained that James has had some ongoing medical issues to deal with recently.
- b. Master Hunter Exam + CORT Training – As reported at the last MHAG meeting, Jim has been certified as a CORT instructor by EITW allowing him to proctor Master Hunter exams and offer CORT training to potential Master Hunters in one location. Jim will use WDFW officers for CORT when they are available but is authorized by Captain Hebner to provide the training without WDFW officer support by using a Tribal Enforcement Officer.
- c. A Volunteer Coordinator position in Olympia has been advertised. Specialist V, Volunteer Coordinator position was approved within Human Resources by the Executive Management Team (EMT). The application period closes 8/31/2012.
- d. Sgt. Klein reminded everyone to continue to meet with local WDFW regional staff to facilitate communications and build strong relationships.
- e. Mike Kuttel distributed copies of a draft volunteer (unpaid) Volunteer Coordinator job description that was developed in concert with Jim Fitzgerald. It will be held as an option to be pursued if WDFW is not able to create and fund a paid volunteer coordinator position for each of the six administrative regions.
- f. Sgt. Klein summarized a meeting he and Mike Kuttel had with Chief Bjork, Nate Pamplin, Dave Ware, and Lt. Steve Crown about a broad focus approach for the use of volunteers. Nate and Bruce expressed strong support for continuing need for the MHPP, use of volunteers, and the need to improve hunter retention. Discussions led to the prospect of creating a volunteer coordinator position in

each WDFW region. Mike Kuttel has been assigned to a joint Enforcement/Wildlife committee to prepare a proposal to the EMT with a funding plan for the volunteer coordinator positions.

- g. There was a brief discussion of volunteer projects that are appropriate for certification hours.

10. Communication Planning, Sgt. Klein and Mike Kuttel

- a. Hunter Recruitment and Retention. USFWS conducts a survey about hunter days spent afield and will be providing information about Washington hunters to WDFW before the end of the year. A Families Afield publication titled *An Initiative for the Future of Hunting* was distributed for review. Also distributed was a draft document for WDFW Advanced Hunter Training (now called Hunter Training Clinics). Washington has a .45 hunter retention rate based on Families Afield data which means that for every two hunters lost, less than one new hunter is being added. Mike Kuttel suggested that joint discussions will be needed between WDFW staff and advisory committees (MHAG, GMAC, Hunter Education Instructor Advisory Committee, etc.) to ascertain recruitment and retention issues. He suggested that MHAG might create a committee to participate in joint discussions about the matter. MHAG members offered thoughts about what some of the reasons are for the significant loss of hunters in Washington. Sgt. Klein cautioned that we need to focus on the factors that can be influenced by WDFW. The prospect of a joint ALEA grant application by GMAC and MHAG for hunter training clinics was mentioned. A motion was approved to create a new committee titled Hunter Retention Committee to focus on hunter recruitment and retention. Mike Britton will serve as chair. Members are George Coulbourn (former MHAG member, subject to his acceptance), Jim Reinbold, Greg Yonemura, and Bob Cromwell (former MHAG member).
- b. Use of volunteers. Six meetings, one in each WDFW region, were completed in five days by Sgt. Klein and Mike Kuttel with MHAG representatives and WDFW Regional staff. The meetings are intended to provide information regarding perception of the program by WDFW staff, allow MHAG to identify local needs, illustrate the need for volunteer activities, and identify the best means of achieving increased use of volunteers with MHAG assistance. Mike Kuttel distributed a summary of recommendations developed by the Hunter Education Division regarding the regional meetings. Pursuant to the regional meetings, Sgt. Klein and Mike Kuttel met with Assistant Director of Wildlife Nate Pamplin, Chief Bruce Bjork, Lt. Steve Crown, and Game Manager Dave Ware on Monday, August 13. Previous plans for a summit meeting including MHAG and EITW representatives with the persons in attendance at the August 13 meeting were preempted by Chief Bjork's decision to immediately proceed with discussions with AD Pamplin as soon as he was briefed by Sgt. Klein about the regional meetings. MHAG had wanted to participate in the meeting to discuss volunteer opportunities for improving recreational access to private lands, first-time hunter mentoring, damage control issues, improving landowner-sportsmen relations, 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 project, and the recruitment of Master Hunters as local volunteer coordinators to assist WDFW field staff. In spite of the disappointment of not being involved in the meeting, MHAG members accepted

the explanation from Sgt. Klein and Mike Kuttel that the fact that the discussion evolved so quickly and the favorable responses by Chief Bjork and AD Pamplin to the matter resulted in an outcome that was exactly what we could have hoped for.

11. Liaison Report – Mike Kuttel. Data for the 2012 MHPP applicants as of earlier this week:

- Total number of current Master Hunters – 1914
- Total number of 2012 applicants – 510
- Total number of 2012 applicants completed – 38
- Total number of 2012 applicants denied – 6
- Total number of 2012 applicants that took the test – 141
- Total number of 2012 applicants that passed the test on the 1st try – 41
- Total number of 2012 applicants that passed the test on the 2nd try – 35
- Total number of 2012 applicants that failed the 2nd time – 22
- Total number of Master Hunters removed for life in 2012 – 1 (resigned, but would have been suspended for life)
- a. Mike Kuttel provided information about Advanced Hunter Training that California is currently implementing.
- b. Mike Kuttel discussed the need to update and replace some questions on the MHPP test. He will work with a small group of MHAG members and test proctors to update the exam prior to the December MHAG meeting. The updated test will be implemented for 2013.
- c. One-third of MHAG appointments will expire in March. Current members are invited to re-apply. Mike Kuttel will prepare and post within 30 days a call for applicants. The same review and evaluation process will be followed as was used last year.
- d. It is probably time to review MHAG Roles and Responsibilities and Bylaws. Mike Estes appointed to head the review (**ACTION ITEM 21-1**).

12. Other Business.

- a. George Dennis and Chris Brong reported on the results of Region 5 (Vancouver) BBQ / Trap Shoot with Master Hunters. Invitations were sent to 205 MHs from Region 5. Seventeen persons responded. Master Hunters were invited to bring a first time hunter. Attendees were not charged; some brought family members. Attendees shot shotguns and had a BBQ. A Region 5 Biologist gave a talk about volunteer opportunities for gate monitoring on timber land. Chris and George split the cost of about \$50 for the event. Their idea for a regional event next year is to gather for a volunteer project and have a potluck afterwards.

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- George Dennis said that communications with Master Hunters via e-mail holds tremendous potential. He shared a conversation with a Region 5 Biologist about the biologist's concern about the poor quality of volunteer service by Master Hunters.
- Dennis Clay said that the attitudes of Region 1 and 2 staff during regional volunteer meetings were similar to the Region 5 biologist. It will take a lot of effort to change the perception of our program that is left over from the old AHE Program.
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## Conclusion

Recap Action Items – The only new Action Item is 21-1 for Mike Estes to lead a review of the MHAG Bylaws and Roles and Responsibilities document.

Agenda Topics for Next Meeting – none noted.

Next meeting Date and Location – 9:00 AM on December 14, 2012 at the Cattlemen's Association offices in Ellensburg.

Adjourn – 2:43 PM