



**WDFW Enforcement Program Advisory Committee  
November 17, 2007  
1000-1500  
Ellensburg, WA**

| <b>Members in Attendance</b>     |                                       |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Vince Hawkins, Chair             | Ray Hansen, Vice Chair                |
| Chris Marlahan                   | Bob Holtfreter                        |
| Josh Pearson                     | Dave Croonquist                       |
| Pat Hatchel                      | David Akehurst                        |
| Holly Ledgerwood                 | Ray Boone                             |
| George Brady                     | Ed Owens                              |
| Rex Anderson                     |                                       |
| <b>WDFW Staff:</b>               |                                       |
| Bruce Bjork, Chief               | Bill Hebner, Region 4 Captain         |
| Mike Sprecher, Region 3 Sergeant | Sean Carrell, Problem Wildlife Coord. |

**Chair Vince Hawkins Convened Meeting at 1010**

Chair Vince Hawkins asked if the supplemental report by the Public Relations Subcommittee was available. Sean Carrell advised that the report had been forgotten, but will provide committee members a copy at the next meeting.

George Brady requested the Officer Training Schedule, page 3, subsection 2 from the June 16, 2007 meeting. He missed the meeting due to illness and was unable to obtain information. Sean Carrell will provide the information.

**No additions were made to the agenda.**

**[June Meeting Minutes](#) - Reviewed and Approved**

**Enforcement 07/09 Budget & Staffing**

Chief Bruce Bjork informed the group about agency shortfalls and reductions in 07-09 Enforcement Program budget. Ten funded officer positions will be filled. The 07/09 biennium authorized FTE level for the Enforcement Program is 154.3 positions. A group discussion ensued regarding the level of officer positions prior to merger. Chief Bjork explained that there are 31 fewer funded officer positions since the merger of the Department of Fisheries and the Department of Wildlife.



Additionally, there are 20 officers eligible to retire at this time. George Brady asked for a current salary chart for Officer, Sergeant, and Captain positions.

There was a discussion regarding hiring. Chief Bjork advised the group on challenges faced by WDFW when hiring. Out of 100 applications WDFW receives during a testing cycle, only 50 applicants may meet our qualifications. Of those who meet the minimum qualifications and advised when to appear for initial testing, WDFW may only have 25 that appear for the physical/written tests (Phase I). After the physical/written tests, 15 or 20 may pass and advance to the next phase (Phase II). Phase II includes an oral exam, fingerprinting, and pre-polygraph questionnaire. Results from Phase I and Phase II are combined and applicants are placed on the register. Of the original 100 applicants, only three or four remain after polygraph, psychological, and background investigations are evaluated. Those remaining will go to the Chief for final review.

George Brady suggested that standards are too high and may need to change with attrition. Ray Hansen advises that CJTC and state statute sets some minimum standards for hiring. Ed Owens also suggests that qualified candidates could be bumped out of the hiring process because of the high standards. Further discussion from the group regarded multiple testing periods in a year to keep up with the demand to fill vacancies. Chief Bjork advised that Enforcement already opens the Fish and Wildlife Officer 1 register two to three times a year for a four- to six-week period.

### **Enforcement Staffing/Allocation Model**

The Advisory Group discussed whether or not committee members could go forward and speak with the Fish and Wildlife Commission Enforcement Sub-Committee or Director regarding allocation levels and staffing issues within Enforcement. Chief Bjork spoke about allocation levels and discussed an allocation formula that was done by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) for Florida because of some of the same or similar state demographics. IACP conducted a study in 2005. Florida had 723 officers at the time and IACP recommended 283 additional officers (low end of formula). The Committee requested the executive summary of the allocation and how it was determined. Chief Bjork advised that he would locate the executive summary and forward it via e-mail. Ed Owens made a comment that we must be cognizant of activities that require/take officers out of the field to address WDFW mandates. There are approximately 1,700 agency employees and each program's positions are allocated by the Legislature.

### **Sub-Committee Reports**

Pamphlet Sub-Committee – No new information. Members were not able to get together and discuss some of the issues contained within the pamphlets, although there were some recommendations forwarded to WDFW.



Public Relation Sub-Committee – Dave Akehurst suggested that Fish and Wildlife Officers attend at least one meeting involving a special interest hunting/fishing group per year. Chief Bjork advised that this is a current requirement and part of an officer’s yearly performance expectation. However, there is no limit as to how many engagements an officer conducts within a year. Most officers are already tied into their communities and are aware/participate as much as they can. Dave Akehurst explained that it would be invaluable to have officers attending these types of meetings. The general consensus was that this was already happening. The Committee discussed what’s contained in the Game Wardens Association magazine and asked whether or not the information is copyrighted. Can articles be used in other magazines, newsletters, or Web sites to increase the public’s awareness of fish/wildlife crimes? Chief Bjork advised that he wasn’t sure if the information was copyrighted, but may be up to the individual author writing the article. Dave Akehurst asked if the SOP manual was available. Chief Bjork advised that it was being revised and would be available to committee members by e-mail/agency website if so desired.

Legislation – Substantive and Technical Omnibus Proposals for the 2008 legislative session were introduced. There was discussion regarding a possibility of additional budgeted positions for Enforcement. There was a motion and second to support more officers since 1994 levels are unacceptable. The Committee discussed that either Chair Vince Hawkins or Vice-Chair Ray Hansen could possibly discuss staffing issues at the next Commission meeting on December 7-8, 2007, in Port Angeles. The Commission meeting is open to public comment and this may give the Enforcement Advisory Committee an opportunity to advise on staff/allocation levels. However, various committee members raised concern on whether or not the “Operation Protocols and Guidelines for WDFW Advisory Bodies” allows such activity and whether or not it must go through the Director first. However, after review of the operation manual, pages 4-6 advises that recommendations can be made to the Department and do not specifically identify the Director as a first point of contact.

### **WAC Proposals (Hunter Education Deferral and Master Hunter Program)**

The adopted Hunter Education Deferral Program WAC and the draft Master Hunter Program WAC was provided to Committee members. Chief Bjork discussed the Hunter Education deferral process and spoke to committee members on the results of the applications. Chief Bjork advised that less than 6% of the applicants are under the age of 10. WDFW has received 846 applications to date. Comments were made regarding not enough hunter education courses, as indicated by the number of applicants. Ed Owens requested the most up-to-date number of applications and all information at its conclusion. Committee members began a discussion regarding the draft Master Hunter Program WAC and suggested a change on page 5, Section D. Section D states: a criminal conviction is a rebuttable presumption that the violation



occurred. Committee members asked whether or not that should be changed to say non-rebuttable, or strike and remove completely. That sentence was a bit confusing and gives the impression that the word "rebuttable" refutes the conviction which appears to be a contradiction of terms and leaves it open for dispute. Chief Bjork advised that it could be changed or removed entirely. During the WAC proposals, additional discussion continued on the Substantive and Technical Omnibus Proposals. Ed Owens made an inquiry regarding the fur dealer/taxidermist license. Licenses are printed on an 8 ½ x 11 piece of paper. Considering the violation for no license in possession, it makes it difficult to carry around such a large document that is also susceptible to be damaged. It needs to be the same credit card sized piece of plastic issued for the trapper's license. The card is much easier. Chief Bjork also advised that the anti-snagging regulation would not be a part of the sport fishing package, as it needs more work. Dave Croonquist discussed the closure of 71 beaches under the sportfishing WAC proposal. Change would give Enforcement the authority to cite for health issues on those beaches. Chief Bjork explained that Enforcement is required to enforce RCW Title 69.30 (Sanitary Shellfish). Ed Owens asked why WDFW is enforcing regulations for another agency when there are already mandates WDFW must fulfill. Chief Bjork discussed FDA requirements concerning the shellfish industry and required frequency patrols for Officers. Captain Bill Hebner added, as a response to public safety, it is critical that these beaches are monitored. The committee did inquire if a beach is tested and determined safe, would it then be opened and how? Dave Croonquist will further this discussion with Region 6 Captain Dan Brinson.

## **2008 Proposed Legislation**

The 2007-2008 Legislative session is scheduled for 60 days this year. WDFW will be monitoring bills and testifying on proposed legislation. There is interest from some groups to re-introduce bills on depredation and wolves. Regarding wolf introduction, the committee discussed the burden of proving damage. WDFW would coordinate with the US Fish & Wildlife Service. Would there be a de-listing in Washington? Additionally, committee members were concerned about additional duties being added to Enforcement's plate considering previous discussion on staffing. Chief Bjork explained that WDFW has implemented a new stakeholder process to look at the problem wildlife and damage statutes.

## **Old/New Business**

Old Business – Nothing discussed.

New Business – Future meetings

- The Committee would like to discuss the terms of both the Chair and Vice Chair of the Enforcement Advisory Committee.



- The Committee would like to continue the discussion regarding de-listing of wolves in Washington State and how it will affect the Enforcement Program. A management plan will be developed. What will Enforcement's role be and what will be its involvement?

***Requested Action Items:***

- *Chief Bruce Bjork will provide those committee members who missed the June 16 meeting with copies of the 07 Officer in-service training schedule.*
- *Chief Bruce Bjork will provide a current salary chart for Officer, Sergeant, and Captains to the Committee.*
- *Chief Bruce Bjork will email the Executive Summary of the Staffing and Allocation formula used in determining Officer levels for the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission.*
- *Chief Bruce Bjork will provide information to Committee re: copyright information using the Game Warden Association magazine.*
- *Chief Bruce Bjork will provide Enforcement's SOP manual as soon as it's reviewed and completed.*

***Next meeting:*** Saturday, January 5, 2008, from 1000-1500, at the Ellensburg Quality Inn. The agenda will be sent out before the meeting with information on topics for discussion.

