

**HUNTER EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING NOTES
April 8, 2022, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
CWU SURC Room 137A, Ellensburg**

IAC Members - Representing		WDFW Staff	Guests
Region 1	Sam Grubbs	<p>David Whipple Hunter Education Division Manager (virtual)</p> <p>Kris Thorson Hunter Education Division Specialist</p> <p>Steve Dazey Region 1 Hunter Education Field Coordinator</p> <p>Aaron Garcia Region 3 Hunter Education Field Coordinator</p> <p>Jackie McBride Region 4 Hunter Education Field Coordinator</p> <p>Bill Montgomery Region 6 Hunter Education Field Coordinator</p> <p>Veronica Hand Civil Rights Coordinator (virtual)</p> <p>Larry Delgado Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Manager</p>	
	John Cushman		
Region 2	Eric Lauver (virtual)		
	Jen Syrowicz (virtual)		
	Bob Hunt		
Region 3	Randy Absolon		
	Rich Mann (excused)		
Region 4	Liz Crain		
	Mikel Edwards		
	Howard Schoen (virtual)		
	Evan Windom		
Region 5	Herb Jessen (excused)		
	Jim Sevier		
Region 6	Blayde Fry (virtual)		
	Jim Fitzgerald		
HERO	Butch Buffaloe		

⊙ **Welcome and Member Introductions (*Kris Thorson, 15 minutes*)**

- ⊕ Kris welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- ⊕ The IAC members and staff all introduced themselves to the group.

⊙ **Statewide In-Service Training Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training Preview (*Larry Delgado, 60 minutes*)**

- ⊕ Larry went over the agencies mission and values and what they are.
- ⊕ DEI is an acronym made up of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- ⊕ Diversity describes the presence of differences within a given setting, collective or group.
- ⊕ Diversity can include national origin, gender, sexual orientation, etc.
- ⊕ Equity is the act of developing, strengthening, and supporting procedural and outcome fairness in systems, procedures, and resource distribution mechanisms to create equitable (not equal) opportunity for all people.
- ⊕ Larry gave an example of shoes, equity is giving folks shoes in their size so they will fit rather than just giving them shoes.
- ⊕ Inclusion is Intentionally designed, active, and ongoing engagement with people that ensures opportunities and pathways for participation in all aspects of group, organization, or community, including decision making processes.
- ⊕ The following benefits have been identified when DEI is beneficial for an agency:
 - Better Morale
 - Increased Productivity
 - Higher Social Consciousness
 - Positive Paradigm Shift
 - Better Bottom Line
- ⊕ Larry gave a brief overview of the current demographics for the 11.5 million hunters nationwide.
- ⊕ Of those 11.5 million hunters, 97 percent are white, and 3 percent are all other races.
- ⊕ Removing the barriers of hunting will allow for more diverse hunters and possibly more hunters nationwide.
- ⊕ The root causes of DEI barriers are:
 - Leaders who are undermining DEI initiatives
 - Detrimental attitudes of the leadership majority
 - Not elevating DEI to a business initiative
- ⊕ Solutions are:
 - Demonstrate support
 - Invite & encourage different perspectives
 - Treat DEI as a business initiative
- ⊕ Larry will share his presentation with the IAC through Kris.

⊙ **Lionbridge Translation Services Presentation (*Veronica Hand, 20 minutes*)**

- ⊕ Veronica is the department's Civil Rights Coordinator and works with Title VI civil rights act of 1964.
- ⊕ She talked to the IAC about the current Lionbridge solution for short term interpretation.

- ⊕ This service could be used for talking to a student's parent who does not speak English.
- ⊕ The service is simple to use, call the number and enter the instructor pin, then select the language.
- ⊕ A translator will come on the line to translate from English to the speaker's language and back.

⊙ **Lunch (30 minutes)**

⊙ **WDFW Updates (*Kris Thorson, 30 minutes*)**

- ⊕ Budget and legislative update
 - Kris has started sharing the Legislative Director's Report with the MHAG members this legislative session.
 - He thinks that this might be a good thing to share with the IAC and move this agenda piece to an email format unless there are specific budget issues that the staff feel need to be covered in a meeting.
 - Kris asked what IAC thinks about using the legislative directors report for budget and legislative updates moving forward?
 - The IAC thought this was a good idea.
- ⊕ COVID updates
 - As the email from Dave through Jan stated, masks will not be required of instructors in counties with low county community levels.
 - The website to check for community levels is https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list_select_state=Washington&data-type=CommunityLevels.
 - This also means that masks will not be required at the statewide IST if community levels for Chelan County are low for the week before the IST.
- ⊕ Student statistics
 - The 2023 student statistics through March 31 are:
 - Total Classes – 102
 - Capacity – 1,886
 - Registered – 1,309
 - Total Pass (in-person classes only) – 1,070
 - Total Pass (in-person classes and online only) – 3,134
 - Total Fail – 42
 - Total Incomplete – 31
 - Total No-show – 166
 - Total % Fail – 1%
 - Total % NS – 5%
 - For comparison, the 2022 student statistics through March 31 were:
 - Total Classes – 46
 - Capacity – 875
 - Registered – 384
 - Total Pass (in-person classes only) – 301

- Total Pass (in-person classes and online only) – 2,787
- Total Fail – 15
- Total Incomplete – 5
- Total No-show – 63
- Total % Fail – 1%
- Total % NS – 2%
- Classes, capacity, registrations, and passing the in-person class have all more than doubled in 2023.
- The number of online only certifications has decreased from 2,486 in 2022 to 2,064 in 2023.
- ⊕ Instructors & Instructor Applicants
 - As of April 6, there are 1,019 certified instructors.
 - In 2023, the coordinators have certified 23 new instructors.
- ⊕ Regional Field Coordinator Updates
 - Steve Dazey – Region 1 Field Coordinator
 - Steve has worked with a private school in Spokane to teach firearms safety and the value of hunter education.
 - He is working on National Hunting and Fishing Day.
 - Steve audited the Wildlife Control Operator class.
 - He worked with Aaron and an instructor volunteer to certify 19 new Range Safety Officers.
 - He met with Youth Outdoors Unlimited to talk about how they can do more and discussed them coming to National Hunting and Fishing Day.
 - He has been asked by the Civil Air Patrol to give another class at their academy in eastern Washington.
 - Aaron Garcia – Region 3 Field Coordinator
 - Aaron and Steve met with a Yakima tribal enforcement officer about helping the tribe create their own hunter education program on reservation.
 - He has done a couple pre-service trainings.
 - Aaron went to Selah Highschool’s hunting club and did a presentation on clinics, hunter education, and is planning on going back to talk more about mentoring.
 - He did a couple sportsman show presentations.
 - Aaron has also been hard at work on the turkey camp where 30 hunters will get to hunt turkey for the first time with mentors.
 - He is planning more camps in the future including the Chris Christensen hunt and two fall turkey camps.
 - Jackie McBride – Region 4 Field Coordinator
 - Jackie has been working with IAC members on the IAC Workplan items.
 - She is standing up a new team in Bellingham with Lyle Galloway.

- Jackie is also working on restarting the Ferndale team with Karl Bossman as the chief instructor.
- She is dealing with a missing firearm issue and a chief instructor who uses other team's equipment.
- She has been on several class visits.
- Jackie has six new applicants ready for their PST, with ten others who are close (completing online course currently).
- She is working with Kelly Riordan on planning and logistics for several R3 clinics and in region 4 later in the year.
- Jackie is working on new venue options for North Bend classes as well as West Seattle
- She is prepping for turkey camp, women's' range day in Prosser, and the IST.
- Bill Montgomery – Region 6 Field Coordinator
 - Bill has completed some Master Hunter Orientations at the sportsman shows.
 - He has done three PSTs recently.
 - Bill has done a PST with the Nisqually tribe.
 - He is also going to the Quinault tribe to do a PST and he is going to work with the Chehalis tribe.

⊙ **IAC Member Roundtable and Communications with Regional Instructors (*Kris Thorson, 15 minutes*)**

- ⊕ Instructor feedback to IAC re: news/issues/concerns related to teaching, COVID SOP, all-online course, minimum age, etc.
 - Evan talked about the hunter education class statistics and getting a commitment to look at the fail rates in different regions.
 - Kris committed to looking at the data with Evan to see if there was a potential issue.
 - Butch had a contact with an instructor who needed more information on hunter education to help the venue secure a 25 year lease of the property for the range he uses for classes.

⊙ **Terry Hoffer Memorial Firearm Safety Award (*Kris Thorson, 30 minutes*)**

- ⊕ This year we only had five nominations for the award.
- ⊕ All the nominations were from western Washington.
- ⊕ Mid-March, there were some emails from previous IAC members to some members of the IAC and the department about the award.
- ⊕ Dave noticed the current membership was not on the email chain and copied them into the emails.
- ⊕ Those emails were discussing that some instructors think the Terry Hoffer Memorial Firearm Safety Award is slanted to western Washington instructors.
- ⊕ This seems to be because they have misunderstood that the award recognizes a volunteer Hunter Education Instructor whose outstanding commitment and

teaching excellence during the previous year clearly exemplifies exceptional performance.

- ⊕ Some instructors interpret the teaching excellence as teaching the most classes and most students.
- ⊕ None of the seven questions ask about class sizes or class numbers but these statistics are sometimes introduced into the nomination by the nominator.
- ⊕ After the email exchanges, Blayde sent Kris and Dave an email about his thoughts.
- ⊕ Blayde thinks the nomination process itself is the weak link as not everyone that should be nominated is nominated and some of the nominations may not have all the pertinent information in them.
 - For example, as Chief Instructor, he is aware of the time and effort put into classes by individual instructors on the team, but he doesn't necessarily know about their other contributions to the program outside of the classroom.
- ⊕ His suggestion is to have each Field Coordinator be responsible for nominating one, and only one, instructor from their region each year.
- ⊕ The coordinators should be much more aware of the instructor's activities outside the classroom and can contact the chief instructor about classroom participation if needed.
- ⊕ Some of the membership felt that taking instructors out of the nomination pool would be detrimental because the coordinators may not see what an instructor does in class or outside of class because they are so busy.
- ⊕ The consensus on the discussion was that there needs to be more outreach to instructors on what would qualify an instructor for the award.

⊙ **National Hunting and Fishing Day (NHFD) Update (*Kris Thorson and Steve Dazey, 15 minutes*)**

- ⊕ Steve and Staci Lehman, Eastern Washington Communications Manager, have been busy soliciting donations for the event.
- ⊕ The Colville Tribe has donated \$500 and the Kalispel have donated \$2500.
- ⊕ Staci helped Kris write a grant request to RMEF for the event as well.
- ⊕ Kris sent the invites for participants at the end of February.
- ⊕ The participants are the organizations that will have a booth, give away, or activity at NHFD.
- ⊕ Currently we have commitments from the Boy Scouts of America, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Kalispel Tribe, Operation Lifesaver, Washington Department of Agriculture bug display, Spokane Flyfishers Club, Puget Sound Knappers, Backcountry Horsemen, WDFW enforcement, and WDFW Invasive species unit.
- ⊕ Kris will recontact the organizations that have not responded in next couple months to see if they are interested in participating at NHFD.

- ⊕ **Recruit and Retain Instructors in Smaller Counties (*Bob Hunt, John Cushman, and Butch Buffaloe, 45 minutes*)**
 - ⊕ This agenda item was moved to the July 29 meeting because the meeting was behind schedule and we know that members would want to provide input on this topic.

- ⊕ **IAC Recruitment Questions Discussion (*Kris Thorson, 15 minutes*)**
 - ⊕ Kris is preparing to start the 2023 IAC recruitment cycle.
 - ⊕ We discussed at a previous meeting about possibly changing the recruitment questions from the current three questions to more pointed questions like the Master Hunter Advisory Group asks.
 - ⊕ Kris received suggested edits to the questions from Randy, but he did not remember other suggestions from the IAC.
 - ⊕ Kris asked the IAC if they think the department should change the recruitment questions or if they should stay the current three questions.
 - ⊕ There was discussion about increasing the recruitment outreach from WDFW to increase applications to the IAC.
 - ⊕ It was identified that having more marketing on the messaging for IAC recruitment may be the first step.

- ⊕ **IAC Onboarding Process Discussion (*Kris Thorson, 20 minutes*)**
 - ⊕ Kris sent the IAC the newly created draft IAC job description and wanted to go over what IAC thought of the document.
 - ⊕ Evan suggested adding the job description information that is unique to the roles and responsibilities document that we currently have.
 - ⊕ Adding the information into the roles and responsibilities document would not create a second document that had some duplicative information in it.
 - ⊕ Kris will add a section to the roles and responsibilities document on “How to be good at being an IAC member” which will house the unique information from the job description.
 - ⊕ Kris will add this section to the roles and responsibilities document for IAC’s review before the July 29 meeting.
 - ⊕ Kris is planning on creating a binder of pertinent information for each IAC member.
 - ⊕ The binders will be full of information for the current membership to have at meetings and use moving forward.
 - ⊕ However, the binders will also be a good way to help onboard new members and help them orient with IAC’s current workplan and goals.
 - ⊕ Kris and Jackie came up with the following list of things to include in the binders:
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Policy manual
 - Contact list
 - Chief instructor book
 - PST process and materials
 - IAC workplan for the current year

- ⊕ Kris asked the IAC to determine what other things might be useful for IAC members to have at their fingertips when in meetings?
 - IAC will get back to Kris with possible ideas for the notebooks

⊙ **Adjourn**