

**FEDERAL AID  
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION  
PO Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

**HUNTER EDUCATION ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

**State: Alaska**

**Grant Title: Hunter Information and Training (HIT Program)**

**Grant #: AKW-9 HIT Section 4**

**Start Date: July 1, 2015      Ending Date: June 30, 2016**

**Project Leader/Contact: Ginamaria Smith**

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**3,201 Students Trained (1511) \$157,967.14 (cost if available): (4c)**

*Students certified under an approved basic hunter education course, including costs of maintaining a staff of instructors and training for basic hunter education. Report number of students in age/gender/race/disabled categories in narrative below, as determined by instructor.*

**3,201 Students Live-Firing (1513) \_\_\_\_ (cost if available): (4c)**

*Students completing live-firing exercises as part of the basic approved hunter education course. Report number of students in age/gender/race/disabled categories in narrative below, as determined by instructor.*

**838 Advanced Student Training (1515) \$89,281.65 (cost if available) (4c)**

*Advanced or adult students completing seminars or specialty courses beyond the beginning or basic course requirements. Report number of students in age/gender/race/disabled categories in narrative below, as determined by instructor.*

**5,962 Volunteer Hours of Effort (1521) \_\_\_\_ (cost if available): (4c)**

*Hours contributed by volunteers and any associated costs of coordination/administration. Report number of hours, with total in-kind value of contribution and how in-kind value was calculated and recorded in narrative below.*

**73 Volunteers Trained (1523) \$212,798.16 (cost if available): (4c)**

*Volunteers trained during the reporting year. Report number of volunteers in age/gender/race/disabled categories in narrative below, as determined by instructor.*

**3 Educational Facility Capital Development (1563) \_\_\_\_ (cost if available): (4c)**

*Classrooms, education centers, etc. developed and/or maintained during the reporting year. Report number of facilities and cost, with summary in narrative below.*

**8 HE Coordination and Administration (1581) \$168,828.51 (cost if available): (4c)**

*Planning, budgeting, needs assessments, reporting and those items that could not be assigned to a category above. Report cost and summarize in narrative below.*

**SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS RELATED TO PROPOSED OBJECTIVES:**

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**Project Objectives:**

**Objective 1:**

Maintain an annual needs assessment for the HIT Program.

- a. Identify and quantify significant problems that the HIT Program should address in Alaska.
- b. Increase programmatic integration and internal division support.
- c. Assess the needs of staff, instructors, students, and public regarding hunter education programming.
- d. Develop, with a timeline, measures to evaluate progress of HIT efforts.
- e. Assess Hunter Information & Training facility needs in Alaska.

**Objective 2:**

Expand the reach of the HIT Program to better serve all Alaskans with appropriate curriculum and facilities, including those beyond the population centers of Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau.

- a. Recruit and retain volunteer instructors with broad backgrounds.
- b. Use the Mobile Shooting Sports Trailer to provide HIT opportunities to students in remote, road accessible locations, and via the Marine Highway System.
- c. Provide training opportunities to Alaskans in areas lacking road access.
- d. Maintain and monitor Alaska's curriculum for use in teaching hunter education.
- e. Interact and collaborate with other agencies and organizations.

**Objective 3:**

Maintain open lines of communication and recognition between staff and volunteer instructors, and implement practical and consistent instructor policies and agreements.

- a. Work with staff, the HIT Steering Group, and volunteers to maintain consistent, honest, and open communication.
- b. Continue to search out new and exciting instructor recognition and incentives ideas.
- c. Ensure consistency and appropriateness of instructor policies and volunteer agreements.

**Objective 4:**

Meet and expand the need for mandatory HE and BE training throughout Alaska and ensure intra-jurisdictional certification reciprocity through standardized curriculum, testing, and passing requirements.

- a. Utilize appropriate advertising mediums for all HIT programs, classes, and clinics.
- b. Maintain standard testing and passing requirements for HIT courses.

**Objective 5:**

Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and ensure ongoing planning and coordination of the HIT program, and seek opportunities to refine and improve it with development of additional training aids and opportunities.

- a. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the HIT program.
- b. Expand the capabilities within WINFONET, the state's computer database system. New technology and database systems are slow to arrive to programs with ADF&G. Need to improve our systems to better serve the HIT Staff, the public, and our volunteer instructors.
- c. Include planning as an ongoing part of the HIT program.
- d. Coordinate with other states and organizations and utilize outside resources to develop recruitment programs and additional training aids that will enhance HIT objectives.

**Project Accomplishments:**

**Objective 1:**

-Identified that the hunter education student test was outdated and some questions were problematic for rural students. HIT Program staff and the Steering Group updated the test and it's been received positively by volunteer instructors and students.

-Set-up a contact with the Alaska State Troopers for them to provide us with information when a hunting firearm incident occurs. This will allow us to provide accurate information to IHEA's National Incident Database.

-Through student surveys, we discovered that the online bowhunter education course did not provide information that was pertinent to Alaska as it is a general course. A review committee with bowhunter education instructors from across the state developed updates to the online course. The bowhunter education online course field day lesson plan was also inadequate and wasn't being utilized by instructors to provide consistency for classes held throughout the state. An updated lesson plan will be available to instructors in FY17.

-HIT staff provided an informational booth at the following events in order to interact and encourage discussion with the public.

- Great Alaskan Sportsman Show (15,000 people)
- Mat-Su Valley Sportsman Show (2,500 people)
- Potter Marsh Discovery Days (800 people)
- Fairbanks Summer Activity Fair (600 people)

-Worked with USF&WS and internal ADF&G administrative staff to develop the procedures and volunteer time forms to collect volunteer hours to use as in-kind match for P-R funds. A trial period was conducted from January-June 2016 to teach instructors how the time forms work and also to remove any glitches. The volunteer hours will be gathered and used in FY17.

**Objective 2:**

- Certified 73 volunteer instructors statewide from 20 different cities/villages. We are able to increase the number of classes offered statewide because of the help of our new instructors.
- Certified 8 ADF&G staff from around the state so that they can answer questions about the HIT Program, assist with scheduling classes in their area, and instruct classes when available.
- Certified 5 government agency staff (Fish & Wildlife Service, Alaska State Troopers, Bureau of Land Management) from around the state so that they can answer questions about the HIT Program and instruct classes when available.
- The HIT Program offered clinics and training opportunities to over 750 participants. Most of the participants were connected to the Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) Program. Clinics offered included: Sighting In Day, Waterfowl Hunting, Bear Hunting, Shotgun Basics, Archery, Firearm Cleaning, Rifle Shooting Basics, Sheep Hunting, Handguns, Bear Safety, Reloading, and Beaver Trapping.
- Collaborated with the Alaska State Troopers and their CSI Camp. 24 students came to a hunter education and firearm safety day at the range. The students learned firearm safety rules, how to shoot rifles and shotguns, and the anatomy of Alaskan game animals.
- Offered two sessions of the Outdoor Youth Days Camp to 60 participants ranging from 10-14 years old. The participants learned about firearms safety, archery, rifle shooting, shotgunning, wildlife ID, fishing, orienteering, and outdoor survival skills.

**Objective 3:**

- HIT Program staff met with instructors in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Mat-Su, and Soldotna for annual planning meetings. These meetings allow face-to-face time with the instructors so that the instructors can give feedback on the program and also so that staff can thank the volunteers.
- A quarterly newsletter was mailed out to every active instructor statewide. The newsletter contained information about policy changes, pertinent class information, and also stories of activities/classes/workshops that highlighted some of the programs offered statewide.
- The HIT Steering Group met three times via teleconference to discuss upcoming changes to the program and ensure that the volunteer instructors have a voice regarding policy and curriculum changes.
- Each year the top volunteer instructors are recognized by statewide awards with nominations made by co-instructors. The HIT Steering Group helped to choose the top volunteer instructors. This past year's recipients included Somerset Jones as Hunter Education Instructor of the Year, Mike Robbins as Bowhunter Education Instructor of the Year, Alexandra Brown as Outstanding Educator of the Year, and Wes Erickson as Lifetime Achievement Awards.

-We've increased communication with instructors about the incentives given out by companies as a thank-you for their valuable volunteer time.

**Objective 4:**

-Increased outreach to schools to inform them of the hunter education program and the ability for teachers to get trained as volunteer instructors.

-Updated the HIT Program website to provide more information about the program and also make it easier for the public to contact HIT staff.

-Updated the HIT Program brochure that was over 10 years old to reflect current program offerings and better inform the public.

-Worked with other state hunter education administrators to develop a spreadsheet with bowhunter education course options nationwide.

-Updated hunter education course test to better reflect the current course.

**Objective 5:**

-Updated the muzzleloader education student survey to match the other certification course surveys. The surveys will provide feedback that can then be used for future program planning.

-The Alaska Board of Game passed a regulation in March 2016 requiring all hunters to complete a crossbow education course if they use a crossbow to hunt big game, starting in July 2018. Discussions with Kalkomey and NBEF are occurring and a joint crossbow education course is in the process of being developed.

-The HIT Program Coordinator attended the annual IHEA Conference to keep abreast of new programs and how they will affect Alaska.

**Final Results:**

Certification Classes Offered:

-Hunter education: 175

-Bowhunter education: 93

-Muzzleloader education: 29

-Total students certified: 3,201

**Prepared by:** Ginamaria Smith

**Date:** August 2016