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Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Wildlife Conservation

Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration  
Annual Performance Report  
1 July 1992 - 30 June 1993

# **Alaska Hunter Education**

by

John Matthews

Project W18-HS-22  
November 1993

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DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
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## ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

State: Alaska

Project No.: W18-HS-22

Project Title: Alaska Hunter Education

Period Covered: 1 July 1992 - 30 June 1993

**Project Objective:** To develop and conduct an educational program for the following purposes:

- a. to reduce hunting related accidents, particularly those involving firearms;
- b. provide students with a basic understanding of wildlife management;
- c. help students understand the role of hunter responsibility and ethics and the role these subjects play in the future of hunting;
- d. help students adapt to new rules and regulations.

### **Job 1: Program Coordination and Evaluation**

**Job Objectives:** To coordinate the state hunter education program and to assure standards are maintained.

- a. Activities: Through a series of form modifications, recording repetitive information has been significantly reduced. Most instructors seem to be having no problems with the present system.

Through efforts of division headquarters, an agreement has been reached with the Department of Public Safety, Division of Wildlife Protection, to collect hunting accident information. This is a significant breakthrough for the Hunter Education Program.

Reassignment of ADF&G staff time in Fairbanks has resulted in a reduced amount of time available for the Wildlife Biologist I to work on hunter education related tasks. Reduced student certification in Region III reflects that reduced effort.

A review of course records indicates that 72 basic hunter education courses were offered during the year. Forty-nine instructors conducted these classes. An additional 51 instructors were assistants in courses for a total of 100 instructors involved in course work this year. Student enrollment ranged from one per course to 60 per course, averaging a little over 11.7 students per course. Regional efforts were: 130 students certified in Region I, 695 students certified in Region II, 38 students certified in Region III, and 7 students certified in Region V for a total of 870 students.

Fifty four bowhunter courses were offered resulting in 815 students receiving certification through the bowhunter education course.

- b. **Target Date:** Continuing.
- c. **Job Status:** Significant improvements over last year were not achieved.
- d. **Significant Deviations:** None
- e. **Recommendations:** Because of the increased work load from both Hunter Education and bowhunter education courses, it is recommended that regional volunteer coordinators be designated in each regional office to coordinate volunteer instructor activities. This position would provide administrative and logistical support for volunteers, based on program standards as outlined in the program manual.
- f. **Cost:** State: \$600.00                      Federal: \$1,800.00

## **Job 2: Instructor Recruitment and Training**

**Job Objectives:** To recruit, train, and support volunteer instructors around the state, and to maintain at least 125 active instructors.

- a. **Activities:** During this period, the second statewide instructor training workshop was held in Anchorage. A total of 100 instructors attended the 2½ day workshop. Mr. Del Benson of Colorado State University presented short courses on lesson planning and teaching ethics.  
  
Awards were presented to the top 10 instructors.
- b. **Target Date:** Continuing.
- c. **Status of Progress:** Approximately 20 new instructors were certified during the report period, bringing the total number of instructors to 177.
- d. **Significant Deviations:** None.
- e. **Recommendations:** Expand the number of instructor training workshops, pay for instructor travel and lodging to attend training courses, establish a probation period for new instructors during which they have to teach a course before they can achieve full certification.
- f. **Cost:** State: \$6,800.00                      Federal - \$20,400.00

### Job 3: Student Recruitment and Training

**Job Objectives:** To encourage student participation in the hunter education program; to ensure that students enrolled in hunter education classes receive a minimum of 10 hours of instruction on proper handling of hunting equipment, outdoor survival, first aid, wildlife management, hunter responsibility, and ethics; to certify 2,000 students per year in the basic hunter education course.

- a. **Activities:** During this period, 870 students (45% increase over last year) were certified. A total of 70 courses were offered, averaging 11.7 students per course. Of the 70 courses offered, 50 (72%) had live fire as part of the curriculum. Of the 870 students certified, 620 (71%) participated in live fire training.

The bowhunter education courses resulted in 815 students being certified. The requirements of a written test and field skills evaluation have made the course more demanding. In some cases, failure rate is 50%. Generally the failure rate is around 20-25%. Over 40 courses were offered with all courses prescheduled and preregistration required.

- b. **Target Date:** Continuing.
- c. **Status of Progress:** Increases in the number of students enrolled in the hunter education courses continues, but at a lower rate than desired to reach program goals in a timely manner. Public awareness of the program is growing, and increased division priority makes attainment of 2,000 students trained per year an attainable goal in 6 to 8 years.

Minority participation in the basic course included the following:

Females	52 courses, 148 total
Alaska Natives	18 courses, 72 total
Black	5 courses, 8 total
Oriental	3 courses, 6 total
Hispanic	4 courses, 10 total
Handicap	3 courses, 3 total

Federal Aid guidelines require that the basic course be at least 10 hours in length. Alaska's courses totaled 1,210 hours of instruction, averaging 17.3 hours in length with a range of 10 to 45 hours.

- d. **Significant Deviations:** None
- e. **Recommendations:** Continue to raise public awareness of the program, conduct more instructor workshops, attempt to get instructors to schedule courses at least

six months to one year in advance, work with schools to accept hunter education as an elective course in high schools.

- f. **Cost:** State - \$2,600.00                      Federal - \$7,800.00

#### **Job 4. Rabbit Creek Rifle Range**

**Job Objectives:** Operate the Rabbit Creek Rifle Range in a manner that provides a safe, enjoyable shooting facility.

- a. **Activities:** No additional work has been done at the rifle range in terms of changes or improvements.
- b. **Target Date:** Continuing.
- c. **Job Status:** The range facility and staff are funded primarily by program receipts and state money. Federal Aid dollars were used only for classroom supplies.
- d. **Significant Deviations.** None.
- e. **Recommendations:** Improve the range facility, fund staff salaries primarily by program receipts and state money. Improvements would include enlarging classroom capacity and adding training aids and equipment.
- f. **Cost:** No federal money involved.

#### **Job 5. Annual Performance Report**

**Job Objectives:** Write an annual performance report describing active projects of the previous year.

**Personnel:** John Matthews: PCN 2128/12 mo/PFT  
Thela Divens: PCN 2142/ 6 mo/PFT

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