

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Wildlife Conservation

Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration
Annual Performance Report
1 July 1997 – 30 June 1998

HUNTER EDUCATION

Mary V. Hicks, Editor

Grant W-18-HS-27
December 1998

PERFORMANCE REPORT

STATE: Alaska

GRANT NR: W18 HS 27

TITLE: Hunter Education

PERIOD: 1 July 1997–30 June 1998

PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To develop and conduct an educational program for the following purposes:

- reduce hunting-related accidents, particularly those involving firearms and archery equipment;
- provide students with a basic understanding of wildlife management;
- help students understand the role of hunter responsibility and ethics and the roles these play in the future of hunting;
- 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.

Activities

The advisory group, which began in the winter of 1997, completed its assigned work in the spring of 1998 by developing a 5-year plan and forwarding a comprehensive hunter education plan to the division. A copy of this plan is included as an appendix to this report.

This year we offered 61 basic hunter education and 54 bowhunter education courses. The basic courses were taught by 41 volunteer instructors and 55 additional assistants. The bow courses were taught by 29 instructors with an additional 42 assistants. Last year 167 volunteer instructors were active. In basic hunter education courses, student enrollment ranged from 1–42 students per course, averaging 12.7 students certified per course. Instructors certified 779 students in the basic program statewide. Bowhunter instructors certified 398 students this year. They were predominantly from Fairbanks, Anchorage, Mat-Su Valley, and the Kenai peninsula. Instructors certified 1177 students in the Hunter Education Program.

Target Date

Continuing.

Job Status

Numbers of students certified were significantly lower than students certified last year. The number of courses offered was similar, but the number of students per course was down. Major emphasis of staff time was working with the Steering Group to develop the Federal Aid 5-year plan.

Significant Deviations

None.

Recommendations

The steering group recommended creation of subcommittees to develop an Alaska specific curriculum which would include Native viewpoints on the various topics, program standards and incentives. Having these elements of the program developed by the subcommittees will greatly improve implementation.

JOB 2: INSTRUCTOR RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

Job Objectives

To recruit, train, and support volunteer instructors around the state and to maintain at least 250 active instructors.

Activities

At this year's annual workshop, the steering group presented their draft hunter education plan to instructors and headquarters staff. At the end of the day, attending instructors (125+) unanimously voted to support the proposal. Lisa O'Brian facilitated the meeting. Mr. Tim Poole attended and presented an overview of similar program changes in Montana.

Target Date

Continuing.

Progress

We recruited 13 new bowhunter instructors and 16 new basic instructors into the program, increasing the number of instructors to 307.

Significant Deviations

None.

Recommendations

As the 5-year planning effort identifies program elements and prioritizes them, we will need to evaluate current training and using a significant portion of the operating budget for the statewide workshop. Regional training may be more effective in improving instructor performance when we add new elements to the program. A rotation of regional

and statewide workshops on a bi-annual schedule would provide both the opportunity to conduct intensive training and to give instructors a chance to develop an “esprit de corps” vital to the function of a volunteer program.

As the subcommittees develop new products and standards for the course and these are implemented, some instructors may decide to leave. Recruiting will have to be focused on bringing in new volunteers that wish to work in the newly revised program.

JOB 3: STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

Job Objectives

- Encourage student participation in the hunter education program.
- Ensure that students enrolled in hunter education courses receive a minimum of 10 hours of instruction on proper handling of hunting equipment, outdoor survival, wildlife management, hunter responsibility and ethics.
- Certify 2000 students each year in the basic hunter education course.

Activities

During this period 779 students were certified in the basic hunter education course. An additional 398 were certified in the bowhunter education course. Basic courses averaged 12.7 students. Of the 61 basic courses offered, 45 had live fire and 31 had a field course.

Target Date

Continuing.

Progress

The number of students enrolled and certified in the hunter education program decreased significantly from last year. Such fluctuations are not unexpected. A total of 1177 students were certified in the program.

Minority participation in basic courses

| | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Female | 48/61 courses | 191 students |
| Alaska Natives | 24/61 courses | 89 students |
| Black | 4/61 courses | 4 students |
| Oriental | 4/61 courses | 6 students |
| Hispanic | 4/61 courses | 7 students |
| Alaskans with disabilities | 4/61 courses | 6 students |

Alaska has adopted a 10-hour minimum course for hunter education certification. During this year, courses averaged 21.0 hours.

Significant Deviations

None.

Recommendations

Continue to provide instructor training workshops and up-to-date training aids. Continue to persuade instructors to schedule their courses in advance. Encourage instructors to use revised and updated teaching systems and course modules. As new program standards are implemented, training instructors will become more important to insure that all instructors are able to implement the new program and continue to provide up-to-date courses for the public.

JOB 4: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

Job Objectives

To write an annual performance report describing active projects of the previous year.

PROJECT COSTS

| <u>Personnel</u> | <u>Operating</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|------------------|------------------|--------------|
| \$146,435 | \$104,039 | \$250,474 |

PERSONNEL

JOHN MATTHEWS: PCN 2128/12 Mo./PFT.

ELAINE LARIMER: PCN 2013/12 Mo./PFT.

ROD PERRY: PCN 2147/12 Mo./PFT.