



Hunter Information & Training Program News

Spring 2017

Coordinator's Corner-Ginamaria Smith

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DID YOU KNOW?

In a nationwide survey, people were asked to choose their most important reason for hunting from a list that included "for a trophy, to be close to nature, to be with family and friends, for the sport or recreation, or for the meat."

About two in five hunters selected "For the meat".

Based on survey results from Responsive Management



I spent a week in Oregon at the end of May attending the 2017 International Hunter Education Association (IHEA-USA) Conference. The annual conference brings together hunter education administrators with industry and conservation partners dedicated to the future of hunting and the shooting sports worldwide. The opportunity to interact with other state and federal hunter education administrators is invaluable. I attended presentations on R3 (recruitment, retention, and reactivation of hunters and shooting sports enthusiasts), federal grants, and the locavore movement to name a few. I plan to share snapshots of pertinent information from these presentations in upcoming newsletters.

Since Alaska will be hosting the conference next year in Anchorage (June 25-28, 2018), I was fortunate to have a booth in the vendor area. The booth gave me the chance to answer questions about our great state and the HIT Program. The most frequently asked questions included, "Is there 24 hours of daylight in June?" and "Will there still be snow?" Many of the administrators are very excited to visit Alaska as they've never been here before. I made lots of great contacts and have some great ideas for our conference next year!



Rabbit Creek Shooting Park storage building

both cities, supplies and equipment have been scattered in various storage areas and it's going to be much more efficient and organized in the future. These buildings have been many years in the making and we're very excited to finally have them built.



Fairbanks storage building

The first draft of the Crossbow Education online course has been reviewed by HIT staff and the Steering Group. HIT staff are currently working on developing the instructor lesson plan. We will be conducting the first instructor trainings in the following cities: Anchorage-Sept. 27th & 28th, Fairbanks-Sept. 25th & 26th, and Juneau-Sept. 29th & 30th. If you are interested in attending the Crossbow Education instructor training in your area, or have questions about the course, please contact me at 267-2196.

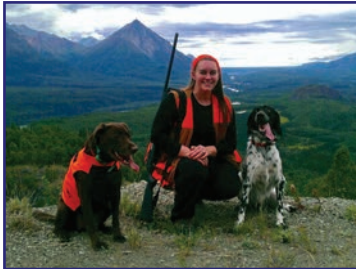


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Tracy Smith

HIT Program Outreach & Education Coordinator



I consider myself to be very fortunate as I was born and raised in Alaska. Both of my parents loved the great outdoors and they passed that appreciation on to me at an early age. Some of my fondest childhood

memories are those of family adventures throughout Kachemak Bay and numerous summers spent in Seldovia; fishing, tide pooling, clamming, crabbing, picking berries and watching sea ducks.

In the fall of 1994 I began working for Fish & Game (ADF&G) as a student intern. That three month internship sparked my interest in biology and I was hooked. As luck would have it after graduating from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, I started working for ADF&G full time and have been with ADF&G ever since. Over the years I have had the opportunity to work in a variety of positions throughout the state with amazing people and dynamic fish and wildlife populations.

My professional life has paired well with my personal life as I love to get out and enjoy our great state. Whether it's spending time on the water, be it a boat ride around the bay or casting a line for whatever is biting, working with my dogs (Labradors and Munsterlanders) in anticipation of upland and waterfowl season, or getting ready to pursue big game around the state (this fall its caribou in Talkeetna Mountains and deer on Raspberry Island).

Throughout my career working with people and sharing my passion for the outdoors has been truly rewarding. Nothing beats teaching someone to tie a fly and then



watching them catch their first fish, or showing someone how to shoot a shotgun and see them breaking clay targets. I love getting people excited about fishing, hunting, and outdoor pursuits

as these are my personal passions as well. I am really looking forward to working with the amazing volunteers and incredible staff from the HIT Program as the new Outreach & Education Coordinator.

Drug and Suicide Prevention Grant Provides New Cutouts For Dillingham Hunter Education



2 students, teacher Robert Burns, volunteer instructor Ward Jones (left to right) These lifelike cutouts for the hunter ed field course were designed, constructed, and painted by students in a Dillingham School woodworking class. Funds for materials were provided by a drug and suicide prevention grant administered by Bristol Bay Area Health Corp's (BBAHC) Behavioral Health Program. Mr. Burns likes to have students work on practical projects and students enjoy working on them, especially when they have input in the design.

According to the grant administrator Rachel Bobbitt of BBAHC Behavioral Health, "The hunter ed course is a culturally appropriate activity that will help promote a healthy lifestyle for rural youth."

The new cutouts will replace and add to the current stock used in hunter ed classes in Dillingham. Thanks to volunteer instructors Ward Jones and Neil Barten for spearheading the effort to get more community involvement in hunter ed in the Dillingham area!

IHEA Instructor Resource Site
www.ihea.com



Alaska HIT Program Site
www.huntereducation.alaska.gov



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Welcome to Our New Volunteer Instructors

We wish to extend a warm welcome to all new volunteer instructors who have joined us since the publication of our last newsletter. Congratulations and welcome aboard!

Hunter Education:

Anchorage: Jimmy Roehl, John Western, Christopher Wilkinson, Darren Burks

Big Lake: Louis Landers

Cordova: James Wiese

Craig: John Ryan

Douglas: Shaun Kuzakin

Eagle River: Matthew Ellis, Chris Scarberry

Eielson AFB: Jonathan Lanier

Fairbanks: Melissa Hendrickson

Haines: Trent Chwialkowski

Hoonah: Andy Savland

JBER: Kurt Woodward

Juneau: Scott Bjork, Aaron Frenzel, Chad Kendrick, Brynn Parr, Tim Tuckwood, Christopher Lombard

Ketchikan: Clyde Campbell, Mark Finses, Gregory Garcia

Klawock: Benjamin Mank

Metlakatla: Timothy Booth, Joshua Gifford, Adam Krick

North Pole: Rhonda Kitchens

Tok: Timothy Lorenzini

Wasilla: Christopher Bilbo, Ryan Viola

Wrangell: David Bozman, Thomas Kowalske, Scott McAuliffe, Winston Davies

Bowhunter Education:

Anchorage: Tim Hale, Darren Burks, Meghan Wake

Eielson AFB: Jonathan Lanier

Fairbanks: Allen Hansen

JBER: Kurt Woodward

Palmer: Douglas Hall

Tok: Timothy Lorenzini

Wrangell: Scott McAuliffe

Muzzleloader Education:

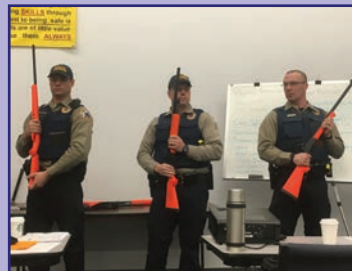
Anchorage: Martha Peck, John Henshaw, Marc Much

Eagle River: Chris Scarberry

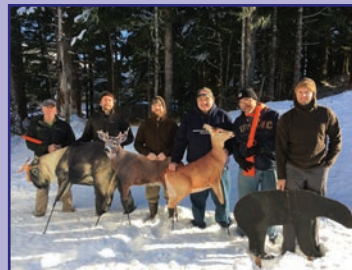
Homer: Stefan Martusheff

Talkeetna: Bobby Ruby

Wasilla: Gabriel Hennemann, Steve Elwell



Three Southeast Wildlife Troopers demonstrating proper field carries during hunter ed instructor training



New Southeast hunter ed instructors

HIT Steering Group

Lyle Shelnut (Interior) lylenutscars@yahoo.com

Andy Finke (Rural Alaska) bdaf@ptialaska.net

Paul Houser (Southcentral) houserfam9@yahoo.com

Martha Peck (Southcentral) martha.a.peck@gmail.com

Bruce Bowler (Southeast) cozylog@alaska.net

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Instructor Notes

Working to Prevent Hunting Incidents

Tom Halverson

In the history of the HIT Program, there has previously not been an effective method of collecting hunting incident information, mainly due to the vastness of the state and different reporting processes among law enforcement agencies. A few individuals tried to resolve this, but it wasn't until a collective effort was made by law enforcement and the HIT Program that a change was finally made. The information collected led to the creation of the Alaska Hunting Incident Report form, which could be used to standardize the process for reporting hunting incidents.

The HIT Program has been gathering incident information since 1987, but never compiled it into a database. As a result, we were unable to effectively use the information to determine trends or whether the HIT Program is effective in preventing hunting incidents.

After scanning and preserving everything collected over the years, I then created a database with fields from the Alaska Hunting Incident Report form. I added a number of additional fields to help pinpoint the types of hunters and situations in which incidents are more likely to occur. The information contained in the database includes: hunting location and region, firearms used, caliber/gauge, if self-inflicted, whether shooter used intoxicants, age of shooter/victim, fatality, gender of shooter/victim, youth hunter involved, type of cover, distance of shot, location of injury, species being hunted, hunter education graduate, and if the victim was wearing hunter orange.

From these fields, we are now able to extract information from the database and determine trends. According to our data, 45% of incidents in Alaska are self-inflicted, 35% involved youth hunters, and 18.5 % of incidents involving youth were fatal.



We know that incidents happen, but it's important to learn from past mistakes so we can work to prevent them in the future. A great book on this topic, titled Blood on the Leaves, is currently available through the HIT Program. The book was written by instructors of the IHEA Hunting Incident Investigation Academy and the stories are real hunting incident investigations and lessons in hunter safety. If you would like to receive a free copy, contact Ginamaria Smith. Think about these statistics the next time you're teaching hunter education, because you do make a difference!

HIT Staff

Contact Information

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Fairbanks

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Tom Halverson 459-7211

Fax: 459-7332

Juneau

Jeff Jemison 586-4101

Fax: 586-4107



Josh Marsan just received his Muzzleloader Education certification on May 13th and is the youngest person to date to receive this certification in Alaska.

Alaska Volunteer Hunter
Education Instructor
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