

Wildlife Restoration OPERATING GRANT FINAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

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

Alaska Department of Fish and Game Wildlife Restoration Grant

GRANT NUMBER: AKW-E-1-2019

PROJECT TITLE: Basic Hunter Education Section 4c FY2019

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019

REPORT DUE DATE: September 28, 2019

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Ginamaria Smith, Program Coordinator II

I. PROGRESS ON PROJECT OBJECTIVES DURING PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

OBJECTIVE 1:

Program Administration, Coordination, & Enhancement

Provide program administration and coordination for all HIT Program certification courses and other outdoor programs designed to recruit and retain new hunters into the shooting sports and to preserve our hunter heritage. Adopt, maintain, evaluate, and update the certification course curricula, including course materials and teaching aids. Review instructor policy and teaching manuals and update when necessary. Manage a database to accurately track volunteer in-kind match hours and documentation.

Accomplishments:

- The HIT Program Coordinator worked closely with Admin staff to ensure in-kind hours were tracked correctly and used as match. The HIT Project Assistant input all timesheet data, followed up with instructors to ensure proper completion of time forms, and maintained the in-kind hour database.
- HIT Program staff met in-person in May to ensure all staff were on the same page in regard to program administration and coordination. Staff gave updates on accomplishments in their regions and in-depth discussions were had regarding upcoming changes, challenges, etc.
- The Steering Group met once via teleconference and once in-person during this reporting period. The Steering Group provided advice to HIT Program staff from an instructor's standpoint.
- The HIT Program Coordinator met with other western state hunter education administrators in Colorado. This was extremely beneficial for the sharing of ideas on volunteer recruitment and training, partnering with other organizations, and resources used to successfully conduct hunter education classes.
- A trailer was purchased for the Fairbanks staff and volunteer instructors to use to transport certification course materials to course locations.
- New computers were purchased for four HIT Program staff to replace outdated equipment.

The actual expenditures for Objective 1 are below:

1000-Staff time	\$221,194.04
2000-Travel	\$11,247.18
3000-Contractual	\$42,413.01
4000-Supplies	\$36,210.87
Total	\$311,065.10

OBJECTIVE 2:

Volunteer Instructor Recruitment & Training

Recruit and maintain an active instructor roster to address the demand for certification courses and ensure courses are offered statewide. Identify the specific areas throughout the state that need instructors and conduct “target recruiting” efforts in those locations. Provide continued education training, evaluation (by HIT Program staff and students), and incentives/recognition for volunteer instructors. Manage a database to accurately track all volunteer instructors.

Accomplishments:

- 77 volunteer instructors were certified statewide from 21 different cities/villages. We are able to increase the number of classes offered statewide because of the help of our new instructors.
- 4 ADF&G staff from around the state were certified as volunteer instructors so they can answer questions about the HIT Program, assist with scheduling classes in their area, and instruct classes when available. New HIT Program staff were trained as certification course instructors as well.
- 7 government agency staff (Fish & Wildlife Service, Alaska State Troopers, Bureau of Land Management) from around the state were certified as volunteer instructors so they can answer questions about the HIT Program and instruct classes when available.
- HIT Program staff met with instructors in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Palmer, and Soldotna for annual planning meetings. These meetings allowed face-to-face time with the instructors so instructors could give feedback on the program and also so HIT Program staff could thank the volunteers. These meetings also help HIT Program staff assess instructor’s needs, community needs, and form a plan for the following year’s courses.
- A quarterly newsletter was mailed out to every active instructor. The newsletter contained information about policy changes, pertinent class information, and also stories of activities/classes/workshops which highlighted some of the programs offered statewide.
- Uniform shirts and hats for instructors were purchased to ensure the professionalism of the HIT Program.
- The Program Technician maintained and updated all instructor records upon receipt of the annual volunteer service agreement forms and firearms assurance forms required by state risk management policies.
- Each year the top volunteer instructors are recognized by statewide awards with nominations made by co-instructors. The HIT Program Steering Group helped to choose the top volunteer instructors. This past year’s recipients included Rich Graham of Wasilla

as Hunter Education Instructor of the Year, Ryan Adam of North Pole as Bowhunter Education Instructor of the Year, and Rob Taylor of Fairbanks as Outstanding Educator of the Year. Dick Groff of Cordova and Rick Sterling of Fairbanks were also awarded Lifetime Achievement Awards.

The actual expenditures for Objective 2 are below:

1000-Staff time	\$205,585.53
2000-Travel	\$18,223.52
3000-Contractual	\$8,622.48
4000-Supplies	\$17,597.08
Total	\$250,028.61

OBJECTIVE 3:

Student Recruitment & Training

Conduct hunter education, bowhunter education, and muzzleloader education certification courses throughout the state. Manage a database to accurately track all certification course students.

Accomplishments:

- 5,732 hours of volunteer effort provided \$238,107.28 of in-kind match. Since this was over the planned amount, the FY20 grant will plan on using additional in-kind hours as state match.
- Purchased ammunition for the proficiency shoots, orange safety vests, and earplugs and safety glasses for each student completing the certification courses.
- Purchased new .22 rifles and scopes to replace older equipment for the hunter education proficiency shoot.
- Purchased three new sets of the Mossberg non-functional firearms used during the hunter education course.
- Purchased new air rifle pellet guns to replace older equipment for the proficiency shoot held during school hunter education classes.
- Provided utilities for the hunter education facility at the Rabbit Creek Shooting Park in Anchorage where a majority of the HIT Program courses and activities are taught.
- Purchased Alaska survival bandanas to be distributed to students who attend certification courses and clinics.
- Purchased a set of 3-D archery targets for Cordova for use in the bowhunter education course and bowhunting clinics.
- The following table reports the number of certification courses offered and the number of students certified in each certification course discipline.

Discipline	Classes	Number of Students Certified
Hunter Education	162	2,194
Bowhunter Education	48	495
Muzzleloader Education	21	115
Crossbow Education	14	75
Totals	245	2,879

- The following table reports the number of students in age/gender/race/disabled categories, as determined by the volunteer instructors through visual inspection.

Discipline	Female	AK Native	African-American	Oriental	Hispanic	Disabled
Hunter Education	52	8	1	6	7	1
Bowhunter Education	1	1	1	1	0	1
Muzzleloader Education	695	134	17	72	49	12
Crossbow Education	8	2	2	0	0	0
Totals	756	145	21	79	56	14

The actual expenditures for Objective 3 are below:

1000-Staff time	\$186,575.90
2000-Travel	\$4,946.46
3000-Contractual	\$38,837.98
4000-Supplies	\$69,631.14
Total	\$299,991.48

OBJECTIVE 4:

Program Outreach

Recruit, retain, and reactivate hunters and shooting sports enthusiasts. Offer certification courses, clinics, and workshops in remote locations. Offer skill development in hunting and shooting sports to women, youth, and families. Partner with outdoor-related education programs and organizations to promote the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to be a responsible hunter and shooter. Increase the number of clinics offered to the public that are designed to promote hunting and shooting sports by seeking out new facilities and venues. Provide opportunities for the public to learn about certification classes, game regulations, and training opportunities offered by the HIT Program.

Accomplishments:

- A replacement Laser Shot Portable Small Arms Hunter Education Training Simulator was purchased. The Laser Shot is used at large public venues such as the Great Alaska Sportsman’s Show and the Mat-Su Sportsman’s Show. In a single weekend, thousands of

people get a chance to interact with volunteer instructors to discuss shot placement and ethical hunting while using the Laser Shot simulator.

- The HIT Program offered clinics and training opportunities to 800 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, small game hunting, and beaver trapping.
- HIT staff provided an informational booth at the following events in order to interact and encourage discussion with the public.
 - Great Alaskan Sportsman Show-Laser Shot Electronic Shooting System (10,000 people)
 - Mat-Su Valley Sportsman Show-Laser Shot Electronic Shooting System (2,500 people)
 - Potter Marsh Discovery Days (800 people)

The actual expenditures for Objective 4 are below:

1000-Staff time	\$190,590.15
2000-Travel	\$7,610.14
3000-Contractual	\$18,712.66
4000-Supplies	\$29,855.57
5000-Equipment	\$9,898.00
Total	\$256,666.52

EXPENDITURES FOR FY19:

The actual expenditures per budget category in this fiscal year are below:

	Awarded	Spent	Remaining
Indirect	\$192,844.30	\$182,817.23	\$10,027.07
1000-Staff time	\$848,040.00	\$803,945.62	\$44,094.38
2000-Travel	\$81,450.00	\$42,027.30	\$39,422.70
3000-Contractual	\$107,165.49	\$108,586.13	\$(1,420.64)
4000-Supplies	\$235,396.22	\$153,294.66	\$82,101.56
5000-Equipment	\$9,898.00	\$9,898.00	\$0.00
Total	\$1,474,794.01	\$1,300,568.94	\$174,225.07

Note: PCN 11-2029 was vacant for two months and PCN 11-2250 was vacant for two and a half months. A large amount of funds budgeted for travel were not spent due to State of Alaska-imposed travel restrictions, which halted out-of-state travel and limited in-state travel for six months during the granting period. Over \$80,000 in Line 4000 went unspent in FY19 since an R3 survey and media messaging program were not developed prior to PCN 11-2222 becoming vacant. Also, due to vacancies, remaining staff spent more time than planned on hiring and ensuring all current activities were completed. This meant that staff was unable to purchase or make the arrangements to spend the budgeted amount on hunter education classroom enhancements/maintenance and classroom supplies.

II. SUMMARY OF WORK COMPLETED ON PROJECT TO DATE.

This is an annual grant with similar objectives and results completed each year. The objectives are designed to run the HIT Program which will result in safer, better informed, and more prepared resource users. The training of students in firearm safety reduces hunting incidents and the curricula regarding ethics, conservation, and wildlife management assist in reducing game violations.

Based on our records, the HIT Program has certified 1,771 instructors and currently has 458 active instructors. To date, the HIT Program through the Section4c grant has certified the following number of students:

Discipline	
Hunter Education	34,748
Bowhunter Education	12,702
Muzzleloader Education	3,060
Crossbow Education	189
Total	50,699

III. SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT REPORTS AND/OR AMENDMENTS

Amendment #1 AKW-E-1-2019 was submitted and accepted by USFWS in August 2018. The amendment added staff hours transferred from Project 21.0 Public and Hunter Services and Information of grant AKW-C-2-2019; objectives and a budget increase to AKW-E-1-2019 for activities involved in teaching the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to be responsible hunters; and the inclusion of all volunteer match hours into the direct project costs. Amendment #1 requested \$409,225.30 in federal funds (75:25) from the Wildlife Restoration program to support the project. The State will match \$136,408.43. An additional 453 estimated volunteer hours valued at \$18,815.36 were added.

A Significant Development Report was submitted and accepted by USFWS in March 2019. The request was for the purchase of the Laser Shot Portable Small Arms Hunter Education Training Simulator equipment.

IV. PUBLICATIONS



Hunter education students in New Stuyahok showing off their new blaze orange hunting vests and safely carrying the Mossberg non-functional firearms during the hunter education field course.



Volunteer instructors listening to a presentation during the Fairbanks annual instructor meeting.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THIS PROJECT

AKW-E-1-2019 is a year-long grant, however it's an ongoing annual project, so the recommendation is for continuation.

Date: September 2019