



Hunter Information & Training Program News

Summer 2024

Coordinator's Corner-Ginamaria Smith

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DID YOU KNOW?

IHEA-USA has launched "Scout", an interactive online product that will include the current regulations for all 50 states. You can ask it questions to determine hunting seasons, bag limits, species, etc.
<https://scout.ihea-usa.org/#>



Fred Voss, longtime volunteer instructor and 2023 Lifetime Achievement awardee was further recognized for his accomplishments by the Alaska Legislature. Senator Kaufman surprised Fred and presented the Legislative Citation at the beginning of the ASD Migrant Education hunter education school field day in July at the Rabbit Creek Shooting Park. The kids in the class had spent all week covering hunter education and conservation topics, and this was the perfect addition to their field day!

HIT Program staff have spent the last couple months reviewing and updating the policy manuals and lesson plans for the certification courses. We updated program information and have tried to make some items clearer and easier to follow. We will mail all current instructors new copies in September so that everyone will have the same version. The new instructors who get certified this fall will receive the same "2024" version as well.

We are also in the process of updating Hunt Alaska. HIT Program staff plus various ADF&G staff are reviewing, updating, and finding new photos to make sure this publication remains relevant and helpful for new Alaskan hunters. We hope to have new copies distributed to ADF&G offices and classroom facilities in early 2025.



In 2024 we've offered 155+ certification classes certifying over 1,400 students. Pat yourself on the back if you've helped instruct at least one class, and if you haven't taught yet, please contact your regional coordinator as we still have lots of classes



scheduled. Many students across the state have also been able to participate in Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) and Alaskans Afield classes. These additional learning opportunities cover hunting and shooting skills and outdoor recreation topics which we just don't have time to expand on during a certification



course. If you would like to help instruct a class or have an idea for a new class topic, please contact Maria Bakic our Statewide Outreach & Education Coordinator at 907-267-2534 or maria.bakic@alaska.gov.



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Hunter Personas Study

www.wafwa.org/publications

The Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies recently shared the results of a study to identify hunter and target shooter motivations when they first hunted and target shot, and how they may have changed over time. Four personas describing US hunters were identified along with six target shooter personas.

Think about yourself and where the students attending our certification classes might fit in...

Provider

Obtaining wild meat is the primary motivation, and sharing is important. The Provider is less interested in the social aspects of hunting, taking the largest or select game animals, or using hunting to escape the daily grind. However, half still place a high value on enjoying nature and the outdoors as part of the ideal day afield. Compared to other personas, the Provider is most likely to pursue big game and least likely to pursue upland game birds.

Demographic Notes: Most likely to be Caucasian (82%), female (31%), and rural (24% live in communities with fewer than 5,000 people).

Their Ideal Day of Hunting: Filling their tags and obtaining their limits.



Tranquil Hunter

The Tranquil Hunter uses hunting to relax, escape, and experience the outdoors. Social reasons rate lower than any other hunter. They report the highest rate of not buying a hunting license in consecutive years, so efforts to retain this persona who represents over a quarter of our hunters is

essential. They are most likely to report having difficulty in accessing lands to hunt.

Demographic Notes: Highest percentage male (83%), slightly less income, but otherwise reflects the average hunter.

Their Ideal Day of Hunting: Relaxing and seeing wildlife in general



Social Hunter-Hunting is a way for the Social Hunter to spend time with friends and family and to be part of a family or community tradition. Harvesting game is of lesser interest. They are the most interested

in teaching others to hunt. If his or her friends and family decide to pursue other recreational activities, we may stand to lose many of these hunters. Encouraging discussions among friends about hunting may encourage many to plan more hunts.

Demographic Notes: Has higher income than the average hunter, is slightly older, and is most likely to be married with children.

Their Ideal Day of Hunting: Being afield with friends, family, or hunting dogs.

Enthusiastic Hunter-The Enthusiastic Hunter scores highest across many hunting motivations including seeking new achievements, sharing their hunting experiences, mentoring, and taking mature/select animals. Although they rate the lowest in terms of social motivations and securing their own food, they are eager to establish themselves in the hunting community. They are more likely to rate themselves as an expert hunter despite being the youngest persona.

Demographic Notes: Generally younger, slightly more likely to be African-American and/or Hispanic, and often more urban. The youngest persona, only 27% are older than 44 years of age.

Their Ideal Day of Hunting: Opportunities to shoot often, harvest a mature big game animal, and develop skills

IHEA Instructor Resource Site

<https://www.ihea-usa.org/>

<https://www.expertvoice.com/iheal/>

HIT Program Site

www.huntereducation.alaska.gov



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SAVE THE DATE: **Annual Instructor Meetings**

The annual instructor meetings are a great way to meet other instructors, share your hunting stories, provide feedback to HIT Program staff, and help plan the 2025 schedule. Dinner will be provided! It's also a chance for us to thank you for your outstanding efforts and volunteer hours in 2024. Please take the time to attend these meetings if you're available.

- **October 23rd** at Snowshoe Gun Club (Soldotna)
- **October 27th** at Fairbanks Indoor Range
- **November 14th** at Juneau Indoor Range
- **November 21st** at Grouse Ridge (Wasilla)
- **December 3rd**-Rural Areas Meeting (Zoom)
- **December 10th** at Anchor Lutheran School (Anchorage)

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: Benjamin Niedbalski, Ayla Rogers

Eagle River: Eric Mauro

Kenai: Looren McDonald

Palmer: Grant Kopplin

Sand Point: Brady Gatlin

Talkeetna: James Gustafson

Wasilla: Brian Ianitelli, Jacob Johnson

WANTED: More Volunteer Instructors

Please encourage students, family members, and friends to fill out the instructor application if you think they would be a great addition to the HIT Program. The application is available online (www.huntereducation.alaska.gov) and printed copies have been included in all class paperwork boxes or cabinets.

Help the HIT Program recruit the next cadre of volunteer instructors! Upcoming training dates:

Hunter Education

- Anchorage — October 11 & 12, 2024 Friday from 6:00pm-9:00pm and Saturday from 9:00am-5:00pm
- Fairbanks — October 25 & 26, 2024 Friday from 6:00pm-9:00pm, Saturday from 9:00am-5:00pm
- Juneau — October 25 & 26, 2024 Friday from 6:00pm-9:00pm, Saturday from 9:00am-5:00pm

Bowhunter Education

- Anchorage — September 28, 2024 from 8:00am-5:00pm

WANTED: Certification Course Photos



Hunter Ed class in Anchorage

The HIT Program needs new photos for our website, policy powerpoint, and publications.

Please take photos during your classes and email them to HIT Program staff.



Hunter Ed class in Unalakleet

HIT Program Steering Group

Melissa Hendrickson (Interior)
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Andy Finke (Rural)
bdaf49@gmail.com

Regg Simon (SC)
reggsimon@hotmail.com

John Western (SC)
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Ted Sandhofer (SE)
cedarpond@gci.net

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Instructor Notes

Above & Beyond Recipients

We'd like to recognize the following instructors for going "above and beyond" this summer. Thanks to the Alaska Wild Sheep Foundation for providing Cabela's gift certificates to help us recognize our Above & Beyond recipients. We'll continue to recognize 1-4 extraordinary

volunteer instructors each quarter, so please keep an eye out for co-instructors who go "above and beyond" in the next few months and send HIT Program staff an email.



Danielle Verna (Valdez)

From fellow instructor Steve Shiell, "Just wanted to send a note recognizing Danielle for her leadership in taking on the hunter ed courses here in Valdez. I fully understand this is all voluntary effort for all of the instructors, and we all have busy lives - however it takes someone like Danielle to commit and push in order to make these classes happen. I appreciate that about her. You have found an ace here in Valdez."

Somerset Jones (Chugiak)

It's been a busy summer for Somerset! He taught 5 hunter ed and 3 muzzleloader ed classes which certified 72 students. He taught at the Rabbit Creek Shooting Park in Anchorage, Grouse Ridge in Wasilla, the Mat-Valley Range in Palmer, and the Elks Camp in Palmer.

Steve Lanford (Fairbanks)

The HIT Program is keeping Steve busy this summer! He's taught 4 hunter ed classes, 1 crossbow ed class, and he taught 3 classes at the Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) Blitz held in Fairbanks at the end of July.

Steve Latz (Kenai)

Steve has led the charge for bowhunter ed in Soldotna! He taught all 4 classes offered which certified 30 students, and he can always be counted on to pick-up the facility keys and mail the paperwork in a timely manner. He also taught the only crossbow ed class offered on the Kenai.



HIT Program Staff Contact Information

Anchorage:

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Luke Metherell 267-2241

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Fairbanks:

Tom Halverson 459-7211

Dani Easterling
459-7242

Juneau:

Daniel Gutierrez 465-4345

Dan Palicka 586-4101



Students during a
school field day in May
in Dot Lake