



ASSOCIATION *of*
FISH & WILDLIFE
AGENCIES

HARVEST INFORMATION PROGRAM WORKING GROUP

Acting Chair: Josh Avey, AZ

Tuesday, March 10, 2020

5:00-6:00 p.m.

Hilton Omaha

1001 Cass Street

Omaha, NE

Attendants

Josh Avey, Arizona Game and Fish Department
Brad Bortner, Wildlife Management Institute
Marc LeFebre, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Scott Durham, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Ken Duren, Pennsylvania Game Commission
Brandon Reishus, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Cynthia Longmire, South Dakota Department of Game, Fish, and Parks
Kent VanHorn, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Rich Schultheis, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism
Chris Smith, Wildlife Management Institute
Jessica Tyler, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources
John Brunjes, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources
Karen Waldrop, Ducks Unlimited
Shaun Oldenburger, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Kevin Blakely, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Ken Richkus, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Kathy Fleming, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Mike Szymanski, North Dakota Game and Fish Department

Agenda

- 1. Welcome & Introductions – Josh Avey, Arizona Game and Fish Department**
- 2. HIP Pilot Project Update (Brad Bortner, WMI)**

Brad Bortner provided the Harvest Information Program (HIP) working group with an update on state participation in the HIP pilot project. States that are currently in the pilot are:

- Arizona
- North Carolina
- Louisiana

- Montana

The goal is for the pilot states to shift their current system to one that is directly populated by the purchaser.

WMI is currently talking with the following states to determine participation in the pilot program:

- California
- Texas
- Minnesota
- Kansas
- Nevada

The working group discussed communication and outreach strategies for HIP implementation among the states. Brad Bortner stated that WMI has money in the budget for outreach materials and is looking at new ways to target outreach to hunters and emphasize the importance of HIP. Kentucky is working to compile outreach materials that were utilized during their HIP implementation to distribute to the working group for distribution to the pilot states.

The timeline for implementation was discussed. There has been a one-year extension on the grant at no cost. The current deadline is June 30, 2021. If needed, the Committee can reach out to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for another extension on the deadline.

3. Harvest Surveys Modernization (Kathy Fleming, USFWS)

Kathy Fleming provided the group with a presentation on harvest surveys modernization.

*a copy of the presentation can be made available upon request

Topics that were covered include:

- Online surveys
- Review of harvest survey objectives
- Problems with HIP data quality
- HIP data problems
- Duplicates and permits
- Annual changes in sample frame
- Validation of past estimates and sample frame
- Communication within state agencies and between state agencies and the USFWS

One issue that was emphasized was the inclusion/exclusion of data because licenses are not specified by license year. The working group discussed conducting outreach to states who have resolved these issues to help guide the pilot states.

4. Consideration of recommendations provided in David Otis' report: "Evaluation of Stratification Efficiency and Sample Allocation in the Harvest Information Program Design" regarding the simplification of HIP survey questions

It was requested that Kathy Fleming provide guidance on the implementation of the stratification process and whether or not it would be implemented on a state by state

basis, or all at the same time. The group will wait until September to adopt any items for recommendation.

5. Review and approval of the 2020 Work Plan

The working group reviewed items to be included in the 2020 Work Plan. Goals for 2020 include:

- Continue to conduct outreach among the states
- Determine questions the states can collect data on and track issues that arise when building the biweekly report to send to the USFWS
- Survey of “pioneer states” to determine the pitfalls, challenges, and improvements both needed and recognized
- Work with the USFWS to determine if HIP survey questions can be simplified. It will take the Service approximately 1-2 years to implement changes to the questions. The WG will need to work with the service to determine the exact questions they would like to ask and then take steps towards getting a quote from vendors to see how much it would cost for them to implement those changes in their system. There was discussion that the WG could not prevent states from asking additional questions, but it raised concern in regards to diluting the HIP survey
- Work with the Service to have all data automatically pushed to the Service on a bi-weekly basis
- Consideration of recommendations provided in David Otis’ report

6. Moving Forward and Next Steps

7. Adjourn