



**STATE EXAMPLES**

**OF**

**HUNTING AND SHOOTING**  
**PROGRAMS**

**April 2004**

**Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
Division of Freshwater Fisheries and Wildlife**

Youth Dove Hunts

In 2000, we began an initiative to introduce youth to hunting through youth dove hunts. The hunts have been very popular with the public and have been successful in meeting our objectives. These hunts, piloted on two fields, have grown to approximately 35 fields throughout the state each year. Prior to this initiative, none of these fields were available for public hunting. To participate, a licensed adult 25 years old or older must bring a youth under age 16. They must hunt together as the main role of the adult is to serve as a mentor. Our focus is on the youth having fun and not the adult harvesting birds.

Funds for the program have been raised from donations, contributions, and grants. Landowners are reimbursed the cost of seed and fertilizer, although many donate those items. There is no lease payment for the field. We have exclusive use of the field through the first two weekends of dove season. Lunches or snacks are provided on each field. When the opportunity is available we provide skeet shooting for the youth prior to the hunts.

The tables below provide a summary of youth participants.

YEAR	TOTAL YOUTH	% FIRST TIME HUNTERS	AVG. AGE	% MALE	% FEMALE	% MINORITY	% WHITE
2001	915	43.2%	11.1	91%	9%	1%	99%

TABLE 1 2001 NORTH ZONE, OPENING DAY SUMMARY YOUTH DOVE HUNTS

A remarkable percentage of first time hunters for the first year of Alabama's Mentored Youth Dove hunts in the north zone.

YEAR	TOTAL YOUTH	% FIRST TIME HUNTERS	AVG. AGE	% MALE	% FEMALE	% MINORITY	% WHITE
2001	2176	33%	10.75	89%	11%	1%	99%
2002	1936	28.9%	10.9	87.1%	12.9%	1%	99%
2003	1778	27%	10.6	89%	11%	1%	99%

TABLE 2 YEARLY STATEWIDE SUMMARIES OF YOUTH DOVE HUNTS.

Summaries of demographic information and youth totals for each year of the youth dove hunts. 2001 being the first year the program was implemented.

These hunts have provided the following:

1. Involved youth in hunting through a mentored experience in a positive environment. On the opening hunt in 2001, the first year of the statewide initiative, 43% of the youth were first time hunters.

2. Provide repeated opportunities for youth to participate in hunting.
3. Opened additional land for public hunting.
4. Helped with retention of adult hunters, some of who had not dove hunted in years.
5. Presented our agency professional employees as role models.

The cards and comments received from the participants have been overwhelmingly positive. Some of these young hunters will become lifetime hunters. Some probably will not. However, even for those who do not become hunters themselves, they have experienced hunting in a positive light. They will be more likely to support hunting as adults.

### Shooting Ranges

We have constructed shooting ranges at eight sites across the state. Seven are on Wildlife Management Areas. One was developed in partnership with a local sheriff on property purchased specifically for a range. All are open during daylight hours. The ranges are not supervised full time. Shooters must have a hunting license to participate. The ranges offer 25, 50, and 100 yard shooting. Two offer 200 yard shooting. They have covered concrete firing lines with benches. Even though they are not staffed full time, vandalism has been minor. The ranges are popular with both hunters and sport shooters.

### Hunting Trail for People with Physical Disabilities

In 2000 Alabama developed a Hunting Trail for People with Physical Disabilities. It began with two locations and has expanded to 13 sites statewide. The sites vary in size but all have accessible shooting houses on wildlife openings and roads capable of handling two-wheel vehicles in all weather conditions. The areas are exclusively for people that have a permanent physical disability. Hunts are offered three days a week and are reserved in advance. These areas have been popular and serve a clientele that otherwise may not be able to enjoyably participate in hunting. We are not aware of any other such program to meet the needs of physically disabled hunters.

### Archery in Schools

Following the lead set by Kentucky, Alabama was the second state to implement the Archery in Schools program. The program introduces youth to Olympic style archery. Alabama's first statewide competition will be held next month. It is anticipated that some of the students will use this introduction to archery as a springboard to hunting and other shooting activities.

### Hunter Education

We have been an innovator in improving the delivery of the hunter education course. Our Hunter Education Coordinator was a leader in developing the CD Rom approach and we have also adapted the course for the Internet. We continue to look for innovative ways to deliver the course.

### Long Hunting Seasons – Liberal Bag Limits

Alabama is well known for offering long hunting seasons with liberal bag limits. Deer limits include two deer per day, one of which can be an antlered buck in most of the state for a 3-month plus season. Turkey hunters can harvest one gobbler per day and five for the 7-week season

total. Small game seasons are lengthy with generous bag limits as well. The rules and regulations are relatively simple compared with many other states and cost to purchase a resident license is inexpensive - \$15 per year. Also, with no minimum age requirement to begin hunting, adults can begin the mentoring phase of hunting with youth at an early age. This helps ensure more of a lifetime commitment to hunting.

#### Youth Shooting Sports

Through our hunter education program we have developed a quality youth shooting sports program. We work in partnership with the state 4-H program in this effort. We introduce youth to small-bore rifles and handguns and to shotguns.

#### Youth Hunts for Deer, Turkey, Waterfowl, Squirrel

In addition to the well-developed youth dove hunts, youth hunts are offered on our Wildlife Management Areas for deer and turkey. We also have one area that offers youth turkey hunting only. Youth waterfowl hunting is offered statewide. On select Wildlife Management Areas, youth squirrel hunts are offered in partnership with various local groups. Youth get to shoot skeet and hunt with squirrel dogs.

#### Conservation Expo

Last year our agency hosted a Conservation Expo at a State Park. The purpose was to make the public more aware of our agency and to introduce youth to shooting and fishing through hands on activities. Several thousand individuals took advantage of the opportunity. Shooting events included skeet, black powder, air guns, and archery. In a family atmosphere, and with encouraging coaches, youth had a positive shooting experience.

## **Alaska Department of Fish & Game**

Alaska Department of Fish & Game has revised its hunter education course to a shorter, more compact format which will be easier for youngsters and other new hunters to complete. The program design is flexible, so the course can be taken as a home study course or in a traditional classroom setting, with all students taking a test and completing a field practicum.

The Division of Wildlife Conservation inaugurated a Mobile Shooting Sports Program several years ago, based on a fully equipped 40 foot fifth wheel trailer that tours the roaded parts of the state. Hunter education classes and a variety of hunting and shooting skills clinics are presented by ADF&G staff in rural communities and special events using the gear and materials hauled in the trailer.

ADF&G operates an outdoor shooting range and associated classroom in Anchorage, an indoor shooting range in Fairbanks, and is presently completing an indoor range in Juneau. The priority use of these ranges is for hunter education-related activities, but high school teams, shooting leagues, and events such as concealed carry classes also use the facilities for significant amounts of time.

At ADF&G's recommendation, the Alaska Board of Game created a youth-only moose permit hunt at Delta Junction in 2001. In this hunt, young people and associated adults who draw permits are allowed to moose hunt on cultivated areas within the Delta Bison Range, special area being managed by the department to prevent bison from moving into nearby agricultural areas. No other moose hunting is allowed in the area designated for the youth-only moose hunt.

ADF&G staff have partnered with rural school districts to deliver a variety of outdoor skills training in recent years. As an example, in Yakutat all high school students have passed the state's hunter education program, and all students from grade 3 onward have been taught the NRA Eddie Eagle material. We have been asked to return to Yakutat this fall with the hunter education course for the new crop of 5-8 grade students, and the 4-H shotgun safety program as part of a waterfowl and steelhead course.

Many ADF&G staff participate in hunting/shooting related programs in their own communities, usually on their own time. These activities include 4-H, Boy Scout, and NRA shooting instruction, volunteer hunter education class instruction, presentations at schools and public events regarding the role of consumptive uses in managing wildlife, etc.

## **Arizona Game and Fish Department**

The following are examples for increased Hunter Participation:

1. Point of Purchase materials were developed to promote hunting different species and placed in stores that sold licenses.
2. Licenses are available 24 hours a day seven days per week online.
3. A supplemental course was added to the Hunter Education program to allow non-residents the privilege of obtaining a bonus point and not have to attend the entire AZ Hunter Education Program.
4. Workshops have been provided to assist new hunters on the draw process as well as on hunting techniques.
5. The regulations continue to be improved as far as readability and organization are concerned.

## Arkansas Game & Fish Commission

Below are some examples of actions that the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission has used to promote hunting or shooting:

- Mayflower Range Renovations
- Construction of Shooting Range at Scatter Creek
- Development of Skeet Trailers
- Alternative Delivery of Hunter Ed. - CD/Internet
- Archery in the Schools Program
- National Hunting & Fishing Day Open House at the Mayflower Range
- Recommending first buck of choice for under 16.
- Friendly format for hunting guides
- Internet licensing and checking
- Youth waterfowl and turkey hunts
- Conservation scholarships and paid interns (recruitment)
- Public hunting lands leasing
- BOW
- DMAP
- School archery program
- Website information access
- Statewide Youth Turkey and Waterfowl Hunts,
- Unmanned firing ranges, Land Acquisition,
- Co-op Wildlife Management Areas funded by AGF and National Forest Service,
- State owned Wildlife Management Areas,
- The now hunt able Elk Herd in Buffalo River basin,
- Mobility impaired permits for access to hunting areas,
- Hunter Education programs
- Placing computers in nature centers for public taking CD hunter education courses.

## Colorado Division of Wildlife

Colorado has done the following the help recruit hunters:

- Created youth big game hunting licenses. Set aside the first 15% of all doe deer and cow elk licenses for youth between the ages of 12-15. Approximately 22,000 youth participate annually.
- Reduced Youth big game license and small game license costs. \$10 and \$1 respectively (12-15 years of age).
- Created a youth mentoring program working in partnership with groups like Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, local Chamber of Commerce and 4-H.
- Hired a youth outreach coordinator who is charged with youth and new hunter recruitment and retention.
- Created the Huntmaster program patterned after the highly successful Hunter Education Instructor model.
- Improved delivery of youth shooting sports opportunities through the acquisition of fully equipped shooting trailers with the goal of having 18 statewide (one per administrative area).
- Created hunter education classes that cater to certain age groups....particularly young hunters
- Partnering with youth 4-H shooting sports programs and instructors to create a better statewide shooting sports program.

## Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

Examples of things that our agency has done to make it easier for people to participate in shooting and hunting activities.

- Support cooperative public shooting ranges on state property which are operated by private sportsman organizations. This includes three shooting ranges and one archery range.
- Provide a 'Home-Study' firearms hunting course as an alternative method of obtaining their hunter education certificate of completion. This arrangement is especially helpful for those who find it impossible or very inconvenient to attend one of the 100+ firearms hunting courses offered each year.
- Provide weekday daytime courses during the standard summer vacation period for people, especially youngsters, who find attending the course in the evening during the week difficult.
- Provide for 'Junior Hunting Training Days'. On specific days, young hunters between the ages of 12 to 16 years old may hunt exclusively. These young hunters must be accompanied by a licensed hunter 18 years or older. On specific designated days preset by the agency, the junior hunter may hunt spring turkey, pheasants, waterfowl and deer.
- The CT Wildlife Division had applied for and was granted by the National Shooting Sports Foundation, money to purchase pheasants to supply at no cost to cooperating sportsman clubs throughout the state which agree to sponsor a junior hunting experience at their private facilities. This grant has been extended to include the state regulated junior pheasant hunting day on October 9, 2004
- The Conservation Education/Firearms Safety Program supports introductory shooting programs and events at summer camps and jamborees which are sponsored by the Boy Scouts of America.

## **Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**

1. Since the year 2000, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has established 11 new Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) encompassing over 220,000 acres open for public hunting. Also since the year 2000, FWC has added over 240,000 acres of land to existing WMAs across the state, greatly expanding the acreage open for public hunting.
2. Since 1994, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has offered the Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) program introducing 3,000 women to hunting, shooting, and other outdoor sports since implementation.
3. In 1998, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission implemented a special-opportunity hunt program to promote hunting by providing high quality deer, turkey, hog, bobwhite and dove hunts for the public. This program has been a great success with interest and participation increasing every year.
4. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission recently implemented more convenient options for hunter safety certification. Hunters can now complete most of the classroom requirements for certification in the comfort of their homes via the internet or CD-ROM.
5. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is currently proposing an organizational restructure that would establish a Division of Hunting and Game Management focused on serving Florida's hunting community. Developing partnerships with hunting organizations to promote hunting and increase participation will be a major focus for this Division.

## **Georgia Department of Natural Resources**

Below are a few things we've done here in Georgia to promote hunting & shooting.

1. GADNR developed a proposal for the operation and maintenance of the Tom Lowe Olympic Shooting Complex in Atlanta that was submitted to the Fulton County Commission in an effort to keep this facility open and operational. The GADNR collaborated with several local and national shooting organizations in the development of this proposal including USA Shooting and local affiliates of the NRA.
2. GADNR recently initiated the National Archery in the Schools program and fully funded an initial pilot program for 19 schools including purchasing all supplies and teacher training for these schools. GADNR has provided Level II training to a total of 30 employees and is currently working to expand the program into additional schools.
3. GADNR has simplified wildlife management area (WMAs) hunting regulations as they pertain to children and the ability for adults to take children hunting on public lands. These regulation changes removed the minimum age requirement for children hunting big game on WMAs; removed the requirement for carrying a valid hunter education certificate provided they are under direct adult supervision; and increased the maximum age for a child to participate in an adult/child hunt from 16 to 17.
4. GADNR has simplified and modified hunting dates and regulation options on WMAs to provide more hunting opportunity. In one year this resulted in a 10% increase in hunting opportunity on Georgia's 99 WMAs.
5. GADNR recently pursued a law change that resulted in elimination of a fixed license year (April 1 – March 31) and now allows a hunter to hunt on a valid license for 12 months from the date of purchase.

## **Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources**

- we lease over 35,000 acres of private land to add to hunting opportunities
- we have ID'd over 60,000 acres of private land that is suitable for new leases for hunting
- we continue to seek out private and public funding for land leases for hunting (such as our NSSF proposals last year and this year)
- ditto for the development of new shooting ranges
- we continue to maintain and seek to improve access to hunting areas, by using money from state & federal trails program, freeing up PR money for even more directly relevant functions
- we meet with all interested hunting organizations once or twice a year to address their concerns and to garner hunter ideas for what we can do to facilitate hunting

## Illinois Department of Natural Resources

### Promotion of Hunting and Shooting

- Introduction to Wingshooting Clinics promotes the safe use of firearms and concepts of hunting to youth and women.
- “Hunter” Wingshooting clinics that promote the safe use of firearms and concepts of hunting to a predominantly adult market.
- Disabled Outdoors Opportunities program that removes barriers and creates and introduces outdoor recreation program that include hunting and shooting to people with disabilities.
- National Archery in the Schools Program -- introduction of archery shooting to youth in the formal school system.
- The Scholastic Clay Target Program promotes youth involvement in the shooting sports that has carryover to hunting.
- Becoming an Outdoors Woman program promotes the safe use of firearms and provides shooting opportunities for participants.
- Statewide firearm deer hunting season.
- Statewide firearm turkey hunting season.
- Special youth waterfowl hunting programs above and beyond the federal youth waterfowl days.
- Youth pheasant hunting day.
- Youth dove hunting day.

## Iowa Department of Natural Resources

List of actions taken in Iowa over the past year:

In '04 we marketed fishing to lapsed anglers in Polk County through use of post card mailings, newspaper supplements, and fliers in Wal-Mart, Kmart, etc. Fishing opportunities in central Iowa were provided along with how to and license information. This effort was evaluated through a survey instrument to compare with the control area (Linn Co.). We are building on this effort and partnering with Parks at four state park areas this summer to advance participation in park and lake use.

FISH IOWA! program in half of the school districts in the state teaching fishing skills, ethics, and land stewardship to 500,000 middle school and high school students each year.

Beginning construction on \$8 million, 350-acre Lost Grove Lake project within 25 miles of over 250,000 people. 1,700 acres have been and will continue to be hunted heavily for upland game and after completion waterfowl also...not to mention the angling opportunities.

Have for the past 15 years provided for and market 3 Free Fishing Days in conjunction with National Fishing and Boating Week in early June.

In 2003, Iowa DNR acquired nearly 500 acres of land for public hunting and access as well as for wildlife production. We now manage 450 areas totaling 325,000 acres.

Conducted 383 hunter education courses for 12,000 young hunters, held shooting improvement clinics for 75 waterfowl hunters and placed maps of all public areas on the web for hunters' information.

Communicate with sportsmen on rules and regulations to establish hunting and trapping seasons to properly manage the wildlife resource and expand hunting and trapping opportunity.

Monitored 3,984 deer for Chronic Wasting Disease and Tuberculosis.

Conducted a HUSH program to process hunters' excess deer for use by needy Iowans. The HUSH program collected 77,018 pounds of venison from 1,602 deer.

Worked with 3,120 private landowners to create or enhance 67,054 acres of habitat for wildlife production and hunting opportunity.

Investing several hundred thousand dollars in upgrading and improving a public shooting range in the Des Moines area.

## **Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife**

Here are 5 examples of ways that we have promoted Hunting and Shooting -- making it easier for people to participate:

1. We set up an Expanded hunting season for archers - allowing them to buy (for \$10) as many permits to take antlerless (doe) deer as they wish with certain areas in a season framework that goes from early September to mid-December.
2. We created a youth deer hunting day (Saturday) before the regular season opens to promote youth hunters getting out with an adult -- they can take either a buck or a doe.
3. We created a youth turkey hunting day the Saturday before season opening, similar to the youth deer day.
4. We created a committee to review requests from, and grant permits to, disabled hunters to make it easier for them to use a weapon appropriate to their disability on a case-by-case basis instead of a one-size fits all basis.
5. We are working with coastal towns and coastal islands with high deer populations and restrictions on hunting or firearms to promote safe hunting as a management tool -- we have been able to open 3 coastal islands and 2 coastal towns to hunting where there was no opportunity previously.

## Maryland Department of Natural Resources

- Expanded deer, turkey and small game seasons in last five years....more deer and turkey hunting opportunities in Maryland than ever---by far. 4 1/2 months of bow hunting, nearly 2 months of muzzleloader and 1 month of modern firearm
- Approximately 1/4 of a million acres of public land open and managed for hunting...compared to 35,000 acres less than 30 years ago.
- Individualized activities for youngsters and women; including: BOW programs---nearly 20 events annually including women-only hunts; Youth Deer, turkey and waterfowl hunting days; Jr. Hunter Outdoor Events; Jr. Trapper Programs; and more.
- Expansion of accessible hunting programs---including wheelchair accessible waterfowl hunting blinds and recent partnership with PVA to obtain access to wheelchair accessible "treestand".
- Finally, recently committed to expanding waterfowl, small game and big game hunting opportunities on all DNR owned or managed lands. This expansion, beyond the existing opportunities on traditional WMA's, will provide easier and greater access to hunters in the metro D.C. and Baltimore areas. Nearly 30% of our licensed hunters in Maryland reside in this region.

## **Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife**

Here are some pro-hunting/shooting things that Massachusetts has done over the past several years.

1. Established a \$50,000 annual shooting range grant program for our rod & gun clubs that will agree to provide hunter education and public shooting opportunities
2. Published editorial in our magazine titled “In Support of our Hunting Traditions.” The printing included a picture of the Director in hunting clothing and a shotgun prominently displayed. Received very favorable comments from sporting community for the proactive message—both written and photographic.
3. Maintain substantial gamebird stocking program even though under political attack by anti-hunters. Over 50,000 pheasants and quail stocked annually.
4. Sponsor annual Massachusetts Outdoor Exposition using various funds including grant from the Weatherby Foundation.
5. Established a co-ed Jr. Sportsmen Conservation Camp for teenagers that focus on hunting, fishing and shooting. The camp is run in partnership with the Gun Owners Action League.
6. Secured a youth hunting grant from the NSSF
7. Advocated for legislation that required all lands purchased by the state natural resource agencies must be open to hunting. This effort was successful in that the passage of the most recent open space bond bill specified that purchased lands had to be open to passive recreation including fishing, trapping and hunting.

## Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Following are examples of projects and programs implemented by the Michigan DNR to enhance and expand shooting opportunities in the last few years:

1. Constructed a new "state of the art" shooting range which hosts over 30,000 shooters annually in our largest metropolitan area.  
Construction Cost = \$2.5 million.  
Features: Rifle, pistol, trap, skeet, and sporting clays.  
Instruction available as well as used to teach hunter safety course.

(Department owns and our Law Enforcement Division manages a total of 10 shooting ranges. 5 of these ranges host 100,000+ shooters annually.)

2. Constructed a "Pocket Park" at the State Fair in Detroit. Includes wide range of outdoor activities and lessons, including: Pellet gun range shooting and instruction, archery range shooting and instruction. Both are heavily used by women and girls who have an interest and no other opportunity. More than 25,000 participants annually, many of whom have never held a firearm.
3. Constructed another "Pocket Park" at the Upper Peninsula State Fair which includes same features as #2. above. More than 15,000 participants annually.
4. Firearms Training System (FATS) opportunities for instruction taught by DNR Conservation Officers. This system used at both state fairs and outdoor shows statewide.
5. DNR has an active outreach program for women (BOW) including a full-time DNR program administrator and budget. Our staff volunteers time to actively assist in the outdoor experiences with special emphasis on firearm and archery instruction. In addition, we will pilot "Archery in the Schools", patterned after the Kentucky program later this year.

As an aside, The NRA publishes a magazine called "Women's Outlook". In the current issue (March 2004) there is an article by Gina Schmidt about our in-house legal counsel, Carol Bambery. Carol has been a member of the NRA Board of Directors for 6 years and actively participated in committees and as co-counsel prior to that. Carol has been encouraged as a part of her job responsibilities to represent Michigan shooters on the NRA Board.

In a section entitled Expanding Reach, she points out in the article how the Michigan DNR had worked for over 20 years to get the appropriation authority to build the new Island Lake Shooting Range and has some nice things to say about our commitment to shooting and the shooting sports.

## Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

### Nebraska Hunter Recruitment and Retention

This memo is in response to your request to provide information as to some of the actions our state has taken to promote hunting and shooting as well as increased availability and opportunity for people to participate in these activities. In the last five years, Nebraska has shown nation-wide leadership in the development and implementation of programs designed to accomplish these goals. Below are a few examples of such developments:

1. Enhancement of State-wide mentoring programs
  - Since 2000, our state-wide youth mentoring efforts have increased with the enhancement and addition of several programs designed to increase youth participation in the shooting sports. These include the largest youth mentoring pheasant hunting program in the country through a partnership with NE Pheasants Forever, The addition of five youth mentoring deer hunting programs, a new state-wide youth mentored turkey hunting program with a partnership with NWTF, a youth mentored small game program and plans are in the works for a state-wide youth mentored waterfowl hunting program with Ducks Unlimited.
2. Increased participation of state high school shooting sports
  - Since 2000, participation at the Nebraska State High School Trap Shoot has doubled setting an example for the entire nation from only 500 youth participants in 1999 to well over 1,000 in 2004. During this same time, Nebraska has provided for the enhancement of the State High School Silhouette Championship where many youth from across the state participate
3. Nebraska has endorsed and laid the groundwork for a high school state-wide muzzle loader championship in 2005
4. Hunter Outreach Programs Enhancement
  - Since 2001, Nebraska has started several outreach programs designed to introduce youth and women into the shooting sports. These include STEP OUTSIDE offerings through grants from the NSSF, partnerships with the NWTF to provide for several Women in the Outdoors workshops each year as well as enhancement of our Becoming an Outdoors-Woman offering each fall. A Becoming and Outdoors-Family workshop is scheduled for offering in 2005 and will be designed to invite families to a weekend workshop to learn various outdoor and shooting type skills.
  - In 2004, Nebraska completed development of an Outdoor Skills Workshop Guide designed to assist gun clubs and sports clubs across the nation with the development and implementation of successful outreach programs.
  - In 1998, Nebraska developed two new Youth Outdoor Skills Camps designed to introduce youth, ages 11 - 14, to the shooting and outdoor sports where youth

participate in rifle, shotgun, muzzle loader, archery and other outdoor related workshops.

5. Enhance Hunter Education Delivery System

- In 2001, Nebraska assisted in the development and offered an Independent Study Firearm Hunter Education Program designed to offer an alternative delivery method for hunting participants using the Internet and volunteer instructors.
- Nebraska is one of three sponsors of a nation-wide Independent Study Bow Hunter Education Program and has scheduled release of this new offering in 2005- 06.
- Nebraska has assisted the NBEF in rewriting of the Bow Hunter Education Student Manual in order to enhance learning for students with a more user friendly format.
- The time commitment for students to obtain Hunter Education certification has not increased in the last 30 years, since the program's inception.
- Since 2001, the quality of education afforded to Nebraska Hunter Education students has increased through quality instructor training enhancements and student manual revisions.

6. Increased opportunity for enhanced participation in the shooting sports.

- Since 2000, Nebraska has established four new archery ranges and is currently developing a state-wide shooting range grant assistance program designed to help ranges with enhancements and developments to meet current and future needs.

## **Nevada Department of Wildlife**

### Youth Recruitment Efforts, 2002-2003

Over the past few years, Nevada has increased its efforts to recruit young hunters and experienced hunters.

Nevada established a Youth Waterfowl Hunt in 1996. Youth Waterfowl Day is observed at Stillwater NWR and Ruby Lake NWR with hunting and training activities and clinics.

Nevada established a Youth Mule Deer Hunt in 1998, offering 5,000 tags in various parts of the state for young hunters 12-15. Demand for the tags has risen over the last few years to the point that all the tags are issued. But, if they are willing to take a variety of choices, applicants still have as close to a guaranteed deer tag as possible.

Nevada Department of Wildlife organized a Family Hunt Program in 2002-2003 focused on Upland Game that offered youth in hunter education classes the opportunity to participate in a limited entry, quality dove hunt, with a parent. As part of the program, youth and their parents participated in a hunt seminar, range time to practice shooting skills, and finally, a wonderfully successful day of dove hunting. About 30 youth and their parents participated in the program each year and have called it a rousing success! Wildlife Restoration Fund, Section 10 money was used to develop habitat and expand this hunt.

As funded by the National Shooting Sports Foundation, Nevada Department of Wildlife conducted a survey of fathers of hunting families (hunters, age 25-55) to determine motivations for hunting, what kept them from taking their families hunting and what strategies the NDOW could employ to get them hunting with their families more. We have applied for another NSSF grant in the coming year to implement some of the strategies. As part of this grant, Family Hunts were conducted on private game farms in Fallon and Mesquite, and the Nevada Wildlife Almanac was mailed directly to hunters.

Through Section 10 money, NDOW purchased three Laser Shot systems to recruit youth hunters at state fairs, outdoor Expos and recreation shows. An estimated 1500 youth were introduced to shooting and hunting through the Laser Shot system, with a curriculum focused on safe shooting and ethics. The Laser Shot systems were used as a key component in the research conducted for the NSSF grant.

In the coming year, Section 10 money will be used to construct a trap and skeet range in Fallon and the plan is to use the remaining portion to develop Quality Hunt Units (QHU) on two of our Wildlife Management Areas. Opening day, Family Hunts will be conducted in the QHUs and the units will be available for hunters on a limited-entry, reserved basis for the rest of the hunting season.

## **New Hampshire Fish and Game Department**

Implementation of home study where the student can choose from a CD, printed workbook or Internet-style format -- requires only 1 day of active on-site participation.

Addition of more weekend classes to replace the multiple evening classes, thereby compressing the required time commitment.

Working with high schools to get the Hunter Ed course into the list of intersession options alongside trips to Boston and Williamsburg; Habitat for Humanity; golf course design, construction and play.

Online licensing, once the individual is in our database (with proof of previous license or hunter ed certification) makes it easy to meet the licensing requirement.

E-mail newsletters and improved info on website provide answers to information needs that can be barriers and is available 24/7.

## **New Mexico Department of Game and Fish**

Following are some examples re: actions to promote hunting, shooting, and ability to participate.

- Incorporation of rifle, muzzleloader, shotgun and archery shooting in our Wildlife Expo done in May. This event (in Albuquerque) has broad exposure to shooting in hunting and non-hunting themes.
- Extensive outreach to include new youngsters in Hunter Education training offered nearly year-round through NM Dept. of Game and Fish.
- Inclusion of youth hunting options in public hunt licensing for elk, deer, pronghorn, javelina, pheasant, and Oryx.
- Outreach interaction with various organizations that promote shooting (firearm and archery) to engage young persons.
- Inclusion of articles and activity references about shooting and hunting in our *New Mexico Wildlifer* that is distributed quarterly through newspaper insertion to about 350,000 readers.

## **New York Department of Environmental Conservation**

1. Implemented automated licensing system including "instant draw" for antlerless deer management permits making hunting license and permit purchase far more convenient;
2. Implemented "home study" option for hunter safety courses and provided home study material via internet at:  
<http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/sportsed/webcourse.html> and made hunter ed class information available online.
3. Youth waterfowl hunts; new youth turkey hunt beginning this Spring and proposed youth deer hunt beginning Fall 2004;
4. Established deer management assistance program to encourage private landowners to allow public access for hunting during regular seasons as a way to control deer damage to agriculture, forestry or to otherwise achieve land/deer management objectives:  
<http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/wildlife/deer/dmap.htm>
5. Since 1995, acquired more than 400,000 acres of land or easements that are now open to public hunting.

## **North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission**

List of ongoing and potential programs in NC:

1. continue a very active land acquisition program, adding significant acreage to our Game Lands program, thereby providing lands upon which the public can hunt.
2. work with other agencies and private corporations to open new lands to the public for hunting.
3. expand our youth hunting program.
4. continue active wildlife management programs to manage wildlife populations, especially big game, to allow maximum hunting opportunities in balance with sustainable populations.
5. expand our Hunter Education Program, including many opportunities for shooting by youth.
6. initiate plans to establish shooting ranges on public lands.
7. expand and improve education of staff, constituencies, and the general public regarding the role hunters play in sound wildlife conservation and the positive impacts of hunters and hunting on local, state, and national economies.

## **North Dakota Game and Fish Department**

- Teach shooting sports (bow, rifle, black powder, shotgun) at BOW events.
- Promote shooting at summer camps we support.
- Extol hunting in most of our youth and adult outreach presentations.

**Ohio Division of Wildlife**

In Ohio we are doing many things to promote hunting and shooting to make it easier for people to participate.

We also have a very good relationship with the Friends of the NRA in Ohio. We have worked together on many projects.

A letter was sent recently to more than 800 conservation and hunting leaders in Ohio with the good news about hunting (attached).

Here are five examples of what we have done to promote hunting and shooting:

1. Established first youth deer gun season in 2003
2. Expanded the Ohio youth turkey season in 2004
3. Built and expanded new gun and archery ranges over last 5 years
4. Made hunter education classes easier to attend and complete through home study and Internet
5. Reduced the price of youth licenses and permits for youth residents and non-residents

\*\*\*\*\*

March 22, 2004

Dear Conservation Leader:

We have all heard the concern around the United States on the future of hunting. We as wildlife conservationists and hunters are concerned about the future. However, there have been many good things that have happened recently in Ohio. Here is some of the good news on hunting:

- 25,000 Hunter Education students were trained last year - the most since 1983
- Ohio's first ever youth deer gun season was held with 5,323 deer taken by young hunters
- Sales of Ohio's top 3 hunting license types all saw increases last year
  - Youth - up 16%
  - Non-resident - up 16%
  - Resident - up 2%
- Record season for the number of deer taken by archery hunters - exceeding 50,000 for the first time
- Record muzzleloader deer season with over 24,000 deer taken
- Ohio established September 1 as the state's annual "kick-off" to hunting season

Thank you for all you have done as conservationists to help with these advances. And please, help pass on the good news on hunting.

Sincerely,  
STEVEN A. GRAY  
Chief

## **Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation**

In Oklahoma we have a number of programs designed to promote hunting-shooting sports in addition to our normal hook and bullet, run of the mill operations.

Our Shotgun Training Education Program (STEP) goes all through the state with clay throwers to expose first time shooters to the shooting sports as well as provide training to persons who want to improve their skills. All equipment including firearms, shells and targets are provided at no cost to participants. Last Year over 10,000 persons shot at one of the many seminars.

Another outreach program we utilize is youth hunts and handicap hunts. Hunts are provided for qualifying youth (14-16 years) for hunting deer, turkey and waterfowl. The Dept. employees include some education and training opportunities to the participants as well as sometimes acting as "guide", camp cook and mentor.

Another program that we are now embarking upon is an Oklahoma Wildlife Expo which will be a two-day outdoor event in September 2005. All aspects of outdoor sports including hunting and fishing skills, shooting skills, boating, ORVing, camping, etc. will be demonstrated and attendees will get HANDS-ON exposure.

The Dept. also provides opportunities to youth to learn outdoor skills through a Summer Wildlife Youth Camp, the cooperative Q.U./Dept. Covey Kids Camp, and is heavily involved with Youth Outdoor Challenge. Other smaller "Youth Day" events are held in many counties throughout the state each year. One other item that was implemented last year was a special youth only deer gun season that occurs prior to other firearms seasons.

## **Pennsylvania Game Commission**

The Pennsylvania Game Commission is proud to offer the following information regarding hunter recruitment and retention initiatives.

1. Junior license sales per year have remained stable or increased slightly since 1995.
2. Youth hunting opportunities have been initiated for squirrel, waterfowl, pheasant, deer and spring gobbler.
3. Pheasants are provided by the Game Commission to sportsmen's clubs sponsoring mentored youth pheasant hunts.
4. Developed elk and bobcat hunting seasons and expanded deer, bear, turkey and small game hunting opportunities.
5. Offered an independent distance learning option for the knowledge based portion of hunter education training.
6. Expanded the agency's involvement in the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program by hiring a full-time outreach coordinator.
7. Provided the opportunity for hunters to purchase their hunting licenses on-line.
8. Developed maps and brochures promoting hunting opportunities in all regions of the state.
9. The agency received a grant from the NSSF to develop county maps listing all state, federal and private lands open to public hunting. In addition the grant provides an opportunity to survey hunters regarding their thoughts on the agency's public access programs.
10. In addition the agency is considering expanding Sunday hunting opportunities and legislation has been introduced that would eliminate the need to display a hunting license.

## **South Carolina Department of Natural Resources**

In 1999 we created the "Take One Make One" Program to educate youth and young adults about hunting, ethics, fishing, wildlife, forestry, conservation and safety. Youth participate through a year-long mentoring program. With private landowners and hunters, we are providing opportunities for youth to actually participate in hunting.

We recently were successful in working with the SC General Assembly to establish statewide free youth hunt days for turkey, raccoon, squirrel, rabbit and deer.

We are constructing a major multi-purpose range facility on a state-owned WMA to provide shooting sports participation in an area of South Carolina where no public opportunity/facility exists. The range will be completed by June.

We recently have allowed the use of crossbows for deer hunting during our 100+ day deer gun hunt season.

We established youth hunts for raccoon, dove, deer, waterfowl and turkey. These hunts are administered by our staff on Wildlife Management Areas. During the 2003-04 season, we provided 74 separate hunts with 880 youth participants.

In addition to the youth hunt program, we are also holding special hunts for women only and mobility impaired hunters.

## South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks

1. First and foremost in our effort to encourage, enhance and preserve hunting for our citizens is our understanding that interest in hunting and the number of participants are directly related to the health and abundance of our wildlife populations. Based on that understanding, we give highest priority to efforts that protect or enhance the necessary habitats and conditions for our wildlife populations. Although perhaps not the stuff that popular stories are made of, our staff works tirelessly on many fronts. For instance, we work to make sure there are strong conservation provisions in the federal farm bill (like CRP and wetland protections that make SD a great pheasant and waterfowl state; we just had a year of record numbers of pheasant hunters). We review development projects and advocate for minimal impacts to wildlife habitat. We conduct research studies related to habitat protection and enhancement, as well as optimum wildlife management strategies. We have established programs to cost-share habitat developments on private lands. We acquire land in fee title and manage them for wildlife production. We expand the range of various species of wildlife to provide additional hunting opportunity through habitat manipulation and translocation e.g. big horn sheep, eastern turkey, elk. We monitor health risks to our wildlife and take early measures to properly manage disease outbreaks e.g. CWD, waterfowl botulism. Many other examples too numerous to mention.
2. We have a model public access program. In addition to over 170,000 acres of fee title Game Production Areas for public hunting, we lease approximately 900,000 acres of private land on an annual basis to provide free public hunting access.
3. We have utilized available technology to provide hunters with easy license application and purchase procedures, information they previously did not have access to, and greater opportunities to become involved in the management and regulation process.
4. We have established a license fee structure that provides incentives or encouragement for certain groups of hunters. e.g. a 1-day small game license to get the lapsed or marginally interested pheasant hunter to "give it a try for 1 day; a price break for a combination package for "junior hunters" i.e. those who are above the age of 15, but not yet adult age of 19; very low cost for "youth" hunters; etc.
5. We have established special seasons for young hunters e.g. youth deer, youth waterfowl, and youth pheasant.
6. We have maintained a strong shooting range development and improvement program using PR funds to cost-share projects with local clubs and ranges.
7. We have had a strong Human Dimensions program in our Wildlife Division to better understand our stakeholders so that we can better manage our resources for their benefit.

## **Texas Parks and Wildlife Department**

Below is a list of items that TPWD has initiated to create more opportunity for hunters. We have made hunting more affordable and reduced the regulatory hassle, while developing more hunting options for youth and adults. As you will see from our license year attachment below, Texas is very steady in its number of hunters. We had a 20% increase in license cost for the current year, and as you will note from year-to-date sales, we have not experienced a decline in participation.

As you can see, TPWD has been very proactive in hunter recruitment and retention efforts, and it seems to be paying off.

### Hunting Accomplishments -- Wildlife Division

Since the last license fee increase in 1996, the Wildlife Division has:

- Increased the number of acres of private lands leased for public dove hunting by more than 200% (20,000 in 1996 to 61,000 in 2002).
- Increased the number of public hunting opportunity days statewide by 57% (222,000 in 1996 to 348,000 in 2002).
- Added an additional 27,975 acres of land to our Wildlife Management Areas (748,124 in 1996 to 776,099 in 2003).
- Greatly expanded the number and type of high-quality guided hunts offered in the Big Time Texas Hunt drawings to include the Texas Grand Slam, Texas Exotic Safari, Texas Whitetail Bonanza, Texas Waterfowl Adventure, Texas Big Time Bird Hunt, Texas Premium Buck Hunt, and the Texas Gator Hunt. Revenue generated by this program has increased from \$68,000 in 1996 to more than \$750,000 in 2002. These funds are used to cover the program administrative costs and provide additional public hunting, wildlife conservation, and wildlife research.
- Added an additional deer to the bag in 49 counties.
- Added a late muzzleloader-only deer season in 20 counties.
- Established the Managed Lands Deer Program enabling landowners who conduct significant habitat improvement and deer management to offer hunters increased harvest opportunity. This program now encompasses over 5.8 million acres.
- Stocked 2,644 eastern wild turkeys on 145 sites since 1996 and completed the restoration of wild turkeys in East Texas.
- Increased the number of counties open to spring gobbler hunting in East Texas from 1 in 1996 to 41 in 2003.
- Established statewide youth-only weekend hunting seasons for deer, wild turkey, waterfowl, and squirrels.
- Initiated the "Future of Hunting in Texas" effort through the Hunting Advisory Board, Texas Wildlife Association, and Texas A&M University to identify and reduce the barriers to hunter recruitment and retention.
- Hosted the 7th Governor's Symposium on North America's Hunting Heritage, a national gathering of hunters and their representatives in San Antonio in December 2003, to develop solutions to problems facing hunters.

## **Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency**

Following are examples of projects and activities which have either promoted hunting and shooting or made it easier for sportsmen to participate in Tennessee:

1. We opened two new firing range facilities in the major metropolitan areas of Memphis and Nashville. One is an indoor facility which also provides classroom space for hunter ed classes.
2. We conduct an annual Becoming an Outdoors Woman workshop to introduce women to hunting, fishing and boating related activities. Rifle, shotgun, muzzleloader, handgun and archery classes are standard at these workshops. We have averaged an attendance of 100 women per year for the past eight years.
3. We have an aggressive youth outreach program which provides an opportunity for young people to be mentored in hunting activities including dove, deer, turkey, quail and waterfowl. Several thousand youth across Tennessee have participated in this program.
4. We are in the fourth year of an Agency sponsored television show, seen weekly by millions of viewers on public television and Comcast Sports Southeast. Hunting and shooting segments, which create excitement about opportunities in Tennessee, are prevalent in the series.
5. We have completed the acquisition of some major tracts of property (120,000-acre Royal Blue, 9,500-acre Centennial Wilderness, 12,000-acre Anderson-Tully) which will ensure access for hunters for years to come.

- Increased the acreage in TPWD-approved Wildlife Management Plans on private lands by 100% (from 7.5 million acres in 1996 to 15.5 million acres in 2002).
- Established the Texas Quail Council, created a statewide Quail Program Leader position, became a leader in the National Quail Management Plan, and created a statewide initiative to improve quail habitat on private lands.
- Hosted "Quail V" - the Fifth National Quail Symposium in Corpus Christi in 2002.
- Currently developing a National Strategic Dove Management Plan in cooperation with all states and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to address mourning dove population declines.
- Cooperating on the Ducks Unlimited MARSH Program, the Texas CARE Program, the Texas Prairie Wetland Program, and the East Texas Wetland Program. These programs are restoring thousands of acres of wetland habitat.
- Are participants in the Gulf Coast, West Coastal Plains Initiative of the Lower Mississippi Valley, and the Playa Lakes Joint Ventures for waterfowl and "all bird" management.

Summary of Youth Hunting Efforts of the Texas Parks And Wildlife Department  
April 16, 2003

This information is presented in response to Commissioner Ramos's request at the April 3, 2003 Commission Meeting that the Commission be provided with a summary of the Department's efforts with respect to youth hunting.

The Department makes the following statewide provisions for hunting by youth:

- Youth, regardless of age, are permitted to participate in all general season hunts.
- Statewide youth-only hunting seasons for participation by youth under 17 years of age have been established for white-tailed deer, turkey, and squirrel, and by youth under 16 years of age for waterfowl.
- A reduced cost (\$6.00) Special Resident Hunting License is available to youth (resident or non-resident) under 17 years of age.
- A mandatory Hunter Education Certification program has been established for persons born after September 2, 1971. The program now certifies approximately 25,000 youth (ages 12-17) each year (**Figure 1**).

The Department's Public Hunting Program offers the following special provisions for hunting by youth under 17 years of age:

- Application fees in public hunt drawings and public hunt permit fees are waived for youth.
- Youth-only hunts for deer and youth/adult hunts for dove, quail, waterfowl, and squirrel are offered by annual or daily permit on public hunting lands. There is no requirement for prior selection in a drawing and no minimum age for youth.
- Some of the public dove hunting units have been designated as a youth/adult area during either the first part of the season or for the entire season. This requires each hunting party to contain at least one youth to be eligible to hunt on the unit.

- During each of the past five years, youth hunts by annual permit were conducted on approximately 68 units of public hunting lands (**Figure 2**) containing approximately 775,000 acres (**Figure 3**).
- Youth are not required to possess their own annual permit. They may hunt with an adult who possesses an annual permit.
- Youth participating in all types of TPWD public hunts are required to be under the direct supervision of an authorized supervising adult.
- Youth who are 8 years of age or older at the time of application are permitted to participate in drawn public hunts.
- From 1999-2000 through 2002-2003, approximately 12 percent of the applicants in the general categories of drawn public hunts were youth (**Figure 4**).
- Currently, five categories of drawn youth-only hunts are conducted on public hunting lands (Alligator; Gun Deer-Either Sex; Gun Deer-Antlerless/Spike; Javelina; Spring Turkey).
- From 1995-1996 to 2002-2003, the number of public hunting areas on which drawn youth-only hunts have been conducted has doubled from 12 to 24 (**Figure 5**), the number of youth applicants for those hunts has increased by more than 50 % from 4,000 to more than 6,000 (**Figure 6**), and the number of youth provided a drawn youth-only hunt has more than doubled from 328 to 701 (**Figure 7**).
- Participants in youth hunts supervised by TPWD staff are given an orientation at the start of the hunt to emphasize safety, conservation, and hunter ethics.
- TPWD youth hunts are scheduled at times when kids are out of school (weekends and holidays).

In addition, the Department is directly involved in or plays a support role in many other youth hunting programs and activities. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The Texas Youth Hunting Program is a cooperative effort of TPWD and the Texas Wildlife Association. This program has grown to the point that it now annually conducts more than 100 youth hunts on private ranches (**Figure 8**) providing more than 1,000 youth with closely supervised hunting opportunities (**Figure 9**).
- Game wardens assisted in conducting approximately 40 separate deer hunts for youth last season on numerous private ranches, including the Pitchfork, Spade, and Parrie Haynes.
- The Texas Game Warden Association annually sponsors youth hunts on many private ranches around the state.
- Numerous departmental employees assist the Operation Orphans program in conducting hunts for several hundred disadvantaged youth on private ranches in Central Texas.
- The Texas Wildlife Management Council, a professional organization of Wildlife Division employees, provided more than 20 youth with a mentored hunting experience on a private ranch in South Texas last season.

- Departmental staff annually assist in conducting hunts for 25-30 wheelchair-confined handicapped youth on the Royce Faulkner Ranch in Kerr County.
- The Department's Hunting Advisory Board, in conjunction with the Texas Wildlife Association and Texas A&M University, conducted the Future of Hunting in Texas workshops and surveys to identify and reduce barriers to hunter recruitment and retention.
- Project WILD activities inform youth of the important role that hunting plays in conservation.

Attachments - Figures 1-9

LICENSE SALES BY ACTUAL LICENSE YEAR (See "License Year Note" on Page 6), 1983-84 THROUGH 2003-04 Year to Date as of 3/23/04

Type of License or Stamp	Rev Code	Rev											originals only	originals only	originals only
		1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Resident Combo Hunting & Fishing	100	656,527	527,669	528,003	510,499	512,820	500,553	325,616	285,196	251,941	228,696	201,119	189,205	177568	155,893
Resident Hunting Special Resident Hunting #	101	260,281	329,252	341,626	346,081	330,536	325,196	283,048	289,771	279,360	270,267	271,114	257,805	264103	271,246
Hunting Duplicate	102	152784	157759	163495	164842	165661	168188	172278	183009	187090	191452	175043	170552	171044	170223
Hunting Boat Super Combo	103	960	1297	1266	1415	1379	1510	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Package Resident Senior Combo Hunting & Fishing	111	69	47	36	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Resident Alligator Hunter's	111	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	157175	211927	252371	280595	333321	345543	355385	352557
	117	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10874	16021	19244	23466
	142	871	811	769	685	709	725	558	661	761	762	828	807	878	796
<b>RESIDENT HUNTING TOTALS:</b>		1,071,492	1,016,835	1,035,195	1,023,522	1,011,105	996,172	938,675	970,564	971,523	971,772	992,299	979,933	988,222	974,181

  

Type of License or Stamp	Rev Code	Rev											originals only	originals only	originals only
		1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
General Non-Resident Hunting	105	14779	14565	15447	17051	18145	18094	17307	18178	18583	20715	21683	21227	22270	22703
Non-Resident Special Hunting #	107	1595	1769	2248	2561	2152	1730	1612	2053	2081	2219	2254	2153	2213	2253
Non-Resident Spring Turkey Hunting	118	n/a	998	1438	2036	2625	2652	2528	2932	3212	3730	3587	3994	4559	717
Non-Resident Banded Bird Hunting	120	236	319	333	406	416	461	541	663	639	761	859	815	706	701
Non-Resident Alligator Hunter's	143	10	10	12	13	12	9	12	12	16	12	15	11	18	21
Non-Resident Five-Day Special Hunting	157	17405	19992	25629	28629	26117	25554	25228	30537	30777	32759	32741	31998	35469	34558
<b>NON-RESIDENT HUNTING TOTALS:</b>		34,025	37,653	45,107	50,696	49,467	48,500	47,228	54,375	55,308	60,196	61,139	60,198	65,235	60,953

  

<b>RESIDENT AND NON-RESIDENT HUNTING TOTALS:</b>		1,105,517	1,054,488	1,080,302	1,074,218	1,060,572	1,044,672	985,903	1,024,939	1,026,831	1,031,968	1,053,438	1,040,131	1,053,457	1,035,134
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- LICENSE YEAR NOTE: The license and stamp sales shown above are actual sales by license year, regardless of when the sales were PROCESSED.
- Numbers include duplicates and replacements.
- License Year 96 - POS Pilot
- Prior to automation duplicates/replacements had their own revenue code. Once automated duplicates/replacements are shown under the same revenue code.
- Lifetime license sales are *not* included.
- License Year 02 through 04 - duplicates/replacements are not included.

## **Utah Division of Wildlife Resources**

The Utah Wildlife Board made significant changes in the 2004 Big Game hunting proclamation to simplify hunting regulations.

- 1) Three categories of elk hunting permits were eliminated and replaced with a simplified statewide elk hunting structure. The hunt structure is now consistent for all weapon types on elk units throughout the state.
- 2) Season dates were changed to be more consistent across all units.
- 3) Procedures for purchasing permits were simplified. Utah's online permit purchasing program has made it very easy for hunters to apply online. Approximately 80% of all hunters now use the online system.

## **Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife**

1. Initiated a "youth hunter weekend" for turkeys;
2. Initiated an "advanced" Becoming an Outdoors Woman program, in addition to the "basic" program;
3. Participate in "family outdoor weekend" at which there is an introduction to shooting sports;
4. Review of the geographic distribution of private ranges in Vermont and plan to provide small grant dollars for range improvements or construction;
5. Developing new WMA guide and placing signs and information kiosks at WMA's to make it easier for hunters to find and use these lands.

## **Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries**

- developed a model sporting clay range on one of our Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) that served to spawn numerous private facilities across Virginia - which was the purpose of us providing the model facility;
- constructed sighting-in ranges on 6 of our WMAs, with one being very close to the Northern Virginia area;
- constructed a youth shooting range at a 4-H facility in south central Virginia;
- purchased 4 DART machines at a cost of about \$40,000 each to assist in our public exhibits;
- recently created and filled a Sportsman's Education Coordinator position with a primary responsibility of developing and implementing hunter enhancement programs;
- provide a special youth hunting day during spring gobbler season and also a youth waterfowl hunting day;
- purchased the first new WMA in about 20 years of approx. 8,000 acres in southwest Virginia;
- expanded our hunter education program to include outdoor education (and BOW) with 10 full time staff dedicated to this effort. Between 7/1/02 and 6/30/03, provided 112 outdoor education events with 23,735+ participants, instructed 15,286 students in the basic hunter education course, had 804 students receive live fire training, and have over 750 outdoor education volunteer instructors.

## Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

### Subject: Promotion of Hunting Opportunities in Washington

Washington State has been very proactive in the past several years in terms of hunter recruitment and retention. The greatest changes have come in youth hunting opportunities. Probably the most significant change was in 1999 when the cost of hunting licenses for youth (under 16 years of age) was reduced to half that of an adult license.

A weekend is set-aside for youth hunters to hunt for upland birds and for waterfowl prior to the general season opening dates. Also, beginning this year, youth hunters will be allowed to hunt wild turkeys on a weekend prior to the general opening date for spring turkey hunting. Other expanded opportunities include a very successful program to introduce wild turkeys to the state. Turkey license sales increased from under 600 in the late 1980s to last year's record of over 17,000.

Youth hunters (along with disabled and seniors) are allowed to take either sex white-tailed deer in most counties where they occur, while adults must be drawn for a permit in order to harvest antlerless whitetails. A portion of antlerless deer permits for black-tailed deer and mule deer are also reserved for youth hunters.

A recent grant from the National Shooting Sports Foundation will result in better maps of lands leased for pheasant hunting and will provide the basis for additional hunting maps that includes hunting and game population information by geographic area. This information is being produced using geographical information system software and will be available over the Internet as well as hard copy formats.

We recently established a Go Play Outdoors initiative that supports sport shows and hunting educational events to help us reconnect with our constituents. This is in conjunction with the Washington Wildlife Federation and will have a strong focus on youth mentoring opportunities.

Specific examples of how the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has actively promoted both hunting and shooting sports:

- (1) Developed meaningful options to the traditional hunter education course. Recognizing that not every interested individual can attend a class with fixed schedules centered around availability of instructors/institutions, WDFW developed and now offers a Home Study Option--where there is no contact time required between the enrolled student and the agency and/or a certified instructor, and a "Paradigm Shift" hunter education option where students study required materials independently, then sit for a written exam and an assessment of firearms handling skills in a time-compressed format. Approximately 10% of our activities now involve either the Paradigm Shift or the Home Study Program, reflecting increasing public interest in these innovative options.
- (2) Developed and funded a shooting range development program. WDFW Enforcement Program staff have provided federal aid funds (Section 10, Federal Aid in Wildlife

Restoration funds) to at least 20 shooting ranges throughout the Evergreen State. Our grant application process provides up to \$100,000 statewide annually--both for small scale and large scale programs--to help insure public access to shooting facilities for hunters and recreational shooters. The shooting range program reflects a priority WDFW commitment to hunting and the shooting sports at a time of dwindling financial and staffing resources. During the 2004 grant application cycle we again anticipate awarding \$100,000 in grants.

- (3) Developed and distributed a booklet entitled "Shooting Ranges In Washington State" to inventory existing shooting facilities in our state and promote both public awareness of and access to those facilities. Enforcement Program/Hunter Education Division staff are now working on a second printing, which will be distributed to license vendors, sports clubs, law enforcement agencies, parks and recreation districts, schools and the general public. WDFW is planning to print and distribute 120,000 copies of this important, informative booklet, which again reflects a strong commitment to the hunting and shooting sports fraternity.
- (4) Developed and subsequently expanded "Firearms Safety, The Law & You" to provide the hunting, shooting and firearms-owning public with comprehensive information on firearms laws in Washington State. This popular booklet has been distributed to many hundreds of thousands of individuals over the years and is distributed to individuals who obtain a concealed carry license in Washington, is widely used in safety training classes, etc. WDFW recognizes the importance of this booklet and remains committed to its continuation.
- (5) Expanded hunter education support--both financially and programmatically--to demonstrate WDFW's continuing commitment to hunters. Hunter education division staff are once again a part of the Enforcement Program--which has officers deployed around our state--to reflect the importance of the hunter education unit in serving Washington's diverse publics. In our state all Section 10 monies have been used to either expand hunter education activities and services or provide funding for shooting range development.

## West Virginia Division of Wildlife Resources

- Created:
  - a youth squirrel hunt
  - a youth waterfowl hunt
  - an early youth deer hunt
- Designated the week of Christmas as a Family Deer Hunt...the first 2 days of the week are for youth hunters only.
- Developed a free on-line system to purchase hunting and fishing licenses.
- Constructed and maintain 25 shooting ranges across the state.
- Spend approximately \$1 million per year to purchase Wildlife Management Areas open for public hunting.
- Like Kentucky, have initiated the Archery in Schools program.

## Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Examples of activities promoting hunting or shooting:

- Developed a 400 page, "Learning to Hunt: Hosting a Hunting-based Outdoor Skills Event for Youth in Your Community"
- Acquire in fee or lease approximately 15,000 acres per year for hunting
- Increased bag limits for deer, turkey, bear, Canada geese
- Initiated a mourning dove hunting season
- Increased hunting in state parks
- Aggressive management to enhance habitat on public land for game species
- Aggressive management on private land to enhance habitat under programs such as CRP, EQIP, CREP, NAWCA
- On-line CD-ROM course for hunter education
- Expanded youth hunting seasons and simpler youth licensing
- Cheap licenses for hunting
- "Learn to Hunt" opportunities (waived license fees and permit requirements for novice hunters to participate in a mentored hunting opportunity)
- Monthly articles in WI DNR Natural Resources Magazine devoted to hunting.
- Implementation of "Future of Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping" initiative (program to identify and remove barriers to hunting, promotes programs to recruit new hunters, retain current hunters, and maintain public support for hunting through outreach and action)
- At least 10 new shooting ranges have opened
- Internet Hunter Education Courses
- Youth Waterfowl Hunts
- Automated License Sales
- BB Gun Booth at DU Great Outdoors Festival
- LaserShot simulator at county fairs, Deer/Turkey Expo

## Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Here are a few examples of what the Wyoming Game and Fish Department has instituted over the past decade or so, to recruit more hunters -- especially youth, retain hunters, and expand opportunities for people to get involved in shooting sports or improve shooting skills.

Shooting Ranges -- During the early 1990s, for approximately 5 years, the Department made available over \$500,000 in grants to communities across Wyoming to either create or improve shooting range facilities. These addressed small bore, shotgun and rifle needs in the local area. More than 25 communities and thousands of hunters/shooters benefited from these new/improved facilities. These funds were derived 100% from license fees revenues.

Hunting and Fishing Heritage Exposition -- The Department was the second state to promote and conduct an annual Hunting and Fishing Heritage Expo as a means of instilling an awareness of the hunting tradition in our state and the conservation contributions made by license buyers, providing the opportunity to engender first-time interest in hunting and shooting, or hone shooting skills through live firing exercises, seminars and other hands-on activities, and introducing students and adults to the full range of programs and responsibilities of the Game and Fish Department. This is a 3-day event (Friday, Saturday and Sunday), with Friday being "kids day". We routinely get 7000-9000 students from across the state who participate as part of a school-sponsored "field trip" to the Expo. The attendance by students is the result of close coordination by our agency and the education community in Wyoming. This is not a commercial undertaking, it is exclusively educational in nature. Over 100 exhibitors attend the Expo every year.

Youth Licenses and Hunts -- In recent years the state Legislature, at our urging, has established a variety of "youth licenses" for both residents and non-residents which are sold at a reduced price, yet afford the same opportunities as full-priced licenses. Similarly, the Department has instituted several "youth hunts" that afford exclusive participation for youth during select time periods.

Outdoor Recreation Education Opportunities (OREO) Program -- This program was initiated in the mid-1990s. It is a skills-based program that meets all of the education curriculum standards in the state, and therefore students can participate during regular school hours. The OREO curriculum includes a full-range of activities that include shooting, archery, orienteering, survival, etc. -- all directly applicable to engaging youth in outdoor sports. This program was developed in Wyoming, for Wyoming.

Archery-in-the-Classroom -- This is our newest program, launched in 2003. In many instances this is integrated into the schools through the umbrella OREO Program, but is more specialized and also includes the purchase and donation of archery equipment to participating schools. In addition to skills, it also is designed to develop leadership qualities.

Shooting Clinics/Workshops -- The Department routinely sponsors several shooting clinics/workshops utilizing the services of outside experts under contract. These most often involve the services of Tom Roster and are aimed at improving shooting skills with steel shot and reducing crippling losses. These are conducted free of charge to participants.

The Department also conducts numerous community "Living in Bear Seminars" annually that are designed to educate hunters and others utilizing the back country about how to avoid conflicts, be responsible and help in the conservation of the species involved. Last year, a "shoot" "don't shoot" voluntary bear identification test also became available on the Department's website.

Publications -- In response to criticism from both hunters and anglers about a decade ago that our agency wasn't communicating directly enough and frequently enough with license buyers, our Department launched a new publication -Wyoming Wildlife News -- that is published 6 times a year. It is a tabloid format and packed with the latest information on where to go, new rules and regs, hunting and fishing outlooks, historical information, message from the director, regional summaries, breaking news, upcoming meetings or major Department initiatives, etc. It is free to residents and is also available by subscription to residents (if desired) and non-residents. It is a very popular publication and designed to get/keep this constituency informed and engaged.

Other -- In addition to the above-referenced programs, Wyoming Game and Fish Department administers a mandatory hunter education program, conducts youth camps where shooting skills are taught and practiced, provides free "sight in days" for hunters/shooters in the Cheyenne area at a local private range (there is no public shooting facility in the Cheyenne area), annually has the state's Governor proclaim National Hunting and Fishing Day and follows through with related statewide education activities and outreach touting the values of the hunting tradition, and also sends exhibits and personnel to several major outdoor sport/travel/hunting expositions and fairs throughout the country each year -- answering questions and promoting hunting opportunities in Wyoming.

In the past several years we have placed license application information and forms onto the agency website, along with draw results, to enhance customer service to hunters. This follows the establishment of a Telephone Information Center in the mid-1990s, aimed at providing a live answering service to hunters, anglers and other folks with a wildlife interest with the opportunity to have questions answered directly by information experts. Over 100,000 calls are received annually, a high percentage of them from hunters. This service is provided to residents toll-free.

We also regularly survey resident and non-resident hunters and anglers to measure customer satisfaction both in terms of service and agency performance. These results are used to help direct agency programs to better meet the needs of our constituency in the future.

And finally, we have aggressively defended, and will continue to defend, the rights of hunting techniques (i.e. bear baiting), licensing provisions and allocation, and Wyoming's wildlife management system in state and federal courts when litigation threatens to erode state management authorities or unduly restricts or threatens to eliminate legitimate hunting practices and opportunities, and/or Wyoming's resource base in a negative manner (i.e. commercialization and exotics) - all counterproductive to the future of hunters and hunting in this state.

## **Becoming an Outdoors-Woman**

The Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program is an educational outreach effort by agencies, which has a primary purpose of teaching hunting and fishing skills. By offering these workshops, state resource agencies do a number of things that promote and encourage participation in hunting.

- BOW workshops make it easier for women to participate in hunting and shooting by teaching these skills in a comfortable, safe, controlled atmosphere.
- In many states, BOW workshops offer a hunter education track, in which women can participate in sessions that lead toward hunter certification. In addition, BOW programs often sponsor or teach specific hunter education classes for women. These opportunities often reach adult women who would not have otherwise felt comfortable taking hunter education. These women are also more likely to promote hunter education in the rest of their families.
- Agency BOW programs actively work at recruiting "non-traditional" audiences to hunting and shooting; not only women, but people from minority groups and people with disabilities.
- Research shows that women who attend BOW workshops and learn hunting and shooting skills do continue to participate in these activities with no dropout rate.
- Research also shows that women who attend BOW workshops recognize their state resource agency and have a high regard for that agency.

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