

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
HUNTER INFORMATION AND TRAINING



**BASIC HUNTER EDUCATION  
CLASS OUTLINE**

**DESIGNED FOR  
INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSE**

**January 2007**

## **GUIDELINES FOR CLASS OUTLINE**

- A) Each chapter in this outline contains instruction to assist in the teaching of your course.**
- B) Objectives are listed to help define what the student should be able to do or know after receiving instruction.**

<b>Key:</b>	<b>SM = Study Manual</b>	<b>WB = Workbook</b>
	<b>TQ = Test Question</b>	<b>HA – Hunt Alaska</b>

**Class Introduction:** (10 minutes) introduce the instructors – stress to students that the instructors are volunteers. Facility layout – restrooms, smoking, breaks, food, lunch, and safety factors (example; if they are at a range make sure they stay out of danger areas). Explain course objective and class schedule, what they will be covering (workbook review, firearm handling, field course, proficiency shoot, and written test). Explain that they will be certified in Basic Hunter Education when they successfully complete the course. Take role call and explain class rules. Safety is imperative - *Any student who muzzles anyone else will automatically fail the course. Students will also be judged on attitude – all students must have a safe, positive attitude. Encourage class participation.* **Collect workbooks from students.**

<b>CHAPTER 1: FIREARM HANDLING AND SAFETY</b> <b>TIME ALLOTTED: 1 hour 45 minutes</b>
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This chapter introduces students to firearms by showing them how to identify, operate, and handle firearms safely. This is the foundation of hunter education and it is imperative that students know, understand and are able to demonstrate the skills in this module.

<b>STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:</b>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ List the major causes of firearm and hunting accidents</li><li>➤ Identify and state the four rules of firearm safety</li><li>➤ Demonstrate how to properly handle a firearm including the safe transfer of a firearm from one person to another, the steps of safely loading and unloading a firearm, and to identify the five types of firearm actions</li><li>➤ Student must be able to explain the concept of zones of fire and know the safe firearm carries for each situation</li><li>➤ Student will clearly understand why Hunter Orange is highly recommended in Alaska and how Hunter Orange reduces two-party accidents</li><li>➤ Student will consistently identify the vital organs of various game animals</li></ul> |
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- A) Show “Last Shot” video; Check to make sure that the workbooks are complete while students are watching the video – return the workbooks to the students after checking them.
- B) *Firearm Handling and safety* (SM page 5): Responsible firearm handling is the most important skill for hunters to practice. Safe habits you learn in this class can help eliminate firearms accidents.
- C) *Major Causes of Firearm and Hunting Accidents*: (SM page 5, WB page 4, TQ17 & 31) Knowing the cause of firearm accidents helps the student choose safe practices for themselves, preventing accidents. Most firearm accidents happen at home. Almost all firearm and hunting accidents are preventable. Three major causes of hunting accidents are: Safety Violations, Hunter Judgment, and Lack of Skill
- D) *Four Rules of Safe Firearm Handling*: (SM page 5, WB page 4, TQ16, 18, 21-23)
1. **Always control the muzzle of your firearm.** Keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction and **NEVER** point the muzzle at anything you are not willing to destroy! Think carefully about where you are pointing a firearm – this is the most important rule of firearm safety.
  2. **Keep your finger off the trigger until ready to fire.** Keep your finger outside of the trigger guard until you are ready to shoot. Think of the trigger guard as a “finger rest” - a place to keep your finger *on* but not *in* until you are ready to fire.
  3. **Treat every firearm as if it were loaded.** Immediately check every firearm you hold. Check the firearm even if another person tells you it is unloaded. Make sure the firearm is unloaded by inspecting the chamber and magazine with your eyes and fingers (do not place finger inside semi-auto actions). When a firearm changes hands, leave the action open and keep the action open when not shooting. No matter what you believe, treat every firearm as if it were loaded.
  4. **Be sure of your target and what is beyond.** This is the most common cause of fatal hunting accidents – another hunter shot because they were mistaken for game or were beyond the target and not seen by the shooter. Never shoot at a movement or a sound. Some hunters concentrate so hard on their target that they forget to look at where the bullet or shot might go if they miss or if the bullet goes through the target. Another person or building may be over the hill or in the woods beyond the target. **Never shoot at a skylined animal.** Learn to look well past your target before you shoot. A rifle bullet can travel up to three miles and fall with enough force to kill another person. The pellets in a shotgun can travel hundreds of yards and fall with enough force to cause an eye injury. You must positively identify the target before you shoot. **Never** use the scope on a firearm to locate or identify a game animal – use binoculars or a spotting scope.

E) *Parts of Firearms and Firearm Actions:*

- a. Discuss and **demonstrate** the actions to the students using the cutaway firearms. (SM page 16-17—WB page 7). Demonstrate how a firearm works using the cutaway firearms bolt-action rifle, pump action shotgun/rifle, semi-automatic rifle and lever action rifle. **\*\*Beginning or inexperienced shooters or hunters should not use exposed hammer lever action guns.**
- b. Discuss safeties and the different types and locations on firearms. Explain that safeties generally keep the trigger from being pulled, or block the firing pin. Unless you are aiming at a target that you have clearly identified and intend to shoot **KEEP THE SAFETY “ON”**. Stress that safeties are not foolproof; they are mechanical and can fail to work—**keep muzzle pointed in a safe direction.**

F) *Ammunition and how firearm fires:*

How does it work?

- Trigger releases the hammer.
- Hammer drives a firing pin into the primer area.
- Primer explodes; this sets fire to the powder.
- Fire causes very high gas pressure.
- Gas pressure pushes bullet or shot out of firearm barrel.

G) *Loading a Firearm:* (SM page 6 brown box, WB page 4, TQ 20 & 25) **Demonstrate** to the class the loading and unloading of firearms using cutaway firearms. *Ammo Safety-* discuss the issue of correct ammunition to firearm and **demonstrate** how to read barrel markings and head-stamp on cartridges.

- a. Control the muzzle; point it in a safe direction. Know the location of all people in your area.
- b. Open the action; check it for proper operation. Leave it open. Is barrel open/clear?
- c. Put the safety on. Check it.
- d. Load the magazine. Count your cartridges or shells.
- e. Close the action on an empty chamber.
- f. Carry the firearm.

H) *Unloading a Firearm:* (SM page 6 brown box, WB page 4, TQ26)

- a. Control the muzzle; point it in a safe direction. Know the location of all people in your area.
- b. Make sure the safety is on. Keep your finger outside the trigger guard.
- c. Open the action.
- d. Remove the magazine.
- e. Eject cartridges if it is the only way to remove them. Do not let the action completely close. Use extra care with lever action firearms.
- f. Count your cartridges. Is the magazine empty?
- g. Check the chamber and magazine. Be sure the firearm is empty.

- I) *Courteously Accepting a Firearm*: (SM page 8, WB page 5, TQ29) **Demonstrate** to the class using cutaways how to safely transfer firearms.
- Check that the action is opened before touching the firearm.
  - Visually check the chamber and magazine before touching the firearm.
  - Grasp the firearm with both hands, keeping the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.
  - Say “Thank You” when in positive control of the firearm. This alerts the passer of the firearm to release it.

**\*\*Eye and Ear Protection** (SM page 8, TQ 30) - Always wear eye and ear protection when you shoot a firearm – including when you are hunting. Sometimes a small piece of unburned powder or even a metal fragment can escape the action when the gun is fired. Eye protection can also protect you when going through thick brush. Noise from a firearm *will* damage your hearing if you do not wear good hearing protection.

- J) *Transporting Firearms*: (SM page 9—WB page 5)
- Never carry a loaded firearm in or on a vehicle. Do not step onto a boat with a loaded firearm – unload your firearm before you get into any vehicle or boat. If you are near a cabin or vehicle, unload your firearm.
  - Keep the action open when you are with other hunters; everyone should keep actions open so it is always clear to all that firearms are unloaded.
  - Never leave a firearm in an unlocked automobile. You are responsible for keeping your firearms out of sight and the vehicle locked.
  - Know the laws about transporting firearms. In Alaska you must know about Canada laws if you are going to be driving through Canada. Generally citizens of a state can transport a firearm within that state as long as it is unloaded, it is enclosed in a case; or it is locked in the trunk.
- K) *Carry Positions*: (SM page 10-13, WB page 11, TQ 27 & 28) **Describe and demonstrate** the six field carry positions (have students look at examples SM page 12). Responsible hunters carry firearms safely always pointing the muzzle in a safe direction. Think about every action and make every action safe. Think about your surroundings, what about your hunting partners – are you carrying your firearm safely so you don’t muzzle your partner?
- Two Hand/Ready Carry – gives you greatest control of the muzzle.
  - Sling Carry – you cannot control the muzzle in a fall or when crossing obstacles. Always unsling the firearm when crossing obstacles.
  - Elbow Carry – there is less muzzle control with this carry than any other. You can use this carry if no one is in front of you.
  - Cradle Carry – This carry can be used for long periods of time. You can only use this carry when no other hunters are on the side in which the muzzle is pointed.
  - Trail Carry – Never use the trail carry when you are behind another person.
  - Shoulder Carry - never use this carry if another person is behind you. Take the firearm off your shoulder and use the two-hand ready to cross obstacles.

L) *Safe Zones of Fire*: (SM page 13) Hunters often hunt together (you should never hunt alone). To insure safety everyone must plan a **shooter's safe zone of fire**. The most experienced hunter maps a zone for each person in the group. Hunters may only shoot in their zones. If hunting in a line, do not get ahead or behind the other hunters. Establish your safe zones of fire before starting the hunt. NEVER shoot above, behind or between other hunters – this is out of your safe zone of fire. Hunters must always be aware of muzzle control, where the other person is, and your safe zones of fire. Responsible hunters know the effective range of their firearm. A responsible hunter also knows their own limitations through time spent at a shooting range. Never shoot at game that is out of your effective range.

M) *Rifle Marksmanship and shooting positions*: (SM page 31/Photos page 32, WB page 9, TQ 34, 35, 36) Discuss and **demonstrate** the four standard shooting positions – standing, sitting, prone and kneeling. Standing is the least stable, kneeling more stable, and sitting the most stable for most people. Prone is very stable but not always practical in Alaska due to marshy conditions and tall brush. Responsible hunters fire from a rest – this can be a log, rock, stump, or your pack. Don't shoot with the barrel resting on a hard surface. Use the B.R.A.S.S. shooting technique - Breath, Relax, Aim, Squeeze the Trigger and Follow through. Sight in your rifle at a rifle range before hunting. Also if your rifle or scope is bumped you should sight in again. You need to practice, practice, and practice.

\* **Finding Your Master Eye** (SM page 30)

**\*\* A note on handguns: The barrel of a handgun is short; it is more difficult to control the muzzle direction of handguns compared to rifles and shotguns. Inform students that there are quality handgun courses offered in many locations.**

N) *Firearm Safety in the Home*: (SM page 14, WB page 5, TQ 32) Responsible gun handling is not limited to the field. Firearms **safety** must also be practiced in **the home**. All family members should know firearms safety. When you are not using your firearm for shooting or hunting, it must be safely stored. Safe storage of firearms in the home:

- a. Carefully and completely unload firearms before bringing them into the home. Never load a firearm in the home.
- b. Store firearms in your home in a secure location inaccessible to children. Store ammunition in a separate locked location, also away from children.
- c. Remember to place firearms in their proper storage location as soon as you return from a hunt or from the range.
- d. Always carefully check firearms to make sure that they are unloaded whenever you remove them from storage.
- e. Responsible hunters make certain the firearms in their home are not easily accessible to anyone who may not be trained in the safe handling of firearms.
- f. Discuss the important options of trigger locks, cable lock and gun safes.

O) *Hunter Orange*: (SM page 15, WB page 5, TQ 23) No single factor has reduced hunting accidents as much as wearing **Hunter Orange** because it reduces accidents where one hunter mistakes another person for game. Over 40 states now require the wear of Hunter

Orange clothing. The wearing of Hunter Orange is not required in Alaska, but is strongly recommended. It is an unnatural color not found in nature. Game animals in the deer family cannot see color – they key in on movement and smell. They see hunter orange as a shade of gray. **There are many good reasons to wear HUNTER ORANGE but there are no good reasons NOT to wear it.**

P) *How far can a rifle shoot?* (SM page 20): Have the students open their study guide to page 20 and follow the chart. A .22 caliber rifle can go up to 1½ miles; a 30-06 can travel up to 3 1/2 miles. How far can a shotgun shoot? Duck loads can go up to 500 yards. A responsible hunter takes this into consideration before pulling the trigger.

Q) *Vital Areas; knowing where to shoot:* (SM page 34-35, WB page 10, TQ 37, 38) It is important to know the anatomy of game animals that you are hunting. **The heart-lung area is the largest of the vital areas to shoot for and offers the best shot for hunters.** A solid hit in this area will be fatal. Head-shots offer less opportunity for a clean shot, and can result in a “miss” or wounding to the animal’s eye, nose, ear, or throat.

R) *Choosing the right moment:*

Know WHEN to SHOOT

Factors to be considered --Student can follow along on (SM page 35, orange box).

- Limit shots to within your personal effective range.
- Get as near to the animal as possible.
- Sometimes hunters get too close; animals can detect your presence and run or change position, thus offering a poor shot.
- If an animal alerts to your presence, wait for a clear shot. Best shots are taken at unsuspecting animals.
- Before taking your shot, look at the intended flight path of bullet for obstructions.
- Best shots are in the heart-lung area. **Head and neck shots should be avoided.**

S) *Firearm Handling Activity:*

Divide the class into four groups and have each group work with one type of action on the cutaway guns and dummy ammo. Then rotate the firearm to the next group until all students have handled each action type. All students must demonstrate muzzle control, familiarization with each action type, and loading and unloading of each firearm. Each student needs to practice lowering the hammer to the half-cocked position on the lever action. This is a perfect opportunity to assess their abilities at safely transferring a firearm. If there is time the students may practice carry positions, and shooting positions. This is your opportunity to assess student’s understanding. Give the students enough time to practice and become comfortable with all the firearms. Afterwards discuss with the class which action type they thought was the safest. What action type would you buy for a first time shooter?

## CHAPTER 2: WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

**TIME ALLOTTED: 45 minutes**

### OBJECTIVES:

- The student will have a better understanding of the basics of wildlife management.
- The student will be able to identify the basic needs of wildlife.
- The student will understand the role of habitat in maintaining healthy wildlife population.
- The student will understand the role of the hunter in modern wildlife management.
- The student will understand the relationship between hunting effectiveness and opportunity.
- The student will understand where wildlife management programs get their money.
- The student will understand what they can do to help wildlife.

*Wildlife Management:* Wildlife management is the science of managing wildlife and its habitat, including people. There are several concepts basic to the wise management of wildlife.

- A) Basic Concepts of wildlife management (TQ 7 & 15):
- a. Amount and condition of **habitat** is the most important factor determining how many animals of a species survive in a particular area.
  - b. Healthy populations replenish themselves annually.
  - c. Hunting and trapping are important and sustainable activities.
  - d. Management of habitat benefits wildlife.

(SM page 44) Learning about wildlife is important because our physical and emotional health often depends on the plants and animals in our **environment**. Humans are very much a part of nature, even though we separate ourselves from nature with increasing use of technology. The “web of life” is an important concept – everything is interconnected. If we break one strand then the support for other strands is weakened affecting the whole web or **ecosystem**. Human actions, even those that seem beneficial at the time may have very harmful results when we don’t understand the effects on the ecosystem. When hunters hunt they should understand that every plant, animal, stream or river is part of the web of life. Humans also are an important strand in the web of life.

- B) *Basic Needs of Wildlife:* (SM page 45, WB page 12, TQ8)
- a. Food
  - b. Water
  - c. Shelter
  - d. Space
  - e. Arrangement (proper arrangement)

(SM page 45-48, WB page 12) These needs must be in the proper arrangement – the best arrangement is when these factors occur in combinations of small blocks that are close together.

Every animal must be able to move safely to find food, shelter, and water. These needs make up where the animal lives or its **habitat**. **Carrying capacity** is the amount of wildlife each habitat can support throughout the year without damage to either the animals or the habitat. Habitat is constantly changing due to succession, or other factors such as fire, flooding, or human development. There are also **limiting factors** in every habitat that directly affect wildlife populations. Some examples of these are human development, drought, fire, hunters, harsh weather (especially limiting in Alaska), starvation, disease, and predators. Predation is a natural occurrence. **Predators** usually capture and feed on surplus prey animals and we must remember that hunters are also a predator.

(SM page 49, TQ9) Habitat loss due to the **growing urban areas** is occurring at an alarming rate in the United States and **is the most common cause of habitat loss**. Habitat loss is most often the direct result of human activities. Growing human populations demand more living space. When we develop large areas for human use we not only permanently change the habitat where wildlife live, but we often cut off important movement routes between areas animals use in the summer and winter. *The future of wildlife depends on people.*

- C) *Improving Wildlife Habitat:* (SM page 49) Improving habitat can increase the carrying capacity of a particular habitat. For example, some animals such as moose and deer eat shrubs and the tender tips of young trees. As the shrubs and trees in an area grow older and larger they provide animals with less and less nutrition. Poor nutrition leads to fewer animals in a given habitat – it lowers the carrying capacity. Land managers may try to improve habitat by using a prescribed fire, which is intentionally set to burn a specific area and improve habitat. The fire burns off the old growth and opens areas for new growth – which provides the best nutrition for moose and deer increasing the carrying capacity. Prescribed fires can be an effective way to maintain effective wildlife habitat.
- D) *Tools for Managing Wildlife Resources* (SM page 51 blue box, WB page 13, TQ10&14) - Can wildlife be managed? **Management** is defined in the dictionary as having control over someone or something. There is little managers can do to keep weather, fire, floods and disease from affecting wildlife populations. Managers have a series of tools that they use for managing wildlife such as burning, planting food plots, or by logging areas. Another valuable management tool is **hunting** and **trapping** which helps maintain healthy wildlife populations at or below the carrying capacity of the habitat. When animals exceed the carrying capacity, the habitat may be damaged and the excess animals will die. All the animals will be affected by habitat damage. Hunting and trapping are closely regulated so that some of the excess animals in a population are removed each year keeping the population healthy. **Predator control** is another tool available to wildlife managers. Like any tool, it is effective and appropriate only in certain situations. Hunters are also predators; we chiefly prey on food species such as caribou, moose, deer, and sheep. In many areas in Alaska, families depend on hunting for food (subsistence). The relationship between humans, predators, and prey is a source of conflict in wildlife resource management.

E) *Principles of Wildlife Management* (SM page 52 – orange box, TQ10) Have the students read these:

- 1) Wildlife Management is the science of managing wildlife and its habitat, including people.
- 2) Conservation is wise use.
- 3) Habitat is the key to wildlife survival.
- 4) Carrying capacity is the number of animals the habitat can support throughout the year without damage to the animals or the habitat.
- 5) If wildlife numbers exceed (go above) the carrying capacity, excess animals will die.
- 6) Setting back plant succession to intermediate stages improves the habitat for most wildlife.
- 7) The birth and death rates of most species of wildlife are high.
- 8) Understanding and obeying wildlife laws are important ways to help wildlife survive.
- 9) Predator control is only one of the many tools available to wildlife managers. Like any tool, it is effective and appropriate only in certain situations.
- 10) The goal of a refuge is to protect or maintain wildlife and wildlife habitat, and promote healthy populations.
- 11) Stocking is most productive for restoring wildlife in areas where restored habitat has not been naturally repopulated.
- 12) Most introduced exotics (non-native species) find their new habitats unsuitable and disappear soon after release. However, some exotics thrive and can cause conflicts with native wildlife.

F) *Laws and Regulations*:(SM page 54, HA page 2, TQ1 & 50) To successfully manage wildlife and people who use wildlife, state agencies need laws and **regulations** that are easy to understand and will be obeyed by hunters. Unregulated hunting leads to the killing of too many animals and possibly even the extinction of an entire species. Hunting in Alaska is controlled by laws and regulations. Alaska hunting regulations are published in the Alaska hunting regulation book available at Fish and Game offices and wherever hunting licenses are sold. It is important to learn how wildlife laws and regulations are made in Alaska and how you can take part in making those laws and regulations. Laws are made for three reasons: **to protect wildlife from over-harvesting, to provide hunting opportunity for all people, and to keep hunters and the public safe.**

G) *Access*: (SM page 54, TQ 4) How we get close to or **access** game is a serious issue for the future of wildlife and game management. Before modern times people hunted on foot – it was difficult to hunt far from home. Now with new technology our access has improved dramatically with the use of boats, airplanes, and four-wheelers. We can easily get into remote areas making us more efficient predators and the number of animals we harvest has increased. Differences of opinions come about when some hunters enjoy

using off-road vehicles to travel into good game country traveling over rough country far away from paved highways. Others feel that motorized access makes the game animals too easy to find and kill and that the vehicles disturb the animals and environment.

H) *Funding for Wildlife Management:* (SM page 55, TQ12 &13): Wildlife managers need money to study animals so they can understand what kinds of food, space and shelter each species need. They also need money to count animals, study the populations of each game species, and manage hunters. If there is no money, then hunting seasons would have to be closed or populations of animals could easily become overhunted. To fund wildlife management Congress enacted a federal tax on all firearms, and ammunition sold to hunters and shooters. This important federal law enacted in 1937, is called the **Pittman-Robertson Act**. Every time we buy firearms, ammunition, archery equipment, or reloading supplies for practice or hunting, you are contributing money to wildlife management. It's important that we as hunters know how funds are raised and how we can help in supporting the future of hunting. A portion of Pittman-Robertson funds also pays for hunter education. Another source of funding is the sale of hunting and trapping licenses. When you purchase a hunting license you are making a direct contribution to wildlife and habitat management. Thus it is us, the hunter that pays for wildlife management and conservation.

#### Hunter Education and Wildlife Conservation Funding Sources

- Firearms and Archery Manufacturers
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- State/Provincial Wildlife Agencies
- Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- Local Sportsmen and Civic Clubs
- Local Businesses
- International Hunter Education Association (IHEA)
- YOU

I) *How you can take part in helping wildlife* (SM page 55, TQ 13) As hunters, it is our responsibility to help in wildlife conservation. **The easiest way to participate in wildlife management is to purchase a hunting and trapping license.** The money from license sales goes to wildlife management programs. Other ways to participate are to:

- Join Sportsmen's Association or Conservation Groups
- Get involved in Wildlife Management Activities
- Donations to management-oriented conservation groups
- Teach others; be a responsible hunter and good example

## CHAPTER 3: RESPECTING THE WILDLIFE RESOURCE

TIME ALLOTTED: 45 minutes

### OBJECTIVES:

- Student will know and understand their responsibility to other hunters.
- Student will know the public's perception of hunting and hunters.
- Student will know and understand their responsibility to the wildlife resources in the state of Alaska.
- Student will understand their responsibility to the habitat resource.
- Student will understand the importance of selecting a proper firearm and ammunition for taking Alaska's big game.
- Student will know and understand their responsibility to recover wounded game.
- Student will be able to read and understand Alaska hunting regulations.
- Student will be familiar with common hunting violations in the state of Alaska.
- Student will be aware of their responsibility to private landowners.

This chapter discusses our responsibilities as hunters. Early settlers decided that game animals would belong to the state and every individual would be able to hunt. This began the tradition of hunting as a **privilege** that extended to every citizen. Our state constitution states that wildlife belongs to all the residents of Alaska.

- A) *Today's Hunters*: (SM page 60-61—WB page 15). Have students look at graphs on SM page 60. Over 15 million Americans and about 100,000 Alaskan's hunt. The percentage of people choosing to hunt is declining – especially among young hunters. In Alaska, one of every five residents purchased a hunting license in 1980. By 1993 this proportion had fallen to one out of every seven residents. Why do people hunt? Hunters say they get satisfaction from hunting for different reasons. Some enjoy being out in nature, and some like the excitement and adventure of hunting. Some hunters hunt because they like to match their senses and skills against those of the animals. Others hunt primarily for meat – the animal is a source of food and they enjoy providing food for their families. Hunting's future may depend on how the majority of American's feel about hunting.

- Percentage of people choosing to hunt **continues to decline**
- 75% of Americans believe hunting should remain a legal activity
- 60% of non-hunters believe hunting should remain a legal activity
- 90 out of 100 American's approve of hunting for food

- B) *Anti-Hunters and non-hunters* (SM page 61, WB page 15, TQ3) People who do not hunt are called non-hunters. **Non-hunters are not out to stop hunting**, but they sometimes have problems with the way hunters behave. Non-hunters are concerned that hunters are not very good marksmen, are not safe, and wound too many animals. People who

strongly oppose hunting are called **anti-hunters**. Some reasons they are opposed to hunting are:

- Pain inflicted on the animal
- Love of animals
- Opposition to firearms
- Hunters use methods that are disrespectful to animals
- Hunters using illegal hunting methods
- Believe it's not right to kill animals for any reason—even for food.

(SM page 61, TQ5, 11, 39, & 41) Much anti-hunting sentiment is really based on bad experiences with hunters; it is more *anti-hunter* than *anti-hunting*. **It is critical that hunters must be responsible in name and action – that starts with you!**

C) *Becoming a Responsible (Ethical) Hunter*: (SM page 62-67, WB page 16, HA page 10-16, 28-30, TQ 2, 4, 6, 11, 24, 34, 39 & 41) Responsible hunters know and respect the animals they hunt. If we don't hunt responsibly, we create negative opinions about all hunters and eventually could lose our privilege to hunt. **Ethics** are unwritten personal rules – a sense of what is right or wrong and the choices you make when no one is looking. Ethics should be above the law – for example if the law says you can shoot 10 ptarmigan but you only need three, your ethics – or feeling of right or wrong – influence your decision to shoot only three ptarmigan. **Unethical hunting is the largest threat to hunting and hunters**. Because of unethical hunters almost ½ of public lands has been closed or restricted to hunters, and negative opinions about hunters and hunting have been created among the general public. Ways to be a responsible or ethical hunter include:

- Learning about wildlife – as you learn more about wildlife and what they need to live, it becomes easier to make ethical decisions while hunting.
- Balance the use of technology and the natural skills of the animal - proper use of technology is one of the practices that upsets the non-hunting public and gives hunters a bad reputation. In general, using machinery to herd, harass, or chase down animals is illegal in Alaska (exceptions exist, e.g wolves in certain GMUs). One good practice is to use off-road vehicles to get you to your destination then get off and hunt on foot.
- Choose a firearm, cartridge and bullet responsibly. You must select a caliber and firearm that you can learn to shoot accurately and that is powerful enough to kill game effectively and efficiently. You must properly sight in the rifle or it will not hit where it is aimed. A rifle that is not sighted in is more likely to wound a big game animal.
- Shooting accuracy - You must dedicate yourself to practice. Practice from the standard shooting positions (standing, sitting kneeling) until you can place all of your practice shots into a 6 inch circle at 100 yards. Know your personal effective range – and don't shoot beyond that. Always use a rest if possible – don't take a chance on a bad shot!
- Practice the skill of range estimation. In hunting situations it is vital to know whether a game animal is within your skill range (the longest distance at which

you can place all your shots in a 6 inch circle from a hunting position). The longer the distance, the more likely you are to make an error in range estimation that could result in a wounded animal. Most hunters cannot accurately judge distances beyond 100 yards.

- Know the vital zones of the game you are hunting. Responsible hunters shoot the animal in the heart lung area – not the brain, which is much smaller and likely to wound the animal in the eyes, nose, jaws, or throat.
- A responsible hunter respects other hunters and will not deliberately take an animal that another hunter is stalking.
- A responsible hunter hunts legally and makes every attempt to learn and follow the hunting regulations. They obey the hunting regulations that protect the wildlife resources. A responsible hunter polices their own ranks – meaning if they see a violation they report it as well as make sure that everyone in their hunting party follows the hunting regulations.
- A responsible hunter shows respect for the land and the landowner, just as they show respect for the wildlife. You should show the same respect for public lands that belong to us all. Never hunt on private property without permission, and never hunt in a closed area.
- You should never display your animal on your vehicle. It not only can spoil the meat, but also is offensive to some people, harming the image of hunters in the eyes of the general public.

D) *Off road vehicles or ATVs:* (SM page 63, TQ 4 & 49) An ATV driver must be aware of the vehicle's impact on the environment. ATVs can damage soft soil, plants, and nesting areas. Pick your route with care. Try to stay on established trails. Avoid sensitive areas such as steep hillsides, stream banks, lakeshores, and meadows. Don't start a new trail around a "mud hole" damaging more land. Never chase animals with an ATV. Cross streams at a 90-degree angle using slow speed. There are fish eggs in stream gravel, which can be crushed. Don't litter or pollute and keep your ATV maintained to avoid fuel and oil spills. Respect the rights of those who enjoy the quiet outdoors – they want to leave motors, radios and noise at home. Be aware that not all hunting areas are open to ATV use—look at the regulations. ATVs are a popular hunting tool allowing you to get back into remote areas – please show respect when using them.

E) *Common Hunting Violations in Alaska:* (SM page 65, WB page 16, TQ 5 & 19)

1. It is illegal in Alaska to shoot from, on, or across a road
2. Not validating harvest ticket after harvesting the animal
3. Wanton waste of game meat – all edible meat must be salvaged for human consumption
4. Evidence of sex – failing to leave evidence of sex naturally attached to the meat.
5. Moving antlers or horns to the place where you will leave the field before all meat is packed out--antler or horns must be packed out with last load
6. Intentionally feeding or baiting animals to attract them – currently, this is only legal for black bear in certain GMUs

7. Leaving any part of game on a public road or right-of-way
8. Illegal stream crossing with ATVs

*A Final Thought:* When you are hunting you will make a lot of decisions. Most of these decisions will be made when no one else is looking, as hunting is usually a private and often solitary activity. Your behavior, when no one is looking, affects how hunters and our sport are viewed by the public. Each and every one of us has the responsibility to be an ethical hunter, to show respect for the activity we love, and to make sure that our privilege of hunting remains for ourselves--and for our children.

## **CHAPTER 4: SURVIVAL AND HUNT PLANNING**

**TIME ALLOTTED: 15 minutes**

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Student will understand the importance of a compass and a map and the importance of learning how to use them.
- Student will know and be able to list the basic rules of survival.
- Student will be able to list the items to include in a basic survival kit and understand that each kit will be personalized for each hunter.
- Student will clearly recognize the value and need of first aid and CPR Training from a qualified and certified instructor.
- Students will understand how important it is to treat drinking water.

A) *Survival and First Aid* (SM page 69, HA page 9, 18-21, 51-62, TQ47) Every year hunters are exposed to potentially life-threatening survival situations. With good preparation, and a cool head most people come through their ordeals just fine. It is important to start your learning well before the hunting season. Put together a well-organized hunt plan. **Learn CPR and take a first aid class.** Exercise and get in good physical shape before going afield. Practice safety around hunting camp and around water. Learn to read maps, how to use a compass, and practice those skills. We highly recommend that you take a survival course and learn how to start and build a fire in case you get caught out away from camp, get wet, or are suffering hypothermia.

B) *Basic Survival Rules* (SM page 70, WB page 17, TQ 45, 46)

- Leave a trip plan with two responsible adults. Buy two maps and mark on the map where you will be hunting. Write down dates you will be back, phone numbers of flying service if you are flying in, or numbers to the proper authorities if they need to initiate a search.
- Never hunt alone.
- Have two compasses and a map of your hunt area and know how to use them.
- Wear proper clothing and carry proper equipment – dress in layers – wear wool or synthetic materials such as polar fleece that will keep you warm even when wet.

Buy good raingear; staying dry will save your life. Don't wear cotton; it gets wet and stays wet – remember the saying “**cotton kills**”.

- Plan your trip so you return to camp or vehicle before dark. Before you pull that trigger on a game animal think about if you have enough time to get it properly cared for and safely return to camp before dark. This is especially important as fall approaches and we start losing our long daylight hours.
- Know how to build a fire and always have proper fire starting materials. Heat is listed as one of the survival needs in Alaska. Learn how to make a fire in wet conditions. Carry at least two different fire-starting methods and keep them on your person.

C) *Basic Survival Kit* (SM page 72, WB page 17, TQ44) ***Have students read brown box on SM page 72.*** A survival kit needs to be personal and on your person. It needs to be carried even on short trips. A bright colored fanny pack works well – something you will take with you since it is easy to carry.

#### A Basic Survival Kit

- Spare pocket knife
- Spare compass
- Plastic whistle
- Matches (strike anywhere) in a waterproof container
- Second fire-making method
- Fire starter – at least two different methods
- Water purification tablets/filter
- Medication
- First aid kit
- Drinking container
- Nylon cord
- Extra glasses (if you wear them)
- Flashlight
- Emergency shelter – your clothing will be your major shelter so dress accordingly
- Signaling mirror and or a signaling device

D) *Drinking water treatment* (HA page 22, TQ48); There is a good chance that any natural water in Alaska could be a source of Giardia or Cryptosporidium which cause serious illness and can ruin a hunting trip. To prevent becoming infected with either you should boil all your drinking water for at least three minutes. Another way is to filter the water using a filter system that is specially designed to remove Giardia; be sure to carry extra filters as they clog easily.

## CHAPTER 5: WATER SAFETY AND HYPOTHERMIA

**TIME ALLOTTED: 15 minutes**

### OBJECTIVES:

- Student will be able to list common causes of water accidents in Alaska.
- Student will understand the meaning, causes and basic treatment of hypothermia.
- Student will clearly understand the value and importance of taking a Water Safety Course, especially in the state of Alaska.

In Alaska, boats are a very popular method for getting hunters into remote areas to hunt. Our water is cold year round and every year there are boating accidents involving hunters – some are fatal. Responsible hunters know how to avoid accidents and how to be safe on the water. Smart hunters follow safety rules, carry the correct equipment and are prepared for water emergencies. They are also aware of the seriousness of **hypothermia** and how quickly it can set in. We encourage every hunter to take a water safety course – it could save your life.

- A) Some Common Causes of Water Accidents in Alaska while hunting include: (SM page 74—WB page 18).
- Overloading or improper balance of boats
  - Inexperience with equipment
  - Inappropriate equipment--not adequate for fast rivers, or large bodies of water
  - Equipment failure
  - Unsafe firearm handling – practice getting in and out of boats with a firearm, always unload the firearm when getting in or out of the boat. Check the regulations to see whether shooting from a boat is legal your GMU
  - Non-use of PFD (Personal Floation Device) sometimes called life jackets. ALWAYS wear a PFD while in the boat or near the water! There are very comfortable PFDs on the market now; some will keep you warm and prevent hypothermia if you get wet or fall overboard. Some are so light and thin they don't hamper your ability to move or mount a gun. If everyone wore their PFD many lives would be saved--this should be the number one safety rule when boating in Alaska
  - Underestimating the impact of tides
- B) *Hypothermia* (SM page 76, WB page 18, HA page 21, TQ43). Hypothermia is a cooling down of the body's core temperature; it is a silent killer. It takes heat from your inner body. You must know the signs of hypothermia. Usually it starts when you get wet, very easy to do in Alaska. Then the body starts cooling quickly, especially if there is wind that will cool you faster. You need to recognize the first signs of hypothermia in both yourself and your hunting partners – these symptoms are **uncontrollable shivering, loss of coordination, slurred speech, and listlessness or mental confusion**. You must stop and treat it, as prompt treatment is urgent. To treat hypothermia you need to stop the heat loss and regain body heat. Get out of the

wet windy weather and out of wet clothes and into dry ones. Start a fire and get warm and dry. Put a hat on your head and wrap in blankets or a sleeping bag. Drink warm liquids. Do not drink any alcohol--this only makes things worse.

**Hypothermia can be prevented**--here are some ways to prevent it:

- Stay dry, avoid efforts which cause sweating and tiredness
- Dress in layers and carry protection from the wind
- Keep your head warm, wear a hat, wear proper clothing for the elements – clothing that keeps you warm even when wet is best
- Plan your trip
- Carry your personal survival kit with fire-starters.

## **CHAPTER 6: GAME CARE**

**TIME ALLOTTED: 15 minutes**

### **OBJECTIVES;**

- Student will be able to identify and list the necessary equipment for proper field care of game meat.
- Student will know the necessary steps to take to keep game meat from spoiling.

*Meat Care* (SM page 79, WB page 19, HA page 33, TQ40 & 42) After you've killed an animal, it is your responsibility to salvage all of the meat in accordance with Alaska State hunting regulations. The regulations state that any trophy item may be taken out of the field **ONLY AFTER** all the meat is packed out. Check the regulations in the unit you are hunting – in some units it is necessary to keep the meat on the bone or leave evidence of sex naturally attached to the meat.

- A) Keep Meat **COOL, CLEAN and DRY** - **heat** is the greatest threat to game meat. To get the meat cool, remove the hide as quickly as possible and get the meat away from internal organs. The warmer the weather, the more urgent cooling the meat becomes. In weather over 60 degrees, it may be necessary to actually place the meat in cool water – but then it must be dried. **Keep meat clean** – use the inside of the hide or carry a tarp. Do your best to keep hair, stomach contents, and dirt off the meat. Use good Alaska game bags to protect the meat – cheesecloth tears easily and does not do a good job of protecting the meat. Protect the meat from flies – good game bags work, as does citric acid. The meat should be sprayed with citric acid, which slows down bacteria growth as well as forming a crust that makes it harder for flies to lay their eggs on the meat. **Keep the meat dry** – hang it where air can circulate around it and cover it from the rain. Keep it out of the bottom of the boat where water accumulates. Do not however put it in plastic bags – meat cannot cool properly when kept in plastic bags and the meat will spoil.

- B) Basic Dressing Gear (SM page 79, WB page 19, TQ42).
- a. Tarp or Visqueen (to keep meat clean)
  - b. Latex/Rubber Gloves
  - c. Sharpening Tool – as you clean the animal your knife will get dull – it is imperative you keep your knife sharp.
  - d. Good quality game bags – (to keep meat clean and protect from flies)
  - e. Citric acid and spray bottle (protects meat from flies)
  - f. Rope
  - g. Meat saw
  - h. Knives – sharp knives and keep them sharp

\*\* Inform students of the Department's **Meat Care Video**, an excellent resource to actually see the process step-step.