
**Natural Resources, Ecology &
Parks Committee**

HB 2372

Brief Description: Encouraging volunteers to teach hunter education courses.

Sponsors: Representatives Cox and Buri.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides an opportunity for qualifying volunteer hunter education instructors to purchase a multiple season big game hunting permit.

Hearing Date: 1/10/06

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

Hunter education

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is responsible for the operation of a statewide hunter education program. This program, or an equivalent program in another state, must be completed by applicants for a state hunting license who are age 34 or younger (RCW 77.32.155).

The hunter education program consists of at least 10 hours of instruction in safety, conservation, sportsmanship, and firearm handling. Average classes involve four to six sessions and require the student to pass a written test and demonstrate firearm handling skills. The Department offers both a live course option and a home study option. Live courses are scheduled throughout the state.

Hunter education courses are taught by volunteers, either individually or as a team, who are trained and certified by the Department. All instructors must be at least 21 years of age and must undergo a background investigation by the Department.

Multiple season big game permits

The Fish and Wildlife Commission was given the authority to offer permits to hunt deer or elk during multiple general hunting seasons by the 2005 Legislature, and a limited number of permits are scheduled to be offered for the 2006 hunting season. The multiple season permit allows the holder to participate in the modern firearm season, archery season, and muzzleloader season. However, the permit only allows the holder to take one deer or elk each year, regardless of which season the animal is taken.

The fee for the multiple season big game permit is \$150 for Washington residents and \$1,500 for non-residents. Permit sale revenues will be deposited into the State Wildlife Fund.

Summary of Bill:

Each year that an instructor volunteers to teach at least two hunter education courses through the Department's hunter education program, the instructor must be given the opportunity to purchase a multiple season big game hunting permit. In order to earn the privilege of purchasing the license, one of the two courses must be conducted between August 15th and November 30th.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.