

Vertical response Feb 13 2016

Happy spring everyone - looks like most of the province has been enjoying little or no snow, milder temperatures. Bears could be out early this year lol.

Just wanted to bring a couple of things to everyone's attention.

The ABA will be involved in several meetings coming up that involve stakeholders and AEP (FW) staff. Some of these meetings will be part of the Alberta Game Policy Advisory Council (AGPAC) process where we will be involved in the processes to review/develop broad "policy" for Fish & Wildlife. We had a conference call meeting Feb 3 2016 to look over the "Terms Of Reference" that had been discussed prior at a Dec 2 2015 meeting - the final TOR should be made available soon to us and then to you . At this meeting, a committee of 10 stakeholder reps/independent individuals and several senior FW personnel was struck to start the review for the "Allocation Policy" - our next face to face meeting will be March 1 2016. This review will eventually lead to creating a new policy that determines who gets what of the big game tag allocation (general hunter, bowhunters, landowners, nonresident, non resident alien etc etc). As this moves along look for more email notices, reports in the newsletter, etc. and we will be keeping everyone informed and also looking for thoughts, comments, feedback to take to subsequent meetings. Once the committee and AGPAC work is done, the review will be taken to the AEP Minister. In addition to these AGPAC meetings, we will be having another stakeholder/FW meeting (soon we are told), to be brought up to speed on the changes for the 2016 hunting season. Again, that information will be sent through our various communication tools.

Also as part of the AGPAC processes, game management policy reviews are being conducted and all species will have their management plans updated in the near future. As you are all aware, the bighorn sheep review has been ongoing for quite some time, lots of public involvement - no final decision by AEP has been made as to what the plans are going forward. The Mule Deer management plan is also being worked on and we should be seeing a draft of that soon.

Just released, is the new draft management plan for Black Bears. Check this out on the AEP website - some great information of black bear habits/biology, historical info on hunting seasons, harvests etc. Feedback to AEP is encouraged and needs to be in by March 31 2016.

<http://aep.alberta.ca/fish-wildlife/wildlife-management/black-bears.aspx>

The banquet is coming up and things are shaping up quite well. If you want tickets I encourage everyone to use our online store - just go to www.bowhunters.ca and right on our home page is the link to order. Takes a few minutes, you get an email confirmation, I get a notice and your tickets are mailed that day or the next. We both have proof your tickets were bought in case they get lost in the mail. As we get closer to banquet time, you will be notified by me when you order that your tickets will be held for pickup at the door. System works *awesome!!* As of today we have almost 100 sold with 9 youth coming thus far - that's great!

The response for bringing bear mounts/rugs has been quiet thus far - hopefully that picks up. If you would like to bring a mount/rug let Cole (Cole@albertabowhunters.com) or Dale (Dale@albertabowhunters.com) know - and remember for everyone who brings a mount/rug we are having a draw for a free table of 8 for next year's banquet! Another neat "bear" thing will be the large painting of a big black bear that member Ric Fedyna has donated and we will be raffling. Ric has donated past works to other conservation groups (Trout Unlimited, Ducks Unlimited) and we really appreciate his support. Check out his new website at www.ricfedynartist.com and also an Instagram feed at @ricfedynartist to see this painting as well as others.

Make sure you get your game awards entries in to Ryk (ryk@ryk.ca) as soon as possible. We are giving out 6 Master Bowhunter buckles and 3 Grandmaster portraits this year!! Entry forms can be found on the website, in the newsletter or contact Ryk or Brent. Once you send them to Ryk, contact him to confirm that he did indeed get them. We have had some in the past not make it - through the mail, a fax or an email. So please confirm. Just to let you know so you don't panic, Ryk left today on a holiday and will be back March 1 - he may not have email or cell service. He'll have a couple of busy days when he gets back!!

At the convention, there will be a "3D Meeting" from 8:00 - 9:30am and our Annual AGM/Regulations meeting from 9:45 - 12:00 pm. We need a quorum of 25 members to make the AGM meeting official. Positions up for election are VP, Treasurer, Membership, 3D, South and Central Director - if you are interested, contact me (or any of the executive) to get a description of the various job duties. We do pretty much everything as a group so you will never be a "lone wolf."

Our partners for the banquet, The Alberta Traditional Bowhunters Association will hold their AGM from 2:00 - 4:00 pm.

The next issue of your newsletter is at the printers as we speak. You should be getting it in the mail in the next 3 weeks or so. If you have a story you'd like to tell or a picture to share, pass it on or let Gord (Gord@albertabowhunters.com) know.

As it is a new year, memberships are due for renewal. The easiest is to do it online - works AWESOME! Many also join through one of our affiliated clubs - the complete list and contact info of 2015 clubs is in this next edition of the newsletter.

I just updated our Vertical Response email list -we have 1977 valid email addresses in our database out of a historical total of just over 3000 (some have changed emails, moved, emails have bounced because of wrong info supplied, people have unsubscribed). We had 1386 members in 2015. That makes almost 600 people we have on valid email did not renew in 2015 and if we go back 4-5 years that number goes over 1700. Hopefully we gain some of them back - definitely power in numbers and with the degree and number of meetings with stakeholders/FW we will be having, that is very important.

Hopefully see everyone at the convention/banquet!!

brent
2016 ABA President
bcwatson@telusplanet.net cell 780-978-1195