

## Notes from Post-Hunt Workshop - 5/24/16

Items from the meeting:

### **Note Volunteer Dates:**

June 25 – Hunt Area Berm Clean-Up

October 1 – Pre-Hunt Blind Work Party

September 15 – Pre-Hunt Meeting

#### + **Post-Hunt Evaluation**

- + Hunters thought hunts went well, no problems with kiosks, gates good but some confusion on them remaining open or not - had a lot of gates open.
- + Recommendation was to post on hunt website “if you find a gate open, close it”
- + Access to slough at A3W would be nice (if FWS owns it that could be a launch spot, but might be Sunnyvale WWTP.)
- + Blinds need to be re-marked and coordinated with the maps, might need to be re-GPS’d as sometimes it seems the blind is not where the map says it is.
- + Recommendation to include pictures of the blinds on website so hunters can decide which to get to and can be a way to catalog them
- + Recommendation: Do a blind condition assessment and post on website!

#### + **Permits:**

- + Hunters liked the idea of a web-based permit system - sign in and get a number and permit
- + Can get a last minute permit off a website
- + Hunters like having a piece of paper making it official they can be out there that could be put on their car (and their person) to reduce questions by leaving a car at 4 am somewhere and some official seeing it to investigate.
- + A permit system also distributes the lock combo better so folks who should not be out there don't have it.
- + Update website on what is allowable uses
- + Make it clear what a hunter can do in R1 for pre-hunt meeting.
- + Permits allow hunters to acknowledge they read regulations and will abide by them
- + Some hunters like having a real voice to talk to, recommend having ability to press “0” and ringing so that someone actually answers the phone.
- + New hunters confused as to which side of a levy to hunt on in general and being clear about that would be appreciated.

#### + **Water Levels**

- + Hunters would like a reference water level developed for the various ponds and posting of water levels so they can get a frame of reference as to whether to go out to a particular pond or not with what they have (boat type, walking, etc.)
  - + Posting of water levels could be done at kiosk and/or website and/or social media, one person mentioned texting it and most did not seem opposed to receiving an email. Generally it was thought that multiple methods would need to be implemented.
  - + Hunters did not like the idea of a mandatory closure and some minimum water depth because so much depends on the hunter, whether they have a boat or not, what kind of boat, age, etc.
  - + Agreement that AB1&2 are to be open as much as can be and leave it to people to decide but with a minimum water level for safety.
  - + Water control structure issues (AB ponds) - hunter asked where all the water goes and why aren't water levels more stable. Discussion.
  - + Agreed to add a link to the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration project to the hunter website.
- + **New Areas to Open/Early Season**
    - + One comment was to consider opening A6 to hunting in the future.
    - + One hunter asked about the ability to have a early goose hunt.
- + **What Blind for Blind Party to Work on?**
    - + Recommendation for Blind 1 in A2E as it is half in the water but shoots good.
    - + Pond A3W does not have a lot of pressure but the blinds in this pond are pretty shot and improving them would reduce pressure on other ponds.
- + **Other Recommendations**
    - + On website and at kiosk say "Pick up and bring out own trash". The shells and trash left by hunters is not good PR and hunters would like to promote good practices.
    - + Question about electronic decoys. Federal policy says no, State says yes after January 1. Being clear on this on the website good and discussion on working to align federal and state together.