Connecting Soldiers and Families with Nature....

Enjoy the Woods.
OUTLINE OF BRIEFING:

- Hunting Safety, Regulation, and Control
- Hunting Accident
- Things to Prepare For
- Lessons Learned
Fort Bragg Wildlife

Hunting Safety, Regulation, and Control

Overview

Success = >770,000 hunting trips, intense troop training: outstanding safety record and reputation.

- Modularity: One Location – One Team
- Permits, Hunting Control, Wildlife Enforcement, Fish & Wildlife Management, and Fishing & Hunting Information
- Extensive Hunter Safety Training and Control
- Intense coordination with DPTM / Range Control
- Very high Wildlife Enforcement profile
- Highly qualified, professional Wildlife Conservation Officers
- Extensive human interface before, during, and after field activity to ensure regulations and safety requirements are understood and followed.
NC Hunter Education

- 10 Hours: with hands on firearms and tree stand handling.

- Excellent films - realistic scenarios: firearms handling and decisions, to basic orientation and outdoor safety.

- Intensive instructor training

- Fort Bragg biologists and enforcement staff are certified state hunter safety instructors.

- Special scheduling and accommodation for deploying soldiers and families.

- All 50 states use standardized hunter safety courses and training
Fort Bragg Wildlife

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Fort Bragg

Hunter Orientation and Safety

- Additional to State Course: Face to face Briefing with a Fort Bragg Wildlife Officer, Biologist, or Operations Specialist:
  - 90 minute brief - reviews and reinforces:
    - Hunter Safety
    - Firearms Handling
    - Hunting and Fishing Regulations
    - State and Federal Laws
    - Restricted, Off-limits Areas
    - Safety Zones
    - Mapping and Navigation
    - Sign Out / Sign In Procedures
- Explicit details on Fort Bragg military training coordination with hunting.
Wildlife Conservation Officers and program staff provide continual learning to hunters and anglers throughout their sporting careers; answering questions and providing insight on:

- Safety
- Firearms Handling
- Equipment
- Tactics
- Navigation
- Fish & Wildlife Biology..
Special Fort Bragg Requirements

- All hunters complete state and Fort Bragg Hunter Safety regardless of:
  - Age
  - Hunting or Weapons Experience
  - Rank
- Never more than one hunter per 100 acres
- Hunters must wear BOTH blaze orange hat and vest (vs state one or other)
- No Faded Orange
- Very High Wildlife Enforcement Field Profile
Hunter Accountability: Sign Out - Sign In

- Physical, in person, accountable sign out for up to 875 slots.
- 5 days/week – 6 month/year
- Completely clear the range; account for safe return of every single hunter, each hunting day.
- Approx. 15,000 hunting attempts/year.
- Hunting is meticulously coordinated with troop training.
- Very high use on fall holidays and weekends.
Fort Bragg Wildlife

Hunting Safety, Regulation, and Control

Wildlife Enforcement Profile

- Super High Field Profile (9457 hunter checks / contacts in 2011) – Well known reputation: “If you hunt on Fort Bragg, you will be checked“!

Conservation Officers:
- Adequate Numbers
- Proper Training and Grades
- Under the Direction of Natural Resources: WHERE THEY BELONG
CASE STUDY (from Orientation)

• 1 Jan 11
  • Fort Bragg Deer Hunter fatally shot a jogger.

• Lessons Learned:
  • Cardinal rule of firearms and hunting safety:
  • Never even approach the trigger unless you are 100% sure of your target and what is behind it.
    • Despite any hunting procedures or rules, you can never be 100% certain who or what may be in the field.
    • Always wear blaze orange and consider other hunters when you are in the field.

• You are responsible for every shot you fire and every time your gun discharges.
  • Always practice safe gun and ammunition handling.
  • Always know your target and what is behind it.
What Did We Change?

- Clarify Trail Ownership – Closure Postings And Actions
- New and Expanded Safety Zones
- Review All Area Designations
- Review and Update Regulation and All Procedures
- 3 Year Hunter Safety Requirement
- Add Case Study and More Firearms Handling to Fort Bragg Briefing
Command Needs and Response

- Commander First Reaction – “no more hunting till I am convinced it is safe.”

- Commander Briefings:
  - All the hunter safety slides you have just seen!
  - Program, process, weapons, and area reviews.

- Accident Investigation Teams:
  - Hunter safety and hunting process slides and reviews.

- #1 Question: Will I see a human face to face at signout – on my way to/from hunting? Answer – yes.
Adjacent Development and Area Designations
Things to Prepare For

MEDIA

- Brief all staff that inquiries go through Public Affairs and/or you.
- Be ready to give the Public Affairs Office all they need.
- Be ready to see yourself on the TV news!
- Insist that you will not talk about incident details or who is to blame.
- Be able to explain that this is not about: Blame, shortcomings, or “What kind of changes are you making to hunting?” - but expect that question anyway – from everyone.

When in Deep:
1. Look Straight Ahead
2. Keep Your Mouth Shut
3. Say Nothing
Things to Prepare For

MEDIA

- Be ready to say but de-emphasize (to a media witch hunt) that:
  - It is always about the cardinal rules of firearms handling: Treat every gun as if loaded – and about to fire, and know your target and what’s behind it.
  - It’s always a good idea to wear bright clothing and think about hunting when in field or forest, regardless of land ownership or policy.
- And - if your program is well designed and implemented you can make it about:
  - We are doing many, many things to make this an exceedingly safe place to hunt – give examples.
  - Look at our safety record: xxx hunts with only x accidents.
  - Be prepared to be able to say: “Although we sympathize with the family and we do not want to diminish that this was a terrible tragedy, we are pleased that intense scrutiny and accident investigation has found that our programs, processes, and controls are very sound.”
**HUNTERS**

- **Information Control**

- Brief all staff that discussion of accident details with hunters is inappropriate, except -

- **What is it that they need to know:**
  - Yes, there can be criminal accountabilities in these matters.
  - But No, these specific circumstances are not what matters:
  - What matters is:
    - What can hunters do to make things even safer?
    - And in many, if not all cases - It is about the cardinal rules of firearms handling – treat every gun as if loaded – and about to fire, and know your target and what’s behind it.
Plan Ahead

- **Fight for a Safe Program:** For example - Congress was right: natural resource law enforcement (like hunting control), are integral parts of the natural resource program - they require singular focus, and a singular oversight. Despite DoD Unique Environmental Policy – Conservation Enforcement is a Conservation Function.

- **Be Prepared:**
  - Keep Data and historical records for perspective: 770,000 hunts with only 3 accidents.
  - Have land use and safety zone maps ready to go.

- Be self assured that your program is sound so you can tell the commander: “Sir, we don’t sleep at night if we think we are not doing all that can be done to keep this safe.”
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