

POLICY TO ADMINISTER AND AWARD FUNDS FROM THE AUCTION OF MOOSE HUNTING PERMITS TO FUND YOUTH CONSERVATION CAMP EDUCATION PROGRAMS

I. POLICY AND PURPOSE

A. Statement of Policy:

The Commissioner may issue not more than 10 moose hunting permits through public auction to the highest bidders as provided in 12 M.R.S. §11154 (11). Pursuant to 12 M.R.S. §10206 (8), all revenues derived from the sale of moose hunting permits through the auction must be deposited into a special non-lapsing account by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (“Department”) and be used to pay the costs of administering the process of issuing permits and to fund youth conservation education programs. Those monies are deposited into a dedicated youth conservation education account (“fund”) administered by the Department. The Commissioner recognizes the need to have guidelines for staff when administering this fund and program.

B. Purpose:

This policy establishes guidelines for Department staff to administer the application process, award funds in a consistent manner and ensure that the youth conservation education camps which benefit from the fund are operated in a manner that meets the standards set forth in this policy.

C. Scope:

This policy applies to any summer camp, day camp, residential camp or any other conservation education organization seeking funding from the fund. Applicants must have the ability and documented experience to provide the Department approved curriculum detailed below.

II. BACKGROUND:

Since the adoption of 12 M.R.S. §11154 (11) in 1993, funds raised from the sale of moose hunting permits have been allocated in the form of scholarships awarded to Maine resident boys and girls, ages 8-17, to attend 1 week (Sunday evening to Friday morning) of residential conservation camp.

Initially, eligible residential summer camps were selected through a “Request for Proposal” or “RFP” process. However, more recently, 2 or 3 approved summer residential camps have been awarded sole source contracts, based on their prior history as camp providers, experience and ability to meet all aspects of the Department required curriculum.

III. GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES:

- A. Full scholarship (defined as a maximum distribution of \$400.00 per camper for one week of basic conservation camp) funding will be provided for Basic Conservation Camp. Any summer camp, nonprofit, for profit or other conservation education organization seeking funding must demonstrate the ability and documented experience to provide the following Basic Conservation Camp curriculum through either a residential or day camp experience for Maine resident boys and girls ages 8-17. The full scholarship amount will be reviewed annually by the Department.

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1. The full slate of 12 required Basic Conservation Camp topics must be organized into a Department approved block schedule that fits into the Sunday evening through Friday morning residential or Monday through Friday day camp schedule. The Department must review and approve curriculum developed by the camps covering all required topics.
 2. The Basic Conservation Camp Schedule will include instruction in the following topics:
 - a. Hunter/range safety / 22 cal. rifle shooting/bow hunting in compliance with hunter safety education standards and certification;
 - b. Map and compass/orienteering
 - c. Outdoor survival
 - d. Archery
 - e. Forest ecology and tree identification
 - f. Fishing instruction and fish biology
 - g. Wildlife management, endangered species, and wildlife identification
 - h. Habitat differentiation and investigations
 - i. Sportsman's ethics/landowner relations
 - j. Introduction to trapping
 - k. Hiking
 - l. Low impact outdoor recreation principles (Leave No Trace)
 3. Other natural science, wildlife, fisheries, recreational safety and/or conservation topics, activities and games should be included in the proposed Basic Conservation Camp block schedule if all topics listed above have been covered and there is additional time during the week.
- B. Partial scholarship (defined as a maximum distribution of \$300.00 per camper for one week other than basic conservation camp) funding for boating safety certification (including canoe and/or kayak safety); and/or ATV safety certification and/or snowmobile safety certification may be provided if offered during camp weeks other than Basic Conservation Camp. The partial scholarship amount will be reviewed annually by the Department
1. These other camp weeks shall provide a block schedule, reviewed and approved by MDIFW, which also includes instruction in the following topics:
 - a. Outdoor survival
 - b. Fishing instruction and fish biology
 - c. Wildlife management, endangered species, and wildlife identification
 - d. Sportsman's ethics/landowner relations
- C. The full cost per camper for a week of residential or day camp must be specified in the applicant's request for funding.
- D. Other required information, documentation and services that must be provided in conjunction with the topics, curriculum and schedule include the following:
1. Proof of a current license and documentation of compliance with all rules relating to Youth Camps, Primitive and Trip Camping (10-144 CMR 208) as administered by the Department of Health and Human Services
 2. A copy of the previous and current year's operating budgets

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3. A list of camp staff positions and when possible, resumes of staff filling those positions and for how long, including but not limited to summer camp director, program manager, counselors, cooks, nurses, and maintenance staff
4. A list of camp equipment necessary and available for implementing the Department topics and curriculum with seasonal and annual maintenance plans
5. Program administration tasks including but not limited to:
 - i. year-round response to requests for information/ inquiries
 - ii. creation and updating of brochure/registration printing and mailings
 - iii. camp marketing and promotion to a statewide audience
 - iv. maintenance of an electronic database of current campers and other interested parties
 - v. processing of all camper registrations, maintenance of medical forms, camper confirmations, cancellations and last minute replacements
 - vi. organization of weekly room/space assignments for campers with desired 50/50 boy/girl ratios
 - vii. maintenance of a year-round web site
 - viii. a current annual medical emergency plan
6. Any or all organizations selected to deliver Department youth conservation education programming shall be subject to several random, unannounced site and program monitoring visits for the duration of camp weeks from Department staff or its approved agent(s), documenting and ensuring satisfactory and consistent delivery of Department programming throughout the summer camp season. Any observations made will be shared with camp's staff as they are reported after each visit.

E. Distribution of Funds:

1. Funds will be distributed annually. The Department's conservation education program administrator, the recreational safety and vehicle coordinator, the Information and Education Director and one person from Resource Management and one person from Warden Service shall decide how the funds will be distributed based on available funds, and the following criteria:
 - a. The total number of existing or newly qualified applicants
 - b. Applicant's ability to serve underprivileged or disadvantaged children
 - c. A balanced geographic distribution of camps statewide
 - d. No more than 80% of the total funds shall be utilized in each calendar year; the remaining funds may be used for other administrative program needs for that year and to maintain consistent funding for subsequent years.

F. The Commissioner will have final approval on funding to all camps.

G. Summary: In the event any summer camp, nonprofit, for profit or other conservation education seeks information about the Youth Conservation Education Fund, the application and award process in this policy shall be utilized to provide guidance and information.