

Idaho Master Naturalist Program



Volunteer Handbook and Policy Guidelines

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What is the Idaho Master Naturalist Program?

The mission of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program is to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to actively work toward stewardship of Idaho's natural environment.

At the state level, the Idaho Master Naturalist program is sponsored by *Idaho Department of Fish and Game*. Partnerships at the local level are encouraged and might include other public agencies, as well as private organizations whose interests are within the boundaries of the program. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game is not required to be a local partner.

The goals of the program are as follows:

1. Increase public knowledge of natural resources, ecology, conservation, and natural resource management.
2. Enhance existing efforts toward conservation in Idaho.
3. Create and foster partnerships between natural resource agencies, organizations, and citizens.

The Idaho Master Naturalist Program exists as a collection of local programs that adhere to a set of objectives, procedures, and minimum requirements set at the state level. The State Steering Committee is comprised of an appointed representative from the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, other natural resource professionals, and appointed or elected Certified Idaho Master Naturalist volunteers. Together with the State Program Coordinator, the State Steering Committee sets the minimum standards and curriculum requirements of the statewide program. Together with the State Program Coordinator, the Committee also reviews and approves new chapter development and both State and Chapter educational curriculum materials.

Idaho Master Naturalist volunteers are trained and certified at the local level through their respective chapters. Each local chapter will be provided at least one advisor from a natural resource agency or organization to ensure that chapters maintain a working relationship with the statewide program and adhere to its principles and guidelines.

It is important for Idaho Master Naturalist chapters to capitalize on local resources and expertise through partnerships. During chapter formation, representatives of these local partners may serve on a Chapter Coordinating Committee. The Coordinating Committee may include state, regional and local natural resources personnel, educators, members of non-government organizations or clubs (NGOs), as well as interested citizens. When chapters are in their early stages (i.e., prior to the chapter's first class training) personnel from one or more of the sponsoring state agencies may lead the local steering committee, or this role may be assumed by any of the other interested parties. As a chapter matures, trained Idaho Master Naturalist volunteers should assume a larger role in the administration of the program. Once the chapter has attained a trained cadre of volunteers, these volunteers are expected to maintain and coordinate the efforts of the chapter through the establishment of a Chapter Leadership Group. Upon establishment of a chapter's first elected Chapter Leadership Group, the work of the local Coordinating Committee is completed. Each chapter will retain one or more local advisors from among the State Program sponsoring agencies. Appendix I lists guidelines for these advisors.

Who Is an Idaho Master Naturalist?

An Idaho Master Naturalist (IMN) is an individual who, after receiving specialized training, actively works toward stewardship of Idaho's natural environment for the required amount of time.

Idaho Master Naturalist in Training

Volunteer participant of an official class from the first day of class continuing until the member has completed Chapter training requirements.

Idaho Master Naturalist Member

Volunteer participant of an official class who has successfully completed Chapter training requirements and passed the final examination, but has yet to complete his or her service requirements for certification.

Certified Idaho Master Naturalist A Volunteer participant of an official class or previous Certified Idaho Master Naturalist who has successfully completed chapter training and certification requirements, including advanced training and volunteer service requirements, during the current or past calendar year.

How May The Title Be Used?

After completion of the requirements to become an Idaho Master Naturalist volunteer, the official title shall be Certified Idaho Master Naturalist (CIMN). Use of this title is a privilege, and this title is to be used only by individuals trained as an IMN while volunteering under the auspices of the program. This relationship should be clearly stated in nametags, signs, etc.

The Idaho Master Naturalist program is a public service program operated to provide accurate, unbiased natural resources information and education and/or accurate data collection. The Idaho Master Naturalist title **may not** be identified with any particular political viewpoint and **may not** be used by groups or individuals as they participate in political advocacy. The title is to be used **only** when doing unpaid volunteer work associated and approved by the program. Any implied commercial endorsement resulting from use of the IMN title is improper. Therefore, the title may not be used for commercial publicity or private business. Participating in a commercial activity, association with commercial products, or giving implied IMN endorsements to any product or place of business is a violation of IMN policies. IMNs may only identify themselves as such while volunteering in conjunction with official/approved IMN programs or activities, NOT for business or personal gain.

IMN training and experience may be given as qualifications when seeking employment; however once employed, credentials may not be displayed by the IMN or the employer.

Violation of the policy concerning the use of the title of Idaho Master Naturalist is grounds for removing the certification or membership of an offending member or grounds for revoking the charter of an offending chapter. Such violations will be reviewed by the State Steering Committee, which will make a final determination of the disciplinary actions to be imposed.

Administrators of the Idaho Master Naturalist program, the State Program Coordinator, and local Coordinating Committee members, Chapter advisors, and other members of state sponsoring agencies who are in a direct supporting role, but are not trained, in training, or certified, may show or wear the Idaho Master Naturalist text and logo in supporting, promoting and/or advertising the program. However, they may not promote themselves as a Master Naturalist, Idaho Master Naturalist or Certified Master Naturalist unless they have completed their training and all certification requirements.

A chapter may, and is encouraged to provide shirts, nametags, and other wearable items for their volunteers with the expectation that the chapter include at least the Idaho Master Naturalist logo (provided by the statewide office).

Certification Requirements

To become a Certified Idaho Master Naturalist, a trainee must complete and/or achieve a minimum of the following:

- The State Advisory Committee approved curriculum with a *minimum* of 40 hours of combined field and classroom instruction (25% in the field).
- A *minimum* of 8 contact hours of approved advanced training.
- A *minimum* of 40 hours of approved volunteer service.

Volunteers have a maximum of 12 months from the first day of their basic training to complete the above requirements and receive their first Certification as a Master Naturalist. Chapters may increase the training or service hours required for certification, but they must indicate such changes in their by-laws and may not decrease the requirements below the state minimum standards.

Training Requirements

The *minimum* basic training requirements include 40 hours of combined classroom and field experiences, with 25% of that time spent in the field. Because of its geographical diversity, the natural resources of Idaho vary widely. Therefore, each local chapter will customize their training program to focus on their local ecosystems. Over the course of the 40 hour training, each volunteer should achieve the following objectives:

An Idaho Master Naturalist should know...

- All aspects of their role as an Idaho Master Naturalist, the mission and objectives of the program, and the guidelines for participation
- What a naturalist is and does and the significance of naturalists and natural history
- The ecoregions of Idaho, especially the details of the ecoregion they live in.
- Basic concepts of ecology
- Basic resource management principles
- Some native flora and fauna in the region
- The general process of science
- The roles of Idaho's state agencies in the management and conservation of natural resources

An Idaho Master Naturalist should be able to...

- Keep a nature journal
- Use a key to identify organisms
- Use a field guide

- Share knowledge with others (verbally and/or in writing)
- Make and record observations in nature
- Recognize when he or she does not know the answer to a question, but be able to seek out answers from people, books, or other reliable resources

With these objectives in mind, every Idaho Master Naturalist's training should include the following topics:

- Introduction to the Idaho Master Naturalist program
- Nature Journaling
- Ecological Concepts
- Ecosystem Management

Maintaining IMN Status

Each year of the IMNP is defined by the first day of training for each chapter. All training and service must be completed within 12 months of the first day of training the first year. Eight hours of advanced training and 40 hours of service must be completed the second year. For example, if a chapter begins training April 1, 2008, the participants have until April 1, 2009 to complete their basic training, advanced training, and 40 hours of service. They have until April 1, 2010 to complete 8 hours of advanced training and 40 hours of service to maintain certification. April 1st remains to be the date from which certification is based.

Course Assessment

Each chapter will complete a pre and post training survey (provided by the State Coordinator). Participants are not required to complete the survey, however, volunteer participation will be encouraged to do so.+ The main purpose of the survey is to gather information that will be used to improve the program in the future. Additional assessments can be developed by the Chapter Coordinating Committee.

Chapter Coordinating Committees can create additional assessments either as an addendum to the pre and post training survey, or separately. Content questions can be added and customized to the pre and post training survey.

Absenteeism

Anticipating the need to set standards for maintaining class attendance, the State Steering Committee has set the following policy: Each chapter may set a local standard for the maximum number of classes that may be missed during a given training cycle without forfeiting the right to earn certification. Chapters are encouraged to set this standard at no more than five hours missed. However, regardless of the number of missed classes that a chapter allows, a trainee must make up any missed class(es) by attending the appropriate class(es) within 12 months of the completion of the training. “Appropriate” means the chapter can allow an advanced training class to count as make-up or the chapter may require that it be the same subject class presented during the next training cycle. If an advanced training class is used as make-up, then for that individual, it does not also count as advanced training. In this case the class must account for only one type of training - initial training OR advanced training. A participant may also attend the same subject class of a neighboring chapter within the same physiographic region, given adequate prior notification and space availability of the neighboring chapter. If a participant must miss more classes than the local standard allows then the respective chapter may consider an exception to their rule in special circumstances, such as medical problems, family illness, accidents, etc. However this should be the exception not the rule. Until these classes are made up, a volunteer cannot become a Certified Idaho Master Naturalist, but may continue to earn volunteer service hours or advanced training hours towards certification. Upon completion of all training coursework, it is recommended that the volunteer be recognized by the State Program as an Idaho *Master Naturalist Member*. Upon completion of all the requirements within the 12 months following the end of training, an Idaho Master Naturalist volunteer is awarded a state certificate and is recognized by the State Program as a Certified Idaho Master Naturalist.

Advanced Training Requirements

The purpose of Advanced Training is to provide Idaho Master Naturalists an opportunity to focus their volunteer efforts on one, or a few, specific topics that interest them. Advanced Training on an annual basis promotes continued learning and development, providing the experienced Master Naturalist with tools to work more effectively on new or advanced volunteer efforts. While the statewide Idaho Master Naturalist Program may occasionally provide statewide or regional advanced training opportunities, it is generally the responsibility of each chapter to insure the availability of sufficient Advanced Training opportunities to enable their members to attain their 8-hour minimum requirement. In addition, the local chapter should be a clearinghouse for notifying members of approved Advanced Training opportunities that exist outside their chapter boundaries.

Advanced Training courses may be made available by Statewide Program Sponsors, local chapter partners, local universities or nature centers, or directly by the local chapter. Master Naturalists must receive approval from their chapter *prior* to attending any Advanced Training course. Educational television shows are not a form of Advanced Training and therefore should not be approved as such. Advanced Training hours are counted one hour for each hour of training, exclusive of any travel time to and from the course.

The Chapter Leadership Group and/or the Chapter Coordinating Committee should use the following criteria when reviewing Advanced Training opportunities for possible approval:

Does the Advanced Training opportunity:

1. Promote continued learning and development of naturalist skills?
2. Provide Master Naturalists with knowledge and skills to work in volunteer efforts?
3. Provide Master Naturalists an opportunity to focus their interests in one or a few specific topics?
4. Build on the core curriculum initially provided by the local chapter?
5. Provide information on natural resources and resource management applicable to Idaho?
6. Direct trained volunteers toward specific programs in need of their services?
7. Take advantage of local partnerships?

Advanced Training opportunities must meet criteria 1-5. It is suggested that the remaining criteria also be a part of the opportunity. An advanced training approval form can be found in Appendix II.

Fingerprinting Requirements

All Idaho Master Naturalist Participants will be fingerprinted prior to volunteer service. Fingerprinting must be performed by a trained individual either at an IMNP training session or at a law enforcement office. The cost of fingerprinting will be covered either by the participant at the time of fingerprinting, or will be included in the price of the IMNP fee.

Fingerprinting cards may be provided by a local law enforcement office or the trained fingerprinter. Cards can be obtained by contacting the Bureau of Criminal Investigation.

Contact Bureau of Criminal Identification

PO Box 700
Meridian, ID 83680-0700
Ph: 208.884.7130
Fx: 208.884.7193

After fingerprinting, cards are to be sent to the address above with a check for \$10/card, directions for them to run a 7 state check, and an address to where the results should be sent. This process should be completed by the Chapter Coordinating Committee, not individual participants. After receiving the fingerprint cards and results BACK from the Bureau of Criminal Identification, they should be placed in a safe or filing cabinet that is locked. *Fingerprints*,

scanned copies, and results are not kept in any state system at the Bureau of Criminal Identification. The fingerprint results are not to be distributed to anyone or used for any purpose other than the Idaho Master Naturalist Program.

This requirement can be waived by the Chapter Coordinating Committee. The form in Appendix II can be submitted to the State Coordinator to waive the fingerprinting requirement.

Volunteer Service

Volunteer service hours are those direct contact hours spent on Idaho Master Naturalist projects approved by the local chapter. Time spent on program administration, such as serving on the Chapter Coordinating Committee, or serving as a Board or Committee member, should also be eligible for service hours credit. Local chapters, at their discretion, may limit the number of such volunteer hours credited to the individual's annual volunteer requirement, however the State Steering Committee recommends that for Chapter Coordinating Committee members, all 40 hours of service may be obtained getting the chapter started the first year.

Service may involve a series of short, unrelated volunteer experiences, a long-term commitment to a single project or resource or anything in between. A Master Naturalist may earn their hours working independently or as part of a team, perhaps on a class project. Master Naturalist volunteer hours can come in the form of outreach, such as educational or interpretive services, assistance to statewide sponsor or local partner programs and/or research, or simply manual labor that benefits the local natural resources. For a Master Naturalist volunteer, the opportunity to do meaningful and interesting work is the reward. Idaho Master Naturalist trainees will vary in their abilities. Some will want volunteer opportunities to be presented to them, while others will see a need and want to design their own project. *Chapter Coordinating Committees need to make it clear to the participants from the beginning of the training what kinds of volunteer opportunities will be approved and how wide or narrow the volunteer opportunities are.* For example, one chapter might focus their participants to volunteer at one location for one agency, while another chapter might allow their participants to Idaho Master Naturalist participants to seek out volunteer opportunities themselves. *There are few constraints with volunteer service: volunteer service must be dedicated to the beneficial management of the natural resources and natural areas within their communities and that the service must be for public benefit, not personal gain.*

Volunteer Contribution Areas

Idaho Master Naturalist Volunteers should record contributions in the following areas:

- **Educational Programming (EP)** This area indicates activities or programs in which the IMN educates the public. This includes interpretive programs at parks; presentations at fairs, booths, etc.; and educational presentations to identified audiences, such as garden clubs, school groups, homeowner associations, etc. This also includes training of other non IMN volunteers or identified groups of volunteers to assist IMNs in delivering a program. Educational efforts include the time spent planning, implementing, and evaluating the program.
- **Citizen Science Activities (CS)** This area indicates service involving data collection, monitoring, biological inventories, and other research-oriented activities. Examples include bird censuses, Wildlife Mapping, and the Idaho Frog and Toad Calling Survey. The activities may be a part of statewide projects or projects specific to a local partner.
- **Stewardship Activities (SA)** This area indicates hands-on activities intended to improve habitat and other natural resources, or, in some cases, to improve the ability of the public to access these resources. These activities may include exotic plant removal, habitat restoration, and trail building. As with other service projects, these activities must be for public benefit, not personal gain, and be approved by the chapter.
- **Chapter Formation (CF)** Any work toward the formation of a chapter. This includes any activities in planning training, gathering participants, forming partnerships, attending planning meetings.
- **Administrative Work (AW)** Any administrative work for the IMNP or a sponsoring agency. Filing papers, data entry, copying, filing. This does not include chapter start up administrative tasks.
- **Chapter and Volunteer Management Time (ADMN)** This time includes efforts spent on chapter organization, volunteer development, training and other management roles. This may include: leading general membership meetings; planning and supervising IMN training classes; working on a chapter newsletter; communication efforts, such as telephone trees; attending state meetings; and any other activities that maintain and support the effectiveness of the chapter and the statewide program. Chapter and Volunteer Management Time does not include management activities associated with planning, implementing or reporting on specific education, citizen science, or stewardship projects reported under those categories. Local chapters, at their discretion, may limit the number of such volunteer hours credited to the individual's annual volunteer requirement and should indicate these limitations in their by-laws.
- **Training Time(T)** Training time is time spent in official IMNP training activities (40 required by state).
- **AT (AT)** Training time is time spent in personal education to increase skills and knowledge; for example, advanced training, education conferences, or other settings that qualify as recertification training.

Reporting IMN Activities

All time (training and volunteer time) should be recorded on the electronic timesheet on the IMNP website <http://www.idahomasternaturalist.org>..

Once on this site, click on your chapter on the left. Next, click on the word “timesheet” on the left. From there, fill out your time and code it according to the categories on the previous page. It is the responsibility of the Idaho Master Naturalist to record all volunteer time and training time on this system.

If a participant is unable to access the online timesheet, a paper timesheet can be submitted (See appendix IX). Participants should enter time at least once a month to help keep their time sheet as current as possible

IMNs and Relocation

When a member moves to a different part of the state or wishes to become active in an alternate chapter, a transfer can be affected under the following conditions:

- The transferee brings a letter from the old chapter certifying that the transferee is a member in good standing, which includes paid dues (if applicable). In addition, the letter should provide information on the transferee’s status including completed coursework, certification, the number of volunteer service hours and advanced training hours that have been accrued during the current year.)
- It will be up to the new chapter’s Chapter Leadership Group to determine if the transferee needs to complete additional training that is specific to the new area, chapter and/or physiographic region during the new chapter’s next class training period.
- The transferee must agree to adhere to all the rules and policies of the new chapter--even if they are more stringent than those of the old chapter.
- The new chapter should accept all volunteer service and advanced training hours certified in the transfer letter from the old chapter.

Membership in Multiple Chapters

Master Naturalist volunteers may not carry membership in multiple chapters. Master Naturalist volunteers wishing an exemption to this rule, must petition the Idaho Master Naturalist Steering Committee, providing exceptional rationale as to why this exemption should be granted.

Recognizing IMN Volunteers

Upon completion of the certification, individuals receive the official Idaho Master Naturalist title, certificate and pin. These recognitions are renewed annually after recertification requirements have been met.

The Master Naturalist program also recognizes milestone achievements of volunteers. These milestones are cumulative and honor those volunteers who have given 250, 500, 1000, and 5000 hours of service. A volunteer may reach these milestones within one year or over the course of several years.

A Chapter may also establish local awards as seen fit. An example of such an award might include "the most hours served" or "Chapter Master Naturalist of the Year".

Contributions

IMNs may not charge fees for talks, slide presentations, demonstrations, etc. They may accept donations for these activities *on behalf of the chapter*. These gifts should be given to the chapter for the furtherance of the IMN mission.

Age Limits

The IMNP is geared toward adult participants though many of those adults may work with youth as part of their volunteer service. However, there are likely to be some highly motivated youth and parent-child teams who would fit into this program perfectly. Youth who are 14-17 years old may participate, provided that they (1) apply and enroll in the program using the application and enrollment procedures established by the chapter, and (2) be accompanied at trainings, field trips, and volunteer service events by a parent or other adult who is directly responsible for them.

A likely part of future program growth will be a youth-focused version of the program which would not carry the same restrictions. Opportunities to pilot such a version, such as by having a chapter based in a high school, will be considered by the Steering Committee on a case-by-case basis.

Discipline and Removal of IMNs

Policy and Procedures for the Disciplining and/or Removal of Members:

1. General Policy. As a policy, in all efforts, the Idaho Master Naturalist Program remains fair, objective, accurate and comprehensive. When it becomes obvious that an individual or group of individuals participating in any capacity of the program is misrepresenting the program and its written objectives, then that individual or group of individuals may be asked to step down from positions of leadership and/or participation in the program. Such a case could result in the revoking of Idaho Master Naturalist participation, Certification and/or Chapter Charter.

2. Background. It is important to review the founding principles of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program before addressing inappropriate behavior. The mission statement and the Idaho Master Naturalist Chapter Management Guidelines contain the primary tenets of the program.

3. Mission. The mission of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program is to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to actively work toward stewardship of Idaho's natural environment.

Key Elements of the Chapter Management Guidelines

- Maintain the program as an unbiased public service.
- Recognize one's responsibilities as an Idaho Master Naturalist.
- Recognize the autonomy of the various partners when coordinating or implementing projects and other chapter events.
- Keep accurate records.
- Present a positive public image that speaks well of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program.
- Actively participate as a team member with other individuals of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program.

Local Chapters should be instrumental in making members aware of these key elements of the State Program as well as their own bylaws, policies and procedures. Chapters shall be vigilant and responsible for ensuring members and affiliates are following policy.

3. Applicability. All Volunteers, Coordinating Committee Members, Planning Committee Members, Chapter Leadership Group, Chapter Committee Chairpersons, Advisors and State Steering Committee Members are subject to the same level of conduct.

4. Procedures for disciplining and/or dismissal. The subsequent procedures are to be followed on the occasion of disciplining and/or dismissing an applicable member of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program.

a. Informal Initial Step. When any member of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program and/or the public thinks an infraction of the tenets, policies, written rules or guidelines of the State or Chapter has occurred, that person should confront the offending party and state what violation they think has occurred and why. This simple act will resolve or preclude most problems an organization will encounter. Not all members are fully aware of the regulations of the program and may be just acting out of ignorance and not malice. It is important for individuals and officers/boards/ committees to know that their actions are being noted with regard to the tenets of the program. If the informal approach is unsuccessful in resolving the problem, the following formal procedure should be followed:

b. Formal Process. In order to demonstrate grounds for this action, the case must be presented in writing. If the case involves a volunteer, committee member, or committee, then the written case must be submitted to the Chapter Leadership Group. If the infraction involves a Chapter Officer, member of the Chapter Leadership Group, or a member of the Chapter Planning Committee, the written case must be submitted to the Chapter Advisor(s). If the case involves a Chapter Advisor, or a member of the State Steering Committee, the written case must be submitted to the State Program Coordinator.

A case may be brought to the attention of the local Chapter by:

- general public, non-affiliates of the Idaho Master Naturalist program
- partnering organizations of the Chapter or State Program

- member(s) of the chapter
- member(s) of the Chapter Leadership Group
- Chapter Advisor(s)
- member(s) of the State Steering Committee

c. The offending individual(s) shall be notified of the allegations within 7 days after the written case has been submitted. The individual(s) shall have 30 days to respond in writing to the case details before suggestions toward disciplinary action are made.

d. The Chapter Advisor(s) and/or the Chapter Leadership Group shall review the documented case and make recommendations toward disciplinary action and submit this information in writing to the State Program Coordinator. The submitted documentation must include a statement(s) from the offending person(s) and the original written case submitted to the committee(s). The State Program Coordinator may contact all involved parties regarding the case prior to taking the case to the State Steering Committee. The Program Coordinator will notify (in writing) the petitioners with the acceptance or non-acceptance of the outlined grounds and recommendations on the further process of disciplinary action.

e. The person(s) affected by the documented allegations and disciplinary action shall also be notified by the Program Coordinator of the case and the final disciplinary action.

f. Appeal Process. The individual(s) have 30 days to respond or appeal to the Chapter Leadership Group, Chapter Advisor, or State Program Coordinator. No response indicates an acceptance of the case recommendation and disciplinary action unless otherwise stated within the disciplinary course of action. In the case of an appeal, the Chapter Leadership Group or Chapter Advisor shall make a recommendation and resubmit the case to the State Program Coordinator for final resolution. Circumstances that may warrant reconsideration requests may include substantive error or omission of information that was submitted to the Program Coordinator.

Risk Management for IMN Activities

Idaho Master Naturalist volunteers must abide by all policies and procedures of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program and its sponsoring agencies.

All service projects must be approved by the chapter. Before participating in a service project, volunteers should receive an orientation to the project. A volunteer should understand the project's purpose, the project's protocols, hazards and risks associated with the project, and safety procedures. The project proposal form should contain all of this information and essentially serve as a job description for that project. Volunteers must be aware of their responsibilities as they relate to liability when planning programs. See "Planning for the Best and the Worst" in Appendix X.

Program Compliance Standards

While working on chapter start-up activities, volunteers will be accumulating hours toward their Idaho Master Naturalist Certification and will be volunteers for IDFG, regardless of if IDFG is a chapter sponsor. This work can exceed the 40 hours of required time for certification.

While in training, all volunteers who helped with chapter start up or those who did not, are not considered volunteers of IDFG or any chapter partner. Training time and volunteer time must be mutually exclusive. If any volunteer service is incorporated into training, the hours must be separated and all participants must sign on as a volunteer of the agency being served.

Volunteers working on a project (other than chapter start-up) for an agency other than IDFG, may need to sign additional volunteer forms for that agency. It is the responsibility of the Idaho Master Naturalist in Participant to seek out volunteer forms for each agency/organization they work with. Signing volunteer forms for volunteer service often allows for certain benefits and protections in case of injury or accident and benefits the volunteer.

The policy statements that follow apply to the conduct of all volunteers of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program while accumulating volunteer hours for IDFG (see rules above) and is taken directly from the IDFG Volunteer Policy Manual. Compliance with these policies is in the interest of the health of the volunteer and the integrity of the IMNP as a volunteer program under IDFG. Violation of these policies could result in the dismissal of the offender from any and all IDMN volunteer activities.

Driving State Vehicles – Volunteers possessing a valid driver’s license may drive state vehicles while performing volunteer services. Driving records will be checked as a regular part of the volunteers’ service.

Drug-Free Workplace – The IDFG, in compliance with the Omnibus Drug Act of 1988, has established this policy to assure a drug-free workplace and the continuance of federal funding to various Idaho fish and wildlife programs. No employee (volunteer) shall engage in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of any controlled substance while engaged in any official activity of IDFG, or when inhabiting any property or facilities owned, leased, or otherwise controlled by IDFG.

Equal Opportunity – Any instructor, student, or other person (volunteer) who believes they have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, or who wishes further information regarding Title 6, should contact the following office: • Director, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, 600 S. Walnut, P.O. Box 25, Boise, ID 83707. • Idaho Human Rights Commission, 450 W. State Street, Boise, ID 83720 • The Office for Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington D.C. 20240

Ethical Conduct – Volunteers are expected to set an example of safe, responsible and ethical behavior, as well as to exhibit good judgment at all times. • Alcoholic beverages must never be consumed before or during a volunteer work project. • Smoking or the use of chewing tobacco is prohibited during any work project.

• The use of foul language, profanity or any racial, ethnic, or religious slur is prohibited as is any demeaning reference to a disability, gender or sexual orientation. Employees (volunteers) shall

never solicit in their official capacity any gratuity or other benefit from any person under any circumstances. Employees (volunteers) shall not accept gratuities or other benefits exceeding a total retail value of (\$50) within a calendar year. All employees (volunteers) exercising any discretionary function shall make a conscious effort to be open to contact by all segments of Idaho society that have an interest in the exercise of that discretionary function. Employees (volunteers) shall not profit, directly or indirectly, from public funds under their control, nor have a private interest in any contract or grant made by them in their official capacity.

Federal Guidelines – Program guidelines must adhere to Federal guidelines set forth by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Federal Aid. Generally, Federal statutes deal with titles and codes, which ensure opportunity for service is available and accessible to all people and prevent discrimination in the administration and performance of duties.

- **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964** – Prohibits discrimination based on race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability in any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.
- **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** – Ensures that no qualified handicapped person shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.
- **The Age Discrimination Act of 1975** – Prohibits discrimination on the basis of age in any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. There is no maximum or minimum age volunteers must be to participate.
- **Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1975** – Prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex (gender) in any education program receiving Federal financial assistance.
- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1991** – Strengthened Rehabilitation Act of 1973 by ensuring that access and sites be modified to accommodate handicapped facilities, programs and access.

Felons and Referrals from the Judicial System – Felons and persons convicted of certain domestic violence offences are prohibited from possessing firearms. This means that IDFG volunteers may not put firearms into the hands of such individuals even when they have been ordered to attend a volunteer program or course.

Internet Use and Electronic Mail – The Internet and electronic mail are important tools utilized to achieve the goals of IDFG, especially in terms of productivity, research, and communications. As a state agency that values the trust and confidence of the public, we have high standards for the use of state equipment. The policy (POLICY NO. P-37.00) and guidelines outlined are designed to enhance the efficient and effective use of the Internet and email, and are applicable to all employees (volunteers) utilizing state-owned or managed computer equipment and/or state-funded network resources. It may also apply to personal equipment and communication when representing oneself as an IDFG employee (volunteer). Users should identify themselves properly when using the Internet, conduct themselves professionally as representatives of Idaho state government, and be aware that their activities reflect on the reputation and integrity of all state employees. Employees (volunteers) should have absolutely no expectation of privacy in using state-owned or managed computer equipment and/or state-funded resources. All

employees (volunteers) who have access to IDFG computers will sign the policy acknowledgment certifying they have read, understand, and will comply with this policy.

Volunteer Support and Recognition

Liability/Tort Claim Insurance – Volunteers are included within the definition of “employee” under the Idaho Tort Claims Act. Therefore, they are entitled to the same protection as an employee of the state. In addition, volunteers are covered under the state’s comprehensive general and automobile liability insurance policy for actions arising out of the performance of his/ her duties. However, when a volunteer is using his/her personal vehicle on state business, only the “employee” is covered in the event of a claim. The volunteers’ vehicle would be covered only under his/her personal insurance policies.

Reimbursement of Expenses – It is the policy of IDFG to not reimburse a volunteer for expenses incurred as a part of his/her service. It is the practice of IDFG to provide necessary materials, supplies, equipment, and facilities to allow volunteers to carry out assignments with little personal expense. Any agreement for reimbursement of expenses must be made with the regional volunteer coordinator prior to the expense being incurred. Costs of food, lodging or travel for volunteers may be covered to the same degree as classified employees of IDFG. The volunteer will file a DA-10 for reimbursement through normal channels and standard approval.

Risk Management – Volunteers, as well as employees, have the right to a safe workplace and safe working conditions. We work toward that goal by taking preventative steps and by demonstrating and practicing safe working habits. Alcohol use is not permitted on any volunteer project, including travel to and from the project site in state vehicles.

Personal Injury – All volunteers of IDFG are covered by Workman’s Compensation. Report injuries or claims as follows: • Report injuries, however slight, to the regional coordinator immediately. • Complete the Workers Compensation – First Report of Injury or Illness form (VF A-11). The electronic version of this form is found on the web at fishandgame.idfg.idaho.gov/cms/about/volunteer. Submit the completed form within five days of the occurrence. Coverage for volunteers includes medical, hospital and doctors’ fees only. There is no compensation for lost time from regular employment.

Volunteers Working With Youth

Youth Protection and Prevention of Sexual Harassment – In order to protect young students from those who would victimize them and protect volunteers from unwarranted allegations of abuse, all volunteers will adhere to the following policy:

Background Checks of Volunteers – Volunteers instructing and/or guiding youth in a classroom or field experience will first successfully complete a background check. This check will be made through IDFG and there will likely be an expense to the volunteer for fingerprinting.

Suspected abuse - If a volunteer suspects that any student has been subject to physical, mental or sexual abuse (regardless of where it may have occurred), they must report it immediately to their local law enforcement office and to the Regional Volunteer Coordinator.

Two-deep supervision - Two adults (volunteers and/or parents) must be present at all volunteer activities.

No one-on-one contact - One-on-one contact between a volunteer and a student is not permitted. In situations that require personal conferences, such as reviews and evaluations, the meeting is to be conducted in the full view of other people.

Respect of Privacy - Volunteers must respect the privacy of all participants in situations such as restroom breaks and may intrude only to the extent that health and safety requires. Volunteers need to protect their own privacy in similar situations.

Proper Preparation for Risk – Activities with elements of risk should never be undertaken without proper preparation, equipment, clothing, supervision, and safety measures.

Constructive Discipline – Discipline used during an activity shall be constructive and reflect values of the program and IDFG (i.e. respect, courtesy, etc.). Only in the case of self-defense or to prohibit the physical harm of others shall an instructor use physical force.

Sexual Harassment and Bullying – No sexual harassment or bullying, even between students, is to be tolerated. Volunteers who observe or are made aware of any inappropriate behavior involving other volunteers or students are to intervene and talk to the offending person. They are to report the incident to IDFG at the earliest time possible.

Appendix I: Chapter Advisor Guidelines

The Advisor's role is as follows:

1. Attend initial Local Chapter Coordinators' training along with other designated members of Local Coordinating Committee.
2. Give advice, make recommendations, inform and notify the chapter on appropriate business in a professional way.
3. The advisor should not be the manager of the chapter business or activities. However, as an ex-officio member of the chapter's Board of Directors, the advisor is expected to attend all scheduled Board meetings and provide counsel and advice when needed. He or she is to be a chapter supporter and available to advise, recommend, inform and notify the chapter and/or its members on and of appropriate and professional matters.
4. Be familiar with the goals, activities and mission of the organization and local Chapter.
5. Be willing to meet with the officers of the organization to discuss expectations of their roles and responsibilities.
6. Assist the organization in maintaining the original goals, mission, vision, and operational framework set forth by the organizers of the chapter as well as assist in further developing realistic goals with the chapter's Board of Directors that are within the parameters of the statewide Idaho Master Naturalist program.
7. Facilitate opportunities for Master Naturalist volunteers to exercise initiative and judgment within proper measure of autonomy when coordinating chapter events and activities. In keeping with this approach, advisors should participate in event planning and attend events when possible or when identified as necessary through the planning process.
8. Be aware of the chapter's financial status via review of financial statements and approval of expenditures.
9. Be aware of the Idaho Master Naturalist State policies and guidelines and other agency or organization guidelines that establish expectations for volunteer requirements, behavior and activities. Ensure that the group and its officers know where these policies and guidelines are published, what rules are, why they exist, and the consequences for choosing to operate outside their parameters. You are expected to report violations or potential violations to the State Program Coordinator.
10. The advisor should be ready to assist the Master Naturalist State Program and State Steering Committee as needed as they may be called upon to implement regulations or policies from time to time.

11. The advisor is responsible for notifying the chapter officers and the State Steering Committee regarding chapter concerns. The chapter officers are responsible for notifying the State Program Coordinator regarding advisor problems or concerns.

The Chapter-Advisor(s) relationship is not a one-way street, in that the Chapter and its leaders also have responsibilities. These responsibilities include an appropriate level of communication, providing opportunities for advisor interaction and a commitment to the success of the organization as a whole.

Appendix II (print double sided)



Idaho Master Naturalist

Approval for Advanced Training

Name Submission date

Training opportunity information:

Training Title

Date of Training Actual training time: hrs min

Instructor Org/Agency

Training Location

Training must be PRE-APPROVED by the chapter advisor or chapter president.

Approval: chapter advisor chapter president

Type of training: (check all that apply) Lecture Presentation/Demonstration

Outdoor Hands on Other

Training Description: _____

Value of Training (to be filled out after training)

Skills Learned	
Knowledge Gained	

Student's Evaluation of Training (to be filled out after training)

Strengths	
Recommended changes	

Do not write below this line
This section to be filled out by program administrators

Pre-Approved by	approval date
# hours recorded	recorded by
	date recorded



APPENDIX III Idaho Master Naturalist Fingerprint Waiver

The Coordinating Committee for the _____ chapter of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program has decided to waive the fingerprinting requirement.

The partners of this chapter are:
(list partners here)

Each partner recognizes the risks involved in not fingerprinting the Idaho Master Naturalist Volunteers. Master Naturalists who volunteer for our agencies and organizations will sign up to do so under our already existing volunteer programs. We take full responsibility for the safety and actions of these volunteers while they volunteer for us.

We will notify other agencies that use Idaho Master Naturalists for volunteer work that a background check and fingerprinting have not been performed.

Signature of all Coordinating Committee Members and/or a representative from all partners required below. (Please date the signatures).

Appendix X Risk Management: Planning for the Best and the Worst

Nothing can replace the good management practices of planning, documentation and extension of that information to your representatives through good training. In order to adequately prepare for any activity you must prepare for the best and the worst to occur. While there is no inclusive list of items from which to plan your activity, there are some general points from which to start. The following are some items which may assist you in your planning process.

Items to be Considered When Evaluating Risk

Be aware of the necessity to know:

- Types of activities
- Plan of supervision
- Location, number, and competence of supervisors, and of participants
- Crowd control
- Safety procedures
- First aid procedures and practices
- Plant and equipment maintenance
- **If at any time you fear for your safety, remove yourself from the situation immediately.**

Be alert to dangerous conditions:

- Physical facilities and areas
- Participants: rowdiness, horseplay, general observations, discipline, if children; physical abilities (vision, clumsiness), experience, and ability to handle tools, if adults

Put overall administration into specific written procedures:

- Medical treatment authorization forms, if children
- Schedules
- Registration forms
- Do's and Don'ts for participants
- Emergency procedures (before and after accident)
- Safety rules
- Job descriptions (Includes Volunteers)
- Participant Insurance requirements

Ensure specific supervision criteria:

- Communicate, so that participants understand the responsibilities of their position.
- Be sure all representatives understand and adhere to safety practices and procedures.

- Be alert to changing conditions which can bring about hazardous conditions.
- Ensure existing sponsoring agency policy regarding activity is followed.

Be clear on instruction given to those involved in activity regarding

- Skills needed for various jobs
- Instruction for safety, courtesies of the game, etc.
- Protective devices.
- Rules and regulations.
- Warnings

Complete all necessary forms

- Medical form
- General Waivers
- Equine Waivers, if necessary
- Accident insurance, if necessary