Notes from New Class Director Meeting

November 30th, 2020 Called to order at 1:02 p.m.

Meeting led by Michelle Haggerty and Mary Pearl Meuth

\*Agenda: New Service Guidelines Updated 11/25/20 and another update expected 11/30/20.

\* Basic & Advanced Training Guidelines for 2021

\* Distance Basic and Advanced Training Resources

\* Field Session Discussion

\* Volunteer Service

**Updates guidelines are through December 6th (to be updated weekly)**

These county based guidelines are based on factors of positivity and rise in COVID infection rates aor hotspots. Chapters are urged to err on the side of caution.

The new guidelines will be sent out to chapter presidents , will be discussed at the President’s meeting scheduled for Monday December 7th, and are on the TMN state website. Chapters should go to the TMN state website weekly for changes in status. Counties are color coded either Red, Orange, Yellow or Green. Red/Pink= counties with **2 of 3** factors of a positivity rate of 8% or higher OR a rapid rise in cases OR hotspots Yellow/Orange= counties with a positivity rate of 8% or higher OR a rapid rise in cases OR hot spots. Green are those not listed as Yellow or Red

Each has a different level of restrictions in activities, including face coverings, distancing and decreased capacity . Counties that are “red” are asked to stop all in person activities until further notice. For chapters with multiple counties, or members in multiple counties, travel between counties for the purpose of meeting or service is not permitted. Multiple county chapter should behave as if all are “red”, for the purpose of the guidelines. Guidelines apply to both indoor and outdoor activities

**Temporary Basic Training Guidelines for 2021**

Temporary Policy Timeframe: Jan 1 – Dec 31 2021

**ALL Basic training classes** Minimum 40 hours of training is still required.

Temporary Policy: Allows for pre-recorded basic training sessions with REQUIRED follow up live Q&A with the same speaker as the recording All 40 planned basic training hours may be done this way, however, it is encouraged to be used minimally or only as needed

Virtual, live training is encouraged. Encourage regional/shared training sessions with neighboring chapters

NO YouTube videos allowed. TPWDs Texas Nature Trackers Facebook videos may be used, but for any pre-recorded videos used for training, be sure to stay true to teaching about your ecoregion. Make sure your trainees are receiving the proper training. If you use pre-recorded videos, be sure to audit ahead of time to ensure region content is appropriate.

\*Ask trainees for patience and flexibility

**Field Sessions:** First, discuss with your chapter leadership and new trainees to see if they are comfortable with restricted field sessions (smaller groups with distancing. (Not for “red” counties), individual at home hands-on, virtual field sessions. The state office has 3 cameras that may be lent out to pre-record virtual field sessions which should be followed up with a live Q&A

Consider making field sessions not conditional for certification.

Open discussion: Please send any suggestions to Michelle or Mary Pearl, keeping in mind that a response from them may take 2-3 weeks.

**Basic Training GOALS for 2021**

The state office is considering a shared calendar so that other chapters may be able to see others’ schedules for help with and to encourage \*regional\* training collaboration (will only be visible to New Class Directors)

**Volunteer Service Guidelines for 2021**

Volunteer service requirements will not change for 2021

**Virtual Volunteer Fair 2021 planned**

Call for proposals – open till Dec 15th. Help with finding project to add to it.

Save the Date – Feb 3rd and 4th.

**Advanced Training** Guidelines will not change for 2021.

Will again be allowing all 8 hours to be obtained virtually.

Different for 2021: These virtual AT hours may be obtained by viewing pre-recorded training \*\*providing there is a live follow up Q&A with the speaker

The state office is organizing a series of virtual advanced training called

TMN Tuesdays. Featured speakers hosted once a month via Webex

From noon to 1 pm, dates are

January 12th

Feb 9th Doug Tallamy has agreed to speak !

March 9th April 13th May 11th June 8th July 13th August 10th Sept 14th ( Oct not included, because of the state meeting) Nov 9th Dec 14th

**Regional Webex Accounts**

Training for these is still available

They are hosted through regional gmail accounts, as previously

WebEx capacity is 2,000 on the new accounts and no time limit

Reminder to **check the calendar** before setting new meetings. Remember these are shared accounts.

Trainings on how to use WebEx accounts offered by the VMS team are on pause

Thank you for you patience with these new tools.

**NOTE:** If you have not sent in you training class information as requested in the email that was sent out, please do.

**New Training Class Director Biannual Calls to continue in 2021. June 2021 date to be announced.**

Open Discussion: With updates from today, what changes do you expect with your new training schedule ?

Consider ways to build community when virtual and distanced

Virtual (but together)

Mentorships

Social time built into schedule

In person and Distanced

Individual tool kits

Indoor and outdoor capacities

Health and safety gear

There was chat discussion about concern about the lack of camaraderie when a class will be held 100% virtual. Some suggestions: consider a virtual “getting to know you”, Chapter buddies (mentors from existing chapter members), strictly social zoom or WebEx meeting (not for training or volunteer hours), Show and tell (3 trainees at the beginning of each class), starting 10 – 15 mins early each day for chat.

Adjourn: 2:40