



ASSOCIATION of
FISH & WILDLIFE
AGENCIES

ANGLER AND BOATER R3 COMMITTEE

North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Meeting, Spokane, WA

Chair: Ty Gray (Arizona Game and Fish)

Vice-Chair: Kris McCarthy (Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game)

Staff Contact: John Lord (Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies)

Wednesday, March 16, 2022

1:00 – 4:00 PM Pacific

87th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference

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Committee Charge: The Angler and Boater R3 Committee guides actions that maintain and enhance participation in angling, boating and other aquatic resource-based recreation including:

- Promoting policies that enhance aquatic-based recreational opportunities.
- Working with partners to identify barriers to participation and develop programs to overcome them.
- Facilitating the flow of information regarding trends in participation; benefit of enhancement programs; and costs of barriers to participation among partners, users, and policy makers

Scheduled Discussion Items

Call to Order / Review Agenda / Introductions

Approval of Minutes from the 86th North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference

- Minutes approved.

Sponsor Recognition and Remarks

- None identified.

RBFF R3 Update

- (Presentation.)
- We're going to continue with get onboard campaign, making a few tweaks. We've had an alliance with Disney that has opened some new doors, such as on ABC on Holey Moley (mini golf game show). We're also expanding into TikTok.
- We want to focus on women moving forward in 2023 campaign. Building on results on Making Waves campaign from 2018.
 - Women drive 70-80% of all consumer purchasing decisions.
 - We think we can grow fishing 15% by getting women to account for half of all anglers.
 - We're researching links between fishing and boating and women's mental health.
 - Preparing for National Fishing and Boating Week in June.
- State engagement
 - Boat registration reactivation program. Working with 17 states on direct mail program. Adding Facebook and e-mail, diversifying comms.
 - Program Grants – Working on retention esp. during the pandemic. We've been developing case studies and sharing stories.

- We worked on helping prioritize funding through grants programs. We supported 11 programs in 10 states. \$208K in grants.
- Education Fund Grants from George H.W. Bush Vamos A Pescar – 15 grantee programs in 6 states, \$185K.
- Mobile First Catch Centers – trailers with states outfitted with equipment to go to urban areas and get interest. 16 trailers, 11 more in the works. Partnering with USFWS in the Northeast.
- Regional partnerships
 - NEAFWA completed a photoshoot to reflect diversity of people, opportunities, and landscapes. Published retention marketing guide.
 - Comment: We've been using them. They are great. Thanks, RBFF!
 - Working on photoshoots with others, next up is MAFWA, with WAFWA and SEAFWA in the works.
- State marketing workshop
 - Hybrid meeting in Texas this past February.
 - AL, OK, and TN shared different perspectives in R3 experience. Presentation and recording will be online soon.
- State Angler R3 Scorecard State Progress
 - This has been progress over the last 3 years in the scorecard, more states moving to launch / plan implementation and sustain / monitoring phase.
 - 29 have FTE Angler R3 Coordinators.
 - 33 States have full-time marketing manager.
 - RBFF is able to continue supporting the states with implementation of their plans and developing CRM systems.
- Some staff changes recently – Dave Chanda became President!

Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports Update

- (Presentation)
- Council seeks to facilitate growth of hunting sports and promote awareness of contributions the community makes toward conservation.
- Team is fully staffed, 4 people.
- National Hunting and Shooting Sports Action Plan in 2016 started capacity building, leading to a work force and implementation work plan. Led to PR Mod, which helped make funding available for R3 work. Going from forming the team to performing.
- Director Williams – It's time to build on what we've collectively learned and amplify it.
- Council has assembled new working groups – TAG and TAG Review Panel - Assess where we are and communicate remaining gaps.
- Council has secured funding through the Multi-State Conservation Grant (MSCG) Program to help address community needs.
 - TAG, Assessment Group, update National R3 clearinghouse. Engaging at local and national level.
- Been working with Southwick to research hunting licenses.
 - Covid spike of 5%, retained 60% of those.
- Also working with RBFF to host new practitioner training and present a unified front for R3 community. **Join us at National R3 Symposium in May.**

License Sales Trends

- (Presentation)
- [Asafishing.org/data-dashboard](https://asafishing.org/data-dashboard).
- Sales are down for the past year, but that's not necessarily a bad thing because the numbers were up so high the previous year. There is a strong need for retention efforts.
- -6% in 2021, but 13% in 2020, +6% over 2019, and +9% over 2011, so overall numbers are still good.

- Reviewed statistics by age and age. Appears that older Millennials (35-44) are picking up fishing despite lack of marketing to that group, unknown why.
- Big boost in recruitment in 2020 – someone we haven't identified over the last 10 years.
 - Number of new recruits fell last year but still up significantly because of increase in 2020.
- RBFF Special Report is coming out soon.
- License data dashboard from a number of partners.
 - Tool requested from R3 practitioners so we could get a live pulse on trends. We need states engaging to be effective – we need to get more data. Let us know you're interested and we'll get you involved!
- PII data not needed for the dashboard. Your license vendor can handle this.
- **Contact Lisa@Southwickassociates.com to get involved with the dashboard.**
- Excise tax data - 2021 is 29% over 2019.
- Discussion
 - The one on ASA now is not real-time?
 - There are 3 States with issues, that might be it.
 - A lot of states have been targeting families, maybe it's having a cooperative impact across the country.
 - A few states may be doing their own research to check into trends. We'll share additional info.

National Fish Habitat Update

- (Presentation)
- National Fish Habitat Board
 - Three new Board members, including two Tribal members. 26 members total.
 - Board is working on policy updates. Next meeting coming up in April.
- Fish Habitat Partnerships
 - Working on compiling together recommendations for Regional Partnerships. Projects need to have 1:1 match. Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership is seeking a new coordinator, some retirements also expected soon.
 - Bass Pro Shops U.S. Open – We received single private donation in its history on November 26, 2021 – A check for nearly \$1.6M to fund priority projects. We are turning it into an RFP that will go out in the next week for reservoirs, natural lakes, and tributaries that connect them. Window is a little small where we can put the funding, but we're hopeful we can get some great projects. Request closes at end of May
 - We've been invited to attend the World's Fishing Fair March 30-April 3 in MO. Open to the public.

WSFR Update

- (Presentation)
- Some changes to excise tax occurred due to differences in estimates v. actual. We unintentionally gave our partners some wrong information as a result. We're going to continue to work how to provide the best information to partners, just know that some information may be an estimate.
- FY22 Apportionments had a 3.5% decrease, but overall relatively flat and consistent from 2013.
- (Bob ran through data showing general trends – easier to see his presentation than try to capture it in the notes.)
- WSFR has been working on the cycle of success. We're trying to show success stories, such as Boat Hoist System for boating access in Texas.
- Boating Infrastructure Grant Program
 - FY22 – Tier 1 – Received 23 applications totaling \$3.3M in Federal funding.
 - FY22 – Tier 2 – Received 22 applications totaling \$21.7M in Federal funding.
 - Anticipate announcing FY22 recipients in March. Anticipate publishing FY23 Funding Announcements this June.

- Success stories – North Coast Harbor Transient Marina in Cleveland OH.
- Clean Vessel Act Program Update
 - FY22 – 37 applications totaling \$16.6M currently under review, expected results in May.
 - Anticipate publishing FY23 in August.
- TR Genius Prize Competitions
 - 6 categories, invasive species to wildlife trafficking. These are actual competitions, represent a form of crowd sourcing and a way to reach broader groups of thinkers to address difficult topics.
 - **Launched March 1. Encourage the public to get involved! Visit [Challenge.gov](https://www.challenge.gov).**
 - **Judges also sought for these challenges.**
 - Up to \$100K for each award. Deadline of April 30.

Wildlife Forever – Clean Drain Dry Update

- (Presentation)
- Campaign to educate boaters and anglers about invasive species.
- 2021 – Strides in marketing / message, but also in access. Empowering people to make behavior change. We did a pilot with USFWS last year on Refuge access. Looking at issues such as species of concern and tools that can be used to manage those species. Looking to advance this work with the states.
- 2021
 - New PSA targeting new users, including nonmotorized users, shoreland owners, and shoreline anglers. Television ads and digital ads.
 - Industry engagement. MLF, USAngling, ASA, and Yamaha – we’re trying to talk in the language that they use with their stakeholders. MOUs will help with engaging new partners.
 - Ambassador of the Year – Radio host and fishing guide Curt Quesnell was selected.
 - **2022 Nominations open!**
- Protect the West campaign – Protecting open access by helping people understand the rules and regulations, minimize long lines, and avoid confusion from the public.
- Education and Outreach is the core of what we do.
 - We live by 7 – typically takes 7 views of an ad for someone to remember it and put it into practice.
 - We work through different means – social / digital, television, radio/print, outdoor media, outreach materials. Seeking messaging that encourages the public to be a partner.
- Joining forces – we do what we do with partners.
- Message in Action through a number of means. Banners, bait bags, etc. – these are all ways to engage where the public is.
- 2021 by the numbers
 - For example...
 - 6.4M fuel stations and bait shop impressions.
 - 3.8M radio impressions.
 - OVER 2.3 BILLION IMPRESSIONS SINCE 2006.
- Contact Eungen@WildlifeForever.org or [CleanDrainDry.org](https://www.CleanDrainDry.org).

State R3 Retention Efforts

- ASA
 - Discussed what as an industry we will do to retain anglers. That includes working with the States. Are there things States are doing to retain anglers from the last two years? We need to focus on that retention.
 - Not every state has a first catch mobile center, but do all states have relationships with fishing tackle retailers? We want to help foster that relationship as an industry association.
 - What do we do with the people who just came on last year and don’t know what to do, where to fish? The retailers know the answers to these questions. We want to hold onto

- customers.
- Barb Gigar – We’ve asked the same questions. We’re working on license purchases, trying to develop new partnerships with Parks and Rec in urban / suburban areas, being more in tune with outdoor recreation as a whole. I’m reaching out Bass Pro to develop a passport for kayakers, which seem to be more popular, to help develop some simple educational pieces.
- Scott – We have two business summits in AZ. Human driver seems to be important.
- OR – Partnered with retailers to develop a fishing display with info. Retailers found it enlightening and a successful end cap. There’s value to them in keeping it up. High end stores often forget the basics that need to be taught, and the end caps are useful. On retention side, we’ve pursued some campaigns with amazing results.
- Jennifer W.: Lot's of proactive comms! And we are taking Glenn's advice to park our trailers at retailers to get folks fishing.
- Barb G.: Aquatic Resources Education Association (AREA) conference Angler and other aquatic education and outreach practitioners September 25-29, 2022. Registration opens June 1. areanet.org
- Bob C. – Please point the Directors to the Dashboard.

Wrap-up Discussion / Action Items

- No significant action items identified at the meeting, but see a few follow-up opportunities below.

Meeting Adjourned at approximately 3:15 pm Pacific.

Meeting Summary

- RBF gave an update on recent activities. Highlights including focusing on women in the 2023 campaign, given their significant growth potential in angling and purchasing power, and pursuing additional state engagement and regional partnerships, working to improve retention of anglers added during the pandemic.
- The Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports gave an update, including noting that it has secured funding through the Multi-State Conservation Grant Program to help address community needs.
- Southwick and Associates gave an update on license sales. Sales are down for the past year, but that’s not necessarily a bad thing because the numbers were up so high the previous year. There is a strong need for retention efforts.
- The National Fish Habitat Partnership added three new Board members, is working on compiling recommendations for regional partnerships, and received a donation of nearly \$1.6M at the Bass Pro Shops U.S. Open last year.
- WSFR gave an update on its funding status and the release of the Theodore Roosevelt Genius Prize Challenges.
- Wildlife Forever gave an update on the Clean Drain Dry campaign, which has continued to make strides in marketing, messaging, improving access, and empowering people to make behavior change.

Summary for AFWA Business Meeting

- Updates
 - Presentations from the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation, Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports, Southwick and Associates, the National Fish Habitat Partnership, FWS Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration, and Wildlife Forever-Clean Drain Dry.
 - Members continue to ask questions about how to improve retention and share case studies with each other.
 - The license dashboard at <https://asafishing.org/data-dashboard/> is a useful tool for tracking sales trends that the Committee will continue to use, and encourages other Directors to take advantage of it for R3 efforts.

- Action Items
 - None.

Action Items

- None identified.

Progress and Opportunities

- The license dashboard at <https://asafishing.org/data-dashboard/> is a useful tool for tracking sales trends that the Committee will continue to use, and encourages other Directors to take advantage of it for R3 efforts.

Threats and Emerging Issues Identified

None identified.

New Opportunities Identified

- The [National R3 Symposium](#) will be held in May.
- Contact Lisa@Southwickassociates.com to get involved with the dashboard for license sales.
- Encourage the public to get involved in the [Theodore Roosevelt Genius Prize Challenges](#). Judges are also still being sought for the Challenges – Please contact stephanie_rickabaugh@fws.gov.
- Nominations are open for the Clean Drain Dry Ambassador for 2022. Contact Eengen@WildlifeForever.org for more information.

Submitted by:

Ty Gray, Chair