

## Outreach Working Group Meeting Notes

86th North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference Virtual Meeting

March 9, 2021

Chair: Jenifer Wisniewski (TN)

### Agenda

IHEA-USA – Alex Baer gives an overview of the new face of IHEA

Making It Last Phase 2 – LA, CT, VT, MS, SC give campaign overviews

Making It Last Next Steps Discussion – whole group

RBFF- Survey Research with target audience segmentation- Stephanie Hussey

Success Story Round Robin

Open Discussion – what is needed in our community of communicators? What other AFWA groups should we be working with? New projects for Outreach working group?

### International Hunter Education Association (IHEA)-USA – Update from Alex Baer:

50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of IHEA.

Initiatives for 2021-2022:

1) Build Industry Trust;

2) Re-establish organization identity—including re-examining who is audience, who IHEA serves. New logo developed. Examine what IHEA does best—including national standards for hunting safety, hunting incident investigation academy, and National hunting incident database. New, improved website launched in Jan. 2021. New & improved hunter incident database soon to be launched.

3) Enhance Communications around Industry Education

Upcoming from IHEA:

- New Firearm Fundamentals Online Safety Class
- 2021 Annual Conference online: May 19-20 (two half days).
- Train the Trainer programs

### Making It Last Phase 2 – LA, CT, VT, MS, SC give campaign overviews:

Online toolkit to help agencies with relevancy. Rolled out with first 5 pilot state two years ago. Phase II states became involved in 2020. Phase II states (LA, CT, VT, MS, SC) used digital tactics to reach people who are not hunters and anglers. Various types of campaigns are built into the toolkit. The toolkit is ideal to help those without marketing backgrounds. Plans from various states are included that others can use. Makingitlast.org.

South Carolina (Kristin Coulter): Priority was an engaging first impression and call to action for audience. A new add message each week with main web pages and Spanish language pages. Lessons Learned: A web platform to help with analytics and ROI would have been helpful. Making it Last postings were some of agencies best, most viewed, communications. Agency gained many new likes on social media (approx. 14 to 15 thousand).

Connecticut (Paul Benjunas): Used eight images—such as biologist in field—along with gifs (animations). Partnered with Good Marketing. 75 locations identified across the state in which audience received same adds or variations of adds during 8-week period. 26,000 visits to page.

Question (from Jenifer): What are next steps? What might be in the way of other states using this?

## Discussion:

One challenge is the focus R3 efforts require of agency staff.

Request for fonts used in media materials to be shared for access by agencies that don't otherwise have access to fonts and graphic design software.

Consider using free online apps, such as Canva, for graphics work.

Note that conservation organizations can use the toolkit in partnership with their state fish & wildlife agency.

Can we make font available for everyone? Or recommend a free font?

Survey to states about MIL

- How do you use MIL?
- What else do you need?

## **Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF)- Survey Research with target audience segmentation- Stephanie Hussey:**

Survey shows surge in fishing and boating. From 2019 to 2020, 11% increase in fishing license sales. 3.2 million increase in people fishing in 2020.

Tactics for Retention (from *Castig a Wide Net* report from Nov. 2020):

New anglers and boaters are younger (25-34). They're very likely to continue fishing or boating. New and re-activated anglers desire access to places that are close & information on "how-to."

Recommendations: Support urban fishing programs, highlight convenient locations, and others.

See infographic at [www.takemefishing.org/whosOnBoard](http://www.takemefishing.org/whosOnBoard) for content and messaging.

Fishing & Boating plays into message about supporting mental health—relaxing & unwinding, etc. Workshop with Dr. Sue Varma recently covered this topic. 4 M's of mental health: Movement, Mindfulness, Mastery, and Meaningful Engagement.

RBFF's social media resources also online. Get On Board Campaign. More content is coming. Press release coming out too.

State Virtual Marketing Workshops held in February. One message was "be quick, clear, & kind." Sara Parker Pauley presented on Putting Customer First. Presentations also included use of automated platforms, use of a targeted predictive modeling marketing approach, use of focus groups to explore new and returning anglers' attitudes toward fishing, retention strategies for first time anglers, use of a comprehensive survey for new and reactivated anglers, targeting those who are undecided about purchasing a fishing license. Many more resources at Wisconsin's website.

Tennessee Survey Findings: Did fishing & hunting help you get through Covid? Common reasons—stress relief, get outside, enjoy the family. Most fished with friends or family (so encourage people to take people with them). Respondents indicated high number of times fishing. People want to know where to go to fish, how to tutorials, biologist report, opening/closing dates. Participants desired amenities—bathrooms & picnic tables for example. There is much research available for retaining anglers.

**Bear Wise** (Dan Gibbs): AFWA considering taking over BearWise program for national administration. If so, a webinar in May will be offered and a survey to states will be sent, followed by formal recommendations, and finally a vote by AFWA members in September.

## **Research Report Summary**

License Dashboards (Rob Southwick) —an R3 tool that helps us understand trends in participation, is customer base shifting, are current tactics working? See [asafishing.org/data-dashboard/](http://asafishing.org/data-dashboard/). 35 states expected to be participating with sharing data by the end of 2021.

2020 Summary of Data:

Fishing: New license sales: Up 13.5%. Female up 24%. Male up 10%. 18—44 year old drove growth.

Churn Rate: Down 7.3%

New Recruits: Up 38%

Hunting: # of unique license buyers: Up 5%. Female up 15%, male up 4%. 18-44 year old drove growth.

Churn rate: Up 4%

New recruits: Up 38%

Next Steps: Message to states—Join the dashboard! All states are needed. It's free for states (grant funded), and there are ways to overcome data sharing restrictions.

The future: Real-time dashboards with up-to date license data and any time.

**More findings:** Don't talk to anglers in a one-size-fits-all approach. Motivations are NOT unique to any gender, age, race, and income. People often don't know why they fish. Seven personas that help describe why people fish.

Examples of angler market segments:

- Occasional angler (13%). Want to meet a fishing goal, before moving on to another outdoor rec goal. They enjoy many outdoor activities and probably don't call themselves an angler.
- The Traditionalist
- The Zen Angler

See [asafishing.org/angler-personas-report/](http://asafishing.org/angler-personas-report/) for more information.

**Research on Return on Investment** for outdoor rec industry. Focus on excise tax, and ROI for industry, helping industry understand importance of excise tax.

More info and resources at NSSF [www.nssf.org/research/wildlife-restoration-program/](http://www.nssf.org/research/wildlife-restoration-program/); ASA [asafishing.org/sportfish-restoration-excise-tax](http://asafishing.org/sportfish-restoration-excise-tax); USFWS [www.partnerwithaPayer.org](http://www.partnerwithaPayer.org)