



ASSOCIATION *of*  
FISH & WILDLIFE  
AGENCIES

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**ANGLER AND BOATER R3 COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**114<sup>th</sup> Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies Annual Meeting – Madison, WI**

**Chair: Ty Gray (Arizona Game & Fish Department)**

**Vice-Chair: Craig Bonds (Texas Parks & Wildlife Department)**

**Staff Contact: Ryan Roberts (AFWA/NFHP)**

**Tuesday, September 24, 2024**

**1:00 PM – 4:00 PM ET**

**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, particularly in underserved groups and develop strategies and highlight 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, participants and potential new audiences, and policy makers.

**DRAFT AGENDA**

**1:00 PM** Introductions ***Ty Gray, AZ***

**1:10 PM** Review Agenda/charge – ***Ty Gray, AZ***

- Approve March 2024 Committee Meeting Minutes

MARCH 2024 Meeting Minutes were approved by Unanimous Acclimation

**1:15 PM** Hunting and Fishing License Dashboard project update ***Swanny Evans, CAHSS***

Hunting and Fishing License Dashboard project update (presentation included in distribution)

- 13 partners
- Southwick and Associates and Pragmatim are two contractors
- CAHSS has vested interest and host on website
- Funded by MSCGP; sink or swim phase (not seeking more MSCGP funding); will be soliciting funding from partners
- Realtime dashboard enables demographic breakdowns that other sources don't
- No cost to states; simply need to provide data
- 19 states currently participating
- [CAHSS.org/dashboard](https://CAHSS.org/dashboard)

**1:35 PM**      RBFF Update      **Catherine Rose Ruiz, RBFF**

RBFF Update (Presentation Included)

- Consumer engagement
  - Female-focused engagement campaign (Find Your Best Self)
  - Market tested by women and men, also non-anglers
  - Integrated media partnerships; won Adweek Media Plan of the Year!
  - Each female angler spends \$962 annually
  - Girls drop out of fishing 11% higher rate than boys (2nd Catch video)
  - MN cobranded campaign (scaling up next spring)
- 2024 special report on fishing (available at RBFF resource center); 57.7M total anglers (18.8% participation rate)
  - All categories at all-time highs (youth, female, Hispanics, Black anglers)
  - Churn still a major challenge (leaky bucket); Lost over 12M anglers
  - Psychology of Churn research done and available
    - Invest in loyal customers; Adopt newcomers into community; try something new (marketing efforts); break the mold with own fresh start; own the churn problem
  - Need more case studies to share; want state agency partners to generate case studies
- State R3 Grant Programs
  - 1st Catch Center report available
  - Boat Registration Reactivation Program; adding email reminders (in addition to direct mail)
  - State Marketing Workshop - Feb 24 - 26 in Baltimore

**1:55 PM**      State Angler R3 Scorecard Update      **Stephanie Hussey, RBFF**

RBFF State Angler R3 Scorecard Update (Presentation Included)

- 6th year
- Ties back to original Angler R3 recommendations (N = 5); AFWA released new recommendations this past March and will be baked into the 2025 scorecard
- All 51 agencies (w/ DC) completed
- Stephanie covered results; take home message is much progress has been made and continues to improve
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- Chronic challenges with implementing CRM; AFWA Tech & Data Committee can help; WMI document is informative (addendum to AFWA V2 Angler R3 Recommendations)
- CRM, Marketing, and Evaluation should be focal areas moving forward to continue making progress; RBFF ready to support those efforts
- Dave Chanda introduced idea of using Scorecard as a metric for establishing a best-in-class spending model for R3 performance (I.e., how much to spend to achieve excellence)

**2:15 PM**      AZ. Shared Angler R3 Position Introduction      **Scott Lavin, AZ**

AZ Shared Angler R3 Position Introduction (Presentation Included)

- How to achieve scale?
- Collaboration with Trout Unlimited
- Hosted R3 engagement events (e.g., college engagement with AFS Student Subunits); mostly habitat restoration work; funded 5 interns for AZG&F
- Trout in the Classroom; Train the Teachers to fish program
- Centralized fishing event calendar listing
- Joint podcast
- Fish AZ network; event management page (year-round calendar of partner fishing events); changed

- culture to stop waiving licenses at events and started getting partners to purchased licenses
- Partners can borrow Take Me Fishing trailer

**2:25 PM** Required Angler Education Course for License Revocations **Scott Lavin, AZ**

Required Angler Education Course for License Revocations - Scott Lavin, AZ

- Current angler ed courses focused on skills and not as much as on ethics. Needs to be tailored to ethics and laws and not skills.
- Perhaps a NGO could fill that void (e.g., Boone and Crockett has ethics course)
- Communicate the “why” behind the rules
- Collaborate with AREA group
- Survey provided to committee to gauge interest in collaborating on the issue
- (Survey Link)

[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=GrMIOeV1qk20h91J2lLvui1dIKTqY3IKloQU0gYjV\\_dUMIk50ThXVVRKWDJHRTJKMjdCUEtHRzQ5WS4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=GrMIOeV1qk20h91J2lLvui1dIKTqY3IKloQU0gYjV_dUMIk50ThXVVRKWDJHRTJKMjdCUEtHRzQ5WS4u)

**2:35 PM** USFWS Office of Conservation Investment Update **Matt Filsinger, FWS**

USFWS Office of Conservation Investment Update (Presentation Included)

- Changed name from WSFR
- Reflection of growth and inclusion of a new workforce; occupationally diverse (beyond WSFR)
- Some new quick reference guides available on the website
- Apportionments down (-10.1%) FY24 from FY23; fairly stable through time; down a bit from pandemic highs; gas tax >80%
- GAO Excise Taxes report (pushed by ASA/ATA); Action needed to improve compliance and eliminate excise tax slippage (e.g., online direct to consumer sales)
  - E.g., Amazon sourcing direct from foreign seller
- Recently updated items taxed booklet
- Industry believes excise slippage accounts for roughly \$17M/yr; mostly about fairness rather than total dollar impact
- May be legislation dropped soon to address this
- Copy of reports can be accessed on Partner with a Payer website
- National Survey out (2022) plus addendum reports
- Grant Happenings web tab has a bunch of relevant information (part of Partner with a Payer website)
- Texas needs to do a PWP event; get with Glen (ASA) for recommendation for industry partner to collaborate on an event
- 75th anniversary of SFR (1950); up for reauthorization

**2:55 PM** The Case for Wildlife Councils **Russ Mason, Nimrod Society**

The Case for Wildlife Councils

- two states with Wildlife Councils - CO, MI
- See handout
- Pass-through funds support efforts to educate the public on value of hunting and fishing to conservation
- Can help with legislative advocacy

**3:05 PM** AFWA Angler R3 2024 Recommendations Discussion **Agency Representatives**

AFWA Angler R3 2024 Recommendations Discussion - Agency Representatives (facilitated by Stephanie H, RBFF)

- Reminded attendees of V2 AFWA R3 Recommendations
- Discussed some barriers to implementation
- Recognize disciplinary overlap with other AFWA committees/sub-committees to make progress on CRM

**3:25 PM** Fishing, wildlife viewing, and including people with disabilities **Dr. Ashley Dayer, VT**  
**Freya McGregor, VT**

(Presentation Included)

Fishing, Wildlife Viewing, and Including People with Disabilities - Freya McGregor, VATECH

- MSCGP funded work
- National survey of wildlife viewers (2022) report available
  - Regional findings
  - 42% wildlife viewers also fish (34% wildlife viewers view fish); 12% participate in motorized boating; 9% non-motorized boating
  - 63% have accessibility challenges when viewing wildlife (of people who fish and view wildlife)
  - Showed pics of accessible kayak launches; talked about key components
  - Anglers with disabilities rely more on public transport or a ride from others; experience greater social benefits; were more constrained by attitudes and behaviors of others at fishing sites
  - Need ADA navigability to fishing locations
  - Check out literature review on inclusion for disabled wildlife viewers (VATECH website); webinars available.

**3:30 PM** Digital Experience Assessment from DJ Case **Jon Marshall, DJ Case**

- Purpose: support and bolster digital delivery efforts; provide insights on how agencies may be able to improve online experiences; ID bright spots (Presentation Included)
- Can download/access assessment report
- <https://digex.djcase.com/r/NATIONAL:2024/>
  - State reports available; download and share report internally; Can request agency access from DJ Case, RBFF, ATA, or access from national report

**3:45 PM** BHA Millennial Angling Participation Survey Results **Rob Southwick, SA**  
(Presentation Included)

- Have also produced economic impact reports for each states (these are ready)
- 35 - 44 year old participation; highest growth in fishing (+9%) 2016 - 2021
- Fished early in life and was ready to pick it back up (importance of youth fishing programs)
- They wanted to introduce children to fishing/hunting
- Youth programs may not pay off for years
- Millennials have many other recreational options; need to break through the noise and remind them to go fishing
- Helps balance a life dominated by electronic screens
- Report available online

MEETING ADJOURNED