

MINUTES: EDUCATION, OUTREACH & DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Chair: Tony Wasley (NV)

Vice Chair: Vacant

September 21, 2022

10:15 AM – 12:15 PM (Central Time)

Attendees = 45

■ Working Group/Subcommittee Reports

- Education Working Group: A monthly call will be held for agency education administrators to build a stronger conservation education network. Contact Tabbi Kinion to learn how to participate. Kalkome presented on improvements to online hunter and boater education courses.
- Diversity & Inclusion Working Group:
 - Texas Parks and Wildlife's National Diversity Fellowship is a new project focused on DEI progress through working with a 3rd party to recruit, onboard and support fellows. A junior cohort would be mentored by a senior cohort to help reduce isolation and increase retention. Rather than hiring entry level biologist from well-established pathways, the program will build relationships from a wider range of people with support to make their experience a success. Training is provided agency personnel.
 - Discussed multistate conservation grant for a study Mike Manfredo is working on—looking at questions about what makes people comfortable in the workplace in state agencies—belongingness, self-authenticity—were considerations in a survey. There was a high drop-off rate among those who started the survey and did not complete it (1,000).
 - Discussion on DEI Thinksheet: a document developed by working group intended to help provide talking points and questions to encourage conversation around DEI in every committees and working groups. AFWA committees/subcommittees are encouraged to start with the question of why is DEI important to the work of the committee.
 - A new DEI working group charge statement will be developed over the next six months
 - DEI Working Group was approved for a multistate grant for a DEI academy intended to help agency staff develop a play book (work plans) for actions in their home organizations.
 - Coffee Talks ongoing
- Outreach & Marketing Working Group: Updates included officers in Alabama choosing education over enforcement (helping them purchase a license rather than issuing a ticket), the Cookoff Kentucky efforts, Oklahoma's unconventional Twitter posts, and updating and promoting further use of the Making it Last Toolkit. This toolkit covers how to communicate about relevancy to wider audiences beyond hunters and anglers.
- Wildlife Viewing and Nature Tourism Working Group: Concluded work on a multistate conservation grant on values of wildlife viewers. Participating states will be getting final reports with efforts from Virginia Tech. The working Group has also been approved for another multi state conservation grant for the next phase to make recommendations and a new website to make data and case studies accessible, as well as a future human dimensions conference presentation in the summer of 2023. Working Group also wrapped up nature tourism academy, as well as a webinar series. 2024 conference will be in North

Carolina. Point made that 15% of RAWA funds, if passed, can apply to outreach and education.

- Joint Working Group: Education, Outreach and Diversity and Wildlife Diversity and Conservation Funding Committees: Focus of committee has been supporting efforts for RAWA passage. Once passed, the group will likely focus on how RAWA funding is helping conservation efforts. EOD staff have been underrepresented on the joint working group—mostly attended by wildlife diversity staff. Encouragement given to everyone to consider participating in the joint working group to help make a more balanced effort.
- Hunter Access, Perceptions, and Impacts of Perceptions: Jeff Rawlinson, Nebraska Game and Fish
 - Basis of a new study: What is reality vs. perception regarding access to hunting, and how do we communicate that to hunters?
 - Other key questions: What is crowding and how is it defined? How does limited access affect participation? What are the limitations on availability of hunting opportunities.
 - Year one—gather baseline data, use of focus groups, literature review, multistate analysis of past license data.
 - Request from agencies for literature reports on R3 efforts. Please share with lou@southwickassociates.com.
 - Funding for study provided by max McGraw Wildlife Foundation.
- Discussion: One Health Integration Strategies. What would a One Health integration strategy look like for the EOD Committee, subcommittees and working groups?
 - Should be part of Relevancy Toolkit
 - Promote and advocate for idea that time in nature is healthy. Texas Children and Nature Network provides access to research on this topic.
 - Participate within state level health planning discussions.
 - Engaging with communities that have greater exposure to health threats
 - Promoting learning benefits of time outdoors and in nature (benefits supported by body of literature)
 - Suggestion to read Shane Mahoney’s white paper on conservation underpinnings of One Health.
 - Partnerships with other sectors are needed for conservation agencies to be successful with advancing One Health
 - Work with state departments of Education to incorporate One Health into school programming (such as current efforts in Ohio)
 - Learning how to work with “eco-grief” with constituents and within agencies
 - POD—Preventing Obesity by Design—effort to change outside environment for early childhood centers, provides 12 best practices.
- Discussion: DEI and Conservation: Sharing thoughts and checking in on advancing DEI in conservation:
 - Need to challenge ourselves with and facilitate discussions about “what are we going to do to advance DEI?”
 - Advancing messaging about health connects to DEI efforts
 - Providing tools and language to help urban people/children make connections about wildlife in their environment—such as with Project WILD content
 - Educating about basic education and concepts about wildlife and conservation is important for establishing relevancy and improving DEI. There’s a need for more educators and funding support for educators in agencies. There’s a concern that RAWA money may over emphasize species of greatest conservation need or outdoor recreation—and not on basic education content.
 - Recommendation to work with state wildlife action staff to help advance basic

conservation concepts and activities.

- Important to keep DEI conversation ongoing.
- Book recommendations: 1) *The Knowing-Doing Gap*, 2) *Inclusify*, 3) *Indivisible*
- Elements needed for advancing DEI: Awareness, desire, action. We've advanced in conservation to be more ready for action.
- Importance of emphasizing value of ecosystem services to advance both One Health and DEI.
- Rather than looking at what we can't do, let's focus on what we can do to advance DEI.

■ “Lightning” rounds (5 minutes each):

- DJ Case Projects:
 - Social Listening project helps agencies understand and analyze what is being said about the organization or specific topics
 - Small Game Diversity Photography
 - CWD Information Sharing—maps agencies can use with distribution of CWD occurrences, and maps regarding rules on transporting carcasses,
 - CWD Related regulations for each state

■ Adjourn