



AFWA Annual Meeting 2019 – St. Paul, MN

Project WILD Subcommittee Meeting Notes

September 23, 2019 | 11 a.m. - Noon
Chair: Rusty Garrison

Rusty Garrison called the meeting to order.
(30 participants)

Agendas were passed around.

Rusty reviewed the agenda and asked about any additions to the agenda.

The minutes from the prior meeting were emailed out. Tabbi made a motion to approve the minutes. Jennifer seconded.

Committee reviewed the committee charge and the floor was opened for questions or comments.

- Jenifer Wisniewski brought up a question about reactivating the Project WILD program in a state where it had been and then went away.
 - Rusty - in Georgia - Project WILD was one part of his job, but he had many other parts, including running the Charlie Elliot Wildlife Center.
 - It is ideal if 100% of time is spent on Project WILD, but that is not always feasible.
 - Tanya said that 60% is of her job is Project WILD. Lindsay said it started higher at 60% but has dwindled to 25-30%. If you have the right person, that is workable.
 - Elena - it also takes more time in the beginning as you sent the program up. It is also helpful to have other staff who are engaged in the program so the agency is not left in a lurch when one person leaves.
 - Barb - Working with partners with an integrated outreach and education program has been what makes it work in IA.
 - Tanya noted that we have about every type of situation represented among Project WILD Coordinators nationally (from 5% - 100% staff's time dedicated to WILD).
 - Marc - There are also states where two organizations partner.
 - Rusty - We will be there to support you! And there are many coordinators who will as well.

- Elena - In some states the coordinators attend each other's workshops: e.g., Maryland and Pennsylvania, Virginia and North Carolina.
- Lindsay asked why the R3/conservation education conversation is happening in the Project WILD subcommittee and not in the larger Education, Outreach, and Diversity committee. (R3 = Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation of hunters and anglers.)
 - Elena - We will develop those talking points here in this committee and bring those talking points to the education committee.
 - Lindsay - Should it be in the education group in as well?
 - Elena - It came up in conversation with our coordinators.
 - Kelly - That's a good point that we should bring it up with the education subgroup and let them know that we are talking about this and broaden the conversation with them.

Rusty - Announced that we a multi-state grant submitted by Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow (CLFT) was recommended to move forward. Project WILD is also working on developing a fundraising strategy.

- Lindsay - Can you talk a little bit more about that?
- Johnnie - And who are the grant recipients?
 - Elena - We are working with CLFT to make sure that the North American Model continues to be reflected in the activities.
 - Lindsay - Will that consist of editing the background material or changing activity procedures?
 - Elena - It will be background information and an extension, and Marc has been working on that and can speak more to that.
 - Marc - Yes, background info and student pages.
 - Tanya - Will that involve the elk activities with RMEF?
 - Elena - That is a separate project.
 - Johnnie - They have adopted a mini-CLFT in Texas. He has hoped to see the opposite - CLFT adopting Project WILD activities and using "Oh Deer!" in their instruction when teaching carrying capacity. Is there latitude for that?
 - Rusty - Yes - we have had continuing conversations about that.
 - Paulette - Who is the audience for that mini-workshop?
 - Johnnie - It is for staff and partners who don't hunt.
 - Rusty - They are developing something similar in Georgia. They are going to develop their own 2-day program that they can move a lot of people through (50 staff, for example).
- Tabbi - Is the strategic plan part of AFWA's? Is it a Project WILD-specific plan?
 - AFWA is developing their own, larger strategic plan. Project WILD will develop a plan based off of that.

Kelly presented--Kelly shared video summary of 2019 Project WILD conference in Montana. Review of guide sales--similar to 2018, but perhaps a bit lower once year closes out.

Marc shared updated on the different guides and programs, including reprints of *Project WILD* and *Aquatic WILD*. He has recently been focusing on getting the Aquatic WILD guides ready for reprint - including mirroring some of the updates that were made to the 4th edition terrestrial guide. *Growing Up WILD* will be a big update, as we are reformatting the guide from 11" x 17" to a standard 8.5 x 11" guide.

He hopes in 2020 we will take a deep look at Flying WILD and update the guide. Thanks to input from some of our coordinators, we have gotten good feedback on what that will look like. It will, among other things, include the AFWA branding.

Elena shared some other projects we will be undertaking in 2020. We did a pilot G UW online course with ten people, and we are working with a small team of coordinators to revise that.

- We will be putting energy into Flying WILD after spending a lot of resources on the terrestrial guide.
- We put a think tank together to think about ways Project WILD can include citizen science.
- WET/WILD Meeting in St. Louis - we are excited to be partnering with Project WET.

Jen W. - Does an agency do all of these programs?

- PW, AW, FW, G UW
- Lindsay: Nebraska spends about \$20 - \$26K on guides.
- Rusty - You can budget for that, or you can charge a registration fee.
- Lindsay said she'd be happy to talk with Jen about both - pros and cons of charging and not charging.
- Jen - How do you evaluate the impact of the program in your state?
- Lindsay - They measure the program in intervals by surveying teachers to see how many kids they reach, how often they use the activities, etc.
- Tanya - They are contracting with North Carolina State University on that - they don't have the data yet, but she will have some more info that she can share.

Elena introduced Samantha Pedder from the Council to Advance Hunting and Shooting Sports.

Samantha Pedder:

- It's good to see individuals here who are also in R3 meetings. Here to provide an overview of R3 and why we're working on it, and highlight some opportunities where collaboration could happen.
- Samantha, Kristen, and John are the team at CHSS.
- R3 - there are a lot of definitions out there. They work primarily at a state level. What they have found is that every state approaches it a little differently.
- Sam shared some data on hunting, fishing, and watching wildlife participation. When we are talking about R3, we are talking about participation in the outdoors, whether "consumptive" or not.
- We are trying to track the outcomes and outputs.
- Because of the funding model we have, fewer license sales results in less revenue. It also results in a smaller group with that knowledge and with awareness of the work the agency does.
- Participants are aging.
- We are looking for more outputs but also better outcomes.
- CHSS was founded in 2009 and has grown a little since then. Partnered with WMI to publish the National Hunting & Shooting Sports Action Plan to increase participation and increase awareness.
- R3 has successfully infiltrated every agency. Just like we need Project WILD Coordinators on the ground to serve as a hub, there is a need to have an R3 coordinator.
- Barb in IA works on R3.

- Partnerships between NGOs and agencies working on R3 together.
- Development of R3 strategies at the state level. Outdoor Recreation Adoption Model - it's a model or a tool to map things out. Question for consideration: how can Project WILD play into that?
- In IA there is a goal to get more Hunter Ed. in schools. Could there be a joint Project WILD and HE outreach at schools?
- Different Approaches
- Some states are heavy recruitment, some focus more on reactivation.
- Evaluation - they are working on that too. R3 coordinators put on programs, e.g., Learn to Hunt. Did a person buy a license? There's so much more to it than that.
- R3 is in the same kind of area - how do we evaluate it so we can improve the program offering?
- We're talking about adult education as well.
- Challenges ahead: Having enough folks to work on this. Capacity issue. More people, more money, more time needed.
- When folks hit 65 there is a loss of engagement - time is of the essence before more folks age out.
- Kristen shared about opportunities to collaborate
 - Incorporate Project WILD curriculum into learning modules
 - Apply training structure (train the trainers)
 - Leverage access to teachers
 - Hunter Ed in Schools
 - Project WILD Teachers
 - Connect local resources together
 - Increase communication & efficacy of all effort
 - Program evaluation
 - Oh Deer!
 - Train the students (new hunters) to understand population dynamics
 - Standard lesson plan
- Oh Deer!
 - Train the trainer (R3 coordinators) to teach potential mentors/volunteers/general hunters
 - Hunters rather than deer
 - Resources = land, mentors, licenses/permits
 - Backward concept: more hunters make more resources
- www.Nationalr3plan.com
- Videos available online. They would love to include Project WILD at their symposium in Oklahoma in May 2020.

Lindsay Rogers, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission

In addition to doing Project WILD, she works on many other initiatives and programs focusing on ecological education.

- The last step of the adoption model is being an advocate.
- The end-all-be-all can't be being a hunter. If we had the entire population hunting, it would decimate the population. It has to be hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, kayaking - whatever the person is interested in in the outdoors.
- In Nebraska, their division is ecological education, but as any agency they have other components of education. They sat down together to create a comprehensive education plan.

Parks naturalist program, cultural & historical resource education, outdoor recreation education (shooting sports, hunter ed, fishing ed), ecological education (Project WILD, G UW, etc.).

- We have to recruit, retain, and reactivate all types of outdoor enthusiasts and constituents in order to lead to agency relevancy. Certainly, we are doing traditional R3 activities but expanding it beyond that to engage more people.
- Johnnie: Do they work with master naturalists?
 - Lindsay: They do work with them on large events. They need to do a better job of incorporating the different volunteer groups - master naturalists, fishing instructors,

Tabbi Kinion, Arkansas Game and Fish: Hunting, fishing, recreation shooting, support & connect. She is working on their R3 plan. She has more info to share.

Tanya Poole, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission: In NC they have a wildlife education division. They had three people, then six. They are back to 3. The other three will be an R3 team.

- Together: R3 strategist, hunter R3 specialist, angler R3 specialist, skills development R3 specialist, shooting R3 specialist, and watchable wildlife specialist.
- Rusty: Diff. between skills and hunter R3 specialist? Skills specialist does BOW, youth hunts, outdoor cooking.

Rusty asked for any other questions. Elena said she will coordinate with Rusty to arrange next steps.

Thank you!

Adjourn