

Wildlife Viewing & Nature Tourism Working Group

Chair: Shelly Plante (TX)

Thursday, March 29, 2018

11am-12pm

Attendees = 25

- Call to Order/Review Agenda- Shelly
 - Please be sure to sign in and if you want emails from us indicate so on the sheet

- Charge= To advance wildlife viewing and nature tourism programs as strategies for state agencies to build support for fish wildlife conservation by connecting ethnically and geographically diverse people to the outdoors.
 - Objectives: 1) Execution of the Wildlife Viewing and Nature Tourism Academy in February 2018; 2) Continue with monthly conference calls and periodic wildlife viewing/nature tourism webinars; 3) Continue to collaborate within AFWA including with the Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife campaign, Waterfowl Working Group, Wildlife Diversity Conservation and Funding Committee, and National Conservation Outreach Planning Committee; provide regular updates to working group; 4) Continue to partner with other conservation organizations – that we exist, share our work plan and develop collaborative opportunities; 5) Increase state participation by colleagues working within wildlife viewing and nature tourism positions in partner states. There are several states not represented in our monthly calls and/or AFWA meetings and we will proactively address those gaps this year.

- Dave Cobb (North American Waterfowl Management Plan 2018) – working with human dimensions public surveys → completed about wildlife viewing (birdwatchers and waterfowl hunters).
 - More information <https://nawmp.org>
 - Can download all reports
 - Looking for feedback and the testing of assumptions
 - Work on hitching this to the waterfowl hunter R3 efforts and starting a birdwatchers R3 effort.
 - Shelly- looking at doing a deep dive in to this effort in May 2018; will be working out the details and will send out an email with additional information regarding webinar/conference call on this topic.
 - Dave- any input is welcome and encouraged
 - Shelly- it would be advantageous for birdwatchers to make a connection with waterfowl hunters and the general public; good opportunity to have a seat at the table

- WVNT Academy- www.wvntacademy.com
 - In the process of getting the presentations and additional information for the academy online for use

- Covered a plethora of topics- example: increasing diversity of work force, best practices, reaching out to local communities, education/outreach tactics, how to work collaboratively, etc
- Number of relevant field trips during academy
- SAVE the DATE for 2020 WVNT Academy: February 17-20, 2020 in Florida

- Communications
 - Monthly Conference Calls
 - Email
 - Webinar series

- WVNT Programs
 - 20 states have shave dedicated staff to WVNT programs
 - 9 some PT WVNT programs
 - 7 have no staff or are losing the staff they have for WVNT programs

- Next webinar: A Fish's Eye View: Snorkeling Freshwater Streams in the US
 - April 17 from 2-3pm EDT
 - A repeat presentation due to popularity
 - Please spread the word
 - Looking for future topics
 - NAWMP Update and Discussions- a deep dive into the data
 - Others?
 - Activating the financials of the active community on the landscape with WVNT; show how it benefits state agencies
 - Bird by Bird Idaho program (Deniz Aygen)
 - How to do a Bird Festival (Jerrie)
 - Please reach out to Shelly (Shelly.Plante@tpwd.texas.gov) with any additional ideas

- Strengthening collaboration with Partners
 - North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP)
 - Wildlife Diversity Programs and State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAP)
 - BRP Relevancy WG- what do our constituencies and staff think needs to be considered by this group?
 - May work to get a workshop (1-day) in coordination with the AFWA annual meeting this fall to galvanize these ideas
 - There's currently a lot of interest in this subject
 - Partnering relevancy with WVNT

- EOD Task: BRP State Relevancy WG- what do our constituencies and staff think needs to be considered by this group?
 - Looking at life cycle of someone's experiences with wildlife – look comprehensively at the continuum of how people interact and relate to wildlife (from hunting/angling to wildlife viewing/photography, etc.).
 - Need to start to improve our outreach to the hook and bullet audience; break down the lack of trust and work together
 - Connect hunting/shooting/anglers R3 efforts to Wildlife Viewing
 - Programming in WVNT – making sure new groups understand their hobby is made better by what we (agencies) do.

- Other Discussion:
 - How can we work to make WVNT experiences better for the public; look at best practices
 - Look at the vocabulary we use to be sure it resonates with the public

- Nature of Americans Study Update Overview (www.natureofamericans.org)
 - You can view the data online state by state; a lot of slides you can you to visualize the data
 - Look at summaries and break down to youth, adults, ethnicity wildlife values, terminology, etc
 - Shows how to 'invite' people to join the outdoors with best practices, using words that work, socializing, etc.
 - Looking at turning this research in to ACTION (with state agencies)
 - Texas is identifying stakeholders a series of brainstorming sessions to create next steps with these efforts