



ASSOCIATION of
FISH & WILDLIFE
AGENCIES

OUTREACH AND MARKETING WORKING GROUP AGENDA
Co-Chairs: Christy Firestone (Nebraska) and Micah Holmes (Oklahoma)

Wednesday, September 16
3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies Annual Meeting
Lancaster, PA

Agenda

- Introductions (3:30 – 3:45)

Review of Working Group Charge - *To continue to initiate public understanding, appreciation and relevancy of state fish and wildlife management while shaping long-term conservation and enjoyment of natural resources through outreach and marketing.*

- **Increasing Public Awareness of State Fish and Wildlife Agencies Update – DJ Case 3:45 - 4:00 Matt Harlow**
 - How to videos: field dressing, skinning, quartering, etc
 - Will be found on the R3 Clearing House; can be used, cut up, etc. and free to use for state fish and wildlife agencies
 - Relevancy and Awareness Campaign (MSCG product)
 - Surveys → focus groups → launch campaign
 - Pilot states launched this campaign
 - Broaden the Message!
 - If you have a story about 1 species → then make it about many species (same with activities, classes, and benefits)
 - Example: stocked salmon for anglers to catch → [broaden to] stocked salmon for the fish to eat and for anglers → [broaden more] stocked salmon for bears, birds, and other fish to eat and for anglers.
 - Found that the more broad the message → doesn't turn off or away your traditional audience, but it increases your potential audience to new people

- **Headline**
 - [Agency Name] at Work
 - Clear, legible font
 - Text is either black or white for contrast
- **Logo**
 - Use logo colors in color scheme
- **Body**
 - One line: what is the agency “at work” doing?
 - 2-3 bullet points
 - Clear, legible
- **Button**
 - Call to action that indicates where the link will take you
 - Should be very clearly a button – include a cursor click on it
 - Colors matches the headline banner
 - Have text say what they’re going to get clicking on the button
- **Context**
 - Include species/location names when possible
- **Recommendation for campaign strategy**
 - Flights (1 week/month)
 - 1 new message/flight
 - New stories in front of new people
- **General and Partner Updates (4:00 – 5:15)**
 - DJ Case – 4:00 – 4:15
 - Southwick & Associates Update – Lou Cornicelli 4:15 – 4:30
 - **Public perceptions of State fish & Wildlife Agencies**
 - Why? State FW agencies have road responsibilities to serve ALL residents.; evolution from a user pay-user benefit model to user-pay – everyone benefits
 - Topics addressed: how relevant their state FW agency is to them; importance of the various agency responsibilities; agency trust; funding; agency interactions; state specific questions
 - OBJECTIVE was NOT to convert people to license buyers
 - Top level results:
 - People who buy a license are fairly aware of the agency
 - People who don’t buy a license but participate in the outdoors are slightly aware of the agency
 - People who don’t buy a license and don’t participate in the outdoors are mostly unaware of the state FW agency
 - In general- license buyers are not very trusting of state FW agencies.
 - How to Reach People?
 - Hunt/Fish: 1) agency website (44%), 2)YouTube (27%) , 3) Agency Email (26%)
 - Outdoor Recreationists 1) YouTube (33%), 2) Agency

Website (31%), 3) Facebook (31%)

- Take Home: License hunter/anglers are more focused on programs that benefit them; support for T&E species (unresolved how to fund), Still lots of work to do [a large enough % of the pop doesn't know who you are; diminished trust and support overall; communication will be a challenge long term]
- **The Nexus of R3 and Deer Hunting**
 - The project: the Deer is 'king' when it comes to hunting throughout most of the US; beyond license revenue, hunting is how we manage deer; agencies have great expanded R3 activities; harvest reporting and hunter participation metrics are all over the board.
 - Three main parts
 - 1) Engaged R3 and Deer Coordinators (FOCUS DAY)
 - Lack of coordination and communication
 - What are the barriers: programs siloed, workload is already too much, lack of awareness of R3 program
 - Agency leadership recommendations: establish formal communication between deer & R3; support cross training; tie R3 performance metrics to deer management outcomes where you can.
 - 2) Surveyed US Deer Hunters
 - 3) Took a 'deep dive' into 5 year data
- [National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associated Recreation Update – David Sterrett 4:30 – 4:40](#)
 - National Participation Tracker = a new survey conducted by NORC which aims to provide
 - More frequent trend estimates
 - New, more detailed data
 - Valuable takeaways for practitioners
 - Compliments the National Survey by providing more frequent participation estimates
 - Trackers findings can support recruitment, retention and reactivation efforts
 - Many Tracker measures can be trended with National Survey estimates
 - The National Participation Tracker also provides new estimates across a range of topics
 - Learn more at <https://go.norc.org/outdoor-tracker>
- 1791 Foundation
 - <https://1791.org/>
 - Check out the film "Held in Trust" at www.1791.org/HeldInTrust
- [National Deer Association – Jenifer Wisniewski 4:40 – 4:50](#)
 - Deer +R3 + Public Support
 - Deer = highest ROI (participation, license sales, management outcomes)
 - General non-hunting public agrees (76%) approve of hunting deer

- The Common Ground
 - Overlap = food, nature, Stewardship, community
- Food may be one of our best bridges
 - 99% of harvest game meat is consumed; 119M pounds shared or donated; 80% say wild game is important food for their household; 400M pounds consumed
- Working on getting the first ever analysis of nutritional analysis of wild white-tailed deer
- Resources available in the R3 Clearing House
- Fall Flights/Southern Wings
 - Check out the [2026 Fall Flights Annual Report](#)
 - We hit our Uniting States for Fall Flights campaign goal of \$6M investment by 2026
 - CALL TO ACTION: remind state agency leadership to invest in Fall Flights and Southern Wings
- Southern Wings – Deb Hahn 5:00 – 5:10
 - Created state outreach packets→ very successful
 - Presenting at many meetings/conferences
 - Intern this Fall
 - Created several director videos highlighting the importance of investing in Southern Wings
 - First ever Southern Wings Awards happening during the AFWA Annual Meeting
 - Recognizing states who are helping reverse migratory bird population declines, implement full annual cycle conservation, and help us reach our annual goal of \$2M
 - Learn more about Southern Wings at <https://southern-wings.fishwildlife.org/>
- ACI Update – Micah Holmes 5:10 – 5:20
 - Currently have 49 states as members
 - Next ACI Annual Meeting set for July 19-22, 2027 will be in Raleigh, NC
 - Learn more at <https://www.aci-net.org/>
- Open Discussion (5:20 to 5:30) – Open Discussion
 - How can we market ourselves as FW Agencies regionally?
 - Perhaps another tweaked relevancy communication toolkit
 - Amplify the voice of state FW agencies → once clicked then can point to the appropriate state FW agency
- Dismiss (5:30)