

Outreach & Marketing Working Group

Chairs: Christy Firestone (NE); Micah Holmes (OK)

Attendees: 28

Agenda:

- Introductions- round table
 - 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.*
- MSCG Update: Rebranding, Repiloting, and Reevaluating the National Conservation Outreach Strategy and Relevancy Messaging
 - Found that people think the work is important, but they don't make the connection that the state agency is doing that work.
 - Relevancy Communication Toolkit
 - Predecessor = Making It Last campaign and toolkit
 - Reboot with Relevancy with a focus on a formula instead and generate awareness for agency work, not a slogan
 - Used the SEAFWA Public Perceptions Report to help develop initial relevancy messaging for testing
 - Messaging priorities under these categories: Access, Habitat, Control, Species, Clean Air & Water
 - 4 pilot states using state imagery
 - Having the state agency "AT WORK" to showcase the work the agencies are doing.
 - 2 focus groups/state
 - Outdoorsy-non hunters/anglers
 - Non-outdoor recreationists
 - 13 messages
 - Results (qualitative):
 - People want to see people or animals (NOT landscapes); they need to have a picture with space for your messages.
 - Scalability with bullets are better than a narrative
 - NO jargon, NO scientific language, NO long words, 5th grade level
 - DO NOT mention hunting or fishing!! Don't mention it directly → broadening the message
 - CALL to ACTION; the call to action button needs to look like a button with a finger/hand clicking it; make the expectations clear if they click the button

- Pilot Tests- Paid social
 - Kansas
 - Vermont
 - California
 - South Carolina
- Evaluation
 - Engagement (clicks, likes, shares)
 - Social Listening (months before, during, and after; discussion of agencies; discussion of issues; more positive perception.)
- NOT a Toolkit (more like a recipe)
 - Formula/Recommendations
 - Stories,
 - Images
 - Working
 - Call-to-action
- Preliminary Results (quantitative):
 - Segmented respondents: licensed participants, non-licensed participants, non-participants
 - Wanted to explore
 - If non-consumptive ads were negatively perceived by our license participants, asses using a generalized ad featuring non-consumptive activities deter hunters/angers
 - How narrow vs broad message perform, holding images and layout constant
 - Non-consumptive ads appealed to anglers and hunters. For certain topics, the non-consumptive ads the largest proportion of anglers and hunters ranked it as their preferred ad of the series.
 - Broad ads performed better than narrow message ads.
 - Also looked at:
 - What are the most important responsibilities of state agencies to you?
 - Do you believe agencies share your values?
 - Familiarity with state agency?
 - The ads moved the needle in people who weren't familiar with state agencies to the slightly/moderately familiar
 - What are the preferred communication channels?
 - State agencies website
 - YouTube Videos
 - Local television or cable not through streaming services

- Partner Updates
 - Fall Flights: this is a state program; have a team of communicators working on messaging
 - Will be conducting interviews during the NA Conference with help from the AK comms teams
 - Starting a new Campaign! **Uniting States for Fall Flights**
 - Goal is to reach \$6M by 2026
 - The ask: stay at goal; land at goal; make final approach to within 50% of goal
 - Working on campaign infographics; banners; social media; short inspiration videos; Fall Flights Newslines; website; swag
 - **THE ASK** for this working group: marketing ideas? What's missing?
 - **THE ASK** for this working group: help us amplify our message
 - **THE ASK**: we need B-Roll footage – Patty (AFWA) will be asking for footage in the near future. Keep an eye out!!
 - DJ Case: Public Perceptions of Midwest State Fish & Wildlife Agencies
 - Why? State Fish & Wildlife (FW) agencies have broad responsibilities on behalf of all residents; general population are not aware of what the FW agencies do or how they are funded; people's values have changes; Adaptation, relevancy, DEI initiatives
 - Topics addressed: how relevant are state FW agencies to them; how important are they; are they doing a good job; funding priorities; interactions with the agency;
 - Study groups = 1) licensed hunters/anglers, 2) other non-licensed outdoor participants, 3) non-outdoor participants
 - Top-level results: familiarity with the state's fish and wildlife differed by category of respondents.
 - Overall top rankings = protect environment, protect fish, wildlife and habitat, enforce game laws
 - Those people who knew about the agency generally had confidence in the agencies
 - Overall, the survey showed that people think there should be a balance between user pay and public pay
 - How to reach people
 - Licensed → state agency websites are the primary source of information
 - Unlicensed participants → YouTube, Facebook
 - Education level and where they live influence the opinion and knowledge/support of state agencies.
 - Take Home:
 - Licensed hunters/anglers more focused on programs that benefit them

- Midwest respondents had higher levels of formal education and were less rural than the SE respondents
 - Still a lot of work to do for building awareness and support.
- Association for Conservation Information (ACI)
 - Mostly state agency folks
 - ACI is a non-profit organization of natural resources communicators. We serve to further natural resource conservation and exchange. We are made up of professionals representing state, federal and Canadian wildlife conservation and parks and natural resource agencies as well as private conservation organizations.
 - Annual conference in Atlantic City, NJ
 - In the middle of rebranding and updating the website.
- National Deer Association: Teaming up to make it easy to go hunting
 - Beyond the Trophy- harvesting 6 million deer for 1.2 billion meals.
 - Tell the story of deer hunting and why it's important
 - Food being the best resonating message
 - Grant work
 - R3 Clearing House
 - Hunting 101 YouTube Series in 4 states
 - CWD Communications: amplify state messages; be another trusted source for good info; www.deerassociation.com/cwd-toolkit/ → free resources
 - Grant work 2025:
 - The Nexus of R3 and Deer Management
 - Streaming Audio/podcast campaign to accomplish R3: AL, TN, GA, SC
 - Game Processing Assets and closing the new hunter
 - Knowledge Gap

Link to all Presentations:

- [Public Perceptions of Midwest State Fish and Wildlife Agencies](#)
- [Relevancy Communication Toolkit \[DJ Case\]](#)
- [Outreach & Relevancy Toolkit Preliminary Results \[Southwick & Assoc.\]](#)
- [Teaming Up to Make It Easy to Go Hunting](#)
- [Fall Flights Updates](#)
- [RBFF Updates](#)