

JOINT WORKING GROUP:  
ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION AND WILDLIFE DIVERSITY CONSERVATION & FUNDING  
COMMITTEES

Attendees: 27

Agenda:

- Call to order, introductions
  - Round robin introductions
  - Overview of this joint working group → goal looking at the synergies between the two committees over a specific topic. Historically, it's been the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA) → produced items such as the RAWA story map, shovel ready project fact sheets for specific states.
    - Looking to see what direction we want to head in the future.
- RAWA update, Kurt Thiede (AFWA)
  - Interest in moving RAWA forward on the senate side; House side – Dingell is still interested. Congressman Westerman has a different idea of a conservation bill with different focus; historically barriers included the pay-for as well as annual appropriations vs permanent funding.
  - Westerman wants to advance something for state conservation funding; looking at a new strategy;
  - In a holding pattern until the political appointment positions are filled
  - Important to continue this joint working group works; need to protect the SWAP & STWG program
    - There will be a briefing and fly-in on March 26 in DC.
    - Need soundbite success stories and how state is able to do great work with limited dollars → can do so much more with continued or increased funding.
  - **ACTION:** social media blitz around the importance and success of STWG around the fly-in. Mirroring the messaging in the Dear Colleague Letter.
  - **ACTION:** fact sheets around the success stories that can be used on the hill.
  - **Note:** a lot of states can't put in an ask for increased funding; but they can highlight the success stories made possible through STWG funding.
  - Looking at messaging around some of this administrations priorities → reduced regulations, etc.
  - If you can reach out the key offices on the hill, that would be very helpful.
  - Talk about the need without attaching it to any specific legislations (ie. STWG, RAWA, etc).
  - Messaging training session happening next week; will send out email with link to join.

- **ACTION:** send email out to EEC group asking to ramp up excitement about STWG with success stories on social media. Work with Jenny (CT) about social media messaging tips, etc.; tag any congressmen/women who supported STWG with the success stories—*thanks for helping make this success possible*.
- **ACTION:** if your state will be physically attending the fly-in→ have them touch base with their communicators to help with a state specific easily digestible message to be used on the Hill.
- Look at creating an email signature for the two-week promo.
- **ACTION:** send link to the SWAP report that has State specific examples that can be used with promotions
- SWAP 20 Year Anniversary- will be September/October 2025
  - Look at developing social media posting every few weeks about SWAPs and the success stories.
  - We can look at focusing on this and make plans for this fall after the fly-in; focus on the fly-in priorities for the next few weeks.
- Open discussion for additional actions/support we could provide and future of this Joint Working Group – SWAP, RAWA
  - **ACTION:** Have this group meet via Zoom in late April for a de-brief of the fly-in, look at current needs; look at the President's budget, etc.; see what conversations have occurred.
- **ACTION:** creation of a **social media toolkit** for states to use to promote SWAP and STWG for the week prior and during the fly-in.
  - **Patty Allen** will draft; **Jenny Dickson** will send examples already completed; **Shelly Plante** will help review/edit. Final product sent to EEC email list and those that signed in to this Joint WG meeting.
- We need to be very strategic about the words we use in our messaging; look at NY Times list that just came out; will need to work with state grant coordinators to help wordsmith to keep the intent without being flagged.
- Adjourn