



ASSOCIATION *of*  
FISH & WILDLIFE  
AGENCIES

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**JOINT WORKING GROUP:  
ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION AND WILDLIFE DIVERSITY CONSERVATION & FUNDING COMMITTEES**  
Chairs: Shelly Plante and Brett Anderson/Olivia DaRugna

**Wednesday, April 1, 2026  
3:30pm – 4:30pm**

Attendees: 28

Notes:

- Call to order, introductions
  - Looking for new chairs/co-chairs for this Joint WG.
  - Please let us know your interest
  
- Legislative update, *David Lind (AFWA)*
  - Remains strong support in congress for SWAPS; 2% increase in STWG funding this year
  - Not expecting to see RAWA or anything like RAWA advance this year, though the door is not closed
  - Right now the need is showing more the money side of conservation, and less the critter side of the argument; ie. Regulator certainty, etc.
    - Looking for a couple of bullets for each state; and if we can get into district level...even better.
    - Want to show what investments were able to occur (example-developments) due to something not being listed due to conservation efforts.
    - Where would some of these conservation efforts take place (what projects are being planned if funding was available).
    - Want to show how much money would be coming to my state if SWAPS were effectively funded (ex. RAWA).
  - There is a draft template (plug and play) that this team can use to help create products the legislative team can use on the Hill.
  - NWF has some fact sheets available for use, as appropriate. They are more species/critter specific (not economic).

- The Western Landowners Alliance has a report on the scale of landowner investments in conservation; may be worth a review.
- Economics, Regulation, and Outdoor Recreation are key talking points to hit on during this legislative cycle.
- SWAP Update
  - 40 wildlife action plans have been approved so far
  - 7 states/territories asked for extensions
  - A few states have submitted and are pending approval
  - We're in a good place for implementation of the new plans
  - The USFWS Director asked the states to send him the states priorities; that was done with 2 of them hitting on SWAPs;
    - AFWA passed resolution in the fall stating that AFWA will work on increasing awareness and use of SWAPs
    - WDCF will be doing a SWAP briefing on the Hill this Spring
  - Looking to get more agencies to use the SWAP plans and increase awareness both within and with the public about the importance of these plans
    - There is a draft communication plan available to assist with this
    - Looking to update some older documents to make them usable today; will need assistance to get this done.
  - Looking for materials for federal partners, legislators, partners, etc; so need a diversity of outreach materials.
    - Make one-pagers for more specific groups of how SWAPs are important to them and how they can help implement them to help guide their conservation work.
- Open discussion for additional actions/support we could provide and future of this Joint Working Group – SWAP, RAWA
  - One-pager on 'what's in it for me?' about SWAPs for partners
  - There's a lack of understanding about what is exactly in a wildlife action plan
  - Maybe do some Case Studies about how you can use a SWAP if you were a (list name) conservation group/partner organization.
    - Where appropriate, look at some key lands that are important to a key legislator; be careful to not have that backfire.
  - NWF has a structure of a campaign that may be useful to this group.
  - We need to make SWAPs digestible by the public; so they can get behind it and provide support; priority landscape that are important to people so it resonates; create products that they can use; highlight what they do for your states; need to do good storytelling.

**Adjourn**