*2-9-23 draft*

**Pathways to Conservation Relevance in Oklahoma:**

**Near-term plan for Engaging Hispanics, Urbanites and Wildlife Enthusiasts**

The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) is leading an effort to help the agency better understand and serve the conservation-related interests of all Oklahomans. ODWC recognizes that organizational change is necessary to fulfill its Public Trust responsibilities as articulated in its conservation mission: “We manage and protect fish and wildlife, along with their habitats, while also growing our community of hunters and anglers, partnering with those who love the outdoors, and fostering stewardship with those who care for the land.” Building on national efforts to increase conservation relevance for all members of the public, ODWC convened a cross-program, multi-level team (Relevancy Project Team [RPT]) that invested in a planning process informed by social science inquiry focusing on population segments that historically have been underserved by the agency. The three population segments that the RPT chose to target for its conservation relevancy efforts were: (1) Hispanic (2) urbanites, and (3) wildlife enthusiasts whose primary interest is not hunting. Across these three population segments, the relevancy project team came up with almost 50 relevancy actions we believed would help us engage with these groups.

This document is ODWC’s near-term relevancy plan focused on external actions necessary to understand, engage and serve the three target population segments. In addition, ODWC identified internal work that needed to be done to help them address agency culture and capacity barriers to effective engagement with these historically underserved population segments.

**Foundation of this planning document**

This planning document is based on (a) input from a team of social scientists and subject matter experts (Relevancy Consulting Team [RCT]) who have a long tenure working in and with state fish and wildlife agencies (SFWAs) and (b) output from a three-phased process that engaged the RPT in organizational learning via dialogue and qualitative and quantitative inquiry over a seven-month period. The process was grounded in planning elements from ODWC’s strategic plan (2019-2023), specifically Goal #2: Strengthen a dedicated, talent-rich fish and wildlife agency and Goal #3: Grow an active, passionate, and knowledgeable outdoor community. Phase I of the process included one meeting and two workshops to identify the population segments of interest, draft relevancy goals for each and determine information needed to address goals. Phase II consisted of data collection, specifically a quantitative survey of residents of Oklahoma and qualitative interviews with representatives of public agencies, interest groups, and civic organizations that worked with the three population segments of interest. Phase III involved a workshop held in Oklahoma City during December 2022 at which all the data from Phase II were considered, relevancy goals were finalized and objectives, actions, and evaluation criteria for the three population segments were identified. In addition, the agency created a list of internal actions necessary to increase the likelihood of successfully engaging each segment.

**Goals, objectives and actions for the three populations segments**

The output from process described above resulted in the following relevancy goals, objectives and actions for Hispanics, urbanites and wildlife enthusiasts.

**Hispanics**

Relevancy Goal 1: ODWC understand the values, interests and concerns of Hispanic communities in Oklahoma

Objective 1.1: ODWC understands where Hispanic communities are and what Hispanic groups currently exist

Objective 1.2: ODWC has recent and sufficient data to understand needs, interests and concerns of Hispanic communities in Oklahoma

Objective 1.3: ODWC establishes relationships with Hispanic communities

Objective 1.4: ODWC partners with educational institutions to recruit Hispanics into conservation careers

Relevancy Goal 2: ODWC communicates effectively with Hispanic communities

Objective 2.1: Hispanics are aware of programs and services available to them

Objective 2.2: Hispanics are aware of career opportunities in conservation

Relevancy Goal 3: ODWC is engaged with and serves Hispanic communities in Oklahoma

Objective 3.1: ODWC has an established presence in Hispanic communities and at cultural events attended by Hispanic Oklahomans.

Objective 3.2: ODWC designs programs and services that are targeted for Hispanic audiences

Objective 3.3: Improve ODWC Law Enforcement engagement with Hispanic Communities

Objective 3.4: ODWC decision-making or input processes are accessible and welcoming to Hispanics

Objective 3.5: ODWC partners with educational institutions to recruit Hispanics into conservation careers

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| **Hispanics—Actions by relevancy goals and objectives** | | | |
| **Relevancy goal 1: ODWC understands the values, interests and concerns of Hispanic communities in Oklahoma** | | | |
| *Objective 1.1: ODWC understands where Hispanic communities are and what Hispanic groups currently exist* | | | |
| **Action** | | **Who initiates** | **Indicators of success** |
| 1.1.1: Identify where large populations of Hispanics are within Oklahoma (e.g., via on-line research or inquiry of agencies or groups that work with Hispanic communities) and make connections with ODWC staff that work with those communities. | | Education Technician and Human Dimensions Specialist | 1. List created. 2. List shared with ODWC staff, particularly staff that work in the areas identified. 3. Inquiry among staff about existing relationships and work done in Hispanic communities. 4. Share information with ODWC staff (e.g., via Coffee Chat). |
| 1.1.2: Solicit input from Oklahoma conservation partners about their connections to Hispanic groups/communities to determine if synergies could be created. | | Executive leadership or Conservation Partner Liaison | 1. Data (names and contact info of organizations) from OK conservation partners. 2. Plans to work with conservation partners to help build out those partnerships to include ODWC. |
| 1.1.3: Reach out to agencies and groups that are already engaged with Hispanic groups (e.g., those interviewed in Phase II, Oklahoma Gas & Electric, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic Caucus) to learn about relationships, common interests, and the possibility to create synergies. | | Depends on the agency or group to be contacted (e.g., Executive Leadership, Legislative Liaison, Fishing R3 Coordinator) | 1. Identify 3-5 agencies or groups to pilot an engagement effort. 2. Make initial connections with groups, identify common interests (e.g., share Hispanic relevant results from Phase II survey), and make plans for follow-up. 3. Share results up the chain. |
| *Objective 1.2: ODWC has recent and sufficient data to understand needs, interests and concerns of Hispanic communities in Oklahoma* | | | |
| **Action** | | **Who initiates** | **Indicators of success** |
| 1.2.1: Relevancy project quantitative and qualitative inquiries are reviewed, analyzed, interpreted and shared within ODWC. | | ODWC Relevancy Project Team | 1. Summary of information about needs, interests and concerns of Hispanics is produced. 2. Summary is communicated to appropriate work units. |
| 1.2.2: Conduct a minimum of 1 focus groups or information gathering meeting with Hispanic group leaders & their referrals to learn more about specific interests, needs and concerns of Hispanic communities. | | C&E- Social Media Coordinator, Law Enforcement, Human Dimensions Specialist | 1. Conduct 1 focus group/meeting. 2. Design a way forward to build partnerships. 3. Commit to continued 2-way communication. |
| 1.2.3: Conduct surveys of Hispanic anglers and to understand their needs interests and concerns. | | HD, Fisheries, Wildlife | 1. Survey designed and pre-tested. 2. Survey implemented, results analyzed, shared and applied to improve services provided to Hispanic communities. |
| *Objective 1.3: ODWC establishes relationships with Hispanic communities* | | | |
| **Action** | | **Who initiates** | **Indicators of success** |
| 1.3.1: Identify and connect with 2-3 leaders of Hispanic groups for purpose of building shared understanding and trusting relationships with them (See Action 1.1.3). | | C&E, LE | 1. ODWC team convened. 2. Group leaders identified (can start with leaders interviewed in Phase II). 3. Meetings initiated 4. Provide invitation to collaborate on event of common interest. |
| 1.3.2: ODWC works with Hispanic groups to assess interest in piloting a Hispanic Summit in a Hispanic community to build shared understanding and relationships. | | Executive Leadership or designees | 1. ODWC reaches out to Hispanic groups to assess interest in a co-produced Hispanic Summit. 2. If interest exists, a planning effort is initiated. |
| *Objective 1.4: ODWC partners with educational institutions to recruit Hispanics into conservation careers* | | | |
| 1.4.1: Identify 2-3 academic institutions and points of contact with conservation management programs (e.g., OSU, OU, Langston). | Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator (DEI) | | 1. Identify a list of academic institutions (and POCs) in Oklahoma with conservation related programs (or skill sets ODWC needs, see relevancy project ODWC internal needs). |
| 1.4.2: Design an outreach strategy to appeal to Hispanic students from identified institutions, create schedule of recruiting events and attend, evaluate. | DEI (with support of division leads and staff volunteers) | | 1. Test outreach effectiveness (e.g., images used, messaging) prior to attending events. 2. Identify evaluation criteria. 3. Identify and attend 1-3. events, evaluate success. 4. Increased applications from identified institutions. |
| **Relevancy goal 2: ODWC communicates effectively with Hispanic communities** | | | |
| *Objective 2.1: Hispanics are aware of programs and services available to them* | | | |
| **Action** | **Who initiates** | | **Indicators of success** |
| 2.1.1: Translate key written materials into Spanish. | Field staff, LE, Fisheries, Wildlife/translation contractor | | 1. Written materials (e.g., website, regulations, signage, conservation decision-making information) are helpful and welcoming to Hispanic audiences. 2. Written materials are available via communication channels Hispanics use. 3. Increased demand for and use of ODWC written materials among Hispanics. |
| 2.1.2: Produce conservation -focused Radio/ TV spots using respected and locally known Hispanic spokespersons. | In-house and/or contract via marketing fund (Brandt) | | 1. Content targeted at Hispanics produced. 2. Media outlets and spokespersons selected and secured. 3. Number of inquiries from Hispanic-heavy zip codes. |
| 2.1.3: Target state and local Hispanic elected officials to communicate benefits of outdoor recreation to their constituents. | Legislative Liaison | | 1. Number of contacts with state and local level Hispanic elected officials 2. 1-3 Hispanic elected officials contacted and assisting ODWC with outreach to their constituents. |
| *Objective 2.2: Hispanics are aware of career opportunities in conservation* | | | |
| **Action** | **Who initiates** | | **Indicators of success** |
| 2.2.1: Initiate a mentor program for Hispanics to be introduced to ODWC, learn skills with the goal of increasing interest in conservation and working for ODWC (e.g., as game wardens, biologists) (start before college level). | HR (with support from targeted programs/positions such as LE, biology, IT, research, habitat management, data management, modeling) | | 1. Connect with and learn from other state wildlife agencies that have successful mentoring programs. 2. Work with Hispanic-focused groups to co-design a program that will appeal to Hispanics. 3. Plan for launching the program in 2025. |
| **Relevancy goal 3: ODWC is engaged with and serves Hispanic communities in Oklahoma** | | | |
| *Objective 3.1: ODWC has an established presence in Hispanic communities and at cultural events attended by Hispanic Oklahomans.* | | | |
| **Action** | **Who initiates** | | **Indicators of success** |
| 3.1.1: Identify events in which large numbers of Hispanics attend (e.g., Festival of the Americas) and prioritize a minimum of 1 pilot event in which ODWC could participate to build relationships and understanding of Hispanic communities as well as increase awareness of ODWC and benefits the agency can provide these communities. | Communication and Education Technician (with support from Relevancy Project Team) | | 1. 1-3 events identified 2. Intentional ODWC participation planned, including metrics for evaluation of success using relevancy lens. 3. ODWC participation in a minimum of 1 events and evaluation of success. 4. Stories and lessons learned shared throughout ODWC. |
| Identify 2-3 Hispanic NGOs that have a connection to conservation and/or outdoor recreation (e.g., Brown Girls Camp, OKC Latina) and focus on building relationships with them by co-producing and delivering events and programs. |  | | 1. 2-3 Hispanic NGOs identified and reached out to. 2. Relationships established and a plan to co-produce programming and/or events is agreed to. 3. Co-produced events occur and/or programs are implemented. 4. Events and/or programs are evaluated to determine effectiveness in reaching Hispanic communities as well as other criteria identified by ODWC and NGO partners. |
| *Objective 3.2: ODWC designs programs and services that are targeted for Hispanic audiences* | | | |
| 3.2.1: Using information from qualitative and quantitative inquiry and input from Hispanic-focused partners, ODWC designs and offers programs and activities to interest and engage Hispanic Oklahomans. |  | | 1. Hispanic community members are participating in ODWC programs and services. 2. ODWC programs and services are available in Hispanic communities. 3. Hispanic constituents have favorable reviews and refer others to ODWC programs. |
| *Objective 3.3:* *Improve ODWC Law Enforcement engagement with Hispanic Communities* | | | |
| **Action** | **Who initiates** | | **Indicators of success** |
| 3.3.1: Deliver regulation publications in Spanish using communication methods and channels (e.g., QR codes, social media) that resonate with Hispanic communities. | Game Wardens (with support from C&E and IT) | | 1. Regulations are published in Spanish. 2. Effective communication methods and channels for Hispanics identified. 3. Number of publications distributed. 4. Increased requests for or positive feedback about regulations published in Spanish. 5. Determine increase in license sales from Hispanic-heavy zip codes |
| *Objective 3.4: ODWC decision-making or input processes are accessible and welcoming to Hispanics* | | | |
| 3.4.1: Use Spanish-speaking communication platforms to advertise opportunities to provide input into conservation- related decision-making processes. |  | | 1. Increased number of radio, TV and or social media posts advertising public input opportunities in Hispanic media markets. 2. Increased input received from Hispanics by ODWC and/or the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission. |
| 3.4.2: Conduct targeted survey(s) to Hispanics to understand barriers to engaging in conservation input and decision-making opportunities. | HD | | 1. Survey designed and pre-tested. 2. Survey conducted. 3. Survey results analyzed and reported. 4. Current practices are modified to encourage and increase Hispanic input. |
| *Objective 3.5: ODWC partners with educational institutions to recruit Hispanics into conservation careers* | | | |
| 3.5.1: Identify 2-3 academic institutions and points of contact with conservation management programs (e.g., OSU, OU, Langston). | Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator (DEI) | | Identify a list of academic institutions (and POCs) in Oklahoma with conservation related programs (or skill sets ODWC needs, see relevancy project ODWC internal needs). |
| 3.5.2: Design an outreach strategy to appeal to Hispanic students from identified institutions, create schedule of recruiting events and attend 1-3/year, evaluate. | DEI (with support of division leads and staff volunteers) | | 1. Test outreach effectiveness (e.g., images used, messaging) prior to attending events. 2. Identify evaluation criteria. 3. Identify and attend 1-3. events, evaluate success. 4. Increased applications from identified institutions. |

**Urbanites**

(Focus on Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Norman greater metropolitan areas)

Relevancy Goal 4: ODWC understands and engages urban constituencies

Objective 4.1: Continue, share and discuss social science research to understand urban Oklahomans wildlife-related needs, interests and concerns

Objective 4.2: ODWC initiates an engagement campaign targeted at urban Oklahomans

Objective 4.3: ODWC engages urban agencies & governmental groups to help shape and influence conservation decisions and opportunities

Relevancy goal 5: ODWC has established relationships with and among groups that contribute to conservation in urban areas

Objective 5.1: ODWC identifies and initiates partnerships with key urban-based organizations

Objective 5.2: ODWC establishes a presence at urban-focused events

Objective 5.3: ODWC convenes urban groups to identify common interests and mutually beneficial actions

Relevancy goal 6: Urban Oklahomans participate in wildlife-related activities at or close to and away from home

Objective 6.1: Increase awareness among urban citizens about the variety of opportunities to participate in wildlife-related activities at or close to and away from home

Objective 6.2: Remove barriers to urban Oklahomans’ participation in wildlife-related activities

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| **Urban Oklahomans—Actions by relevancy goals and objectives** | | | | | | |
| **Relevancy goal 4: ODWC understands and engages urban constituencies** | | | | | | |
| *Objective 4.1: Continue, share and discuss social science research to understand urban Oklahomans wildlife-related needs, interests and concerns* | | | | | | |
| **Action** | | | **Who initiates** | | | **Indicators of success** |
| 4.1.1: Follow up with Phase I interviewees by sharing (and discussing) survey data, explore how ODWC can use the data together with groups to create opportunities to partner. | | | Human Dimensions Specialist (HD) | | | 1. Groups identified. 2. Data shared. 3. Results discussed with groups. 4. Partnership opportunities identified. |
| 4.1.2: Conduct focus groups of urban constituents (e.g., members of urban groups identified in 1.1.1) to provide further and more specific insight into urban Oklahomans’ needs, interests and concerns. | | | HD | | | 1. Focus group participants identified. 2. Focus group conducted. 3. Data gathered, analyzed and specific actions (e.g., effective messaging, desired programs) identified. |
| *Objective 4.2: ODWC initiates an engagement campaign targeted at urban Oklahomans* | | | | | | |
| **Action** | | | **Who initiates** | | | **Indicators of success** |
| 4.2.1: Based on data collected in Phase I, Phase II and insight from actions 4.1.1 and 4.1.2, design a strategy to engage urban Oklahomans using tools and communication channels like social media and Outdoor Oklahoma | | | HD, C&E | | | 1. Strategy designed with effective tools and communication channels for urban stakeholders identified via focus groups (Action 1.1.2). 2. Strategy implemented. 3. Strategy effectiveness evaluated. |
| *Objective 4.3: ODWC engages urban agencies & governmental groups to help shape and influence conservation decisions and opportunities* | | | | | | |
| **Action** | | | **Who initiates** | | | **Indicators of success** |
| 4.3.1: Identify 3 urban governmental agencies/groups (one per urban geography) to engage with and discuss opportunities of shared interest on which to partner to create conservation benefits and opportunities in urban areas. | | | Legislative Liaison | | | 1. 3 urban groups identified. 2. Meetings held with 2-3 urban groups to identify common interests on which to partner. 3. Issues identified and a plan for partnering is agreed upon. |
| 4.3.2: In regular meetings with urban legislators (policy makers), ensure that messaging is proactive/intentional (vs. reactive and only asking for support) and includes positive stories about engaging urban constituents (e.g., Cub Hug). | | | Legislative Liaison, Executive Leadership | | | 1. A proactive, storytelling approach used with legislators. 2. Positive response from legislators. |
| **Relevancy goal 5: ODWC has established relationships with and among groups that contribute to conservation in urban areas** | | | | | | |
| *Objective 5.1: ODWC identifies and initiates partnerships with key urban-based organizations* | | | | | | |
| **Action** | | **Who initiates** | | **Indicators of success** | | |
| 5.1.1: Use insight gained in actions 4.1.1 – 4.3.1 as a foundation to continue to establish strategic relationships with urban-centric groups and agencies (e.g., civic groups, city parks, schools, NGOs, recreation departments). | | HD & C&E (with support from metro game wardens, Wildlife Diversity Program, urban fisheries staff) | | 1. Identified a minimum of 3 groups (one per geography) to engage in partnerships. 2. Reached out to a minimum of 3 groups to further shared understanding and explore opportunities for partnering. 3. Opportunities for partnering identified and a plan agreed upon. | | |
| 5.1.2: Discuss additional opportunities to work with Project Wild partnership in urban areas | | C&E section | | Re-establish/reinvigorate ODWC partnership with Project Wild Coordinators that work in urban schools. | | |
| 5.1.3: Increase awareness among urban Oklahomans regarding ODWC backyard opportunities/programs | | Wildlife Diversity Program | | 1. Implement an outreach blitz (email, social media). 2. Increased requests to be on the email list. 3. Increased requests for backyard field days. | | |
| *Objective 5.2: ODWC establishes a presence at urban-focused events* | | | | | | |
| **Action** | | **Who initiates** | | **Indicators of success** | | |
| 5.2.1: Inventory events in which ODWC is currently participating in the 3 urban areas and identify gaps that may exist (e.g., large events that ODWC could attend to reach urban residents and other population segments of interest such as Hispanics) and prioritize among them. | | C&E | | 1. List of events in which ODWC participates in the 3 urban areas. 2. Identify event that ODWC does not attend but should consider attending 3. Prioritized list of events that would help ODWC achieve Relevancy goals for urban Oklahomans in the three target areas. | | |
| 5.2.2: Identify 3 small-scale urban events (review & reprioritize existing list through the relevancy lens) that will allow ODWC to make meaningful connections without major time/resources investment. | | C&E (in partnership with urban-focused groups) | | 1. Identify urban groups to co-partner/co-sponsor on urban-focused events. 2. Attend 2-3 more urban focused events with specific desired outcomes identified. | | |
| 5.2.3: Using relevancy lens, review existing metrics to determine whether attendance at events is helps ODWC achieve its relevancy goals and objectives for urban Oklahomans (as well as other focal population segments). | | HD and C&E staff (with support from metro game wardens, urban fisheries staff) | | 1. Agreed upon metrics to evaluate success of ODWC event attendance (e.g., contact information/customer ID, participants follow through, feedback, merchandise sales). 2. Share successes and “failures” among ODWC staff. | | |
| *Objective 5.3: ODWC convenes urban groups to identify common interests and mutually beneficial actions (Note: This objective and action were identified as important and to be considered in the next phase of ODWC’s relevancy work. This objective could apply to other population segments as well.)* | | | | | | |
| **Action** | | **Who initiates** | | **Indicators of success** | | |
| 5.3.1: ODWC considers and discusses the possibility of a once yearly summit of groups (e.g., urban government agencies, urban Hispanic-focused groups) to establish open communication, awareness of each other/roles, increase credibility of each other as trusted resources. | | Relevancy Project Team and Executive Leadership | | 1. Urban groups have been identified, contacted and interest in a summit is assessed. 2. If interest exists, a core planning group is identified. 3. Go-to contacts for each group are communicating regularly. 4. Agencies and groups understand each other. 5. ODWC a convener of these entities. 6. Fewer FOIA requests. | | |
| **Relevancy goal 6: Urban Oklahomans participate in wildlife-related activities at or close to and away from home** | | | | | | |
| *Objective 6.1: Increase awareness among urban citizens about the variety of opportunities to participate in wildlife-related activities at or close to and away from home.* | | | | | | |
| **Action** | **Who initiates** | | | | **Indicators of success** | |
| 6.1.1: Design a communication effort targeted at urban Oklahomans to provide them with information about ways that they can participate in small-scale and inexpensive wildlife conservation activities (e.g., Rack Madness, bird walks, Outdoor Oklahoma) | C&E | | | | 1. Communication plan for 2023-2024 2. Communication plan initiated. 3. Social media metrics identified and monitored. 4. 1 or 2 activities listed in plan are implemented and people participate. 5. Positive event feedback. 6. Participants are referring others to ODWC events/activities, social media use increases. | |
| 6.1.2: Incentivize ODWC story telling/information sharing about experiences with urban audiences to learn about: (1) urban events ODWC is participating in; (2) urban programs or easily modified programs that ODWC has; (3) how do they evaluate; (4) share consistent conservation message. Make sure the right questions are being asked in soliciting stories (need to be specific). | Division heads (note: Betsey working on agency conservation messaging) | | | | 1. List of urban activities and programs (potential programs) that are occurring/exist. 2. Sharing of stories among agency staff and with partners/the public about making connections with urban Oklahomans. 3. Positive feedback among staff and the public (e.g., social media analytics). | |
| 6.1.3: Implement a focused outreach campaign for ODWC backyard programs, Sierra Club Master Gardeners, winter bird count, Wild Scape. | Wildlife Diversity Program | | | | 1. Increased number of program certificates (Wildscape). 2. Email interest list grows, more backyard field days. 3. Expand landscape program. 4. Expansion of network with other groups. | |
| *Objective 6.2: Remove barriers to urban Oklahomans’ participation in wildlife-related activities (Note: This objective and action were identified as important and to be considered in the next phase of ODWC’s relevancy work)* | | | | | | |
| **Action** | **Who initiates** | | | | **Indicators of success** | |
| 6.2.1: Work with urban groups and agencies to help identify opportunities (and areas/facilities) to meet urban Oklahomans “where they are” with programs/activities they can participate in at home, in their yards, near their homes, at school (e.g., offering virtual programming, brining fishing equipment to local parks. Use survey research to help inform) | C&E (with input from field staff in urban areas) | | | | 1. Assess interest in and as appropriate, increase the reach and accessibility of existing programs and activities in the 3 urban areas as a starting point. 2. Increased participation in ODWC programs in the 3 urban areas, request for repeat programs. | |

**Wildlife Enthusiasts**

Relevancy goal 7: ODWC understands the values, needs, interests and concerns of all wildlife enthusiasts

Objective 7.1: Continue to explore the values, needs, interests and concerns of wildlife enthusiasts

Relevancy goal 8: ODWC has established intentional relationships with all wildlife enthusiasts

Objective 8.1: Build active, intentional relationships with all wildlife enthusiasts

Objective 8.2: Increased awareness of and participation among all wildlife enthusiasts in ODWC programs and opportunities

Relevancy goal 9: All wildlife enthusiasts understand the contribution of each other to conservation

Objective 9.1: Identify opportunities to convene a diversity of wildlife enthusiasts to discuss conservation issues of common interest

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| **Wildlife Enthusiasts—Actions by relevancy goals and objectives** | | | |
| **Relevancy goal 7: ODWC understands the values, needs, interests and concerns of all wildlife enthusiasts** | | | |
| *Objective 7.1: Continue to explore the values, needs, interests and concerns of wildlife enthusiasts* | | | |
| **Action** | | **Who initiates** | **Indicators of success** |
| 7.1.1: Offer to meet with 2-3 groups representing outdoor enthusiasts (e.g., with input from Wildlife Diversity and Phase II interviews) to discuss data and what it means from both perspectives and how it can be used to increase conservation relevancy in Oklahoma. | | HD (with involvement of JD, Wade) | 1. Scheduled 2 - 3 meetings. 2. Action items from meetings captured and followed through on. |
| 7.1.2: Schedule regular interactions (twice yearly) with groups to discuss issues of common interest, build out partnerships from there. | | Wildlife Diversity Section | 1. Develop a simple plan for continued regular engagement. 2. Identify a small team to help coordinate. |
| 7.1.3: Conduct a survey of Conservation Passport holders to learn more about their interests, assumptions about what is and isn’t allowed on WMAs, ideas and groups of which they are members. | | HD | 1. Survey developed, implemented and results analyzed. 2. Use of data to improve services to Conservation Passport holders and enhance marketing to appeal to broader constituencies. |
| 7.1.4: As partnerships with groups representing wildlife enthusiasts are established, request assistance in reaching out to their memberships to help understand their interests (e.g., upcoming Oklahoma Ornithological Society survey as pilot survey). | | HD | 1. Collaboration with 2-3 groups on an inquiry of their members interests. 2. Survey developed, implemented and results analyzed. 3. Use of data to craft programs and messages to appeal to a diversity of wildlife enthusiasts. |
| 7.1.3: Consistent exchange of information and co-attendance and involvement in events (show up to their events and welcome them to attend/co-sponsor as appropriate ODWC events). | | C&E | 1. Identify with partners which events would be most important to attend, co-produce, or co-sponsor. 2. Partner on 1-2 events and co-evaluate success. |
| **Relevancy goal 8: ODWC has established intentional relationships with all wildlife enthusiasts** | | | |
| *Objective 8.1: Build active, intentional relationships with all wildlife enthusiasts* | | | |
| **Action** | | **Who initiates** | **Indicators of success** |
| 8.1.1: Inventory of all wildlife enthusiast groups in Oklahoma. | | C&E (with input from other divisions) | 1. List created and kept updated. 2. List used to help identify priorities for engagement. 3. All staff have access to the list and ability to add input. |
| 8.1.2: Offer genuine opportunities to build shared mutual understanding among 2-3 groups representing wildlife enthusiasts and ODWC, particularly focused on benefits that each provide for conservation awareness and support (see actions under Objective 1.1). | | C&E (with input and support from all divisions) | 1. See indicators of success under Objective 1.1. 2. All staff encouraged to participate in building shared understanding and appreciation among a diversity of wildlife enthusiasts, starting with selected groups. 3. Staff encouraged and incentivized to share stories of engagement with a diversity of wildlife enthusiasts. |
| 8.1.3: Using input gathered in 7.1.1, develop messages and imaging that appeals to the interests of a diversity of wildlife enthusiasts. | | C&E | 1. Messages and images developed that target the interests of a diversity of wildlife enthusiasts. 2. Positive feedback and increased engagement in ODWC programs among all wildlife enthusiasts. |
| 8.1.4: List partner organizations and summary of each on ODWC website and highlight success stories of ODWC partnerships with a diversity of wildlife enthusiasts. | | Legislative Liaison (with stories from field and other staff) | 1. Stories of new partnerships on website. 2. ODWC staff providing stories regularly. 3. Positive feedback from partners and ODWC staff about stores. |
| *Objective 8.2: Increased awareness of and participation among all wildlife enthusiasts in ODWC programs and opportunities* | | | |
| **Action** | | **Who initiates** | **Indicators of success** |
| 8.2.1: Using information gathered for Objective 1.1, promote awareness among wildlife enthusiasts about WMAs and make efforts to ensure inclusive and welcoming messaging (e.g., info. Cards and signage at WMAs) | |  | 1. Increased use of WMAs among a diversity of wildlife enthusiasts, e.g., record and report field contact information. 2. Positive feedback from a diversity of wildlife enthusiasts about the benefits provided at WMAs. |
| 8.2.2: Focused outreach campaign on ODWC backyard programs, Sierra Club Master Gardeners, winter bird count,  Wild Scape. | | Wildlife Diversity Program | 1. Increased number of program certificates (Wildscape). 2. Email interest list grows, more backyard field days. 3. Expand landscape program. 4. Expansion of network with other groups. |
| **Relevancy goal 9: All wildlife enthusiasts understand the contribution of each other to conservation** | | | |
| *Objective 9.1: Identify opportunities to convene a diversity of wildlife enthusiasts to discuss conservation issues of common interest* | | | |
| **Action** | **Who initiates** | | **Indicators of success** |
| 9.1.1: Assess interest about bringing back the Oklahoma Natural Resources Conference among groups representing all wildlife enthusiasts | Leadership Team | | 1. Assessment of interest in co-producing a revitalized and expanded Natural Resources Conference. 2. Agree to an implementation plan and roles of each entity so burden is spread among the interested agencies and organizations. |

**Internal actions needed for ODWC to achieve relevancy goals for the three populations segments**

The output from process described above resulted in the following brainstorm list of actions need to be taken by ODWC to increase the likelihood of effective engagement with Hispanics, urbanites and wildlife enthusiasts.

Internal Action Items Identified to Achieve ODWC External Relevancy Goals

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| 1. **Overarching Internal Actions Recommended** |
| **1.1: Agency culture** |
| 1.1.1: Use survey data and relevancy plan to continue to engage all staff in discussions about why increasing conservation relevance is important re. conservation and ODWC’s mission, that it is a long-term agency priority, and address their fears (e.g., the essence of their jobs will change), concerns (e.g., too many users at WMAs) and myths (e.g., city folk aren’t interested in wildlife conservation). (Note: The need to summarize the main survey results in a way that is more reasonable and meaningful for staff vs. a data dump was identified.) |
| 1.1.2: Develop consistent internal messaging around the relevancy work that can be easily understood and used by staff internally (and externally) to explain why the work is important (i.e., agency priority, clearly articulated to staff through their chain of command) and the current focus on Hispanics, urban Oklahomans and wildlife enthusiasts not primarily motivated by hunting. Use Public Trust Principles to help explain. |
| 1.1.3: Have conservation relevance and related topics (e.g., diversity, equity and inclusion) as a regular agenda item at staff meetings, Coffee Chats and in ODWC internal communications. |
| 1.1.5: Support and celebrate staff who “take this on” (early adopters). E.g., ask staff that already have had successes working with one or more of the three focal groups to share stories, lessons learned. Prioritize presence (e.g., provide dedicated time, incentives, include in PMPs) in communities at events where the three focal populations are present in high numbers. |
| 1.1.4: Provide time/resources and incentive staff to intentionally engage with individuals or groups from one or more of the three population segments (as a starting point) by reaching out to them, participating in events, tailoring programs that appeal to the focal population segments, learning new relevant skills (e.g., Spanish, partnership building), using known communication messages and channels used by the focal population segment (see SMART objectives for additional examples). |
| **1.2: Agency capacity** |
| 1.2.1: Use the relevancy plan to begin discussions of how and where to strategically direct more agency resources to ensure success with identified relevancy work. As part of this discussion, identify ways to leverage resources with partners with common interests, particularly those who represent the three focal population segments (see list of interviewees below). |
| 1.2.2: Hire/create a dedicated Relevancy Coordinator or Relevancy Coalition/Team in ODWC to guide relevancy related work for ODWC, with a focus on partnership building. Identify staff throughout ODWC that have the greatest opportunity to engage with the three focal population segments (e.g., field staff, C & E, Game Wardens, others) and provide those staff with the support (incentives, trainings, time) to be confident and successful in building intentional, mutually beneficial relationships with new groups, communities and individuals. |
| 1.2.3: Develop a strategic approach to recruitment and retention of diverse staff, with a near-term focus on the three focal population segments. Ensure that awareness building about conservation, ODWC and conservation careers starts early in elementary school and at community events and continues up through to university students. Partner with groups representing the three focal population segments to assist with recruitment of individuals among their membership. |
| 1.2.4: Mainstream diversity, equity and inclusion training within the agency. For staff working with population segments, provide training on how to engage and build relationships with new constituencies. Build training requirements and application of the training into performance evaluations. |
| 1.2.4: Increase FTEs in C&E and HD to help build and support relationships (e.g., innovative and targeted messaging and images, survey research/focus groups) with the three focal population segments. |
| 1. **Hispanic Constituents-Internal Actions Recommended** |
| 2.1.1: Do an internal inquiry of Hispanic staff and Spanish-speaking staff. Engage those staff as part of the team to lead implementation of the Hispanic-focused actions. (Note: The inquiry could include asking whether staff is bilingual in any language and their ability/willingness to translate public inquiries as needed). Provide interested staff incentives to learn Spanish (e.g., HRDS training hours). |
| 2.1.2: Identify existing programs that ODWC leads or is a partner (e.g., OKC Latina fishing clinics) that have high levels of Hispanic participation and consider expanding them to other communities. Build in meaningful evaluation (e.g., post-participation interviews). |
| 2.1.3: Provide Hispanic-focused cultural awareness training for ODWC staff that work with Hispanic communities. |
| 1. **Urban Constituents-Internal Actions Recommended** |
| 3.1.1: Direct ODWC staff that work in urban areas, the Wildlife Diversity Program and other interested staff to work with urban-focused organizations to design a “close to home” program in the Wildlife Division. Start by inventorying successful urban wildlife programs that ODWC leads or is a partner and expand as appropriate. |
| 3.1.2: Provide opportunities (e.g., time) and incentives (e.g., include in PMPs) to staff to be present in urban communities or at partner events in urban areas (e.g., at Scissortail Park) to get to known urban needs, interests and concerns. Will help dispel myths that “city folk” are not interested in wildlife conservation and discover ways to link interests of urban Oklahomans (e.g., mental health, clean water, see Phase II survey results) and conservation. |
| 1. **Wildlife Enthusiasts Constituents-Internal Actions Recommended** |
| 4.1.1: Leadership initiates internal dialogue about the importance of understanding, engaging and serving all wildlife enthusiasts, emphasis that increasing conservation relevancy is not about leaving hunters behind but expanding support for conservation out to others who are interested in wildlife as well. Focus on common interests (e.g., habitat, healthy and sustainable populations of wildlife, health benefits of nature) and goals (e.g., maintain habitat, clean water) and encourage staff participation in generating ideas for engaging new groups and individuals in wildlife conservation-related activities (e.g., ensure all wildlife enthusiasts are aware of, feel invited to and welcome at WMAs). |
| 4.1.2: Provide opportunities for staff and non-consumptive organizations to get to know each other, discover common interests and learn about each other’s contributions to conservation in Oklahoma. These opportunities could include: (1) ODWC co-producing a webinar series where ODWC and select organizations share some highlights about their organizations, the work that they do and their memberships; or (2) encouraging and providing time for ODWC staff to attend meetings/conferences sponsored by non-consumptive organizations. |

**Next Steps**

The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation has made a concerted effort to understand the values, attitudes, and interests of all Oklahomans and start examining its agency values and culture to identify barriers to engaging with segments of Oklahoma’s population that the agency would like to understand and serve better. Through the work described in this document, ODWC’s RPT sought to understand more about the needs, interests, and concerns of Oklahomans, with an initial focus on three population segments—Hispanics, urban residents and wildlife enthusiasts (not primarily motivated by hunting)--that the agency wants to understand better. This report reflects the hard work and commitment of the RPT related to these population segments.

To be successful in achieving their relevancy goals and objectives, ODWC will need to continue its work on assessing it internal programs and capacities, finding synergies and efficiencies with other internal initiatives, and further prioritizing the actions described in this plan. ODWC now has data for key demographics, a process by which to outline objectives and action items, and resources such as the Fish and Wildlife Relevancy Roadmap to assist the agency as it continues to work through strategies for improving its employees’ capacity to engage and provide conservation benefits to underserved population segments of interest.

The Relevancy Consulting Team’s intention with this project and process was to create a learning environment facilitating additional capacity within ODWC as it moves forward. Success will depend on resource allocation, capacity-building, follow-through (plan refinement and adequate implementation), internal and external communication, reasonable expectations, ongoing evaluation of relevancy-improvement efforts, and celebrating successes when they occur.

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