



ASSOCIATION *of*
FISH & WILDLIFE
AGENCIES

EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

Chair: Tabbi Kinion (AR)

Friday, March 24, 2023

88th North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference

Agenda

- Welcome/Introductions
 - We are a subset of the EOD Committee, focused on strengthening conservation education through network building, training, tools and coordinated messaging.
 - Review of the CE Toolkit on the AFWA website (<https://www.fishwildlife.org/afwa-informs/ce-strategy/north-american-conservation-education-strategy>)
 - There is a very active Facebook page for Conservation Education educators (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/276989063783620>)

- Wildlife Viewer Survey and Conservation Education Implications (Shelly Plante, TX)
 - National and regional results of the wildlife viewer survey
 - More than 1/3 of all adults view wildlife; number of viewers are growing
 - Most wildlife viewers do not know the state agencies that serve them
 - How can we connect wildlife viewers outside the hunter/angler model?
How can they financially contribute to conservation?
 - Asking wildlife viewers what they want from us (state FW agencies)
 - Over 1000 respondents in each region took part in the national survey; oversampling in some states (requested) to delve more into a specific states data
 - 80% self-identified as beginner/novice/intermediate skill level
 - 75% of people viewed wildlife around home/property
 - Developed recommendations to implement to reach wildlife viewers

- There is a lot of work to be done to reach out to more diverse wildlife viewers (black, indigenous or people of color)
- There will be an online website where all this information will be shared (under development)
- Building the Conservation Education Leadership Network (Tabbi Kinion, AR)
 - Bi-monthly calls between the AFWA Annual Conference and this conference targeted at managers of Conservation Education teams
 - Purpose: sharing information between states; professional development; network building; collective voice for multistate initiatives
 - Next call: May 4 at Noon ET
 - Created a list of top topics and training ideas→ need presenters on identified topics
 - The Management Assistance Team has some training opportunities to meet this need
- Project WILD Updates (Elena Takaki & Marc LeFebre, AFWA)
 - Developed a long-term Project WILD strategic plan- introduction of digital thematic units
 - Seeking funding to begin implementing the Strategic Plan
 - Further develop and improve online courses
 - Develop new Project WILD modules around thematic units
 - Launch and administer Year 2 EE360+ Seed Grants (an EPA grant) to states
 - Provide Professional Development for the Project WILD Network
 - Project WILD Conference 2023 will be in Anchorage, Alaska (May 15-19)
 - Have monthly-ish Project WILD Coordinator Meetings
 - Have an Earth Month webinar series in April (April 5, 12, 19, 26)
 - DEI In Practice Coffee Talks in partnership with Project WILD in March (March 16, 29)
- One Health - Education Connections Conversation
 - AFWA adopted a resolution about One Health at the 2022 AFWA Annual Meeting
 - One Health is an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimize the health of people , animals and ecosystems
 - Will have presenters on One Health during the EOD Committee
 - Discussion: What is our role of conservation education in One Health?

- Messaging
 - Talk about zoonotic markets and wildlife diseases
 - We need to start educating each other across agencies
 - More intense communications with each other
 - Might need to look at making this connection with wildlife viewers
 - Perhaps do a white papers as to why people don't care, and what we can do to communicate the importance of conservation and one health; teach our colleagues how we can say our important messages that will make people listen and not shut down [words matter]

- State Legislation Supporting Wildlife Education (Share from your state)
 - Ohio just adopted Project WILD (movement from the Governors level)
 - Hunter Education is an approved class with credit in Arkansas
 - NICE Database- NatureWatch, Interpretation and Conservation Education (USFS)
 - Project WILD kicking off 3rd year with EPA grant- focused on Justice 40 Initiative (Federal government goal to have 40% of their spending going towards vulnerable communities/people)
 - MAT courses are open for registration
 - Kansas- in final stages of writing an R3 action plan; bringing Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) program back into the department
 - Florida- realized their BOW program wasn't reaching diverse or new audiences; started an OWL (outdoor weekend learning seminar) program to try to reach these audiences; developed a DEI plan
 - Nebraska- in process of updating their SWAP;
 - Arkansas- second version of R3 plan will be out shortly; looking at how we evaluate R3

- Wrap-up/closing