

## **Wildlife Viewing & Nature Tourism Working Group**

Chair: Shelly Plante (TX)

Thursday, March 29, 2018

11am-12pm

Attendees = 25

- Call to Order/Review Agenda- Shelly
  - Please be sure to sign in and if you want emails from us indicate so on the sheet
- Charge= To advance wildlife viewing and nature tourism programs as strategies for state agencies to build support for fish wildlife conservation by connecting ethnically and geographically diverse people to the outdoors.
  - Objectives: 1) Execution of the Wildlife Viewing and Nature Tourism Academy in February 2018; 2) Continue with monthly conference calls and periodic wildlife viewing/nature tourism webinars; 3) Continue to collaborate within AFWA including with the Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife campaign, Waterfowl Working Group, Wildlife Diversity Conservation and Funding Committee, and National Conservation Outreach Planning Committee; provide regular updates to working group; 4) Continue to partner with other conservation organizations – that we exist, share our work plan and develop collaborative opportunities; 5) Increase state participation by colleagues working within wildlife viewing and nature tourism positions in partner states. There are several states not represented in our monthly calls and/or AFWA meetings and we will proactively address those gaps this year.
- Dave Cobb (North American Waterfowl Management Plan 2018) – working with human dimensions public surveys → completed about wildlife viewing (birdwatchers and waterfowl hunters).
  - More information <https://nawmp.org>
    - Can download all reports
  - Looking for feedback and the testing of assumptions
  - Work on hitching this to the waterfowl hunter R3 efforts and starting a birdwatchers R3 effort.
  - Shelly- looking at doing a deep dive in to this effort in May 2018; will be working out the details and will send out an email with additional information regarding webinar/conference call on this topic.
  - Dave- any input is welcome and encouraged
  - Shelly- it would be advantageous for birdwatchers to make a connection with waterfowl hunters and the general public; good opportunity to have a seat at the table
- WVNT Academy- [www.wvntacademy.com](http://www.wvntacademy.com)
  - In the process of getting the presentations and additional information for the academy online for use

- Covered a plethora of topics- example: increasing diversity of work force, best practices, reaching out to local communities, education/outreach tactics, how to work collaboratively, etc
- Number of relevant field trips during academy
- SAVE the DATE for 2020 WVNT Academy: February 17-20, 2020 in Florida
  
- Communications
  - Monthly Conference Calls
  - Email
  - Webinar series
  
- WVNT Programs
  - 20 states have shave dedicated staff to WVNT programs
  - 9 some PT WVNT programs
  - 7 have no staff or are losing the staff they have for WVNT programs
  
- Next webinar: A Fish's Eye View: Snorkeling Freshwater Streams in the US
  - April 17 from 2-3pm EDT
  - A repeat presentation due to popularity
  - Please spread the word
  - Looking for future topics
    - NAWMP Update and Discussions- a deep dive into the data
    - Others?
      - Activating the financials of the active community on the landscape with WVNT; show how it benefits state agencies
      - Bird by Bird Idaho program (Deniz Aygen)
      - How to do a Bird Festival (Jerrie)
      - Please reach out to Shelly ([Shelly.Plante@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Shelly.Plante@tpwd.texas.gov)) with any additional ideas
  
- Strengthening collaboration with Partners
  - North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP)
  - Wildlife Diversity Programs and State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAP)
  - BRP Relevancy WG- what do our constituencies and staff think needs to be considered by this group?
  - May work to get a workshop (1-day) in coordination with the AFWA annual meeting this fall to galvanize these ideas
  - There's currently a lot of interest in this subject
    - Partnering relevancy with WVNT

- EOD Task: BRP State Relevancy WG- what do our constituencies and staff think needs to be considered by this group?
  - Looking at life cycle of someone's experiences with wildlife – look comprehensively at the continuum of how people interact and relate to wildlife (from hunting/angling to wildlife viewing/photography, etc.).
  - Need to start to improve our outreach to the hook and bullet audience; break down the lack of trust and work together
    - Connect hunting/shooting/anglers R3 efforts to Wildlife Viewing
  - Programming in WVNT – making sure new groups understand their hobby is made better by what we (agencies) do.
  
- Other Discussion:
  - How can we work to make WVNT experiences better for the public; look at best practices
  - Look at the vocabulary we use to be sure it resonates with the public
  
- Nature of Americans Study Update Overview ([www.natureofamericans.org](http://www.natureofamericans.org))
  - You can view the data online state by state; a lot of slides you can you to visualize the data
  - Look at summaries and break down to youth, adults, ethnicity wildlife values, terminology, etc
  - Shows how to 'invite' people to join the outdoors with best practices, using words that work, socializing, etc.
  - Looking at turning this research in to ACTION (with state agencies)
    - Texas is identifying stakeholders a series of brainstorming sessions to create next steps with these efforts