

Harvest Information Program Working Group

Chair: Ross Melinchuk

Tuesday, March 5, 2019

5:00-6:00 p.m.

84th North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference

Silver, Tower Building: Sheraton Denver Downtown

Denver, Colorado

Attendants

Ross Melinchuk, National Wild Turkey Federation

Judith Scarl, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Karen Waldrop, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources

David Cobb, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

Russ Mason, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Jim Dubovsky, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mitch Marcus, Indiana Department of Natural Resources

Paul Telander, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Alicia Hardin, Nebraska Game and Parks

Shaun Oldenburger, Texas Parks and Wildlife

Todd Bishop, Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Ken Richkus, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Paul Padding, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Brian Wakeling, Nevada Department of Wildlife

Josh Avey, Arizona Game and Fish Department

Larry Reynolds, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

Mike Szymanski, North Dakota Game and Fish Department

Phil Serg, DJ Case

Brandon Reishus, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Bill Moritz, Wildlife Management Institute

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions - Ross Melinchuck, National Wild Turkey Federation

2. Update on Implementation – Chris Smith, Wildlife Management Institute

- Review problems identified with current national system
 - Cost, security risk, fund transfers, and inconvenience to hunters
- Wildlife Management Institute's Approach
 - Modify states' online license systems
 - Advantages for this approach include low up-front costs, no security risk, no fund transfers, no inconvenience, and growth for online sales
- How the system works:
 - If the sale is online, then there will be no change
 - If the sale is over the counter, then it depends on whether or not the state wants to send them online to answer questions
 - If the sale were through a third party, then there would be significant change because it would eliminate data entry by a third party and license printouts for hunters would need to be modified to have on license
- There are still potential problems to consider
- Next steps
 - Finalize grant agreement
 - Analyze approach with Colorado, Kentucky, and Nebraska
 - Recruit states from central and pacific flyways because we are lacking participation there
 - Meet with Arizona, Connecticut, Louisiana, Minnesota, and North Carolina to develop a game plan
- Discussion regarding how the three states that currently have this model feel about the program
 - Concern about confusion regarding what hunters need to have and do to be compliant (e.g. HIP registration, waterfowl stamp sales, etc.)
 - Need to discuss outreach with hunters as the program is implemented
 - Suggested to include discussion with the USFWS to provide information on data collected from the various states to ensure the service receives what is needed for population models, etc.
- Wildlife Management Institute's role and what the grant covers
 - Some money in the grant for contracted services, WMI staff time, developing outreach strategy, compiling the experience to report back regarding state costs, quality control, compliance, etc.
- Discussion of costs for building a national system
 - Because each state already has a system, this process would be tweaking an already existing system
 - Will report what the costs will be for the states on a national level

3. State Participation

- Discussion regarding which states would be asked to participate based on geographics, demographics, etc.
- Geographic Distribution

- Need for additional state volunteers, even if they are unsure if they would be willing to completely implement all of the changes necessary, to allow WMI to evaluate the barriers and solutions
- Need cooperation with the USFWS to help with developing the program
- Nevada may be a good candidate for the pilot project because they don't have third party vendors at all
- o Hunter Demographics
- o Sample Size Sufficiency
 - Want to have willing participants moving forward with the pilot project and will likely need a few more states to have a good sample size to draw conclusions

4. Next Steps in Implementation, Timeline, etc.

- o Want to start outreach in mid-April to the participating states
- o As outreach begins, it would be beneficial to create a report to show the importance of this issue
 - Ross shared that this document has already been created and it will be shared during the outreach process
- o Face-to-face meetings early on in the process with IT groups, contracts, etc. to work through issues and develop a game plan for each state
 - Each will look slightly different based on their current system, etc.

5. Chairman/Vice Chairmanship of Harvest Information Program Working Group

- o Ross stated his desire to have this working group continue as we go through the development part of the program
 - He stated that his position has changed and he would like to transition to a new chair in September at AFWA
 - He would like to entertain interest from this group regarding continuing the group and leadership
- o Motion for Karen Waldrop as Chair and Josh Avey as Vice Chair to be taken forward to Gordon Meyers as a recommendation

6. Wrap-up Discussion

- o Start scheduling conference calls to discuss the implementation phase
 - Decision to update the informational document and reach out to states not represented in meetings
- o Mark Alessi mentioned that we need to keep all of the flyways informed as we progress

7. Adjourn