

NEAFWA ABSTRACT ARCHIVES: 2015 Information & Education Sessions

Information & Education	
Tuesday, April 21, 2015 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	
8:00 a.m.	<p>Volunteerism and the CT Master Wildlife Conservationist Program <i>Laura Rogers-Castro, CT DEEP Wildlife Division</i></p> <p>The Connecticut Master Wildlife Conservationist Program began its fourteenth year in 2015. This training program serves to provide the Connecticut Wildlife Division with volunteers to assist with outreach, research, and habitat management projects. Approximately, 5,000 hours of volunteer service annually are provided to the Division through the program. What are the pros and cons to working with volunteers? What are the best ways to retain volunteers? How do volunteers receive accurate information on complex wildlife issues? Are the important messages of the Division interpreted accurately by volunteers and delivered to an audience appropriately? Are volunteers a plus or minus to an organization?</p>
8:20 a.m.	<p>Volunteer Recruitment and Retention <i>Frances Toledo-Rodriguez, UFWS; Elizabeth B. Duff, Mass Audubon; Nancy Pau, USFWS</i></p> <p>The use of volunteers in citizen science projects has long been used to increase manpower, outreach, and funding needs. For long-term projects, such as invasive plant control, the challenge is to maintain the enthusiasm over year after year. Since 2006, Parker River NWR has partnered with Mass Audubon, and other conservation partners to treat perennial pepperweed in the 20,000-acre Great Marsh using volunteer recruitment and leveraging local civic and conservation groups. For 8 straight years, we have been able to increase capacity and grow the project annually. A component of the volunteer recruitment has been outreach to local youth organizations that have resulted in long term support as well as increase network opportunity along community and local groups. Frances Toledo-Rodriguez, Invasive Species Coordinator will discuss: volunteer recruitment techniques, ideas in how to increase capacity and funding strategies. Learn how conservation partners have been able to recruit and maintain volunteer support through the years resulting in increased treatment delivery- and greater biodiversity in the region. Thanks to our strong volunteer support we have been able receive grants targeted to volunteer based projects.</p>
8:40 a.m.	<p>The Care and Feeding of Conservation Volunteers <i>Chris Saunders, Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife</i></p> <p>This presentation will focus on managing volunteers in state government, including training, evaluating and disciplining.</p>
9:00 a.m.	<p>Unity College Bear Study: An undergraduate model for wildlife research and education <i>Jonah Gula, Mariana Rivera Rodriguez, George Matula — Unity College Bear Study</i></p> <p>In 2012, Unity College received approval from the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) to capture, tag and track black bears in central Maine. The project expands bear research into an area where bears are in the early stages of recolonization and nuisance complaints are rising. The project is the first to integrate undergraduates into all aspects of the study: planning, implementation, data analysis, and more. Unity College students are acquiring</p>

	<p>practical, real-world exposure to wildlife management through the Bear Study. Data collected during the 2013 and 2014 field seasons has provided valuable preliminary information about the dynamics of this population, which can be used by MDIFW to inform bear management goals and objectives. As the project moves forward, more opportunities for student research are arising, and students are learning how to apply what they have learned in classes to real-life conservation.</p>
BREAK 9:20 a.m.	
<p>10:20 a.m.</p>	<p>Natural Pathways Project: Connecting Traditional Conservation Education Programs with Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation Efforts <i>Judy Stokes Weber, Natural Pathways Project Coordinator, AFWA Contractor; Kelle Loughlin, Great Bat Discovery Center Director, NH Fish and Game Department</i></p> <p>Conservation education is a solution-oriented discipline with a long history of addressing the social aspects of outdoor recreation and resource management. The presentation will recap ten years of research and development of AFWA’s North American Conservation Education Strategy and introduce the current project – Natural Pathways. This term speaks to the need to substitute something for the traditional role families played in introducing younger members to hunting, and fishing. Today, agencies in the Northeast are facing an urgent situation making it paramount for states to determine how best to use conservation education to address the challenges of declining participation in traditional outdoor activities and to ensure that science education reflects changes at the national level. These dual concerns are linked together in the challenges State Fish and Wildlife Agencies are facing to maintain participation levels that result in both advocates for the resources and financial resources required to carry out conservation on behalf of the public. New Hampshire Fish and Game proposed, and will report on, one of the 6 national projects that are being mounted to learn more about the connection between initial participation in conservation/outdoor education programs and movement toward becoming a participant in and purchasing a license to hunt, fish or participate in the shooting sports generating WSFR tax revenue. Pilot states are using the Hunter Adoption Model to plan and evaluate outdoor recreation programming.</p>
<p>10:40 a.m.</p>	<p>Hooking Up with Anglers: Recruitment and Retention Initiatives in Connecticut <i>Justin Wiggins, Mike Beauchene — CT DEEP Inland Fisheries Division</i></p> <p>The CT Bureau of Natural Resources developed a 5-year strategic plan in 2011 with the goal of increasing fishing participation 30% by 2016. This is the single most important objective for the Inland Fisheries Division (IFD). While gratifying to have this support from administration for outreach and education, this is a heavy task. This presentation will take a glance at the angler recruitment and retention initiatives that the IFD has developed to attempt to accomplish this goal; specifically the expansion of our Community Fishing Waters program, development of a Connecticut Fish and Wildlife Facebook page, our free Family Fishing Courses, reduction in license fees for 16-17 year olds, additional free license days, surveys to Connecticut anglers, and the implementation of our Youth Fishing Passport.</p>
<p>11:00 a.m.</p>	<p>Partnerships enhancing opportunities for maximizing stages of R3 Model <i>Werner Barz, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i></p> <p>This presentation will discuss identifying and working with partners with established Hunting programs that address different stages of Wildlife Management Institute’s Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation Model (R3). By working with a variety of partners to provide participants the opportunity to progress through multiple stages and demonstrates the benefit of distributing the cost, workload, staffing and time across multiple organizations to maximizes</p>

	<p>opportunities for each individual organization while providing a complete program. . In this presentation we look at examples of programs developed through partnership between Federal, State and Non-Government organizations (NGOs). The presentation will include a timeline and process for development of a program and determining roles and responsibilities, as well as, barriers encountered and how they were overcome, And conclude with lessons learned.</p>
11:20 a.m.	<p>Current Trends and Statistical Analysis of Hunter Education Program Participation in Rhode Island <i>Scott Travers, Wildlife Management Institute</i></p> <p>The State of Rhode Island, Division of Environmental Management, provides hunter education courses for both firearms and bow hunting to prospective hunters in the state. In September 2012 the State of Rhode Island introduced an on line hunter education program as an option to the in classroom firearms hunter education course. There has never been an analysis or study to determine the breakdown of demographics to determine the trend of participants engaged in the programs. We used available data taken from information provided by in classroom firearm and bow hunter education course participants over the last 10 years as well as information provided by on line hunter education course participants over the last 2 years to show the breakdown by age group and by gender of the people participating in the various programs. The data was also evaluated to make several other determinations to include the trend in hunter education participants increasing or decreasing as a percentage of the general population over the years, which segment of the group participated the most in each program, and which program produces the highest test scores based on the same written examination taken by both in class firearms hunter education participants and on line hunter education participants.</p>
11:40 a.m.	<p>Hunting 101 Workshops <i>Patricia Handy, Maryland DNR</i></p> <p>Learn about these ‘next step’ workshops geared towards those thinking about or just getting into the hunting and shooting sports. These half-day workshops are designed to be as hands-on as possible, giving participants enough knowledge to further pursue their interests once the workshop is concluded.</p>
BREAK 12:00 p.m.	
1:00 p.m. - 1:40 p.m.	<p>Urban wildlife conservation: Creating a connected community <i>Janis Nepshinsky, Tylar Greene — U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i></p> <p>To garner broad support for conservation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service must provide a reason, and opportunities, for urban residents to find, appreciate, and care for nature in their cities and beyond. Our urban initiative aims to establish measures to help define and achieve standards of excellence for urban refuges, create a framework for creating new urban partnerships, and establish a refuge presence in ten demographically and geographically varied cities in the U.S. Our urban wildlife refuge partnership in Providence, Rhode Island is working with many partners including the City of Providence Park System, the Partnership for Providence Parks, the Roger Williams Park Zoo, The Nature Conservancy of Rhode Island, the Department of Environmental Management, Audubon Society of Rhode Island, and other conservation organizations to develop and implement inclusive and cohesive environmental awareness, and education programs by bringing messages to students and families where they live and work in over 100 parks, schools and the zoo. Learn about our efforts to engage our neighbors and foster a sense of stewardship among urban residents.</p>
1:40 p.m.	<p>Communication Beyond Borders: The Connecticut River Watershed Landscape Conservation Design Pilot</p>

David Eisenhower, Bridget Macdonald — U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative

The Connecticut River Watershed Landscape Conservation Design Pilot represents the cutting edge in conservation science - incorporating the best available data on regionally important species and habitats, as well as predictions about how climate change will impact the integrity of these resources over time. But just as important, the pilot represents a year of collaborative decision-making by a team of more than 30 conservation partners working at multiple scales in the region - from federal and state agencies to private non-profit organizations. Without the involvement of stakeholders who are commitment to communicating the purpose and applicability of the design to those who will ultimately be making ground-level decisions, a conservation priority map for a 7.2 million acre watershed could not succeed, no matter how sophisticated the underlying science. From the beginning, the perspective of partners was integral to the pilot's communication and outreach strategy, ensuring that the design remained relevant and applicable for audiences with diverse objectives across multiple scales. Communication involved regular news updates targeting key conservation audiences, presentations to conservation networks such as Regional Conservation Partnerships, a video in which Core Team members articulated the project's value, and the development of case examples demonstrating the applicability of the design for practitioners at multiple scales. Through this presentation, we hope to spark a discussion on how the LCC, Fish and Wildlife Service and states can jointly communicate about landscape-scale efforts like the Connecticut River Pilot and help potential users access information and tools for better decision making.

Building a Stronger Coast: Communicating Hurricane Sandy Recovery

Margie Brenner, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Northeast Region

**2:00
p.m.**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, along with other government agencies and conservation organizations, is investing millions of dollars in federal funding for Hurricane Sandy recovery to restore fish and wildlife habitat, remove dams, rebuild infrastructure and make the coasts more resilient to future storms. Our communications strategy emphasizes how local efforts to strengthen natural defenses can add up to a more resilient Atlantic Coast in the face of climate change and future intense storms. And our efforts to conserve wildlife also have long-term economic, recreational, health and safety benefits for communities. During this session we'll showcase products and tools we've developed for communications, including an interactive, online story map. We will engage participants in a dialogue on how we can jointly tell this story and leverage efforts to communicate the value and importance of forward-thinking conservation in an era of constant change.

Anglers support North American river otter (*Lontra canadensis*) presence at a popular fishing site over 10 years after successful reintroductions

Megan Spindler, Frostburg State University; Thomas Serfass, Frostburg State University, and Appalachian Laboratory, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science; Courtney Birkmeyer, Frostburg State University

**2:20
p.m.**

The Pennsylvania River Otter Reintroduction Project (PRORP) was initiated in 1982 to restore extirpated otter (*Lontra canadensis*) populations in central and western Pennsylvania. Overall, the project released 153 otters among 7 aquatic systems statewide. Prior to implementing the project there was concern that anglers at reintroduction sites would consider otters harmful to game fish populations. Consequently, considerable time at each reintroduction site was spent developing and implementing a public education program that accurately and positively depicted the role of otters in aquatic ecosystems and reviewed important aspects of otter feeding ecology related to prey selection. Support among anglers during the initial reintroduction project was

	<p>high. However, we were interested in determining if support and interest for the otter and PRORP remained positive approximately 30 years since the project was initiated. To accomplish this assessment, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 115 anglers at the Youghiogheny River in southwestern Pennsylvania from 2011 to 2012 to assess their knowledge about and attitudes towards otters and PRORP. Support for otters and PRORP was high among the majority of anglers surveyed, with 91% of anglers indicating they were glad for PRORP and 77% believing otters are beneficial to their habitats. Only 26% believed that otters would harm the game fish population. Given that 61% of anglers surveyed indicated they were not aware of the reintroduction project in the area, we suspect that the support shown is related not only to the education programs given, but also to angler's genuine interest and concern for the otter.</p>
BREAK 2:40 p.m.	
3:00 p.m.	<p>Brand- Beyond the Logo <i>Brittany Howell, Communications Specialist, Pennsylvania Game Commission</i></p> <p>Branding goes beyond the selection of a logo. This presentation will discuss other aspects of branding including standard designs, consistent use and style. It will also discuss the effects of branding on perception and recognition.</p>
3:20 p.m.	<p>Social Media: Make it Work For You <i>Patricia Handy, Maryland DNR; Brittany Howell, Pennsylvania Game Commission</i></p> <p>Are you proud of your good work? Social Media can help you share your accomplishments, come and learn how! Learn the best social media techniques to reach your target audiences (Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, etc). Check out tools of the trade to help you schedule your posts and see what's working and what's not.</p>
3:40 p.m.	<p>Is this thing on? How to find out if you are being heard on social media <i>Keith Shannon, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i></p> <p>Likes. Reach. Engagement. Impressions. Retweets. MTs. What does this all mean and how can they be used to customize your social media messages to reach a broader audience? In this presentation you will learn how to use free tools to help measure how well your social media content is performing.</p>
4:00 p.m.	<p>National Efforts to Recruit, Retain and Reactivate (R3) Hunting and Shooting Sports Participants</p> <p>Hunters and shooting sports participants are a critical element of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. For this reason, the Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports, industry representatives, state fish and wildlife agencies and NGOs are partnering together to ensure that future R3 efforts are effective in maintaining viable participant populations. In this hour, the Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports will address its efforts to develop a National R3 Action Plan. The results of a national survey to quantify resources allocated by the 50 state fish and wildlife agencies to hunting and shooting sports R3 efforts will also be reviewed and discussed with audience members. Finally, industry representatives will highlight the importance of a joint national effort and offer opportunities for northeast state fish and wildlife agencies to become active in this partnership.</p>