

WAFWA COMMISSIONERS' COMMITTEE

BRIEFING PAPER



Issue Topic #2

Connections with National Outdoor Groups

Virtual Meeting
July 9, 2020



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
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Department of Fish and Game

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Alaska Department of Fish & Game Issue Topics WAFA 2020 Summer Meeting

Connections with national outdoor groups. The commissioners would like to know more about what is being done to expand relationships and make connections with National outdoor groups.

Alaska is focused on strengthening pre-existing connections and establishing new connections with in-state outdoor groups including the Alaska chapters of national organizations such as SCI Alaska Chapter and the Alaska Wild Sheep Foundation. This allows us to tackle local issues of mutual interest where we can have the most impact on shared issues of concern. In contrast, we focus less effort on national groups, which we find often differ or who cannot support Alaska specific issues or concerns. National positions are often too watered down in an attempt to find consensus.

The Department overall has good working relationships with Alaska outdoor groups. We attend nearly all meetings/banquets and have an open-door policy to hear them out on their ideas and suggestions. Our mantras is that while we may not agree on everything, we cannot find agreement on issues if we are not talking. This includes a concerted effort to reach out to the groups if we haven't heard from them.

Arizona Game and Fish Department

Issue Topic #2 – AZGFD Connections with National Outdoor Groups

Introduction

The Arizona Game and Fish Department maintains a very active profile with national partners. Collaborating with non profit organizations, trade associations, and other constituent groups. The Department participates in the development of strategic efforts that include but are not limited to habitat restoration, wildlife management, R3 initiatives, and conservation research. It is because of the Department's strong reputation and its presence on the national level that these relationships are leveraged to the benefit of wildlife management in AZ. While this brief does not provide adequate venue to detail every national collaboration, the following documents the most recent and larger scale relationships.

Boone and Crockett Club

Mission - to promote the conservation and management of wildlife, especially big game, and its habitat, to preserve and encourage hunting and to maintain the highest ethical standards of fair chase and sportsmanship in North America

In 2019 the Department collaborated with the Boone and Crockett Club to expand the reach of it's Fair Chase social influencer campaign. Department staff presented to the membership during their annual meeting.

Mule Deer Foundation

Mission - The purpose of the Mule Deer Foundation is to ensure the conservation of mule deer, black-tailed deer and their habitat.

The Mule Deer Foundation has maintained a high profile in conservation work. They provide a significant number of annual mentored hunt camps supporting Arizona's statewide R3 collaboration, the Hunting Angling Heritage Workgroup. As an annual sponsor of the Department's Outdoor EXPO, the Mule Deer Foundation has been essential in supplying ammo for the event's intro to shooting venue which provides a 1st time shooting experience for up to 1,000 participants a year. They also have done significant habitat and water catchment work across the state providing improved landscape for Arizona's wildlife.

National Wild Turkey Federation

Mission - The NWTF is dedicated to the conservation of the wild turkey and the preservation of our hunting heritage.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department maintains a very active collaboration with the NWTF, both having seats on several national level boards involved in steering national level habitat, wildlife management, and R3 efforts.

The Department currently has a shared Statewide R3 Coordinator position with the NWTF. They maintain an active population of chapters in AZ executing large scale volunteer projects in collaboration with the Department. They maintain a seat at the steering committee of the Department's R3 program and support many Department initiatives.

Pheasants Forever Quail Forever

Mission - Pheasants Forever is dedicated to the conservation of pheasants, quail and other wildlife through habitat improvements, public awareness, education, and land management policies and programs.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department maintains a very active collaboration with the PFQF, both having seats on several national level boards involved in steering national level habitat, wildlife management, and R3 efforts.

PFQF maintains an active population of chapters in AZ executing large scale volunteer projects in collaboration with the Department. They maintain an active participation in the Department's Outdoor Recreation Business Summit. They also chose the Department's CTC Pavilion as a venue for their inaugural National Outdoor Women's Weekend.

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

Mission - to ensure the future of [elk](#), other wildlife, their habitat and American hunting heritage.

RMEF maintains an active role in conservation and R3 efforts in AZ. They have remained active in the execution of the Department's Outdoor EXPO and provide annual financial support to the Department's Hunter Education program.

Safari Club International

Mission - Safari Club International is the leader in protecting the freedom to hunt and promoting wildlife conservation worldwide. These primary missions are supported through the many arenas of the organization.

The Safari Club International continues to play a supporting role in the development and execution of Wildlife for Tomorrow's Celebrity Windshoot. This event provides direct funding to the Department's R3 program supporting expanded scale for mentored hunt opportunities in Arizona.

They maintain a valuable wildlife exhibit at the Department's Outdoor EXPO. SCI has also allowed the Department to develop North American Model messaging in their International Wildlife Museum in Tucson and allowed the Department to host public engagement meetings at this facility. Finally the SCI Annual Convention has allowed the Department to present outreach and education materials promoting outdoor recreation and license sales in Arizona.

Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Commissioner Issues Report to the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies,
Summer 2020

Issue Topic #2: Actions to Expand Relationships and Make Connections with National Outdoor Groups.

In the past year Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) has undertaken a number of efforts to expand relationships with both public and private national outdoor groups.

- Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (BHA) launched their “Hunting for Sustainability” program which was initially piloted by the Idaho Chapter of BHA and which was modeled after IDFG’s *Wildavore Program*. Fish and Game provided access to shooting ranges, classroom space, biologist presentations, and firearms. As BHA volunteers, IDFG staff also took a lead role in providing classroom instruction and served as mentors to new hunters. BHA also sponsors the tuition for one youth to attend the Idaho Youth Conservation Camp put on by IDFG conservation officers as demonstration of our partnership. BHA also provided the department with a free expo booth at the BHA annual rendezvous, held in Boise in 2018 and 2019 that allowed IDFG staff to reach out to many national constituents.
- IDFG received a grant from the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) and partnered with Idaho Wildlife Federation and the Hispanic Access Foundation to create an event to enhance fishing outreach to Idaho’s Hispanic population. This event will take place in spring 2021.
- Idaho received another grant from RBFF to support a marketing campaign to recruit millennial anglers. National organizations that helped sponsor this campaign included Camp Chef, Patagonia, Waterworks-Lamson, RIO Products, and Loon Outdoors.
- IDFG hosts a number of community events including Hunting University in our Southeast Region (Pocatello) and the Youth Outdoor Skills day in our Upper Snake Region (Idaho Falls). National partners include Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Cabela’s, Sportsman’s Warehouse, Mule Deer Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, and Trout Unlimited. There are also numerous local conservation groups and private businesses that participate.
- IDFG annually provides a number of recruitment activities such as youth hunts, free fishing day, and fishing events in partnership with organizations like Trout Unlimited, National Wild Turkey Foundation, Delta Waterfowl, Pheasants Forever, and Ducks Unlimited.
- During the legislative season, IDFG attends meetings held by the Idaho Sportsmen’s Alliance (ISA). ISA is comprised of 23+ national hunting, fishing, and trapping conservation NGO’s that meet to collaborate on issues relevant to hunters, anglers, and trappers. IDFG provides department updates and technical information regarding legislative issues facing Idaho’s wildlife and sportsmen and women.
- Idaho piloted a program to incorporate hunter education into the 4H Shooting Sports program. In November 2019, this program was presented to the National 4H Convention, and numerous states have adopted this program into their 4H programming.

- IDFG has worked with National Shooting Sports Foundation, the Air Gun Industry, and AWFA to study and implement the use of air gun for hunting in Idaho.
- IDFG has helped start a number of National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) chapters across the state. NWTF has also helped IDFG with a *Turkey Wildavore* program to train new turkey hunters, taught our *Wild About Turkeys* program, and hosted youth hunts. The *Wild About Turkeys* program was featured in NWTF's national magazine.
- Local chapters of Trout Unlimited have worked with the department to host many introductory fishing events, free fishing day events, and our *Trout in the Classroom* program.
- IDFG has also worked with national outdoor podcasts including MeatEater, Pheasants Forever, Quail Forever, Hunt Backcountry, and Western Huntsman.
- Kryptek Outdoor Group is completing a series of conservation videos highlighting the efforts IDFG puts forth on behalf of wildlife and sportsmen and women.

Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Summer 2020

Commissioners' Topic Briefing – Kansas

Connections with National Outdoor Groups

Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism staff from nearly every division work with a large number of national and local outdoor and conservation groups. Some of these partnerships include funding while others are working collaborations.

KDWPT provides the National Wildlife Turkey Federation with \$25,000/year to support an NWTF biologist position.

KDWPT pays Ducks Unlimited/Can annual habitat support of \$50,000 to fund nesting habitat projects in Saskatchewan. The department has also contracted with DU for wetland engineering and works with the organization on a variety of projects to enhance wetlands and acquire land.

KDWPT provides funding to Pheasants Forever Quail Forever to fund three habitat specialist positions. And the department also provided funding to PF to fund a youth outreach coordinator from 2012-2016.

Department staff partner with a variety of other organizations to conduct habitat work and R3 programs. Those include:

Union Sportsman Alliance
Friends of Reservoir
American Fisheries Society
Fishing's Future
Kansas BASS Nation
Recreational Boating and Fishing
Foundation
Back Country Hunters and Anglers
Boy Scouts of America
Future Fisherman Foundation
Delta Waterfowl
National Association of Conservation
Districts
Mother Earth News Fair
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Quality Deer Management Association
Whitetails Unlimited
Kansas Hunter education Instructors
Association
Boone and Crockett Club

Girl Scouts of America
Izaak Walton League of America
Kansas Bowhunters Association
Leave No Trace
Pass it On - Outdoor Mentors, Inc
Kansas Furharvesters Association
Kansas Alliance of Wetlands and Streams
Arkansas River Coalition
Archery Trade Association
Kansas BASS Nation
Kansas Wildlife Federation
Kansas State University
Kansas Hunters feeding the Hungry
Kansas Grazing Lands Coalition
Mule Deer Foundation
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Playa Lakes Joint Venture
Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation
Recreational Boating and Fishing
Foundation

Safari Club International
The Nature Conservancy
The Wildlife Society - Kansas Chapter
Trout Unlimited
American Fisheries Society - Kansas
Chapter
Trout Unlimited

American Fisheries Society - Kansas
Chapter
Wander Woman
Wheatland Christian Bowhunters
Kansas Wildscape
Kansas chapter of Sierra Club

Staff are constantly looking for ways to collaborate and partner with outdoor organizations to leverage labor and funding.

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
Commissioner's Committee Topic #2
National Outdoor Groups
Summer WAFWA – July 2020

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) has many strong connections with our national outdoor groups:

- Partnership Positions
- Conservation
- R3 Programs
- Advocacy
- Fundraising

Partnership Positions

The Commission has over 20 shared positions with some of our national outdoor groups such as Pheasants Forever (PF) and the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF). These positions are on the payroll of the national organizations, but the funding comes from a variety of sources, including the Commission and other granting entities. These positions have built capacity for conservation delivery in private and public lands. Some of the positions are housed in Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) centers while others are housed within our Commission field offices. In times when it is difficult to add enough permanent capacity in our agency, these positions can be brought on relatively quickly and serve in a similar permanent capacity. There are Farm Bill biologists that help deliver wildlife friendly conservation programs via the USDA Farm Bill (CRP, EQIP, and WRE). We also have Coordinating Wildlife Biologists that are helping to deliver our Nebraska Natural Legacy Program (State Wildlife Action Plan) in biologically unique landscapes and a Forester in the northwest part of the state (NWTF) that is helping to guide our wildlife friendly forestry practices on our wildlife management areas in the pine timber habitats.

Conservation

The Commission has worked closely with many of our national partners on a variety of conservation programs on private and public lands. Ducks Unlimited has worked closely on our public and private wetland projects including in acquisition at times. NWTF and PF have helped us with conservation projects on our public areas through a program we call Habitat Share, where the conservation organizations cover the 25% in non-federal match and the Commission provides 75% in Pittman-Robertson Federal dollars, in most cases, the conservation organization helps with the bidding and payment process, which helps relieve our staff from some of that burden. Our conservation partners have helped on habitat projects that benefit both our game and non-game species. Pheasants Forever has been a big partner in our Berggren Plan for Pheasants, providing match for projects, and housing many of our shared positions that provide the technical assistance and capacity.

R3 Programs

We have a number of R3 programs that are coordinated and run through our conservation partners. We also have a R3 committee that has representation from DU, NWTF, and PF, this has helped us reach out for help through their volunteers. A recent R3 effort called “Take Em Hunting” could not have happened without all of our partners and their vast memberships. Our partners not only helped to “take the pledge” to take someone hunting, but they provided many dollars worth of outreach and provided monthly prizes to help keep our hunters interested and engaged.

Advocacy

Our various national partners including the National Bow Hunters, Isaac Walton League, PF, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF), DU, and NWTF, have stepped up to help us many times during our legislative sessions to provide important testimony and their volunteers have reached out to their senators in support of the Commission bills.

Fundraising

We have combined efforts on national grants such as the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), Voluntary Public Access (VPA), and on state grants such as the Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET). Our partners have often been a source of non-federal match for our federal grants (both for game and non-game) projects across the state. The ability for our dollars to work together for conservation projects (often matching 3:1) also allows their dollars to go farther and help them show projects in more areas of the state, which appeals to their volunteers (and helps them continue to fund raise).

We also have the statutory ability to allow conservation organizations to auction off some of our big game permits: bighorn sheep, elk, combination permits (pronghorn, turkey, and deer). These are shared revenue permits where the conservation organization can keep up to 15% of the proceeds from the auctioned permit. These permits not only provide funding for both the commission and the organization, but when auctioned at national events, provides a platform for Nebraska to showcase our big game hunting opportunities.



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Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Nevada Department of Wildlife Commissioner's Committee Meeting Issue Topics

2. Connections with national outdoor groups. The commissioners would like to know more about what is being done to expand relationships and make connections with National outdoor groups.

As one of the original partners of the Wild Harvest Initiative (WHI), the Department is contributing Nevada annual harvest data, distributing WHI content internally, and using WHI messaging and media content on multiple platforms. We are re-framing our messaging and outreach to promote locavores, self-reliance, and sustainable harvest of wild harvested foods.

Department staff are constantly reaching out to social media influencers trying to create relationships. Some of these contacts are with the simple goal of creating an ally, and other times the goal is the need to share or promote an agenda item. New and old hunters are influenced by members of the hunting community and this a way to reach many of those with a positive message.

A new Department position was filled at the end of February, our Outdoor Connection Coordinator, who is tasked with fostering relationships with agencies, Non-Governmental Agencies (NGO) and national outdoor groups to broaden the conservation base and bolster our capacity in that arena. Although still new to the position, that employee is now actively engaged within the R3 community, following up with other organizations on how they're adjusting their messaging, outreach, and conducting events during COVID-19 to reach various outdoor recreation constituencies. This position will help us build relationships both regionally, and at the at the national level in the outdoor recreation community. These relationships will help us garner support from a variety of new constituent groups that will help our agency remain relevant to our citizenry into the future.

We work regularly with the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) on marketing strategies and grant opportunities to better understand our customer base as well as what differences exist between Nevada and the rest of the country. We share our experiences as well as use their research, reports, and marketing materials to help us more effectively reach our customers. This has helped us better serve our current customers, communicate with recently lapsed customers, and contributes to our efforts in developing novel ways to build a broader, more diverse, new customer base.

We have partnered with Pheasants Forever as well as our federal counterparts to jointly fund field biologist positions which further our ability to improve private landowner outreach and complete more private land habitat improvement projects. We have worked cooperatively with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, and a host of federal counterparts as well as the Navy (Naval Air Station of Fallon) to pursue and secure various conservation easements throughout the state. On our wildlife management areas, we have worked alongside Ducks Unlimited to improve our wetlands benefiting waterfowl, a variety of other migratory bird species, increasing hunter opportunity, and providing better bird viewing opportunities for bird enthusiasts.



Topic #2 – Expanding relationships and connections with national outdoor groups

The Department will be hosting a state R3 summit during the 2021 fiscal year. The purpose of the summit will be to introduce the Department's newly-written R3 plan to our partner groups, including national outdoor groups. Discussions will focus on both the Department's role and partner roles in the current R3 strategy. Originally planned as an in-person meeting, the COVID-19 pandemic has initiated discussions on shifting the summit to a virtual platform. This shift to a virtual summit will not only encourage participation during the current social situation but also expand the summit's potential reach, including to national outdoor groups. More information on the summit, details and dates will be coming soon.

Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation
Agency Director: J.D. Strong



Issue Topic #2 — Connections with national outdoor groups. The commissioners would like to know more about what is being done to expand relationships and make connections with national outdoor groups.

Many connections ODWC makes with national outdoor groups actually go hand-in-hand with connections made at the state and/or local levels. Many of our employees represent or serve on boards or committees affiliated with national groups, such as NWTF, RMEF, Ducks Unlimited, Quail Forever, etc. Oftentimes, representatives from national stakeholder groups are invited to join in ODWC policy discussions or on-site meetings.

Recently, the Department joined with NWTF to create a hunter R3 coordinator position. This full-time position is funded by NWTF along with federal matching funds, and offices with ODWC to work exclusively on joint R3 hunting programs. A “Learn to Hunt” mentoring program is set to debut in July.

Last year, the Department partnered with NRA to provide hunter education online.

For many years, the Department’s Education Division has been actively partnering with the National Archery in the Schools Program, and the Information Division has been involved in marketing efforts with RBFF.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
WAFWA Summer Report – July 2020
Connections with National Groups

Question: What is being done to expand relationships and make connections with National outdoor groups?

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) regularly collaborates with several national organizations and their local chapters on a wide variety of projects. As a result, the Department has strong working relationships with a diverse set of organizations representing a variety of interests. Some recent examples of partnerships highlighted in various reports to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Commission, legislature, WAFWA and other entities include:

- Grants from the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) for two pilot projects related to recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) efforts. One grant connected passionate anglers with the Department. These Fishing Ambassadors helped bridge the gap between the Department's social media followers and the ambassador's local communities. A second grant funded training for fisheries biologists on the importance of R3 efforts to the agency mission. The training also focused on how to apply R3 considerations in resource management decisions.
- College Duck Hunting Workshop conducted with Ducks Unlimited and Oregon State University. This R3 research project, done in conjunction with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, introduced 15 college students to duck hunting. The workshop provided hands on lessons for these new hunters on shooting, decoys, identification, field dressing and preparing ducks, and wetland conservation policies. Following the event, students were mentored by Duck Unlimited hunters. Oregon State conducted pre and post evaluation of the student's interest in continuing to hunt.
- National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) tournaments and events. When ODFW took over management of the program in Oregon in 2016, there were 4 Oregon schools certified and 16 certified instructors. This year, there are 62 certified schools and 122 active and certified instructors. With the help of a number of partner organizations, the Department has held statewide and regional tournaments. The most recent tournament included support from Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, USA Archery, Scholastic 3D Archery and the Oregon Hunters Association.
- Anti-poaching initiative. A recently launched effort to combat poaching in Oregon includes a stakeholder advisory group with representatives of a number of organizations. Participants include the Audubon Society, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Defenders of Wildlife, Foundation for North American Wild Sheep, Mule Deer Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, The Wildlife Society, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, Trout Unlimited, and a number of Oregon organizations related to hunting, fishing, forestry, farming and ranching.
- Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund Advisory Committee. This nine-member body, appointed by the Governor, makes recommendations to the Commission on the use of the legislative established fund for activities that protect, maintain, or enhance fish and wildlife resources in Oregon. Additionally, this body is working to raise \$1-million in private funding to match \$1-million in General Fund to support conservation initiatives. Board members are affiliated with the Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, Hike It Baby, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, 4-H, Society of American Foresters, and the Outdoor Industry Association, as well as a number of local organizations and natural resource and outdoor related agencies and organizations.
- Wetlands and habitat restoration projects with Ducks Unlimited. The Department has a long history of partnering with DU on projects to conserve and restore wetlands and waterfowl. As an example of the strength of this relationship, DU recently recognized a longtime manager of the Summer Lake Wildlife

Area upon his retirement. Marty St. Louis received the 2020 Ducks Unlimited Conservation Achievement Award. Marty worked with DU staff on numerous projects over the years, completing nearly 7,500 acres of wetland conservation projects at Summer Lake Wildlife Area. In one recent event, about 20 DU volunteers collected over 500 pounds of litter in a single cleanup day.

- Restoration following Lower Deschutes fires. Two large fires in 2018 burned a total of 111,000 acres. To reduce the threat of future catastrophic fires and combat an invasion of non-native, annual grasses, ODFW collaborated with several land management agencies, private landowners, and conservation groups, most notably the Oregon Foundation of North American Wild Sheep (ORFNAWS) and Oregon Wildlife Foundation (OWF). Together, these partners took on grassland restoration projects on nearly 40,000 acres of private, state, and federal lands in the lower Deschutes Basin.
- River cleanup and restoration. A good example is the annual Williamson River Cleanup. The Williamson's reputation for trophy redband trout attract anglers from all over the country. Since the early 1990's, a group of volunteers and partner organizations began an annual effort to cleanup trash and debris along the shoreline. In 2019, sixteen miles of streambank were cleaned up by volunteers from numerous organizations including The Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, The Klamath Tribes, US Fish and Wildlife Service and several local organizations, resorts and guides.
- Youth Outdoor Day. More than 520 youth and 354 adults attended the 17th annual Youth Outdoors Day at the EE Wilson Wildlife Area. Kids were introduced to archery, firearms, fishing, conservation, and Oregon's fish and wildlife. More than 180 volunteers from a variety of groups put on the event. Major partners included the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Oregon Hunters Association, Oregon Wildlife Foundation, Sportsman's Warehouse, Hewlett-Packard, Garmin and many others.
- Western painted turtle rehabilitation. An individual found a native Western painted turtle with a screw in its shell (apparently for tethering purposes) and turned it into Portland Audubon's Wildlife Care Center. The screw was removed, but the turtle could not be returned to the wild. The Oregon High Desert Museum in Bend saw a social media post about the turtle and offered to rehome the turtle at the museum to be used for public education and display.
- Strategies for Open Range Ranching workshop. The Department, Defenders of Wildlife and Oregon State University Extension partnered on two seminars on techniques to reduce livestock-wolf conflicts, increase soil and grass productivity, and increase profitability in open range situations. The workshop was tailored to state, federal and local government employees, NGO staff and livestock producers. The event helped build stronger relationships between ranchers, public land managers and organizations.

In many of these examples, the efforts focused on a challenge in a specific location and involved local representatives of national organizations. The diverse parties recognized a shared interest and temporarily set aside any differences to work towards a common goal. These efforts build trust, common understanding of the challenges facing the various parties, and relationships that can be harnessed to address additional challenges in the future.

SDGFP Connections with National Outdoor Groups

National Marketing Campaign efforts

Meateater podcast
Social media influencers
Pheasants Forever
Scheels

Bighorn Sheep Auction Tag – Wild Sheep Foundation - Midwest Chapter

The 2020 bighorn sheep auction tag was completed on September 23 with the tag going for \$312,000. Proceeds from the tag will be divided by obligating the first \$85,000 to bighorn sheep management, then the remaining funds split with \$113,500 Game Production Area habitat efforts and \$113,500 going to the working lands program administered by the Habitat Fund. These allocations were determined by the GFP Commission.

GFP Partnership positions with outdoor groups:

- In October 2017, NWTF hired a Cooperative Black Hills Forester position. This is a cooperatively funded effort with SDGFP, NRCS, SDAG-RCF, Custer County Conservation District, Neiman Timber Co., and the American Forest Foundation. The Forester position is based out of the USDA Service Center in Rapid City, with a work focus on promoting, implementing, and delivering wildlife habitat conservation programs that enhance forest and riparian area management on private lands throughout the Black Hills and surrounding region.
- In March 2018, a new cooperatively funded Conservation Specialist employed by the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) was hired and will be working out of the Buffalo NRCS field office focused on implementation of USDA grassland conservation and management practices on private land in NW SD. The position is supported with funding from SDGFP, World Wildlife Fund, the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, NRCS and ABC.
- Executed an MOU with American Bird Conservancy (ABC) to place another cooperatively funded private lands biologist in Buffalo NSCS office. Position is funded by a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant awarded to World Wildlife Fund (WWF) with matching funds provided by GFP and others.
- Finalized an MOU with American Bird Conservancy to cooperatively fund a private lands biologist position in partnership with National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, World Wildlife Fund, and NRCS.
- Renewed a long standing MOU with Ducks Unlimited to support two private lands easement biologists stationed in USFWS offices.
- Renewed for another year an existing MOU with DU to support two easement biologist positions in SD.
- Renewed for another three years an existing MOU with NWTF to support a Black Hills forester position working with private forest owners.
- Renewed for another five years an existing MOU with PF for additional financial support for 15 farm bill biologists in SD.

GFP cooperative research projects with outdoor groups:

- RMEF recently approved funding to support elk GPS collars.
- SCI and Boone and Crocket are contributing to deer collaring efforts to monitor survival.
- Signed a Cost-share agreement with the USFS which will use RMEF and USFS dollars and GFP in-kind contributions to enhance hardwoods within the Northern Hills Ranger District



Topic 2. Connections with National Outdoor Groups

*Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies
Summer Meeting – July 2020*

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) accomplishes its mission through extensive partnerships with a diverse set of local, regional, statewide, national, and international outdoor organizations. Opportunities for collaboration center on shared programmatic interests where leveraging of technical expertise, project funding, and other resources and capacity can significantly expand the scope and scale of our collective investments in natural resources conservation and outdoor recreation initiatives. Examples of TPWD's cooperation and collaboration with national outdoor organizations are profiled below.

- Since the formation of the National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP) in 2006, TPWD has collaborated with NFHP to deliver nearly 80 freshwater fish habitat projects in Texas that restored more than 10,000 acres of springs, creeks, rivers, and lakes. National outdoor organizations engaged in NFHP include Trout Unlimited, American Sportfishing Association, The Nature Conservancy, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Sport Fish and Boating Partnership Council, B.A.S.S. Conservation, Bass Pro Shops, Friends of Reservoirs, and several federal agencies including the National Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.
- TPWD has partnered with the Bass Anglers Sportsman Society to deliver the Toyota Bassmaster Texas Fest, a catch-weigh-immediate release format tournament that demonstrates and encourages fish care practices that reduce handling stress on large bass. Through this partnership with B.A.S.S. and Gulf Coast Toyota, financial support is provided for the Toyota ShareLunker Program and TPWD's Neighborhood Fishin' Program, an angler recruitment program focused on providing close-to-home fishing opportunities for urban families.
- Bass Pro Shops has provided fishing gear and gift cards to anglers who participated in the Toyota ShareLunker Program and to anglers who caught tagged Guadalupe Bass as part of a prize promotion spotlighting efforts by TPWD and partners to restore the official state fish of Texas in central Texas streams.
- TPWD has collaborated with Trout Unlimited to plan and deliver the annual Guadalupe River Troutfest, which raises significant funding to deliver fisheries conservation in Texas, and nationally.

- TPWD partners with Fishing's Future to provide opportunities for families to reconnect to nature and learn about angling through family-oriented fishing activities designed to strengthen family bonds and teach responsible, ethical, and environmentally conscious lessons. TPWD's Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center serves as a First Catch Center and provides hands-on opportunities for youth and families to learn basic fishing skills along with conservation ethics.
- The Coastal Conservation Association has been a long-time partner of TPWD collaborating on habitat restoration, removal of abandoned crab traps as part of the Texas Abandoned Crab Trap Removal Program, hurricane recovery of coastal fisheries, oyster reef restoration, and commercial fishing license buy-back programs.
- TPWD is an active participant in the development of national boating standards and is an active collaborator in the delivery of national programs designed to keep boating a safe and enjoyable pastime, reactivate lapsed boaters, expand boating access opportunities, and support stewardship of America's waterways. This includes ongoing partnerships with the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, National Safe Boating Council, United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, America's Boating Club, BoatUS Foundation, Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation, Water Sports Industry Association, Water Sports Foundation, National Drowning Prevention Alliance, Safe States Alliance, State Organization for Boating Access, American Boat and Yacht Council, and American Canoe Association.
- TPWD collaborates with the National Marine Manufacturers Association and Outdoor Industry Association to secure economic and industry data that help assess boater participation and the economic value of boating to the Texas economy.
- TPWD collaborates with an extensive list of nongovernmental organizations to conserve and restore wildlife habitats, recruit, retain, and reactive hunters, and deliver hunter education programs. This includes active partnerships with the National Wild Turkey Foundation, Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, Wild Sheep Foundation, Mule Deer Foundation, Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation, National Shooting Sports Association, National Rifle Association, International Hunter Education Association, and Archery Trade Association.
- TPWD has joined with over 250 other national, regional, statewide, and local outdoor organizations to support passage of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. National outdoor organizations supporting passage of the Act include National Shooting Sports Foundation, National Wild Turkey Federation, National Wildlife Federation, Trout Unlimited, American Sportfishing Association, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Bass Pro Shops, Cabela's, and Ducks Unlimited. Passage of the Act would recover and conserve species at risk by dedicating \$1.3 billion for conservation projects undertaken by state fish and wildlife agencies and their partners.



Briefing Paper – Commissioners’ Committee
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
July 2020

Subject: Connections with national outdoor groups and organizations

Background: Partnerships are critically important to the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. We work closely with a host of stakeholders — from both local and national organizations — to find consensus on management decisions and to conduct on-the-ground projects, research and data collection. On our own, we do not have sufficient resources to do all that is necessary for Utah’s wildlife. By partnering with these outdoor recreation groups, we can carry out important initiatives through additional funding, volunteer work and expanded outreach to the general public.

Current status: The Division believes in working closely with its partners, many of which are national organizations that focus on outdoor recreation. These groups include — but are not limited to — the following organizations: Delta Waterfowl, Ducks Unlimited, Mule Deer Foundation, National Archery in the Schools Program, National Shooting Sports Foundation, National Wild Turkey Federation, Pheasants Forever, Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Safari Club International, Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife, Trout Unlimited and the Utah Wild Sheep Foundation.

To build and strengthen these relationships, the Division’s leadership and wildlife program coordinators have an open, regular dialogue with many of the conservation groups. We often visit with them — and include them — when we:

- Propose hunt recommendations
- Develop species management plans
- Have hands-on fieldwork opportunities for volunteers

Some of these conservation organizations also play a critical role in funding habitat-improvement projects (through Utah’s Watershed Restoration Initiative) and ongoing wildlife studies and translocations (through Utah’s Conservation Permit Program). They have put volunteers on the ground to help with Utah’s Wildlife Migration Initiative and with many youth and beginner hunts. There are ongoing opportunities for partners to get involved and conserve Utah’s fish and wildlife.

The Division’s position: The Division’s strong, positive relationships with its partners benefit Utah’s wildlife and the general public. Because of these relationships, we have diverse, abundant wildlife and healthy habitat. These groups are truly invested in the success of Utah’s wildlife and are willing to support the Division politically, financially and with volunteer efforts. We recognize their passion and commitment, and are very grateful for their ongoing involvement.

Key dates: These partnerships are ongoing.

Key publics: Key publics include everyone who enjoys wildlife-based recreation in Utah.



**State Report for Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Mid-Summer Meeting, December 2019 – June 2020
Director Brian Nesvik**

Issue Topics Report

Issue Topic #2

Connections with national outdoor groups. The commissioners would like to know more about what is being done to expand relationships and make connections with National outdoor groups.

The Department has a long history of collaboration with national outdoor groups. This collaboration involves partnerships for habitat improvements, conservation leases, partner positions, developing policies, R3 initiatives, wildlife crossings and other funding initiatives. These groups include, but are not limited to, Trout Unlimited, Ducks Unlimited, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, National Wildlife Federation, Pheasants Forever, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and The Wilderness Society.