

Agenda Item Summary

BACKGROUND

The decline in hunting and angling participation has prompted fish and wildlife agencies throughout the nation, including the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), to increase the emphasis on recruitment and retention of hunters and anglers. Recruitment efforts introduce new hunters and anglers to hunting and fishing, while retention efforts focus on keeping current hunters and anglers active. Recently, agencies have expanded efforts to also emphasize reactivation. Reactivation efforts encourage lapsed hunters and anglers to return to active participation in hunting and fishing.

Since 1980, Oregon has seen a 37% decrease in hunting participation and an 18% decrease in angling participation. Because hunters and anglers represent the primary funding source for ODFW, these downward trends jeopardize the Department's ability to manage all of Oregon's wildlife resources (not just game animals).

One-half of the Department's budget comes from monies generated by hunters and anglers. Thirty-nine (39) percent comes from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses and tags, and another eleven (11) percent is from the federal Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Program (WSFR). The WSFR program is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is funded through a federal excise tax on the sale of hunting and fishing related equipment (firearms, ammunition, arrows, fishing rods, motorboat fuel, etc.). These federal funds are apportioned to states based, in large part, on the number of licensed hunters and anglers in that state. It is important to note that by law, neither of these revenue streams may be diverted away from fish and wildlife management efforts.

The ODFW Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation (RRR) Action Plan was adopted by the Department's Executive Leadership Team in October 2012 to address these concerns. While many fish and wildlife agencies focus their recruitment and retention efforts on outreach (fishing clinics, workshops, publications/tools, etc.), ODFW has taken a more holistic approach that calls for Department-wide involvement and increased partnering with outside stakeholders. This is a recognition that a positive customer experience is influenced by factors throughout the Department and that reversing declining participation in hunting and angling is too big for the Department to successfully undertake on its own.

The ODFW RRR Action Plan has three main goals:

1. Develop active agency support for RRR efforts.
2. Increase participation in hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing.
3. Develop and maintain long-term strategic partnerships with industry, sporting/conservation groups, and youth development

organizations.

The first goal is centered on ensuring that the agency is well-situated for RRR success. This goal calls for the development of a coordinated agency-wide RRR effort and the identification and lessening of barriers within ODFW to RRR efforts. The development of a customer centric focus within the agency is a key component of this goal. This involves ensuring that all ODFW employees understand the critical role hunters and anglers play in wildlife conservation and are able to direct our customers to Department resources (such as the weekly recreation report, how-to guides, ODFW Outdoors workshops, etc.) that make fishing, hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities easier to access. It also involves understanding the customers' expectations regarding fishing, hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities and providing them with an effective and efficient customer feedback system. Also called for is the use of evaluation tools to ensure that customer needs are being met and RRR efforts are being implemented in an effective and efficient manner that maximizes the Department's return on investment.

The second goal is focused on ensuring that hunting and angling opportunities are maintained and that it as easy as possible for hunters and anglers to access those opportunities. An important objective of this goal is a review of the Department's license structures, prices and processes with the intent of creating and maintaining a positive customer experience. Other target areas of this goal include increasing customer awareness of opportunities, the use of targeted marketing campaigns, the expansion and enhancement of ODFW Outdoors educational workshops, classes and events, and a focused effort to increase opportunities and access in a manner that protects the resource.

The third goal involves engaging key stakeholders in the RRR effort and building long-term strategic partnerships that allow the Department to leverage funding and effort. Manufacturers, retailers, and sporting/conservation groups all share with the Department the benefits that increased participation in hunting and angling brings. Each of these groups is also uniquely positioned to enhance the Department's RRR efforts. Strategic partnerships will be pursued that takes full advantage of each group's resources and role in hunter and angler RRR efforts.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Communication and coordination with key stakeholders is in progress.

ISSUE 1

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND RE-ACTIVATION ACTION PLAN ADOPTED OCTOBER 2012.

ANALYSIS

1. The Department has been focused on implementing the Recruitment, Retention and Re-activation Action Plan.
2. The Department is actively working with partners from other agencies,

industry (retailers and manufacturers), sporting/conservation groups and youth development organizations on recruitment, retention and re-activation projects.

3. The Department is in the early stages of a license analysis project that will include price adjustments that will be presented to the 2015 Legislature for consideration.

OPTIONS

N/A

**STAFF
RECOMMENDATION**

Informational only. No action requested at this time.

DRAFT MOTION

No action requested at this time.

EFFECTIVE DATE

N/A