



# Learning from the hunting, fishing, boating and shooting sports industries in Minnesota

A federal-state partnership unveils key insights into industry perceptions of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program



# Listening to industry representatives: A pilot project

- Gather information from hunting and fishing industry representatives in the state of Minnesota about their perceptions of the WSFR Program
- Create a “template” or “how-to guide” for other states to gather the same information
- Provide opportunity to educate representatives about the WSFR program
- Begin face-to-face communication with local manufacturers



# Participants

Greg Wollner, **Rapala  
Normark Group**

Gary Morgal, **Northland  
Fishing Tackle**

Ryan Bronson, **Federal  
Premium Ammunition**

Jim Tertin, **Magnum  
Research**

Rich Christianson, **Minn  
Kota and Cannon**, Johnson  
Outdoor Marine Electronics

Duane Peterson, **Northland  
Fishing Tackle**

Geoffe Ratte, **Ratte and  
Associates**

John Schaffer, **Schaffer  
Performance Archery**

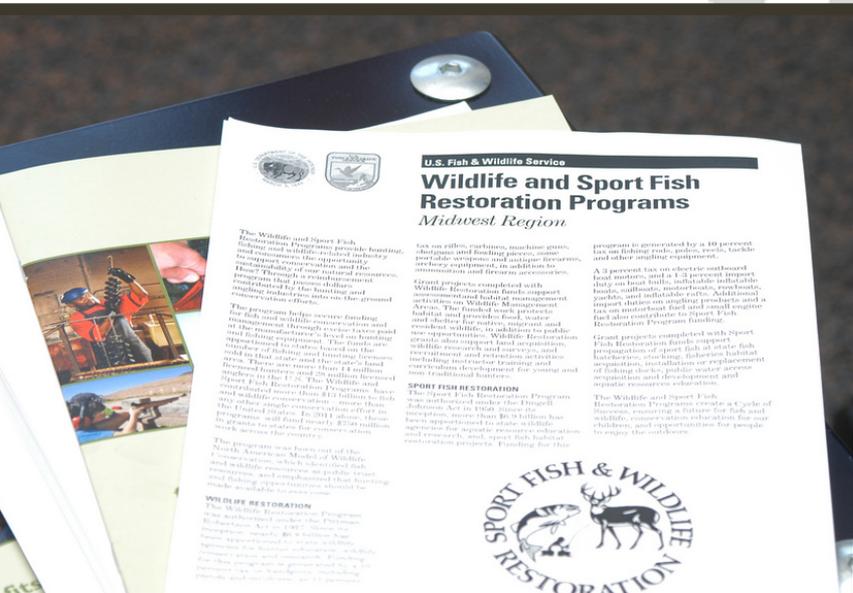


# Methodology

- Develop state-federal communication team
- Develop potential participant list
  - CEO, President, VP, Owner
  - Under 10 – OMB Regs



- Maintain contact, pre-session post-session
- Facilitator selection
- Script development



# Summary of responses

- Personal Knowledge of WSFR Program
- Company Knowledge of WSFR Program
- Rate the Service' s/DNR' s communication efforts
- Attitude/Opinion about the WSFR Program
- What do you like most/least about the WSFR Program?
- How do you think WSFR Program should communicate?



# Personal/Company Knowledge



- All knew about the excise taxes, but few knew much about what happened to the tax money specifically after they paid it

- Better than average knowledge due to national involvement



# Rating the job we've done communicating the program

-7 rated communication **“Poor”**

-1 rated communication **“Fair”**

- All felt it was very important for industry to know more about the program, especially how and where the money is being spent
- Most felt the program would get better/more support from industry if there were better communication about how the money was spent

**“Give me a reason to support**

**t!”**

# Attitude/Opinions about WSFR

1 rated program “Outstanding”

6 rated program “Good, but could be improved”

- No one thought it was a poorly conceived program or should be eliminated
- **Biggest concerns:**
  - How the money is spent?
  - Overhead?
  - Non-consumptive projects? i.e. Kirtland’s warbler example

# What we don't like

- Lack of accountability
- Recreational shooters not receiving equitable benefit from taxes
- Hard to find information about program



“Federal excise tax audits are a pain!”

“It’s unfortunate that a tax is such a significant cost driver for a product”



# What we do like

- (+) Like - Long term, dependable funding source for natural resource conservation
- (+) Like - Supports public land access, professional wildlife management, and youth recruitment
- (+) Like – Benefit of cooperative venture between industry, agencies and end users



# How *should* we communicate?

“Service should create a Web site for this specific purpose that would show how much money was collected and where it was apportioned, from the national perspective”

“The MN DNR and its sister agencies should have a Web site that shows what specific projects were funded, how much was spent on each, the objectives of the project, results (benefits), and other specific details”

“We should receive information at least once a year, after each annual program update”

# We want DATA

“We don't need videos, pretty printed materials or other traditional promotion materials. “

“We want spreadsheets and short descriptions that show us where and how the money is spent, which allows us to draw conclusions about the relative return on investment.”



# Take home messages

- Industry does not oppose
- Provide detailed information
- Provide information at least annually
- Educate industry
- Educate end users
- Educate general public



# Recommendations

- Provide the information requested to industry
- Develop a template for future listening sessions
- Develop a communication strategy
- Use these results in future communications
- Evaluate efforts
- Keep communicating with industry!



# In the works



# In the works

Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs - WSFR | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.fws.gov/midwest/test/wsfr/index.htm

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## Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs

Midwest Region

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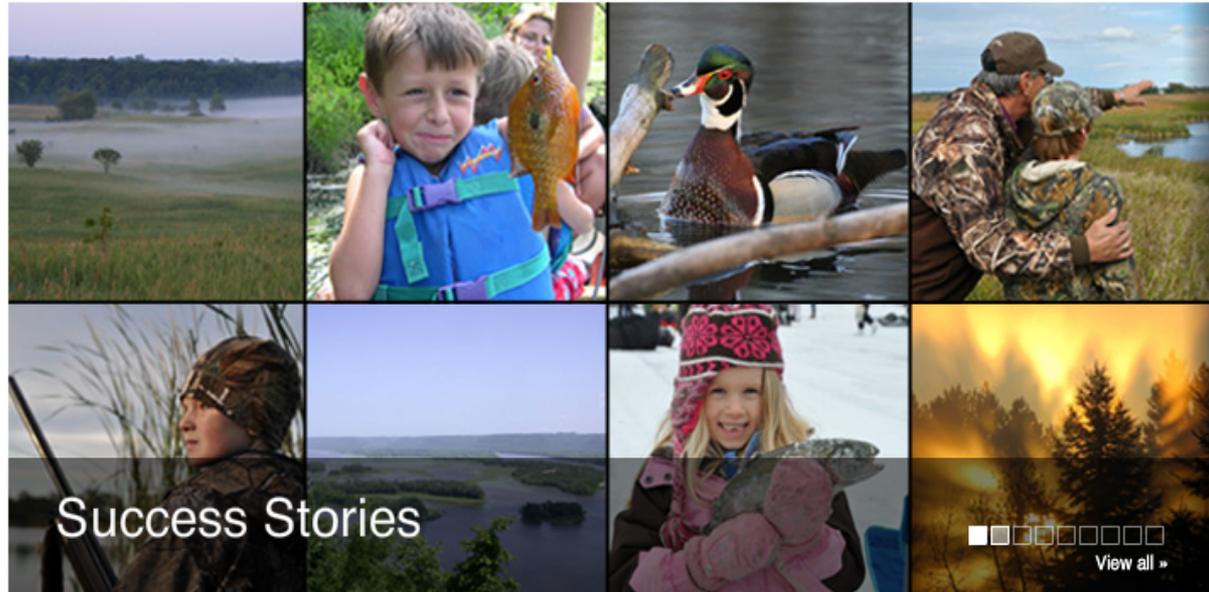
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### Success Stories

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs efficiently and effectively administers

### Videos

Trusted sites

U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service



## Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program *Midwest Region*

# Expand, More Regions, More States

- WSFR Chiefs
- Midwest Fish and Wildlife → AFWA Resolution
- All Regions/All states
- Washington office
- 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of WSFR Program in 2012
- North American

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