



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Region Three Citizen's Advisory Committee
FWP Region 3 – Bozeman
January 22, 2015

CAC Members Present: Tom Helm, Bill Mealer, Jill McMurray, Rick Grady, Pauline Murrill, Mike Dailey, Harold Johns, Dan Crismore, David Gibson, Mike England, Dennis Nelson, Cale Christensen, Norman Bishop, Ken Sinay, Dennis Nelson

FWP Present: Sam Sheppard, Andrea Jones

Public:

Welcome and Introductions: Andrea Jones

Notice: Open house with legislators 6:00 pm, January 22, 2015, at FWP R3 headquarters

Round Table

Mike Dailey: I think depending on where you live, you have different focuses; in my area, biggest ethical problems comes from the fact that there isn't much public land, lots of unethical road hunting because they don't have any permission. Road hunting is my biggest complaint. It's a lack of preparedness on the part of an ethical hunter to not know where they are going to hunt. People should prepare months ahead of time and get permission.

Dan Crismore: Educating landowners is a waste of time; there should be more focus on hunters.

Mike England: I took hunter-landowner relations quiz, I think it's a good tool and I didn't know about it. Can we help promote it?

Sam: I would suggest that with this topic, you stay focused on hunter ethics, not whether or not hunting is okay. The problem we have currently is what happens when large groups of elk end up on the flats – they eventually become surrounded by people, and poor choices are made. We're here to steer you when you tell us where you want to go with this.

Mike England: we need a compelling message. Many ethical violations are people who aren't thinking about what they're doing. Trespassing on private property comes from not imagining that the landowner is someone like you. Personalizing that is an important part of this process.

Sam: Different campaigns that you can look at have been successful over the last few years. One is the Montana Meth Project. The ads were not pleasant, but they were gripping, and they demonstrated the level of the problem. So there is that avenue.

Bill Mealer: Sam, what group is the most problematic? We should focus on them.

Sam: It's not that definable. I've heard the term slob hunter; if it wasn't for those slob hunters. It's honestly just people who aren't thinking or aren't in the right state of mind given the circumstances. So you can't say it's just "this group of people." It can be someone who is an upstanding member of the community that chooses to go down a bad path when faced with certain circumstances. There is a criminal element that exists, but in fish and wildlife violations, that is not the norm. People make mistakes, and sometimes those mistakes lead to consequences such as a ticket. How many of you have gotten a speeding ticket? Almost everyone. We're not bad people; we just made a bad choice. But you have to be accountable. Part of this campaign is accountability; accountability to the law. Some call it punishment, but it is accountability. You have to be accountable to whoever's ranch you are a guest on. You are accountable to the people who see you and you're accountable to yourself. A retired warden's business card said, "How would I act today if my father were watching me?" It's not an easy answer for your question. It's choices people make when faced with certain circumstances, and we want them to make better ones.

Ken Sinay: Age? Demographics?

Dave: It's across the board. Terrible decision making under stress. I wish we could focus it on something better, but we can't. It's a general thing. It would be a stretch or mistake to focus it. We need to keep things more general.

Sam: It is a lack of understanding about why it's wrong and it can be a learned behavior. We put out decoys and catch people – it's sad when a 12 year old is caught shooting from a pickup in the headlights because his dad is telling him to do it.

Dan Crismore: I told my hunter ed students to bring me back something that was ethical but not legal and legal but not ethical. For instance, you can't kill a deer that has been hit by a car on the side of the road, and there is no caliber restriction for hunting elk. We get kids thinking right and then they go hunting with their dad who tells them to shoot out of the truck. Some of it is learned, some of it is revenge because they didn't get permission to go on a certain ranch. I like the idea of the shock factor to get them thinking, like the meth project ads.

David Gibson: We don't need to reinvent the wheel. We should survey other states and see what has been successful and go from there.

Andrea: I think not reinventing the wheel structurally makes sense, but we have such a different character here that we need to think about that. Make it local, meaning Montana, so they feel like they are a part of what makes Montana special. They have an opportunity to hunt, don't ruin it.

Sam: We are facing a problem that you are willing to take on and I think the next great thing may be in this room, may help us make a difference for the next 10-15 years. Then the next group of people will probably have to tackle this again and they can look back and see what worked before. It's an ongoing thing; it has to be a movement. The goal is to get people to find that hook to get them to understand why this is important. If we can do that, it will go.

Dennis Nelson: No matter what we do, it's still one piece in a big puzzle. It's not the whole thing. I see this going on and on. It will be decades. Norm sent out some thought provoking articles. Follow-up: three long seconds. Bugle 1999: Turning, I began to walk toward the rimrock, along the way feeling what I had felt. Scott, his hunting buddy, said, "Given the conditions, I think you did the right thing." I personally don't like negative campaigns, but I am open minded. I still want to go to hunting camp, but just saying, "You did the right thing." Fishing example; grandfather walking with two grandkids to the dock. Message: Fishing is a good thing. It has a real, positive message that I would like to see. It would be better to have more people that are thanked for doing the right thing than have papers filled with articles about people doing the wrong thing.

Norm Bishop: My grandmother, instead of scolding me, used to say that she admired an older cousin of mine because he put away his clothes. So I thought that could get me some admiration. Your points are well taken, but a parallel is found in Beyond Fair Chase. A kid saw an elk but couldn't see all of the elk (the head) so he didn't shoot. Then the elk ran away and the kid's chance to shoot was gone. He realized that his hunt was fulfilled because he had been face to face with what he was hunting for. This kid didn't shoot because he couldn't see his entire target and whether or not it was antlered. Aldo Leopold; "A peculiar virtue in wildlife ethics is that the hunter ordinarily has no gallery to applaud...."

Ken Sinay: That is a key quote. This is a big part. There's no doubt about it that social approval or disapproval drives ethics. I'm not sure if this fits in our campaign, but it's relevant. I agree that the positive message is much better, and the reality is, today it's not unusual to have someone watching. A lot of people were watching at the incidents we were discussing. It's legal sometimes, but it doesn't make it right. It may still be ethically wrong. People use rifle scopes to look at houses, cars, and people, and it's insane. A catch phrase like hunt right could be used for

other tag phrases; hunt right for your children, hunt right for safety, etc. If we could come up with a direct, simple campaign that captures attention that we can build on in the future, like stickers, logos, I think we can use those. We're not trying to change people's values, we're trying to change people's behavior.

Mike England: in the interest of progress, can we agree that we want to take a route of building up not condemnation?

Jill McNealy: Sam hit a good point about why. You have to incorporate the "why" to help people understand.

Sam Sheppard: We have to figure out the delivery system. This ted talk video had 20 million views. Travis Horton, our fisheries manager, sent a series of three photos to Andrea of a weasel, and in 4 hours it had been viewed or shared on our Facebook page about 14,000 times. Next time you're anywhere, notice that everyone, especially young people, are always on their phones. Those are strong possibilities for reaching people. Andrea just unpacked a go-pro camera that we are going to use to help us spread our message.

Rod Bullis: You all are the leaders in Montana on this issue today. That is a unique position to be in. You're not going to find a person in Montana who will say that they are proud of herd shooting. The reason I'm here is to share my experience with the first shooting this year. One of my rancher friends had a shootout on his ranch, I found 2 elk dead and he found 5. Being a hunter, it had an effect on me. In your effort, I suggest that the hunters in here to determine what the cause is of the effect of multiple herd shootings. What caused that behavior? You all have an opportunity in Montana to show some leadership and get out a great message of "how can we prevent this" not a message of condemnation.

Public: I think what it comes down to is respect the hunt. This could be a good tag phrase.

Bill Mealer: In the past, we had a respect our rivers program. I would be comfortable with setting a public announcement/website to stay focused with the message we want to send. We should go back to the outline and think about the mechanism of getting this message out.

Sam Sheppard: The end result of this campaign could be a chapter or lesson incorporated into sports shows or other outreaches. You go to sportsmen's warehouse and the hunt show is playing there round the clock. This could be there.

Rick Grady: I'd like to support Bill's proposal to accept this draft and use it to move forward. We need to move forward.

Sam: All in favor raise your hand.

consensus to use the current draft

Harold Johns: I'd like to see hunter orange in some of this stuff because everyone knows what hunter orange is and what it stands for. Also simple things such as showing someone picking up litter can be used.

Dan Crismore: We need to not keep this species specific because it happens with everything.

Rick Grady: We need to regulate ourselves. Hunters need to send a message.

Sam Sheppard: Let's look at the mission statement and see if we can tweak or accept it and then move down the list.

Rick Grady: I'd like to see something about landowner relationships in the mission statement. It can be there or in the goal section.

Mike England: A mission statement should be pretty simple but also all inclusive.

Bill Mealer: Mission statements should be concise and to the point, ten words at the most.

Ken Sinay: I think they should be 25 words or less. I like this and I support it.

David Gibson: If you want to shorten it, you can just put a period after Montana and leave it at that, and have the second part of the mission statement as part of the goal.

It was decided by show of hands to keep the mission statement long.

Sam: Landowner hunter relations are a goal. We want to improve these.

Dan Crismore: With just our ethics, we're just trying to clean up our hunters here. Later on we can move into landowners.

Rick Grady: I think landowners need to clean up to.

Dan Crismore: I want to be able to put a good foot as sportsmen out first, because before we get cleaned up, we can't have good landowner relations. After we clean up our hunter group, then we can move on.

Ken Sinay: A landowner might be a hunter and might not, and one of the things I like about this goal statement is that it mentions non-hunters.

Mike Daily: I am of the opinion that some of the worst things I've seen have been done by landowners.

Sam Sheppard: What about the second bullet?

Mike England: Everybody knows what they should be doing; they just need to try a little harder to do it.

Dennis Nelson: I think it should say ethical hunting instead of proper conduct. Proper conduct is very broad.

Andrea: I worry about your next bullet point and whether or not you need it.

Sam: Tell me the why behind the bullet point (whoever authored the notion).

David Gibson: Some of the public don't know right or wrong about hunters; they see a hunter doing something wrong and may think that it is acceptable.

Mike England: before we rephrase it, do we need it?

Norm Bishop: if the public expects hunters to behave in a given way, then when you're in public if the topic comes up, then people will voice that expectation.

Mike England: I think it will serve as a controlling mechanism, a self regulation.

Sam: "Create accountability of ourselves and others." Does that get to the point?

Bill Mealer: That is very broad.

Mike England: We want the public expectation of hunters to be raised.

Norm Bishop: I think it's okay as written.

Fourth bullet point: Cale Christiensen: Since we're trying to keep this in a positive light, let's change the fourth goal to "increase in ethical behavior," which can be measured by a reduction in ethic-related violations.

Jill McMurray: I think one of the issues is about the place-based ethical violations.

Andrea: What is the difference in the way traditional hunting was taught vs. the present? Is that a problem?

Jill: That is meant to be a question. Is there a difference between how people used to be taught and how people are taught today?

Bill Mealer: If a group of new hunters from Pennsylvania come and see a herd of elk, they don't think about how a stampeding herd of elk will destroy local landscape and fences. I don't know how to fix that.

Mike England: We need a scenario based campaign that we can build on. We come up with 3 or 4 now and then next year come up with 3 or 4 more.

Bill Mealer: We did something similar with Respect our Rivers, we had a series of commercials and talked about respecting other anglers, etc.

Ken Sinay: We don't have anything on here about how new technologies influence the hunt. I do think new technologies need to be included.

Sam: Is that a value judgment or is that an ethic/behavior judgment?

Dennis Nelson: We don't need to set all of this in stone tonight. We can whittle down the detail later, but I am comfortable with looking at a level higher than the detail. I am interested in talking about the proposals and funding to make this a reality. If we go too deep into the weeds right now, we aren't going to get this thing funded. If we agree on just the big high points for now, I think we will be better.

Andrea: If we have to go to a number of groups asking for funding, what are we going to provide; what is the deliverable that they are paying for? We need to think about that.

Sam: My suggestion is to task a subgroup to make a white paper; one page to include mission statement and goals but then move to the mechanism of what you want to do. We have this notion of scenarios. Create multiple media scenarios to reach people in these four subtopics. Once you have that paper, you can go to the foundation and ask if they would like to be a part of this. This group is the face of what this movement is that represents all of our interests. Something along those lines is important.

Next month's meeting: Thursday, February 26 @ 6:00PM

Have comments and changes to the draft emailed to Mike England by February 5, two weeks from today.

Sam: specify what you need funding for; e.g. bumper stickers, the like

Dennis: in the draft/one page paper, have five talking points.

Public: I think you guys did a great job with the bison hunt video that was put out, so there's that avenue.

Sam: The bison hunt video focused on how to hunt bison the right way, but it was long – we would need shorter segments.

Dennis: To businesspeople in the room: why would you fund this? Use talking points that would encourage you to fund this. Create talking points to help people believe that this is worthwhile. Put yourself in their seat and think about what we can say that meets our mission, very direct, that would cause you to fund this.

Mike England: we need one subcommittee to decide on the message; slogan, particulars of the campaign. Then a media subcommittee that comes up with a media plan – how are we going to promote/deliver this? A funding committee can then make all the money.

Committees:

Dan Crismore: Message

Ken Sinay: Message, Media

Mike England: Message, Media, Funding

Jill McNealy: Message

Harold: Media

Pauline: Media

Dennis: Funding

Rick: Funding

Bill Mealer: Funding

David Gibson: Funding

Mike Dailey: Media