



Minutes
February 20, 2019 - 10:00am - 2:00pm
Colorado Parks & Wildlife
6060 Broadway, Denver, CO 80216
Hunter Education Classroom

Members Present: Bohrer, Emery, Gates, Gurzick, Melcher, Neinas, & Shettel

Members Calling In: Brown & Justman

Also in Attendance: *CPW Staff:* Jennifer Anderson (Wildlife Council Liaison), Gary Thorson (Assistant Director), Ginny Sednek (Council Secretary), Debbie Lininger (Marketing); *R&R Partners:* Jacqueline Meason (Account Director), Amanda Bergman (Brand Manager); Mitch Markel & David Klein (Benenson Strategy Group); *Public:* Steve Lohr (Big Game Forever), Dianna Rupp (Nimrod Society), Scott Cisco and James Williamson (Criticter Gitter of Northern Colorado).

Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions - Neinas

Chairman Neinas welcomed members of the public and guests.

Approve Minutes - Neinas

Motion- The Council approves the minutes as read from the January meeting (1/11). - Shettel
2nd - Melcher

Motion carries by Council vote.

Treasurer Reports - Gurzick

Overall the budget looks good even though incoming revenue was lower than expected for January. This could be due to a lag in accounting or the new license/pass system. We will continue to track this and will communicate with financial services. Credit card fees from license sales are now being reported under expenditures (Bank Card Fees), whereas in the past it was subtracted from the revenue. Per the request of the Council, Gurzick will follow up on the credit card fee percentage.

The Council discussed the potential for the new fee increase to affect incoming revenue. Gurzick stated that historically there is usually a dip in revenue the year after a fee increase is instated, afterwards revenue should increase. Overall there should be an increase in total licenses sold which would increase Wildlife Council revenue. This should be expected after the draw, June 2019.

Council Member Reports - Neinas

Anderson announced that the Wildlife Council trailer will likely be in the Denver St. Patrick's Day Parade on 3/16. Gates further encouraged Council members to educate themselves and participate at the Sportsmen's Caucus at the Capitol. The Council expressed interest in working more with the Parks and Wildlife Commission (PWC) and to share the relevant information in the research report. Gurzick showed a video from the Colorado Tourism office, an animated commercial called 'Care for Colorado'. This video was reminiscent of one of the ideas R&R brought to the Wildlife Council in 2018. The Council needs to maintain an open mind about creative ideas, even though they may not prefer them personally. At the Colorado River Outfitters Association meeting, Neinas talked with Dan Gibbs, new Executive Director of DNR, about the importance of what the Wildlife Council does.

Legislative Update - Thorson

Every commissioner within Colorado (on all public state boards) who did not go through Senate confirmation, including four PWC Commissioners, will need to re-apply to be re-considered since

they were appointed by Governor Hickenlooper in October. The commissioners have been advised to continue attending meetings and the Council will be kept updated regarding these positions.

DNR Executive Director Dan Gibbs has fully embraced Colorado as a national leader, understands CPW's mission, and is supportive of what we do. Gibbs has worked in public service with many legislative accomplishments while serving on both the State Senate and House of Representatives. There are many positions within DNR that need to be filled before CPW's Director will be filled. In the interim Jeff Ver Steeg is the acting Director of CPW. The CPW Director position will be advertised nationwide and will have a 2-3 step interview process. Additionally, CPW will need to instate an acting manager for the SW Regional Manager position since Patt Dorsey will be retiring at the end of February. Additionally, Area Manager Perry Will, retired from CPW to accept an appointment as the Representative for Garfield County.

Partners Conference Update - Neinas

The Wildlife Council is a Keynote Speaker Sponsor for the Partners in the Outdoors Conference and will introduce Mahting Putelis. The Council will also have a table and the trailer/statue will be on site. The Council would like to have more swag and have a presence at the Forever Colorado Social. All Council members are encouraged to attend. Sednek will send out the registration information.

Council Bylaw Review - Anderson

At the budget retreat, the Council will need to update and approve their bylaws to clarify the Council name. Contact Anderson with further edits and questions. Anderson will reach out the budget team regarding the language of the Wildlife Management Public Education Fund. Gates wanted more clarification about Article III, Section 1. Definition of Membership. This accordance is in regard to how the Council is composed and there is flexibility in to determining membership.

Sharing Hug a Hunter (HAH) Brand - Anderson

Alberta's Professional Outfitters Society has requested the use of the HAH brand/slogan/past creative (several Canadian groups are interested in HAH). The Council can create a licensing agreement through CPW, but incoming funds would go into the general wildlife cash fund (could inquire for the CPW Leadership Team to request these funds). The bylaws do state that incoming funds would go into the Council's fund per the 2016 re-draft when the Council worked with the AGs office. Anderson will follow-up with Padia about additional incoming revenue and will note the language/origination in the bylaws. Sharing HAH could create a bigger community about hunting and allow interested parties to be proactive. Does the Council have a hard price or go case by case?

R&R Presentation - R&R Team

Exploratory Research: Key Takeaways and Final Report (see Final Research Report for full details)

- 1.) Online ethno journals: Discover attitudes and Colorado's mindset. Primary in-depth research of ITW. R&R is still confident that this is the correct targeted audience.
- 2.) Courtroom focus groups: Our message needs to be relevant to the target audience.
- 3.) Tracking and messaging survey: Ethno journals and focus groups helped build the survey. Connected with 969 registered voters (RV) and 407 In the Wind voters (ITW) (1,376 total).
 - More questions were incorporated to expand the questionnaire:
 - Want to understand their values, attitudes, and beliefs.
 - Discover who a trustworthy source is (audience is skeptical about HAH).
 - Incorporated the benefits of H/F (similar to 2011 and 2015) to see what resonates and gets their attention.
 - Is hunting for food relevant?

The goal of the research is to get into the minds and hearts of Coloradans so we can create influential concepts that resonate with the audience.

Key points:

- All Coloradans have similar attitudes for what they love about CO.
- Hunting is not top of mind and it is not a black and white issue (there is ambiguity).
- ITW is indifferent, but persuadable. We have effective messaging, but it needs to resonate and be relevant.
- Even though pro-hunting arguments ‘won’ at the focus groups, there was little emotion behind them due to a lack of connection.
- RV are supportive of hunting overall, but ITW struggles to identify with hunting.
- ITW has concerns about trophy hunting and gun culture.
- ITW has a lack of knowledge of benefits, but when messaging connects hunting to ITW it leads them to become more supportive (pre/post impact on survey).

Key Findings: Messaging

- Connect to a Common value: Lean into Colorado’s ‘Live and Let Live’ spirit
 - ITW is reluctant to take away hunting as a right even if they do not hunt.
 - Gates stressed that hunting is a privilege in Colorado, not a right. Need to make sure we aren’t misleading.
 - Benenson clarified that they tested ‘right’ in terms of ‘who am I to say you can hunt or not’ not as a constitutional right.
- Make clear the benefits of hunting to non-hunters using exact numbers when possible.
 - Clearly demonstrate direct benefit to all Coloradans.
- Confront concerns about animal cruelty head on.
 - There is misperception about hunting and many voters may not know about the regulations in place. Trophy hunting is a concern for all voters and learning about the Willful Destruction of Wildlife statue was highly persuasive.
- Humanize the economic benefit of hunting (i.e. people care about local businesses).
 - Highlight that individual tax payers would have to pay more.

Voter Mindset and Hunting attitudes:

- ITW is indifferent because they cannot identify with hunting/hunters.
- Good news is that ITW can be persuaded and are open-minded. They are just as likely to know someone who hunts: are not alienated by hunters, but by the act of hunting.
 - The Council would like to see the data on what people ITW knew who hunted.
- Overall ITW does not understand the benefits hunting brings.
- It is really important to communicate with ITW and drive points home since they are just as open to listening to opposing arguments.

Takeaways regarding the arguments in support of hunting (see full report for full details)

- Animal welfare and economy are stronger arguments compared to environment and personal benefit.
- Humanize the economic impact with the jobs that rely on H/F.
- Make a direct connection back to audience and the activities they enjoy (i.e. hiking).
- Hunting as a food source did not resonate well.
- Need to realize that ITW thinks differently and has different values and attitudes.

- They can be persuaded when we provide them with information. They don't need to be pro-hunting zealots, just need to not be against us.

Messaging Architecture

- Connect to common values: make them empathize, respect individual liberties/rights.
- Make clear the benefits of hunting to all: make personal and connect the benefit to them and highlight benefits for animal welfare.
- Confront concerns about animal cruelty head-on: this is a top concern for all voters.
- Humanize the economic benefits of hunting: highlight real people who would be impacted by restrictions. Address the negative and then pivot to the positive.

Communications Guidance:

- Need to target those who are on the fence and don't have a strong opinion (ITW).
- Humanizing hunters should **not** be the main objective. The key is giving non-hunters a reason to support **hunting**.
- Humanize the benefits of hunting and how real people benefit.
- Give them permission (and a reason) to support hunting by showing how license fees keep lands and wildlife populations healthy, allowing them to keep their CO lifestyle.
- Should be demographically diverse.
- ITW is looking for something that feels authentic; talk to them, not down to them.
 - ITW knows more than we give them credit for. They do like humor, but we need to be respectful. Need to remember that this educational campaign is about them, not us. Need to tie it into why they should care even if the creative may counter the Council's intuition.
- CPW was seen as the lead trustworthy source by both ITW and RV (viewed as a non-partisan expert) and being more closely aligned is self validating. Organizations with one-sided agendas are not trusted.

Council Discussion

The Council is concerned about how some would not take away a right, but were supportive of restrictions. There is a fear that restricting different types of hunting is an erosion of hunting altogether. Gates is concerned that we are too focused on hunting in general when certain types of hunting are more at risk (no one would restrict elk/deer hunting, but what about other species?). Can we get the audiences' perception on different types of hunting? Benenson responded that the public does not know the current restrictions/regulations and are essentially saying that there should be rules. Important to let them know that there is someone already regulating hunting (i.e. CPW) and the research shows that the message needs to come from a trusted source. From there, ITW will do their own research, find the truth, and connect the dots. There was some confusion as to who ITW was? R&R clarified that ITW are registered voters, aged 18-35, who are indifferent to hunting, tend to have lower household incomes, urban, and less politically engaged. The Council wanted to know what percent of Coloradans fall into this category? There are roughly 35% of registered voters between 18-34 years old, 19% are ITW (about two thirds).

The Council would like to look into their relationship with CPW since there is an opportunity to have a more valid message. In the past there were ads that had a strong link to CPW's logo (Keeping Colorado Wild) which was frowned upon since it appeared as a CPW advertisement. Emery thought that CPW and the Wildlife Council should remain separate due to fear of pushback. Additionally, Emery was concerned about appearances as the Council will be bringing in more funds. Chairperson

Neinas suggested that it would be different and could be ‘in partnership with CPW’, benefitting both. The Council was created knowing there would be a strong relationship with CPW. The Wildlife Council is an advisory council to the CPW director and they have a duty to be effective with their funds. The Council agreed that they would need to be careful in how they partner with CPW and will avoid what was done in the past. Bohrer stated that we cannot be afraid of kickback if we are moving in the right direction and that mentioning a partnership with CPW for credibility does not change who the Council is. Thorson will talk with the CPW Leadership Team regarding a CPW-Wildlife Council partnership.

R&R asked the Council, are they comfortable moving away from HAH/HAA? Given the confidence in the research and audience attitudes this is what R&R recommends. The Council also needs to consider that HAH was a campaign, that turned into a brand, and that they can rebrand easily.

The Council was very unsure about moving away from HAH, some were ready to move on while others were not ready to let go of HAH. An idea was broached about keeping HAH and just modifying it. R&R responded that keeping HAH and evolving are two different things. A modification is to change HAH.com to HAH.org and to not have a ‘hug’ in the creative. Evolving is to drop HAH. Emery was not in favor of moving away from HAH. R&R asked again, is the Council more concerned about brand awareness or support levels/resonance? Chairperson Neinas is concerned about effectiveness; stating that everything the Council does is perishable. Moving away from HAH would further push the need to connect with CPW. Some Council members agreed that there is some recognition to HAH, but it is very little and holding onto the brand does not benefit the Council much.

Reasons/ideas for maintaining HAH

- Other states/Canada like HAH.
- Rebranding takes time.
- Keep HAH and modify, include diversity, and don’t perpetuate the stereotype.

Reasons/ideas to evolve from HAH

- The audience is skeptical of HAH, meaning they do not trust HAH as the messenger (HAH tagline is the messenger).
- HAH is a little too self serving which does not resonate with the audience.
- The Council has the potential to evolve.
- The research shows that the audience is OK with hunters, but there needs to be a better connection to hunting.
- Overall there is not much brand awareness with HAH.
- Emotional connection with HAH may no longer be effective.
- It is more important to support the mission not the brand.

Overall it appears that the Council does not know what they want to do and does not want to completely walk away from HAH. R&R will bring 3 different concepts/options to the budget retreat including partnership ideas with CPW. R&R expressed concern since they will need to leave the April budget retreat with direction due to the tight timeline.

Bohrer challenged Council members: Who are we? What are we trying to do? The Council needs to move forward, but right now we cannot agree on what we are. Therefore, how can we direct R&R on what to do? As a Council, we need to answer some specific questions before we give R&R direction.

Public Comment - Steve Lohr

Mentioned that name recognition is important, and people do recognize HAH, even if they do not know what it means.

Next Steps:

- R&R will bring creative concepts to the budget retreat.
- R&R will work with Anderson/Neinas regarding web content and the Partners Conference advertisement.

Motion: To adjourn meeting. - Bohrer

2nd Melcher

Motion carries by Council vote.

Action Items

- Credit card fee percentage - Gurzick
- Send out Partners Conference Registration information - Sednek
- Seek clarification on the Wildlife Management Public Education Fund - Anderson
- Review bylaws and send edits to Anderson - Council
- Follow-up with Padia regarding extra revenue to the Council - Anderson
- Data regarding the individuals that ITW knew who hunted - R&R Partners
- Talk with CPW LT regarding CPW-Wildlife Council Partnership - Thorson

<u>2019 Wildlife Council Meeting/Call Dates</u>		
Month/Location	Meeting	Conference Call
<i>March - Call</i>	-	<i>Monday 3/11 @ 9am</i>
April- Budget Retreat TBD	Mon/Tues 4/1-4/2	-
<i>May - Call</i>	-	<i>Wednesday 5/1</i>
June - Denver	Wednesday 6/5	-
<i>July - Call</i>	-	<i>Wednesday 7/10</i>
August - Denver	Wednesday 8/7	-
<i>September - Call</i>	-	<i>Wednesday 9/11</i>
October - Denver	Wednesday 10/2	-
<i>November - Call</i>	-	<i>Wednesday 11/ 6</i>
December - Denver	Wednesday 12/4	-