

- Roundtable Review Draft -

# Recruiting and Retaining Minnesota Hunters and Anglers



**A summary of work and recommendations of the  
Commissioner's Council on Hunting and Angling Recruitment and Retention  
2013**



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## **Overview of the Commissioner's Council on Hunting and Angling Recruitment and Retention**

The Commissioner's Council on Hunting and Angling Recruitment and Retention (CCRR) was formed in January 2013. The council was created following conversations in late 2012 between leaders of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Minnesota Outdoor Heritage Alliance (MOHA). The council was formed because MOHA, an umbrella organization for more than 50 Minnesota-based hunting, fishing and conservation organizations, and the DNR share a mutual interest in sustaining Minnesota's hunting and fishing heritage. Creating future generations of outdoor enthusiasts is a priority for the DNR. It is a priority for MOHA, too.

To address this issue, DNR and MOHA convened a council of stakeholders. Specifically, the group was charged by DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr to *"discuss and better mutually understand how best to recruit future generations of hunters and anglers, as well as retain those who already participate in these sports."* The group was further charged to *"establish a long-range vision for how we can all design and deliver more effective public and private sector recruitment and retention programs."*

The council met five times between February and June of 2013. It was co-led by Jay Johnson, DNR hunting recruitment and retention coordinator, and Roland Sigurdson, acting DNR MinnAqua Program supervisor. Each meeting was facilitated by Olivia LeDee, a DNR strategic planner and policy expert.

More than 20 different organizations were offered the opportunity to be part of council. Participants who attended more than one meeting and contributed to recommendations were:

- Jim Bezat, MOHA vice president
- Win Mitchell, youth programs coordinator, Minnesota Ducks Unlimited
- Tom Glines, regional director, National Wild Turkey Federation
- Mark Johnson, executive director, Minnesota Deer Hunters Association
- Cheryl Riley, vice president of education and outreach, Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever
- Aaron Meyer, board member, Minnesota Muskie Alliance
- Janine Kohn, youth director, Twin Cities Trout Unlimited
- Jeremy Smith, general manager of TV and productions, Lindner Media Productions
- Tom McDowell, associate superintendent, Three Rivers Park District
- Dr. David Fulton, U.S. Geological Survey, Minnesota Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit
- Nicole Pokorney, extension educator, University of Minnesota Extension 4-H Shooting Sports and Wildlife Program
- Erika Rivers, assistant commissioner, Minnesota DNR
- Michael Kurre, mentoring program coordinator, Minnesota DNR
- C.B. Bylander, outreach chief, Minnesota DNR

During the five meetings members were:

- Updated on the substantial generational and ethnicity challenges to recruiting and retaining hunters and anglers in Minnesota.
- Provided the latest national research on how to effectively recruit and retain hunters and anglers.
- Tasked to identify barriers to hunting and fishing participation.
- Tasked to identify gaps in DNR and stakeholder programming/marketing/skills-based training that limit a person's ability to move through the "awareness, interest, continuation with support and continuation without support" continuum.
- Tasked to identify target audiences and initiatives that the DNR and stakeholder organizations could collaboratively focus on; and
- Tasked to develop recommendations for action.

### **SIX KEY TRENDS AND OBSERVATIONS IDENTIFIED BY THE COUNCIL**

The council identified six key trends and observations important to the future of hunting and fishing in Minnesota.

#### ***One –Hunting and fishing are core Minnesota values; it is in the state's best interest to sustain them***

Minnesota has a strong and long hunting and fishing tradition. Minnesota's angling and hunting participation rates (28 percent and 12 percent, respectively) are double the national averages of 14 percent and 6 percent, respectively. Nationally, only Alaska has a higher angling participation rate than Minnesota's 28 percent. Minnesota ranks ninth in the nation for resident hunters. Each year the state licenses about 1.1 million resident anglers and 550,000 resident hunters. Total expenditures by Minnesota residents on hunting and fishing within and out of Minnesota totaled \$3.3 billion in 2011, the most recent year for federal information on hunting, fishing and wildlife-related recreation. This level of spending supports nearly 48,000 Minnesota jobs.

Minnesota citizens so value hunting and fishing that as recently as the 1998 general election voters passed a constitutional amendment that states ". . .hunting and fishing and the taking of game and fish are a valued part of our heritage that shall be forever preserved for the people . . ." This passed by a three-to-one margin.

In 2008, Minnesota voters amended the state constitution again to support actions that benefit hunting and fishing. This time voters agreed to impose a one-eighth of one percent sales tax increase on themselves for 25 years to restore, protect and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests and habitat for fish, game and wildlife as part of a sweeping outdoors and cultural legacy amendment. This has resulted in annual appropriations of \$80 to \$100 million to the Outdoor Heritage Fund. Appropriations to the Clean Water Fund are substantially above that.

Hunters and anglers were the initiators of both constitutional amendments, especially MOHA affiliate organizations such as Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Minnesota Deer Hunters Association and the National Wild Turkey Federation. This political ballot initiative activism on behalf of a core Minnesota

value has and will continue to positively influence habitat and species conservation. It will also help sustain state and local economies tied to hunting and fishing. Council members strongly agreed that maintaining our state's strong hunting and fishing tradition will provide important and positive social, economic and environmental outcomes.

***Two –Government and stakeholders must adapt to an unprecedented generational challenge***

Two unprecedented generational challenges are negatively affecting Minnesota hunting and fishing participation rates: 1) Younger Minnesotans are not participating in hunting and fishing as did previous generations; and 2) a large cohort of older hunters and anglers are at or near the age at which they will stop participating because of health, mobility or other age-related lifestyle choices. The net result will be an increasingly smaller percentage of the state's population that hunts and fishes.

To date, Minnesota has been the envy of many states as it has not experienced declines in hunter and angler numbers. Hunting and fishing license sales for the past decade have been remarkably stable at roughly 1.5 million resident and non-resident anglers and 575,000 resident and non-resident hunters. However, stable license sales during an era of population growth results in a statistical decline in participation rates. In the 1960s, for example, some 40 percent of Minnesotans age 16 and older purchased a fishing license. Now it is 28 percent. Similarly, in the 1980s 16 percent of Minnesotans hunted. Now it is 12 percent.

Since 2000, Minnesota has had a 12 percent decline in hunting and fishing licensing rates as the population has grown from 4.9 million to 5.3 million. This decline represents 153,000 fewer resident licensed anglers and 74,000 fewer resident hunters than if participation had kept pace with population growth.

The fishing generational challenge is most pronounced among those from ages 25 to 44. Specifically, from 2000 to 2012, participation dropped 16 percent for those ages 35 to 44 and 10.7 percent for those ages 25 to 34. The decline for those ages 16 to 24 was 7.4 percent.

The decline in young adult fishing participation is doubly problematic when viewed in the long-run. That's because hunters and anglers tend to be the children of hunter or anglers or relatives that hunt and fish. As young adults drop out of hunting and fishing it greatly increases the likelihood that their children will not become hunters or anglers.

For hunting, the most pronounced hunting participation decline between 2000 and 2012 is among those ages 35 to 44. That group's participation declined 18.8 percent. Those in the 16 to 24 and 25 to 35 age classes declined 16.4 and 15.8 percent, respectively. Conversely, there was 3.1 percent increase in hunters age 12 to 15 and a 2.3 percent increase in hunters age 45 or older. Hunters age 65 or older actually increased 28 percent, evidence of Minnesota's aging population and the on-going avidity of older hunters and anglers. Council members strongly agreed that government and stakeholder organizations need to better understand the impacts of these generational changes and develop strategies and tactics to address them.

### ***Three – We must adapt to an emerging race/ethnicity challenge that makes recruitment more difficult***

A significant race/ethnicity challenge may negatively affect Minnesota hunting and fishing participation rates. Currently the segment of Minnesota's population with the highest hunting and fishing participation rates is white, non-Hispanic. This segment has essentially stopped growing and not expected to grow much in the future. This means the race/ethnic segment with the longest state history of hunting and fishing isn't likely to increase with population growth.

Conversely, the race/ethnic population segments that generally have lower hunting and fishing participation rates (non-white and/or Hispanic) are growing and will continue grow in the future. This means cultural populations that do not have long-standing Minnesota hunting and fishing traditions will represent a larger percentage of the state's population. This will be a recruitment challenge because some of these populations do not have the cultural references or tradition-based experiences that would exert internal pressures to pass these activities on to the next generation.

This is not a distant issue. Minnesota population data from 2000 to 2010 indicates the percent of white, Non-Hispanic youth age 17 and younger *declined* by 11 percent while the number of non-white and/or Hispanic youth have *increased* by 48 percent.

Council members strongly agreed that government and stakeholder organizations need to better understand and adapt to the race/ethnicity challenge.

### ***Four – We need to understand and support the social processes that recruit/retain hunters and anglers***

The process of becoming a hunter and angler is not well understood by many of those who seek to create the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts. Increasing understanding of this process is important because becoming a hunter or angler doesn't just happen. Instead, people become hunters and anglers as part of a social process that involves multiple experiences over time, friends and family, and positive introductory experiences. Hunting, fishing, conservation and recreation organizations can play a positive and supporting role in this process but there are limits to what they can and should do.

The process - generally referred to as the conceptual adoption model of recruitment and retention - includes the following stages. (See diagram page 15)

- 1) Becoming **aware** of hunting or fishing as something they may want to do.
- 2) Expressing an **interest** in hunting or fishing.
- 3) Engaging in a **trial or introductory** hunting or fishing experience, typically with a family member, friend or as part of program.
- 4) Continuing **with support** of a friend, family member or program.
- 5) Continuing **without the support** of a friend or family member as they are confident they have acquired the skills to do this alone. At this stage, the hunter or angler may also introduce someone new to hunting and fishing or re-engage someone who has lapsed from hunting and fishing.

The adoption process takes time. Repeated and on-going experiences are critical to developing the interest and desire to hunt and fish. Though not true in all cases, most hunters and anglers, including women, became hunters and anglers through the guiding hand of an immediate family member or relative (most frequently a male family member). The slogan “It takes a hunter to make a hunter” is largely true as hunting is generally not an activity that people undertake alone. It’s likewise for angling. The council strongly agreed government and stakeholders need to work collaboratively to identify where their organization structures and missions can be of most value to the process of recruiting and retaining hunters and anglers.

***Five – We need to adapt programs and policies to the realities of participation barriers***

Minnesota is a land of opportunity when it comes to hunting and fishing. It has 5,400 fishing lakes, thousands of miles of river and streams, millions of acres of public land to hunt, low cost license price alternatives and a firearms safety requirement exemption under certain situations. And most importantly, fish and wildlife are generally abundant. Yet most Minnesotans don’t hunt and fish. Those interested in recruiting hunters and anglers need to adapt their efforts to the realities of why people do not participate.

Five general categories that limit participation are:

- **Behavioral:** For example, believing that hunting or fishing is not safe or is cruel to animals or simply not having an interest in hunting and fishing because of other higher personal priorities.
- **Institutional/structural:** For example, never receiving the kind of information that sparks an awareness or interest in trying hunting or fishing.
- **Economic:** For example, not having the means to purchase equipment and pay for costs associated with these activities.
- **Physical:** For example, not participating because hunting and angling are too physically demanding or handicapped accessible opportunities are unavailable.
- **Access:** For example, not participating because of lack of place to hunt or fish.

The Minnesota Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit at the University of Minnesota studied hunter participation and retention on behalf of the Minnesota DNR. In its 2005 report, “Hunting in Minnesota: A study of hunter participation and retention,” it was determined:

Constraints among younger respondents are:

- Work commitments
- Cost of equipment, licenses and travel
- Interest in other recreational activities
- Amount of planning required



Constraints among older respondents are:

- Physically unable, age, poor health
- Low need for wild game for food
- Personal and others' concern for animals' pain and distress
- Effort required

Constraints among middle-aged respondents (30 to 49 years old) are:

- Crowding at hunting areas, low game populations
- Family commitments
- Inadequate hunting skills
- Safety concerns

The study concluded: 1) younger individuals feel more constrained than older individuals, 2) work commitments and lack of leisure time are the biggest specific constraints, 3) younger hunters are more constrained by work and cost, and 4) older hunters are more constrained by physical limitations.

These Minnesota-based findings largely parallel national survey results which indicate that lack of free time due to work and family obligations are the most frequently cited reasons for not participating in hunting and fishing. These findings also largely reflect barriers identified by council members during a facilitated discussion.

The council recognized that government and stakeholder organizations are unable to influence many of the factors as to why people don't hunt and fish and, therefore, these entities should focus their integrated energies into those areas where they will have the most direct and positive influence based on a scientific understanding of barriers.

***Six –More rigor needs to be applied to recruitment and retention program metrics and evaluation***

Historically, recruitment and retention was not a concern for fish and wildlife agencies or those organizations whose memberships are comprised of hunters and anglers. In the 1960s and decades before that people hunted and fished because it was part of their heritage, a relatively low cost outdoor social activity and it provided food for the table. In the 1960s and '70s about 40 percent of Minnesotans age 16 and older purchased a fishing license. That number fell into the 30 percents in the 1980s and into the upper 20 percents in recent years. These declines sparked hunter and angler recruitment and retention programs.

Though government and stakeholder recruitment and retentions programs have proliferated, the ability to track and measure outcomes have not. The Wildlife Management Institute, a private non-profit scientific and educational organization dedicated to wildlife conservation, has studied and evaluated more than 400 state and national recruitment and retention programs, events and activities. It has concluded that too often these programs lack an effective evaluation component. Those that do have some form of evaluation typically measure outputs (number of participants) rather than outcomes (did

they become a hunter). In the absence of effective evaluation it's been difficult for governments and stakeholder groups to distinguish between "feel good" program and "do good" programs.

The Wildlife Management Institute concluded that virtually all hunting recruitment and retention efforts fall into one of the following 11 general categories.

- Skills training seminars/learn to hunt programs
- Training hunts
- Mentor development programs
- Shooting sports programs
- Introductory awareness and/or recruitment events
- Youth hunting opportunities
- Diversity recruitment events
- Targeted licensing programs
- Camp programs
- Targeted hunter marketing and communications programs
- Mentor programs

In Minnesota, DNR examples of the above that have, or are believed to have had, a positive influence on hunter and angler recruitment and retention include:

- Free or reduced price youth hunting and fishing licenses
- Special youth hunts
- Youth hunting seasons
- Special days when adults do not need to be licensed if they take a child hunting or fishing
- Mentored hunts
- Fishing and hunting skills-building clinics
- In-school archery training and education
- School-based MinnAqua fishing and aquatic education curriculum/instruction
- Family target archery programs in certain state parks
- Fishing equipment loaner programs and public fishing piers and shore-fishing areas
- Urban Fishing In the Neighborhood (FiN) program
- Becoming an Outdoors Woman program
- Outreach to Asian and other cultures
- Grants to partners
- Targeted marketing to current and lapsed license buyers
- Temporary exemption from firearms safety certification under certain safety provisions
- Customer-friendly on-line firearms safety certification option

The council strongly agreed that government and stakeholder organizations need to better identify and apply metrics to their efforts so that program effectiveness can be better measured and evaluated.

## **COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

In addition to reaching conclusions, council members spent two meetings developing and refining recommendations. This work followed their enhanced understanding of demographic and ethnicity/race challenges and the recruitment and retention processes, a barrier analysis and a gap analysis of existing efforts. Following a voting, discussion and re-voting exercise, council members recommend seven activities or initiatives on which the DNR, stakeholders and other partners should focus their collective energies.

*The recruitment recommendations are:*

- Develop and support after school sporting clubs for youth age 8 to 18.
- Develop and support “I’m an angler/hunter” marketing campaign that targets adults from ages 18 to 44.
- Develop and support “Learn to hunt/fish” workshops and events for adults age 18-44.
- Develop and support family-oriented outdoor skills sampler events.

*The retention recommendations are:*

- Create and support a web-based clearinghouse of hunting, fishing and outdoor skills information so that those who have had an introductory hunting or fishing experience can find the types of information that will enable or encourage them to continue. This would be targeted at adults age 18-44.
- Create and support a reverse mentoring campaign in which younger hunters would be encouraged to take an older adult hunting and fishing so as to retain their interest and participation in the activity. This would be targeted at maintaining the participation of adults age 45 and older.
- Create and legislatively enact a new family license that incorporates hunting, fishing, state park admittance and other privileges.

The council did not identify funding amounts or funding sources for these recommendations. Instead, the recommendations were made with the understanding that their work would be the subject of discussion at the 2014 DNR Fish, Wildlife and Ecological and Water Resources roundtables. At that time, conservation organizations will become more broadly aware of the council’s work and further meetings will be held to develop strategies to implement the recommendations.

## **ADDENDUM**

### **INFORMATION THAT INFLUENCED COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

The council reviewed a wealth of information pertinent to the current status of Minnesota's hunting and angling population base, race and ethnicity challenges, the science of recruitment and retention and other pertinent data.

What follows are selected information pieces that influenced council recommendations.

***The generational challenge***

The chart on the following page depicts the generational challenge facing Minnesota hunter and angler recruitment and retention. It shows the statistical difference in licensing rates by various age cohorts from 2000 to 2012. The significant decline in anglers and hunters in the age 16 to 44 ranges was a contributing factor to recommendations related to targeted marketing campaigns to that demographic as well as skill-building efforts that target this demographic.

## Generational challenge

### Minnesota fishing and hunting participation change by age class, 2000 to 2012

<b><u>Fishing</u></b>	<i>----- Percent of population licensed -----</i>		<b><u>Percent change 2000 to 2012</u></b>
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2012</u>	
Overall (age 16+)	31.2%	28.1%	<b>-10%</b>
Age 16 to 44	33.3%	28.9%	<b>-13%</b>
Age 45+	28.6%	27.4%	<b>-4%</b>

<b><u>Hunting</u></b>	<i>----- Percent of population licensed -----</i>		<b><u>Percent change 2000 to 2012</u></b>
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2012</u>	
Overall (age 16+)	14.2%	12.6%	<b>-11%</b>
Age 16 to 44	16.2%	13.3%	<b>-17%</b>
Age 45+	11.7%	11.9%	<b>2%</b>

### ***The race and ethnicity challenge***

The race and ethnicity charts on the following pages depict the recruitment challenge ahead as Minnesota's population becomes increasingly diverse and the white, non-Hispanic population levels off. This information contributed to recommendations related to: 1) developing and supporting after school programs for youth age 8 to 18; 2) creating a user-friendly clearinghouse of hunting and angling information that focuses on awareness; 3) interest and trial experiences and; 4) family-based skill-building opportunities.

## **Race/ethnicity challenge**

### **Changing racial and ethnical composition of population in Minnesota and U.S., 2000 to 2010**

(Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census)

<u>Race &amp; ethnicity</u>	<u>Population 2000</u>	<u>Population 2010</u>	<u>Numerical change</u>	<u>Percent change</u>
<b><i>Minnesota</i></b>				
White, non-Hispanic	4,337,143	4,405,142	<b>67,999</b>	<b>2%</b>
Non-white and/or Hispanic	<u>582,336</u>	<u>898,783</u>	<b>316,447</b>	<b>54%</b>
Total	4,919,479	5,303,925	<b>384,446</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b><i>U. S.</i></b>				
White, non-Hispanic	194,552,774	196,817,552	<b>2,264,778</b>	<b>1%</b>
Non-white and/or Hispanic	<u>86,869,132</u>	<u>111,927,986</u>	<b>25,058,854</b>	<b>29%</b>
Total	281,421,906	308,745,538	<b>27,323,632</b>	<b>10%</b>

## Race/ethnicity challenge

### Population 17 and younger: Changing racial and ethnical composition of population in Minnesota and U.S., 2000 to 2010

(Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census)

<u>Race &amp; ethnicity</u>	<u>Population 2000</u>	<u>Population 2010</u>	<u>Numerical change</u>	<u>Percent change</u>
<b><i>Minnesota</i></b>				
White, non-Hispanic	1,055,405	942,498	<b>-112,907</b>	<b>-11%</b>
Non-white and/or Hispanic	<u>231,489</u>	<u>341,565</u>	<b>110,076</b>	<b>48%</b>
Total	1,286,894	1,284,063	<b>-2,831</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b><i>U. S.</i></b>				
White, non-Hispanic	44,027,087	39,716,562	<b>-4,310,525</b>	<b>-10%</b>
Non-white and/or Hispanic	<u>28,266,725</u>	<u>34,464,905</u>	<b>6,198,180</b>	<b>22%</b>
Total	72,293,812	74,181,467	<b>1,887,655</b>	<b>3%</b>

#### ***Who's the target audience? Is it youth or is it their parents?***

The council spent substantial time discussing the merits of different target audiences and the relative cost-benefit relationship of each. The diagram on the next page, referred to as the hunter recruitment tree, was developed by Dr. Robert Holsman of the University of Wisconsin-Steven Point. It graphically represents the reality that the higher an organization aims up the recruitment tree the higher the investment and lower the return.

In terms of recruiting youth into hunting, the tree's "lowest hanging fruit," in order are: 1) youth with avid hunting parents; 2) youth with one avid hunting parent; 3) youth with infrequent hunting parents; 4) youth with non-hunting parent(s) but a close relative who does hunt; 5) youth without familial hunters; 6) Non-white youth without familial hunters.

Similarly, in terms of recruiting adults into hunting, the “lowest hanging fruit,” in order are: 1) spouses of existing hunters; 2) those who already fish; 3) those who have co-workers who hunt; 4) locavores/foodies; 5) non-white adults with limited hunter social network.

The recruitment tree exemplifies the strategic target audience challenge facing state agencies and stakeholder organizations. The “lowest hanging fruit” is white/non-Hispanic youth and adults who already have a connection to hunting or fishing. Basically, that means focusing on Minnesota’s traditional and existing base of hunters. However, in the long-term organizations are going to need to focus higher up the tree and put more recruitment efforts into those ethnic populations without a strong hunting and fishing heritage. That’s going to be more difficult work with potentially lower returns on investment.



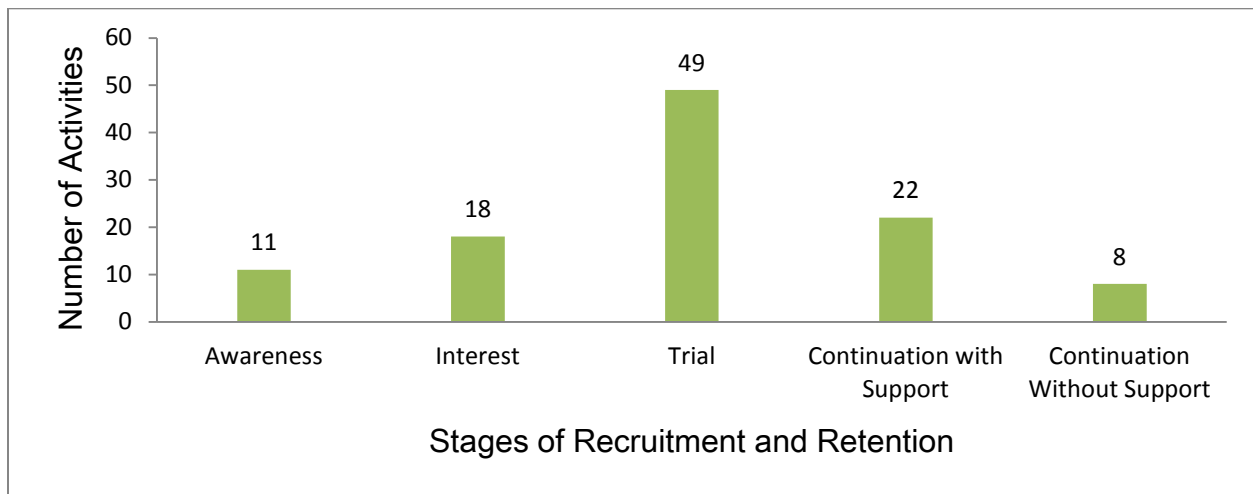
***Plotting council member activities on the recruitment and retention continuum***

At the council’s third meeting members went through an exercise in which they identified where their current hunting and angling recruitment and retention programs fit into the Conceptual Adoption Model of Recruitment and Retention. Specifically, they were asked to identify whether their activities and programs best fit under the heading of awareness, interest, trial experience, continuation with support, or continuation without support.



This exercise had two purposes. One was to determine where organizations are allocating their recruitment and retention energy. The other was to identify the gaps where council organizations could be working more closely together but aren't. Council members identified more than 100 activities their organizations are doing in the name of hunter and angler recruitment and retention. These included such things as website content, youth field days, mentored hunts, the training of volunteers and stakeholder magazines. These activities were listed under the following 10 categories: 1) Skills training seminars/learn to hunt programs; 2) mentored or training hunts; 3) mentor development programs; 4) expos or other introductory events; 5) youth hunting opportunities; 6) diversity recruitment events; 7) targeted licensing programs; 8) camp programs; 9) targeted marketing and communication programs; and 10) shooting sports programs. They were further listed as to where they fit in the conceptual adoption model of recruitment and retention.

Below is a bar chart that represents the findings of that exercise.



This exercise clearly conveyed organizational preference in planning and providing trial experiences such as fishing clinics or introductory hunting experiences. It also showed the relative lack of energy in generating awareness and interest in hunting and fishing as well as providing social support following the introductory experience.

During gap analysis discussion council members identified the following issues:

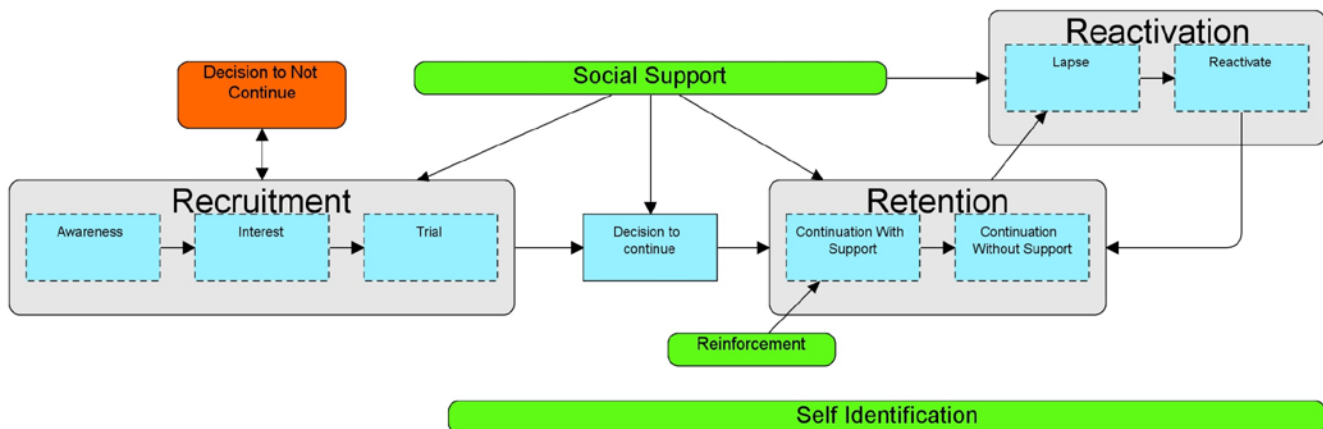
- Trial experience activities are popular because it is easier to recruit volunteers for such events than other types of work. Even so, it can be difficult to generate large numbers of volunteers for local or statewide trial experience events.
- Awareness and interest marketing has been a low priority, especially to under-represented ethnic communities.

- Cost is one of the primary reasons organizations don't become involved in the awareness, interest or continuation stages. Organizations can provide trial experiences at relatively low cost due to donations of volunteer labor, products and services. Other activities, including marketing, tend to require more significant economic resources.
- There is little or no evaluation of program offerings.
- There is little "cross-pollination" that encourages participants from one organization's events to further their learning and social support by participating in another organization's events.

The above-mentioned bar chart influenced council recommendations relating to skill-building and yet to be determined future collaborations that will build upon each other's work.

***Visually communicating the hunter and angler adoption model and sharing it with others***

## The conceptual adoption model of recruitment and retention



Above is a diagram that depicts the conceptual adoption model for hunting and angling recruitment and retention.

This model was adapted and refined by Matt Dunfee of the Wildlife Management Institute and Bob Byrne of Bob Byrne Consulting. It is based on previous research by Daniel Decker, Phil Seng and others. The blue boxes show the natural progression to become a hunter or angler. Agencies and organizations that invest energy into the first three boxes (awareness, interest, trial) by providing skill-building clinics, outdoor sampler festivals, youth days are focusing on the recruitment process. Agencies and organizations that invest energy into the final two boxes (continuation with support and continuation without support) by providing on-going mentoring, continued skill-building, and other activities are working on the retention process. Agencies and organizations that enact marketing and incentive

programs that aim to get former hunters to hunt or fish again are targeting lapsed hunters and anglers. Understanding and applying this model is one of the keys to successfully implementing recruitment and retention efforts. That's because it reinforces that for most people becoming a hunter or angler is a multi-year, multi-trial process. Becoming a hunter or angler involves much more than simply attending a one-day clinic or event. Research suggests that many of today's hunters and anglers became so because they went hunting and fishing on numerous occasions over multiple years with family or friends. They followed the natural path of becoming aware, expressing an interest, trying an activity with support and eventually identifying themselves as a hunter or angler who is comfortable doing these activities alone. The model emphasizes the need for social support throughout the process.

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

The Commissioner's Council on Hunting and Angling Recruitment and Retention reflects DNR and stakeholder interest in addressing a broad societal swing away from nature-based recreation.

Attached is a DNR document titled "Observations on Minnesota's changing resident angler and hunting populations using licensing information from 1969 to 2012." This document provides further demographic detail.

Also attached is the chartering letter for the council.

Those seeking additional information on hunting and angling recruitment and retention would be well served by visiting:

- [http://www.responsivemanagement.com/download/reports/Future\\_Hunting\\_Shooting\\_Report.pdf](http://www.responsivemanagement.com/download/reports/Future_Hunting_Shooting_Report.pdf)
- <http://www2.dnr.cornell.edu/hdru/pubs/HDRU%20Report%2013-04%20HRR.pdf>
- <http://takemefishing.org/general/about-rbff/programs-and-materials/education/best-practice/>