

**Maine Wildlife Action Plan 2015
Public Outreach Subcommittee
August 25, 2014
Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Objectives and Outcomes

The subcommittee's responses are in italics.

1. Define our key audience(s) (Who is the 'public?')
Constituents of conservation partner groups
Members of the general public that are interested in/affected by wildlife issues
2. Define our audience's involvement goals (What do we want from the public?)
We want to make the public aware of the revision and plan.
We want their feedback on conservation actions.
3. Identify outreach opportunities (What tools can we use to get the public's involvement?)
Goal: make the public aware of the revision and plan
 - *Media (Facebook, website, press releases via email, Twitter, etc.)*
 - *Public meetings, presentations at partner events**Goal: get feedback on conservation actions*
 - *Email and phone surveys*
 - *Focus groups*
 - *Public meetings*

Participants

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The importance of public outreach and messaging during the action plan revision

- Public outreach is very important for support and successful implementation of Maine's Wildlife Action Plan.
- Broad public involvement also is a required element of the action plan (Element 8).
- We have to connect with the public and message our outreach accordingly
- In our outreach, we need to address questions such as:
 - Why should the public care?

- What are we (resources agencies, partners) already doing for wildlife conservation?
 - Highlight four success stories related to the 2005 action plan
 - Maybe start with a declining species that the 2005 action plan helped recover?
- What else should we (resource agencies, partners) be doing?
- Why would the public want to be involved?
- What is Maine's plan?
- What can members of the public do?
- The action plan needs to reflect community values
 - Various groups have looked at what is important to the people of Maine, so we do not need to duplicate these efforts
 - Could we get this info from the Maine Municipal Association or the Dept. of Tourism?
- Need to identify community gatekeepers that can bring information to their respective communities for us
- Eventually, we need to think about our outreach goals during plan implementation.

Who is the public we are trying to reach?

- There could be multiple publics we are trying to reach
 - Constituents of conservation partner organizations
 - Scientific reviewers
 - We've already reached out to this group through our SGCN peer review process
 - Others that may be interested in wildlife conservation

What do we want from the public?

- It's probably unrealistic to expect the general public to have the time or interest to review the plan in its entirety
- We need to unveil the plan in pieces and formats that are accessible and interesting to the public
 - But, we also need to make sure the plan in its entirety is available for public review as per USFWS requirements.
- Element 4 (conservation actions) would likely benefit most from public buy-in and involvement for successful implementation

Outreach methods

- We will use two tiers of outreach (education and soliciting feedback):
 1. **Education** (mainly, one-way outreach to make the public aware of the plan)
 - In general, use short, colorful executive summary of the action plan
 - Approaches

- Social media (Facebook posts, Twitter posts)
 - Other media (YouTube videos, press releases via email, MDIFW website)
 - Presentations (public meetings, presentations by conservation partners)
 - Other resources to help with outreach development
 - Human dimensions class at UMO Spring 2015
 - Unity College TWS
 - UMO TWS
2. **Soliciting feedback** from the general public on conservation actions (two-way outreach)
- Approach: surveys and focus groups
 - Begin in January
 - Email surveys (likely via SurveyMonkey)
 - In general, send out the list of conservation actions developed by partners
 - Ask respondents their opinions of the proposed actions
 - Add, modify, or delete the proposed actions
 - Leave open ended for respondents to suggest their own ideas
 - Work with the outreach subcommittee and UMO to develop questions
 - Want to ensure that we are getting regional diversity in responses
 - Can do this using coding in survey response and through questions
 - Phone surveys
 - \$250/question as per Critical Insights
 - We would ask rather general questions, not to the level of detail as in the email survey
 - Adds in weekly newspapers
 - Set up a phone number for interested parties to call into and answer questions
 - Focus groups
 - Hold these after survey results are in; present focus groups with results of survey and get their thoughts
 - Target members of the general public not captured by email survey groups above
 - Many different approaches to how to select focus groups; may want to think about how the plan relates to the people we are trying to target
 - For example, convene a focus group in a town where there is a concentration of SGCN species or habitats.

- Groups to target with email surveys
 - MDIFW email lists
 - General email list
 - Hunting and fishing license holders
 - Snowmobile license holders
 - ATV license holders
 - Birder band contributors
 - Loon license plate holders
 - Members of partner email lists
 - Legislators

Proposed Timeline

September-December 2014

Goal: focus on education

Methods:

Press releases to MDIFW and conservation partner email lists

Facebook posts

Twitter

Continue to post plan materials to the website as they are developed

Begin work on conservation action feedback survey format and content

January 2015-April 2015(?)

Goal: solicit feedback on conservation actions

Methods:

Email surveys

Phone surveys

Collate, analyze, and report survey data

Begin planning for focus groups

April 2015(?)–July 2015(?):

Goal: continue to solicit feedback on conservation actions and the entire plan

Methods:

Focus groups

Public presentations

Post completed plan on website with mechanism for receiving and responding to feedback