

INTER-DEPARTMENT COORDINATION OF INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

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When we have a product or a service to sell, we must first of all evaluate that product, consider the demand potential, determine the best approaches that will interest people in buying and using that product or service.

We in wild life resources management have a valuable product—one that affects millions of our people directly or indirectly — and considered dollarwise is nationwide a large segment of our country's economy.

How do we go about selling the fish and game management story? I will endeavor in the time allotted me to tell you of some of the things we are doing in Louisiana, and will try to pin-point some of the problems we have encountered in our approach to the solving of these problems.

First, I believe, we must understand that we have a two-fold selling job to do in that much which we have to offer comes under the broad description of an intangible, and then secondly that resource or activity which can be actually seen by our people. Both can be sold.

A brief outline of our commission organization will show you why we determined to closely coordinate our public relations effort in every detail. We realized that we had and still have a task and responsibility in this direction, and that throughout the state numerous of our personnel can and do contribute their talents in many ways in fulfilling this effort.

Our Commission, constitutionally created, has seven members. This board meets monthly, in public open session, and limits itself to actions on policy, program planning and decisions on matters specifically designated by law.

Organizational breakdown shows eight department divisions, namely Education and Publicity; Law Enforcement; Fur; Water Pollution Control; Oysters, Waterbottoms and Seafood; Fish and Game, and Refuge. Each division is headed by a Chief and in most cases an Assistant Chief. There is a department Director and Assistant Director, who head the Administration Division with overall supervisory responsibilities.

Since we have such a diversified resource management program in Louisiana, our firm policy is that every division must participate in our publicity and promotion effort.

Toward that end all elements of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission closely coordinate efforts in assimilation and dissemination of information relative to fish and game management.

All field men and office personnel are constantly urged and requested to channel ideas to Division Chiefs.

Division Chiefs attend at least two meetings monthly with the Director, Assistant Director and Chief of Education and Publicity for the purpose of coordinating and determining information and education needs.

I just emphasize that attendance at these meetings by all division chiefs or principal assistants is a positive must, and rarely do absences occur.

Usually these meetings are two-fold in purpose. First the group acts as a publications committee, and following this a staff meeting is held.

Considerable time is spent in deciding upon subject content of the *Louisiana Conservationist*, published six times a year, with more than 80,000 circulation. Once content is decided upon, writing assignments are made, and a deadline set for receipt of copy. This first meeting is held sixty days prior to publication date. A second meeting is held about thirty days later and all copy is carefully edited, and every division representative must review every article.

In this meeting there always is a discussion of critical fish and game

management problems in the state and the need for and ways of getting information to the public in solving such problems.

Examples of coordinated and successful efforts include such undertakings as Commission opposition to location of a proposed dam that would have destroyed Catahoula Lake, one of the principal waterfowl wintering grounds in the United States, and an important commercial fishing ground.

Every division, numerous personnel and even Commission members joined in television and radio programs, individual contacts and civic club and public body meetings to sell the public on what would happen to wild life should Catahoula be impounded as proposed, by a Federal Agency.

Other examples:

Years of information and news articles on harvesting of doe deer in Louisiana provide the basic ground work that is finally seeing this accepted in our state.

We are in a fight today to save the 130-square-mile Atchafalaya bottomland utilized by thousands for recreation, commercial fishing and trapping—from being drained. Many employees of all divisions are assisting in this effort. This is principally an effort to inform the public through news stories, magazine articles and personal contact.

We've failed, too, in some of our efforts because we did not inform or sell our people. A good example of this was our failure to impress the public several years ago of the need for fluctuation of Lake Bistineau water level as a fish and waterfowl management procedure. We did a very weak selling job, even lost a court fight, and today, several years later, there is just a slight inclination on the part of the people in that section toward proved fisheries and waterfowl management practices.

In our second staff meeting we again make suggestions for news stories, and information and education needs are given consideration.

We emphasize in these meetings, in turn division chiefs convey to all our personnel that every employee of our department has a personal responsibility in assisting in the selling of our program to the public.

I could go on generally describing our public relations effort. Why don't I just cut right through all this and cite some specific efforts.

1. News stories are mailed regularly to radio, television and weekly and daily news media. Each story is handled individually, and mailed separately. We endeavor to time our mailing to reach all media to give as near even deadline consideration as possible.

2. The *Louisiana Conservationist* is mailed free bi-monthly to more than 80,000 persons in Louisiana.

3. School education program. Seven lectures visit hundreds of classrooms, civic organizations and wild life clubs and thousands have heard their lectures, viewed their films and received our literature. These educators participated in an intensive training program prior to beginning their work. Lecture periods were conducted by every division chief, and actual field work and visits to all department projects helped prepare them for their jobs.

4. We have published hundreds of pieces of literature ranging all the way from Dr. George Lowery's fine book on Birds of Louisiana to a simple little mimeographed story of stone through the ages.

We fill every request we receive for wild life information. If we do not have a publication that covers the subject matter requested, someone is immediately assigned the job of drafting a written reply.

5. We maintain one of the finest wild life museums in America in our New Orleans headquarters building. An average of about six hundred persons visit this museum each of the six days it is open.

6. We never turn down a request for speakers and programs for any club or organizational meeting.

7. We comply immediately with requests for stories of a local nature that come to us from radio, television and press media.

8. We publish as required by law a bi-annual report to the Governor and legislature. We take advantage of this by having each division detail its work to date and note future planning.

9. We carefully edit all literature, and all news stories mailed out

by our department must have final approval of the Director or Assistant Director — regardless of source of origin.

10. All personnel is instructed to answer all questions pertaining to our department and its work that are asked by individuals, groups or publicity media. We ask only that they be sure of their answer, and we suggest that if the question applies to a division other than their own that they direct the question to the proper division, if time will permit.

We require that all materials intended for publication and initiated and written by our personnel be cleared through the main office.

11. We encourage our personnel to join and take an active part in all wild life organizations.

13. We conduct a two-day public hearing each year at which time all suggestions on seasons, bag limits and regulations are heard, tape recorded, and then carefully studied. These hearings are conducted in a centrally located city, before the Commission in public meeting and on Friday and Saturday to permit as large attendance as possible. All department divisions participate.

14. We prepare talks for personnel and Commission members, when there is need to do so. However, we have found that numerous of our personnel have become quite adept "after-dinner" speakers, usually requiring only a few notes and often speaking without notes.

15. We welcome the opportunity to appear before women's organizations — many of whom have in turn become our department's strongest supporters.

There just is no place where this subject can be ended, and there are still many things I would like to tell you.

There are, as you know, other speakers and related topics. If the chairman wishes, I will answer such questions as I can.

In closing just let me say that no program is any better than its public acceptance, and public acceptance comes with selling and performance results.

Our wildlife resources all over America depend upon you and your state departments. If we are to perpetuate these God-given resources, we must continuously keep our study before the public by every possible means.

PLANNING AND DESIGN OF SMALL LAKES FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

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GENERAL:

For the purposes of this discussion, we will define small lakes for fish and wildlife management as lakes with earthfill dams less than 50 feet high. Also the watershed area to lake-surface area ratio would be relatively small when compared with water supply, irrigation and power lakes.

The economic justification for any lake is hard to calculate, but in a lake designed for fish and wildlife, it is even more nebulous.

Generally the need for a fish and wildlife lake in a particular area is based on the judgment of the administrators of the State's fish and wildlife department. Rarely in wildlife programs is a lake project introduced by the engineering section. Thus, when a lake project is presented to the designer, it has already been decided that a need exists. It then becomes the engineer's problem either to find a lake in the area or to build a lake on a site already selected. To place himself in a position to judge the economic feasibility of the project, it is im-