

# R3 Technical Committee 2025 Annual Report



Recruitment, Retention & Reactivation in  
Fishing, Hunting, Target Shooting & Wildlife-Associated Recreation



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Report prepared by Olivia Harmsen, SEAFWA Regional R3 Coordinator

Acknowledgments – Special thanks to committee members and other state representatives who contributed state reports.

## 2025 Committee Roster

### State Agency

Alabama Department of Conservation & Natural Resources  
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission  
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
Georgia Wildlife Resources Division  
Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources  
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries  
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks  
Missouri Department of Conservation  
North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission  
Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation  
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources  
Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency  
Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife  
Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources  
West Virginia Division of Natural Resources

### Member

Justin Grider (Chair)  
Becky Bloomfield  
Will Burnett  
Kaitlyn Goode  
Rachel Crume (Vice Chair)  
Rene LeBreton  
Jeremy Bass  
Eric Edwards  
Travis Casper  
Micah Holmes  
Amanda Stroud  
Emily Buck  
Jason Mercer  
David Hennaman  
Kayla Donathan

### U.S. Territory

Virgin Islands Department of Planning & Natural Resources,  
Fish and Wildlife  
Dr. Nicole Angeli

Puerto Rico, Department of Natural Resources and  
Environment

### Affiliate Member

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Wildlife Management Institute, Southeastern Field  
Representative

The Wildlife Society, Southeastern Section

### Representative

Paul Wilkes

Jon Gassett

Ray Iglay

**SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting Agenda  
(Sunday) October 26, 2025 at 1-5pm Central  
Biloxi, Mississippi**



**1-1:15pm Welcome-Justin Grider, Chair**

- Agenda Overview
- Introduction

**1:15-1:45pm SEAFWA R3 Regional Review- Olivia Harmsen**

- Current Grants
  - MAFWA/SEAFWA:
    - *Employing Social Media Influencers to Retain Female Anglers- An Application of the Find Your Best Self Campaign*
    - *Increase Public Awareness of State Fish and Wildlife Agencies*
    - *Can the Role of Online Hunting Communities Lead Us to New Hunters?*
- 2026 Pending Grants
- Regional Work

**1:45-3:15pm Partner Updates 1 hr 45 min**

- Morgan Evans- National Wild Turkey Federation -via Teams (10 min)
- Lou Cornicelli- Southwick Associates (10 min)
- Amanda Pitman- Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports (10 min)
- Freya McGregor- Research Associate at Virginia Tech (10 min)
- Alex Baer-International Hunter Education Association (10 min)
- Silvana Yaroschuk- Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (10 min)
- Jenifer Wisniewski-National Deer Association (10 min)
- Dr. Ellen Haynes- SEAFWA Regional Wildlife Health Coordinator (10 min)
- Samantha Pedder- Paylt (10 min)

**Break**

**3:30-5 pm Open Discussion-Justin Grider and Olivia Harmsen**

- We will be sending out discussion questions ahead of time in preparation

**2025 Meeting Agenda & Attendees R3 COMMITTEE October 26, 2025**

<b>Committee Members</b>	<b>Name (Proxy)</b>	<b>Present?</b>
Alabama	Justin Grider	YES
Arkansas	Becky Bloomfield	YES
Florida	Will Burnett	NO
Georgia	Kaitlin Goode	YES
Kentucky	Rachel Crume (Megan Bagby)	PROXY
Louisiana	Rene LeBreton (Eric Shanks)	PROXY
Mississippi	Jeremy Bass	YES
Missouri	Eric Edwards (Nathan Bess)	PROXY
North Carolina	Travis Casper	NO
Oklahoma	Micah Holmes	NO
South Carolina	Amanda Stroud	YES
Tennessee	Emily Buck	NO
Texas	Jasson Mercer, Tom Lang	YES
Virginia	David Hennaman	NO
West Virginia	Kayla Donathan	NO
<b>Affiliate Members</b>		
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Regional Federal Aid Chief	Paul Wilkes	
Wildlife Management Institute	Jonathan Gasset	
The Wildlife Society, Southeastern Section	Ray Iglay	
<b>Other Attendees</b>		
	<b>Name</b>	
Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries	Mimi DelGizzi, Ty Medlen	
Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks	Jessica Amacker/Chip Ward	
Alabama Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources	Kasie McKee, Bill Freeman	
DJ Case & Associates	John Marshall/ Matt Harlow	
International Hunter Education Association	Alex Baer	
Archery Trade Association	Dan Forester	
Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports	Chuck Sykes/Amanda Pitman/Olivia Harmsen	
Bass Forecast	Landon Bloomer	
North American Lead-Free Partnership	Leland Brown	
Hampton Wildlife Fund	Bebe Dalton Harrison	
Southwick Associates	Lou Cornicelli/Lee Leavitt	
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies	Silvana Yaroschuk	
National Deer Association	Jenifer Wisniewski	
Virginia Tech	Freya McGregor	
Paylt	Chris Willard/Samantha Pedder	
Monologix	Jae Ellison	

# Minutes

SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting Notes  
Biloxi, MS 10/26/2025

## SEAFWA R3 Report Olivia Harmsen

### Regional Training: Volunteer & Mentor Management Cohort

- Partnered with the Council to deliver regional volunteer and mentor management training.
  - Participation: 6 states and 2 organizations (NWTF, TN Wildlife Federation)
    - Which spurred State-Specific training-
      - AL starting in November on the focus areas: R3 Foundations, Program Design, Volunteer & Mentor Management, and Adaptive Management.
- Four states completed consultation calls; Louisiana is developing a volunteer video funnel.
- The 2025 cohort is full—please reach out if you’re interested in the 2026 opportunity.

### Regional & Multistate Grants

Three grants are directly benefit the SEAFWA region, including the first multistate project spanning two regions:

- Can the Role of Online Hunting Communities Lead Us to New Hunters? – Understanding how new hunters use social media for learning and community (DJ Case, Southwick Associates, MAFWA).
- Public Awareness of State Fish & Wildlife Agencies – Builds on our previous public perception work.
- Employing Social Media Influencers to Retain Female Anglers – Expanding RBFF’s *Find Your Best Self on the Water* campaign (content will be available to all states).

### Pending Grant Applications

SEAFWA submitted several Multistate Conservation and Dingell-Johnson–funded proposals based on identified regional gaps:

- SEAFWA “Hunt for Good” Campaign – Public support for hunting (CAHSS, NWTF).
- Connecting NASP Students & Families to Fish and Wildlife Resources – Linking archery, hunting, and fishing pathways for lifelong participation.
- Range Development – NSSF grant proposal to increase access.
- Regional R3 Fishing Initiatives Coordination – Strengthening alignment and collaboration. (Dingell-Johnson funds)
- We’ll share updates once awards are announced.

### Looking Ahead

We’ll continue building momentum by:

- Supporting R3 practitioners through training and skills development.
- Advancing R3 Strategic Plans 2.0.
- Addressing regional gaps around shooting sports, female angler retention, NASP lifetime participation, and public support for hunting.

Thank you again for your ongoing support and for helping drive R3 success in the Southeast!

## Partner Updates

### National Wild Turkey Federation -Morgan Evans [mrevans@nwtf.net](mailto:mrevans@nwtf.net)

- Resources Library
  - <https://your.nwtf.org/members/resources/>
    - Click on Presentations:
      - Deer Hunting 101, Dove Hunting 101, Mentor Training Presentation, Turkey Hunting 10, Etc.
  - <https://your.nwtf.org/members/resources/>
    - Click on Flyer
      - Backyard Bingo Boards
      - Adapting Conservation to the Landscape
      - Build a Turkey Worksheet
      - FAQ on Hunting Leases
      - Etc.
- Snapshot- Reach out to Morgan Evans if you want to be featured in their Snapshot!

### Southwick Associates-Lou Cornicelli [lou@SouthwickAssociates.com](mailto:lou@SouthwickAssociates.com)

- Making it too Crowded Webinar with CAHSS, Southwick Associates, and Max McGraw
  - <https://youtu.be/epX-jXZx0pA>

### Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports-Amanda Pitman [amanda.pitman@cahss.org](mailto:amanda.pitman@cahss.org)

- R3 Clearinghouse: <https://find.nationalr3community.org/>
- R3 Case Studies 2025: <https://find.nationalr3community.org/collections/view/AD660DC0-2AB2-4613-888F3B0800C3D6C0?viewType=grid>
- She needs Archery Case Studies; feel free to reach out to her!
- May 4-7 2026, De Moise, Iowa, R3 Symposium hosted by Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports
  - January 15-Deadline for Speaker Submissions
  - Partnership Positions with the Council- [Council-Partner-Positions.pdf](#)

### Virginia Tech -Freya McGregor [freyamcgregor@vt.edu](mailto:freyamcgregor@vt.edu)

- Ven Diagram: The overlap between wildlife-related recreationists
  - [The overlap between wildlife-related recreationists \(11 x 8.5 in\)](#)
- Disabled Wildlife Viewers: <https://viewing.fishwild.vt.edu/disabled-wildlife-viewers/>

### International Hunter Education Association- Alex Baer [abaer@ihea-usa.org](mailto:abaer@ihea-usa.org)

- The article Alex mentioned about AI and the Wyoming Game & Fish Department
  - [AI-generated information can be inaccurate | Wyoming Game & Fish Department](#)
- Hunters Connect
  - [IHEA-USA “Hunters Connect” - YouTube](#)
  - Videos on:
    - How to set up a Ladder Stand
    - How to Field Dress Deer
    - How to Clean a Shotgun

### Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies- Silvana Yaroschuk [syaroschuk@fishwildlife.org](mailto:syaroschuk@fishwildlife.org)

- AFWA Website: [Multistate Conservation Grant Program](#)
- MSCGP Grant Database [www.fishwildlife.org/mscgp](http://www.fishwildlife.org/mscgp)

**National Deer Association- Jenifer Wisniewski Jenifer@deerassociation.com**

- Hunting 101 YouTube Series in 4 states (New York, Wisconsin, Alabama, Oklahoma)  
Will have processing videos by next year:
  - NWTF-Turkey videos
  - Ducks Unlimited-Waterfowl
  - NDA- Deer
  - Promote non-resident hunting ads with NDA, if it cannot come from the agency. They can also help with grants and TikTok
- CWD Communications: <https://deerassociation.com/cwd-toolkit/>

**SEAFWA Regional Wildlife Health Coordinator Dr. Ellen Hayes ellen.haynes@uga.edu**

- Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study
  - [SCWDS Disease Fact Sheets - UGA VetMed](#)

**Payit- Samantha Pedder spedder@payitgov.com**

- [Outdoors - PayIt](#)

**Non-lead initiative: Leland Brown leland.brown@oregonzoo.org**

- [About the North American Lead-Free Partnership | Our Story & Conservation Mission — North American Lead-Free Partnership](#)

**APPENDIX A:  
STATE & TERRITORY REPORTS**



**2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting**  
 (Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)

**State Report**

<b>State:</b>	<b>Alabama</b>
<b>R3 Lead:</b>	Justin Grider, R3 Coordinator Justin.Grider@dcnr.alabama.gov   334-590-4084



**Significant R3 Effort #1: Partnership Positions**

FY 25, to complement the co-funded R3 positions established in FY 24, ADCNR added two additional positions to the R3 team for a combined total of four partnership positions. Support for these positions was provided by the Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports, Grand Slam Club Ovis Hunting Heritage Program, Delta Waterfowl, National Deer Association and Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration funds. With the additional staff members, ADCNR was able to scale its outreach efforts and broaden the scope of work around the state. Additional capacity allowed our team to engage with more stakeholders, conduct more outreach events, and connect with new partners. Plans are in place to take on additional partnership positions and continue scaling R3 efforts.

**Significant R3 Effort #2: Campus Conservation Program (CCP)**

In 2023, ADCNR developed a new program designed to increase engagement and involvement with colleges and universities around the state. In 2024, The Collegiate Conservation Outreach Program was rebranded as the Campus Conservation Program (CCP) but maintains the original mission to increase participation in outdoor recreation among college and university students and streamline their career path towards conservation-specific employment. In 2025, the Campus Conservation Program expanded its reach to include K-12 learning institutions, increasing conservation awareness and outdoor recreational opportunities for youth participants. Our staff is proactively involved as guest speakers and lecturers on campuses around the state throughout the year. These engagements, along with career fairs and several years of developing partnerships with university and K-12 faculty and staff, serve as starting points for students' participation in the program. From there, introductory events are planned and focus on consumptive and non-consumptive outdoor recreation activities. After the basic introductory event, additional, more advanced opportunities are provided to enhance students' skills and confidence. During the entire process, we're able to assist these students with the state job application process and communicate with them about opportunities within the

agency. At the conclusion of the Campus Conservation Program's third full year as an official program, multiple program participants have been hired at the Agency and many more have developed new lifelong skills and passions for conservation. The program is growing rapidly due to its successful model. Additional colleges, universities, and K-12 campuses are already in the process of being added to the program.

### **Other R3 Efforts of Interest and/or Active Participation Metrics**

- DCNR R3 Experience Days (days where staff can use work time to learn about and participate in R3 activities)
- Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow, Hunting for Conservation
- University First Hunt Program
- Firearms 101 Program (Handguns, Rifles, Shotguns, and Archery)
- Internal R3 staff training videos and learning modules
- National Archery in the Schools Program
- Disabled Hunting Trail
- Hunting 101 Workshops
- Hunter Education Range Days
- Community Archery Development Program
- Shooting Sports Events (Handguns, Rifles, Shotguns, and Archery)
- Aquatic Education Program
- Go Fish! Alabama Program
- Community Fishing Events
- Youth and Adult Dove Hunts, Trapping Workshops (Youth and Adult), Adult Mentored Hunting Program
- Special Opportunity Area Hunts (limited draw)
- Marketing Campaigns to increase hunting and angling participation

### **Barriers to R3 Efforts**

- Money
- Days in a year





**2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting**  
 (Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)  
**State Report**

**State:**

**Arkansas Game and Fish Commission**



**R3 Leads and Report Contributors**

Becky Bloomfield, Education Statewide Program Coordinator, [becky.bloomfield@agfc.ar.gov](mailto:becky.bloomfield@agfc.ar.gov)  
 JJ Gladden, Education Division Assistant Chief, [jj.gladden@agfc.ar.gov](mailto:jj.gladden@agfc.ar.gov)  
 Lauren Weston, Communications Division Assistant Chief, [lauren.weston@agfc.ar.gov](mailto:lauren.weston@agfc.ar.gov)  
 Jose Jimenez, Chief of Recreational Shooting Sports, [jose.jimenez@agfc.ar.gov](mailto:jose.jimenez@agfc.ar.gov)  
 Steve Johnson, Youth Shooting Sports Statewide Program Coordinator, [steven.johnson@agfc.ar.gov](mailto:steven.johnson@agfc.ar.gov)

**Significant R3 Effort #1: Launch of the Volunteer and Event Management System**

Effective July 15th, the AGFC officially transitioned to the new VEMS system. This VEMS product is integrated with our licensing, CRM, and Hunter and Boater Education certification systems. By housing all these components within a single system, the agency is better equipped to serve our customers. Users will benefit from a single account and login for all services, with all their information consolidated in one place. For the agency, this robust database will enable customer journey mapping, customized messaging, and a comprehensive view of all user data. We’re working with our vendor to move into phase two of the implementation of the events system - analyzing customer data to see how the average visitor moves through classes and educational offerings in advance of conversion - which will allow us to automate customized campaigns to encourage customers to continue their journey.

**Significant R3 Effort #2: Establishment of Education Division Standardized Reporting**

As of Jul 1, 2025 the AGFC Education Division has been utilizing the ArcGIS Survey 123 application to report efforts from Statewide Programs, offerings through the nine Nature Centers, and all other statewide initiatives. The data collected from each survey is tied directly to the landscape which allows us to begin looking at our efforts and their impacts on a spatial scale. This new system also standardizes reporting so that all information is being collected in the same way. We are using data from this system to guide our strategic plan for the Education Division by identifying audiences that are over- and under-represented.

### **Other R3 Efforts of Interest and/or Active Participation Metrics**

- Learning Management System
- Generation Conservation Summit
- Mentored Hunts and Fish Camps
- University Outreach Coordinator Interns
- Scholarships
- Internships
- Introduction to Hunter Education a PreK-5 Resource
- K-16 Teacher Professional Development offerings
- Youth Shooting Sports (YSS) Advanced Coaches Training in partnership with Cypress Creek - focused on coach development and retention.
- YSS Collegiate Program launched to establish college teams and connect those teams to Junior High and High School teams at regional and state tournaments.

### **Barriers to R3 Efforts**

- Staffing limitations
- Slow uptake on standardized reporting



# 2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting

(Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)

## State Report

**State:** Florida

**R3 Lead:** Brandon Stys  
[Brandon.Stys@MyFWC.com](mailto:Brandon.Stys@MyFWC.com) | 850.354.4798



### Significant R3 Effort #1: Youth Outdoor Education

The Florida Youth Conservation Centers Network (FYCCN) hosts education and conservation based activities for youth in the geographic areas near our camp locations; Everglades Youth Conservation Center (West Palm Beach), Joe Budd Youth Conservation Center (Tallahassee), Ocala Conservation Center (Silver Springs), Suncoast Youth Conservation Center (Apollo Beach) and Tenoroc Youth Conservation Center (Lakeland). Each location partners with their local school districts to provide field trips and with local youth serving programs to provide conservation education and fishing, hiking and shooting sport activities reaching over 10,000 youth in 2025, and 1,687 youth during summer camp 2025. The Tenoroc Fish Management Area and Tenoroc Youth Conservation Center have been hosting a Youth Fishing Derby for 30 years. The event on Derby Lake includes a casting contest, free bait for youth under 15 years and a limited number of loaner rods and reels to encourage aspiring anglers to participate. 158 youth participated in 2025.

The FYCCN Partnership Program strengthens shooting sports and fishing recreation by leveraging hundreds of statewide partnerships with public and private organizations (parks, aquariums, community groups, outfitters, etc.). It is a collaboration that empowers partners to enhance and multiply quality outdoor youth programming in fishing, boating, shooting sports and wildlife discovery. FYCCN provides resources such as training, educational materials, curricula, and loans of equipment. The program enhances regional capacity, reduces barriers to entry, and reinforces stewardship values that align outdoor recreation with conservation and lifelong participation.

Data from the last four quarters showed that 67 partners provided transformative activities in target archery for 17,388 youth participants. Additionally, 66 partners carried out fishing instruction and experiences for 15,746 youth, including experiences in freshwater, saltwater, and bow-fishing.

### Significant R3 Effort #2: Hunting and Shooting Sports Education

FWC's Youth Hunting Program of Florida offered 87 mentored youth hunts for deer, turkey, hog, alligator, duck, and python. 1,652 youth and parents were impacted. Families learned conservation practices, safe hunting techniques, and participated in resource stewardship activities.

Florida's National Archery in the Schools (NASP) Program welcomed 89 new schools to the program in 2025. 11,653 students participated, with 817 attending the State Tournament. There, top archers won a combined \$20,000 in scholarship funds.

### **Significant R3 Effort #3: Fisheries Education and Communication**

During FY 2024-25, 46 schools received funding and participated in the School Fishing Program, with over 950 students involved. Throughout the school year students also conducted 23 conservation projects, focusing on reducing single use plastics and cleaning Florida's aquatic habitats. Most recently, there has been a high demand for this program and a surge of interest, with over 78 applications from schools across the state. In a joint effort across divisions to meet the demand, the program will expand to support 75 schools by providing fishing equipment in FY 2026-27.

FWC continued our efforts in the Vamos a Pescar (Lets Go Fishing) program, completing our tenth year. In 2025, two partner applications were accepted, all from dedicated organizations helping reach and recruit Hispanic anglers. Tampa Bay Kayak Anglers returned to the program for another year.

The Fish Art Contest was inspired by a 5th grader's homework assignment that has grown into an international competition to introduce youth to the wonders of fishing and the outdoors. Wildlife Forever, a nonprofit conservation organization, organizes the competition each year and coordinates their efforts with states around the country. The FWC has worked with Wildlife Forever as a host state for the past six years to run the Florida Fish Art Contest, seeing over 300 student entries each year. The Florida Fish Art Contest focuses on 20 fish species native to waters across the state and features fishing rods as prizes to further encourage our state's winners to participate in recreational fishing. At the International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades (ICAST) in 2025, the FWC highlighted one of last year's winners, Sebastian Romo. His artwork was featured on our state's hard card license and at the show he signed posters alongside Guy Harvey. The FWC is continuing to collaborate with Wildlife Forever to increase participation and find innovative ways to highlight Florida's emerging wildlife artists.

### **Significant R3 Effort #4: Freshwater Fisheries Education**

In collaboration with the agency's Division of Habitat and Species Conservation and Brandt, the FWC is conducting a marketing campaign to encourage Florida residents who participate in outdoor recreation to also try fishing. The campaign will focus on cross promoting freshwater fishing with other activities such as hiking, biking, birding, paddling, camping and hunting, to encourage participation in fishing while they are already outside doing the things they love. This concept, called "piggybacking," aims to convey fishing as an easy, natural addition to already existing plans rather than requiring a separate commitment. The campaign includes social media posts, emails, and meta-ads which launched in November of 2025 and will conclude in April of 2026.

TrophyCatch is FWC's citizen-science, data collecting and promotional program for Florida bass/largemouth bass in Florida. This program focuses on promoting fishing and community engagement by offering prizes for catch submissions. The program asks anglers to submit their catches of all Florida bass weighing eight pounds or more, requiring photo/video documentation of all catch submissions and the live release of the bass caught. To further promote the program, the FWC alongside the FWC licensing brand and system, GoOutdoorsFlorida, partnered with Front Row Motorsports to advertise the TrophyCatch program to NASCAR fans. Agency staff were present at the Coke Zero Daytona 400 in August 2025 and will attend the Daytona 500 in February 2026 where the Friday truck race will feature a truck fully wrapped and themed for TrophyCatch and GoOutdoors Florida. This is the most unique and highly visible marketing endeavor the agency has embarked on to date!

Big Catch is FWC's citizen-science, data collecting and promotional program for over 30 species of freshwater fish. The program focuses on recruiting new anglers by recognizing them for their fishing accomplishments and awarding them with recognition. The program asks anglers to submit their catches, with each species having its own qualifying weight or length for both adult and youth categories, requiring photo/video documentation. Enthusiastic anglers may take on the challenge of completing one of the program's slams or specialty recognition for catching more than one fish or species. Staff are working to update the website making it easier to use and navigate while discussing ways to improve the program going into 2026.

**Significant R3 Effort #5: Marine Fisheries Education**

Catch a Florida Memory (CAFM) is FWC's saltwater angler recognition program that is designed to recruit and retain anglers. CAFM provides recognition and rewards to anglers who submit photos of qualifying catches to three categories. These incentives help attract new anglers to the program and encourage current anglers to diversify their catches to reach new achievements. This program provides a unique way for FWC to engage with stakeholders and enhance the fishing experience for saltwater anglers.

Continuing the momentum of the Triple Threat Throwdown, which challenges anglers to participate in all three categories of CAFM and submit a qualifying catch during a specified period the FWC launched a third season of the challenge with a renewed marketing campaign. This campaign reached over 1 million individuals and resulted in a 10% increase in Triple Threat Club members who had qualifying catches in the three CAFM categories. This success has inspired the CAFM team to continue utilizing diverse marketing strategies to ensure continued recruitment and retention of anglers.

**Other R3 Efforts of Interest**

- Standardizing Data Analysis and Evaluation
- Improving Internal R3 Communication
- Reintegrate the FYCCN website into the main agency hosting platform
- Create a manual for Aquaculture in the Classroom, a joint effort from marine and freshwater fisheries
- Coordinate and consolidate agency event tracking
- Update inventory management for educational publications
- Updating our Big Catch angler recognition program to become more user friendly and streamlined before increasing external promotion
- Incorporating freshwater fishing content into our publication Fishing Lines, which was solely saltwater
- Updating our fishing publication, Fishing Florida, targeting elementary and middle school students with basic fishing, conservation, and ecology information

**Barriers to R3 Efforts**

- The availability and ease of customer participation reporting, not all the agency customer/participant data is stored in the same location
- The ability to easily cross reference program participants with the agency's licensing database
- Funding
- Staff Resources





## 2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee

(Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)

### State Report

**State:**

**Georgia**

**R3 Lead:**

Walter Lane

Assistant Chief

Communication, Education & Outreach Section

Walter.Lane@dnr.ga.gov



#### Significant R3 Effort #1: Community Fishing Events

WRD facilitated over 150 community fishing events across Georgia, utilizing assistance from local community partners, reaching over 18,000 people. WRD participated in over 120 fishing outreach events, reaching over 21,000. WRD also hosted 8 adaptive fishing events, as part of the Outdoors Beyond Barriers Program.

#### Significant R3 Effort #2: Communication, Education, & Outreach Section Created

WRD created a Communication, Education & Outreach Section and recently hired Walter Lane as the Assistant Chief of this section. Walter will oversee the Division's R3 efforts. WRD is currently evaluating our High School Shotgun Program, which has students taking hunter education, practicing all three shotgun disciplines, competing in multi-level tournaments and participating in advanced hunter education activities. These activities range from deer processing, assisting with taxidermy, tree stand safety training, and going on various hunts. For 2024-2025 school year:

- There were 1058 student athletes (17% female)
- 276 active shotgun coaches. GA DNR trains these coaches
- 79 schools participated
- 63 tournaments
- 112 advance hunter education activities were completed

#### Other R3 Efforts of Interest

- Hunter Development Program staff conduct numerous R3 programs and events annually, including hunter education, beginner and intermediate shooting events, and hunt and learns.

#### Barriers to R3 Efforts

- Within the agency – dedicated staff for evaluating programs that define R3. Staffed shooting ranges are important to our customers, and programing offered at ranges is highly desired. However, attracting and retaining Public Affairs and Hunter Development staff is challenging.





# 2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting

(Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)

## State Report

**State:**

**Kentucky**

**R3 Lead:**

Rachel Crume, R3 Branch Manager 502-892-4404  
rachel.crume@ky.gov



### Significant R3 Effort #1: Kentucky R3 Planning

This year, a large, cross-divisional team from KDFWR came together to collaboratively develop Version 2 of the R3 Strategic Plan. Staff from multiple divisions contributed their expertise, perspectives, and experience, strengthening coordination across the agency and ensuring the plan reflects shared priorities and long-term goals. This collaborative effort represents a significant step forward in aligning our work and guiding future R3 initiatives.

### Significant R3 Effort #2: Program Registrations with Direct Access to License History

Our IT department updated the internal registration system to provide R3 staff with direct access to participant license history from the year prior to course enrollment and in subsequent years. This enhanced access allows staff to more effectively evaluate program outcomes. We will review this data alongside program survey results to identify successes and make informed adjustments to programming as needed in the future.

### Other R3 Efforts of Interest

- We created and finalized Kentucky's Hunter Education booklet and accompanying PowerPoint, providing students with additional information on available programming and outdoor opportunities throughout Kentucky.
- During the 2024-2025 school year, the National Archery in Schools Program incorporated archery into the curriculum of 839 Kentucky schools, engaging 103,420 students during school hours and 29,798 in after-school programs. Kentucky NASP® added 59 new schools in 2024-2025. In tournaments, 667 schools registered 17,753 unique archers in Kentucky school hosted NASP® tournaments, with the 2025 KyNASP® State Bullseye Tournament featuring 7,607 archers from 395 schools, and the KyNASP®/IBO 3D Challenge Tournament hosting 2,295 archers from 151 schools.
- We finalized contracts with the University of Kentucky for three partner positions that will increase program capacity statewide. These positions will focus on Learn to Shoot, Learn to Hunt, and Cook Wild Kentucky programming starting in 2026

### Barriers to R3 Efforts

- Limited budget poses challenges for R3 staff and programs.
- Our staff are tasked with managing multiple programs simultaneously, stretching resources thin.

Registrant	DOB	Gender	2024 (Yr Prior)				2025 (Yr of Event)				2026 (+1 )			
			Hunt	Fish	Both	Any	Hunt	Fish	Both	Any	Hunt	Fish	Both	Any
		Male	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
		Male	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
		Male	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
		Male	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Manager Search ▾ Events ▾ Sessions ▾														
		Female	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
		Female	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
		Male	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
		Male	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
		Male	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓
		Female	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
		Male	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
		Female	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
Totals (of 13)			1	2	5	61.5%	4	0	9	100.0%	0	2	1	23.1%



**2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting**  
 (Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)

**State Report**

**State:** Louisiana Department of Wildlife and  
**R3 Lead:** Fisheries

Rene LeBreton  
 Public Information Director  
[rlebreton@wlf.la.gov](mailto:rlebreton@wlf.la.gov)  
 504.286.8745



**Significant R3 Effort #1: Squirrel Hunting 101**

On November 7, and 8<sup>th</sup> of 2025 the Hunter Education Program held a Squirrel Hunting 101. Eight novice hunters attended from around the state. The purpose of this workshop is to give hunters the tools and knowledge to safely and legally hunt on the WMAs. The program started at noon on the 7<sup>th</sup> with firearms safety and sighting in of firearms. In the afternoon we took each participant to Dewey wills WMA to scout the areas where they will be hunting. While scouting we covered topics on animal feeding, sign, and plants. In the evening we went thru requirements to hunt on the WMAs and other relevant information. On the morning of the 8<sup>th</sup> each participant went out with a staff member and participated in a hunt. After the hunt, each participant was shown and cleaned squirrels.

**Significant R3 Effort #2: Women’s Fishing 101 Workshops**

LDWF held five Women’s Fishing 101 Workshops in 2025 interacting with over 65 female anglers. Two additional Women’s Fishing 102 Workshop was held during the summer, where past 101 participants attended a weekend long course focusing on bank and boat fishing. The 102’s were held at the LDWF Grand Isle Fisheries Research Laboratory & at the LDWF Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge.

**Other R3 Efforts of Interest and/or Active Participation Metrics**

- In 2025, LDWF initiated development of a firearm (shotgun) shooting sport program to complement our existing archery in the schools program. This effort is in its planning stages, however LDWF is developing a partnership with the Scholastic Clay Target Program to jointly implement this new program.
- Archery in Louisiana Schools (ALAS): 230 participating schools and more than 20,000 participating archers.
- Basic Firearm Instruction classes: In 2025, LDWF intensified its efforts to offer basic firearm safety and use instruction courses, primarily for handguns. Through volunteer and staff

efforts, as well as MOU's with 3<sup>rd</sup> parties, we plan on offering these courses at all 4 of our public shooting ranges moving forward.

- In January of this year we will host the Beyond BOW event at Floy McElroy WMA. Six novice deer hunters will participate in a 3 day workshop. Topics covered will be how to deer hunt, equipment, tagging and navigation. They will then hunt on the WMA in the hope of harvesting a deer over the weekend. This is an annual event which takes place every winter.

### Barriers to R3 Efforts

- Marketing dollars
- No R3 Coordinator
- Staff for hands-on training
- Tracking program participants through licensing system
- Competing with other sports or extracurricular activities

### LDWF Pictures



*Volunteer assisting at a Youth Fishing Rodeo*



*Beyond Becoming an Outdoors Woman Participant and Harvest*



*1 Women's Fishing Workshop Participants with a Red Drum*



*Squirrel Hunt 101*



*2025 Ladies Basic Handgun Class*



## 2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting

(Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)

### State Report

**State:** Mississippi  
**R3 Lead:** Jeremy Bass  
[Jeremy.bass@wfp.ms.gov](mailto:Jeremy.bass@wfp.ms.gov)  
601-432-2218



#### Significant R3 Effort #1: New License System

MDWFP successfully launched our new license system, a cornerstone of our retention and reactivation strategy. This platform transitioned us from a passive registry to an active engagement platform.

- A user-friendly mobile application that allows for instant license purchasing and digital document storage in addition to game check and draw requests.
- Our new Content Management System enables automated, behavior-triggered communications. By utilizing push notifications and SMS, we can now reach hunters and anglers exactly when they need to renew or when season openers are approaching.
- This data-driven approach allows us to identify "churn-risk" individuals and deploy promotional incentives, significantly boosting our reactivation rates among lapsed license holders.

#### Significant R3 Effort #2: Integrated Marketing Campaigns

MDWFP executed two major integrated marketing campaigns. These initiatives were designed to shift the perception of the outdoors from a solitary pursuit to a communal legacy.

- "More Than a Hunt": Focused on the conservation impact and the "field-to-table" lifestyle, appealing to a younger, more health-conscious demographic.
- "Hooked on Memories": Centered on family traditions and the emotional ROI of a day on the water.

Both campaigns successfully drove a significant increase in social media engagement and followers.

#### **Other R3 Efforts of Interest and/or Active Participation Metrics**

- Archery in Mississippi Schools (AIMS): Expanding the pipeline for student-athletes to transition into lifelong bowhunters.
- Mississippi Shooting Sports Program: Providing safe, competitive environments for youth skill development.
- Track Chair Program: Enhancing accessibility and ensuring mobility-impaired hunters can enjoy our Wildlife Management Areas.
- Hunter Education & Shooting Sports Training Outreach: Modernizing in person curriculum delivery.
- Community Fishing Events: High-frequency, low-barrier events designed to introduce families to angling.
- Youth Hunting Events: Targeted events for Dove, Squirrel, and Duck to provide mentored experiences for new hunters.
- Targeted Draw Hunts: Implementing specialized opportunities - offering high-quality experiences.
- Micro-Marketing Campaigns: Niche-targeted digital ads focused on specific regions and unique season openings.
- Lapsed Hunter "Win-Back" Initiatives: Specialized direct-mail and digital hybrid campaigns targeting individuals who have not purchased a license in 2+ years.

#### **Barriers to R3 Efforts**

The primary barriers to our R3 success are rooted in a misalignment between our technical infrastructure and the psychological journey of the modern outdoorsman. Our current data silos create "blind spots" that prevent a unified view of the customer journey.

We have also found a missing sense of identity centrality preventing participants from transitioning from casual trial to lifelong commitment. Without a robust social infrastructure to foster a sense of belonging, many recruits fail to bridge the gap between skill acquisition and self-identification as a hunter or angler, leading to the high rates of attrition. As a conservation agency, it is difficult to draw resources to invest in comprehensive, social based programs.



**2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting**  
 (Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)  
**State Report**

**State:**

**Missouri Department of Conservation**

**R3 Lead:**

Eric Edwards, Hunter & Angler Marketing Specialist

[Eric.edwards@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Eric.edwards@mdc.mo.gov)

573-522-4115 x3295



**Significant R3 Effort #1: Creation of Evaluation Rubric & Program Standards**

The Missouri Department of Conservation has, because of our dedicated fund been able to increase capacity for delivery of programs decades. In the past our efforts had been focused on how many programs can staff deliver each year. Last year we eclipsed 6,000 free public programs with over 1,300 of those being R3 programs. This year my effort has been focused on creating an evaluation rubric as well as program standards for R3 programs. With the standards in place the development of the rubric was much easier to create. We now have 15 measures that every R3 program is evaluated by. MDC now has data to show which programs are helping us move the needle towards reaching our R3 goals of recruitment, retention, and reactivation.

**Significant R3 Effort #2: Hunt for Good Campaign**

While MDC has been active in retention and reactivation email campaigns for the past several years, the past two years we took advantage of the Hunt For Good campaign. Ads were placed on Facebook, Snapchat and paid radio targeting 18–34-year-olds (our R3 target demographic) that didn't hunt or fish. This marketing campaign has reached over 15 million people and thousands interactions helping spark and interest in hunting and other R3 activities.

**Other R3 Efforts of Interest and/or Active Participation Metrics**

- MDC is currently working on a process to provide shared partner positions to increase the R3 footprint in Missouri. These positions would provide the administrative support for a large-scale mentorship training program.
- For our fiscal year of 2025 MDC saw an uptick in hunting and fishing participation of 1.2% New hunters and anglers increased 2.1% to 219,716. WE increased retention by 1.3% our only decline was in reactivation of hunters and anglers which fell by .5%

### Barriers to R3 Efforts

- Marketing dollars/avenues to reach new audiences that aren't already aware of MDC

## Scoring Rubric

Staff & Volunteer Time	0, 1, 3	31+ hours, 21-30, 20 or less
Consumable Cost Per Participant	0, 1, 3	\$100+, \$51-100, \$50 or less
Field Experience	0, 5	Hunt, fish, majority hands on
Partner With NGO	0, 3	Current programs that do
Course Level	0, 1, 2	Advanced, Intermediate or Beginner
Number of Participants	0, 3, 4	0-10, 11- 25, Greater than 25
Target Audience 18-34 Y/O	0, 1, 3, 6	0, 1-10% 11-49% 50+
Tiered Community Conservation	0, 2	Tier 1 Yes or No
Participants intent to continue	0, 1, 2	on their own 0-29%, 30-49%, 50%+
Course met expectations	0, 1, 2	50%-74%, 75% or higher
% of participants new permit buyers	0, 6, 8, 10	%0-10, 10-24, 25-74, 75+
% of participants retained permit buyers	0, 3	Above or below churn rate
Continued Participation	0, 6, 8	% for 3 plus years 0-29, 30-49, 50+
Multiple Contacts (Additional events)	0, 2, 4	0-5%, 6-10%, 11%+
First Time participant	0, 1, 3	0-29%, 30-49%, 50%+
Score Totals	62	Excellent > 40, Good 39-25, Poor 24 <



## R3 PROGRAM COURSE CHECKLIST

To evaluate the effectiveness of events, each must include all the following standards.

### STANDARDS

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>ACCESS</b><br>The course includes a section that tells participants where they can go to participate in the activity, how to obtain access, and what time of year or time of day.  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>EDUCATIONAL COMPONENT</b><br>The course will provide participants with the opportunity to learn a skill through presentation, videos, or kinesthetic learning.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>NEXT STEPS</b><br>Participants are provided with avenues to continue their education. Information and other courses and partners that provide opportunities will be included in the course.  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>HANDS ON COMPONENT</b><br>In person courses will provide a learning opportunity beyond a presentation that allows participants to learn by doing. Virtual courses will include “next steps” for participants that have hands on components. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>REGISTRATION</b><br>All courses require participant registration. Preregistration should be used when possible, and registration day of should be collected day of when not feasible ahead of time. Events will be entered at least one week ahead of course date. | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>PROMOTION &amp; MARKETIING</b><br>All public courses will be promoted to ensure participation. Media specialist will assist with promotion and advice for marketing courses.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>MISSION</b><br>The course will include a brief presentation on the background of the agency and how the mission is tied to the course.   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>REGULATIONS AND CODE</b><br>Understanding the rules for participating in the activity can be a barrier. The course should include explanations of the wildlife code that relate to the activity.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>PARTNERS</b><br>The agency has many partnerships with organizations that have parallel objectives. These partners should be contacted to assist with and promote the course.   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SURVEYS</b><br>Instructors will advise participants that they will likely be receiving surveys to provide feedback that can improve educational efficiencies.   |



## 2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting (Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)

### State Report

**State:** North Carolina  
**R3 Lead:** Carissa Daniels  
Assistant Division Chief  
[Carissa.daniels@ncwildlife.gov](mailto:Carissa.daniels@ncwildlife.gov)  
336-455-0292



#### Significant R3 Effort #1: Outdoor Skills Academy for Women

In 2023, the Wildlife Education Division began the process of evaluating the long-standing North Carolina Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) program. As a well-loved, twenty-year plus program, there had been little, in-depth evaluation. With the change in organizational structure of the division, the opportunity to do a deep dive into evaluation of programming within the division.

Beginning with the former BOW program, the evaluation included surveying and focus groups of past participants, volunteers, and agency staff to build a base line of data. Evaluation staff also began meeting regularly with BOW coordinators from across the nation to gather how other states were also implementing their program. With assistance from the agency's Conservation Policy and Analysis Office, the division was able to re-imagine and develop a skills-building program that ultimately will create new participants and a social support next work for women in the outdoors.

In the summer of 2025, the agency launched the Outdoor Skills Academy for Women. The summer began with one-day teasers, where participants experienced activities related to each of the tracks; Hunting, Angling, Shooting Sports, and Conservation. After three regional teasers, the agency hosted the Wild Skills event in October.

The Wild Skills Weekend is a weekend of outdoor experiences galore. Participants are able to choose the track would like to take to hone skills throughout the weekend and build relationships with other women working on the same skill set. As we move forward with year two, returning participants will have the option to select an advanced track of the basic track that they completed this fall. Long term goals are to have participants returning after completing the basic and advanced tracks, as instructors and mentors in the program. Planning and evaluation will continue with the Outdoor Skills Academy as the program continues to grow and develop.

## Significant R3 Effort #2: Barn Owl Project

The Wildlife Education Division, in conjunction with the agency's divisions of Land and Water Access, Engineering Services, Office of Conservation Policy & Analysis, and Office of Communication, Marketing & Digital Engagement, has gone live with Barn Owl Project – a live camera feed that the public can view and visually engage with wild barn owls in their natural habitat.

This concept has been in development for over a year, and on December 15th, 2025, the project recorded the pair of barn owls' first sighting of the season. The project is located on agency property and in an outbuilding on Game Lands in the western part of the state, where barn owls have historically been present. The recording system utilizes the latest technologies, including HDonTap, Starlink, and solar panels, to make this idea a reality.

Goals for the project include:

- Engage new constituents and all wildlife-associated recreational enthusiasts.
- Create traffic from YouTube Channel, agency website, and social media to direct the public to other agency programs and opportunities.
- Develop school curriculum aligned with N.C. Science Standards of Learning, family oriented activities, virtual learning programming to engage with youth, families, and schools with agency as introduction to all wildlife-associated recreational activities.

## Other R3 Efforts of Interest and/or Active Participation Metrics

NCWRC FY25 Outreach Tracking Report (07.01.2024 to 06.30.2025)

### HUNTING EDUCATION PROGRAM

Traditional Hunter Education Certification Course	5,131 certifications
Online Hunter Education Certification Course	15,331 certifications
Today's Bowhunter Certification	44 certifications
Trapper Education Certification certified	88 certifications
Range Safety Officers Training	97 training
Learn-to-Hunt workshops	243 participants
Learn-to-Hunt PLUS mini workshops	43 participants
Learn-to-Hunt webinars	1,028 participants

Range Attendance Total	76,682
McDowell (partnership range)	4,200
Foothills (partnership range)	27,317
Holly Shelter (partnership range)	12,000
Wake (partnership range)	12,811
Lentz Shooting Complex	6,231
Caswell	5,725
Odom	1,770
Flintlock	3,105
Cold Mountain	5,293

Youth Hunter Skills Tournament Statewide Data

Number of participants	2,743
Number of Senior Teams	218
Number of Junior Teams	104
TOTAL NUMBER OF TEAMS	322

Number of High Schools	126
Number of Middle Schools	74
TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	200

National Archery in Schools Program Statewide Data

Number of schools participating	140 schools
Number of NC NASP participants	18,623

NASP Tournament Data

NC State Tournament	1,040 archers
IBO Challenge	185 archers

Live Fire Events (Pellet Range, BB guns, Archery, Rifle, and/or Shotgun)

Statewide Totals	15 events with 1,111 participants
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Other outreach Hunting Education programming/presentations (school programs, boy/girl scouts, clubs, hunting-based interpretive programs, career days, furs & skulls, safety days, etc.)

Statewide Totals	20 programs with 1,756 participants
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Camps and Hunts

Day Camps	Statewide Totals	8 camps with 1,520 participants
Week/Weekend Camps	Statewide Totals	4 camps with 435 participants
Hunts	Statewide Totals	2 hunts with 12 participants

*\*Two of the four hunts were cancelled due to impacts from Hurricane Helene*

FISHING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

District Fishing Events	Statewide Totals	20 events with 2,454 participants
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Center and Depot Fishing Programs and Events

Fishing Workshops	178 programs with 2,306 participants
Fly Fishing Workshops	136 programs with 1,169 participants
On-the-Water Fishing	5 programs with 8 participants

CONSERVATION EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Outreach Programs and Presentations Statewide Totals	37 events with 2,317 participants
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**VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

**Hunting Education Program Volunteer Data**

Total hours volunteered	13,218 hours volunteered
Miles driven	76,631 miles driven
Active instructors	300 instructors
New instructors trained	37 new instructors

**Range Program Volunteer Data**

Range volunteer	694 hours volunteered
Range volunteer miles driven	4,929 miles driven
Active range volunteers	13 volunteers

**Fishing Education Program Volunteer Data**

Total hours volunteered	2,388 hours volunteered
Miles driven	9,064 miles driven
Active Volunteers	50 volunteers

**Barriers to R3 Efforts**

- Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers
- Funding sources for non-hunting and non-angling projects.



Outdoor Skills Academy for Women Montage (<https://www.ncwildlife.gov/education/outdoor-skills-academy> )



# 2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting

(Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)

## State Report

**State:** Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation  
**R3 Lead:** Micah Holmes, Chief of Communication and Education,  
[micah.holmes@odwc.ok.gov](mailto:micah.holmes@odwc.ok.gov), (405) 521-3855



### Significant R3 Effort #1: Podcast

Hunting podcast and fishing podcast series on YouTube.

- Learn to hunt (hunting)
- Reel Talk Real Tips (fishing)

Learn to Hunt:

- 286 new YouTube channel subscribers
- 17,572 total views
- Has been available for less than nine months.

Reel Talk Real Tips:

- 405 new YouTube channel subscribers
- 33,283 total views
- Has been available for less than one year.

### Significant R3 Effort #2: Hunting, Fishing, Trapping, Land Management Workshops

#### Workshops

20+ Summer fishing clinics. Featured on CAHSS - [Bobbars and Bouquets Case Study](#)

Huge hit with attendees. This event is the perfect opportunity to learn new tips and tricks from seasoned anglers in a relaxed, hands-on environment

- Open and free to the public
- 400+ attendees overall.

Multiple, statewide Hunter Education classes.

- Over 13,000 certified in-person and online in FY25.

Hunting/trapping/land management workshops.

- Open to the public with some being free.
- Mentored range time/hunt component
- Partner with NGOs for mentors, speakers, and lunch sponsorship
- Biologists, Game Wardens, and R3 Coordinator present on topics such as public lands, regulations, and a hunting workshop.

Field Days

- Opportunities for constituents to go to a WMA with a shooting range. There they learn about the opportunity at that WMA and then get expert guidance during a hands-on, live-fire experience at the shooting range.

**Other R3 Efforts of Interest and/or Active Participation Metrics**

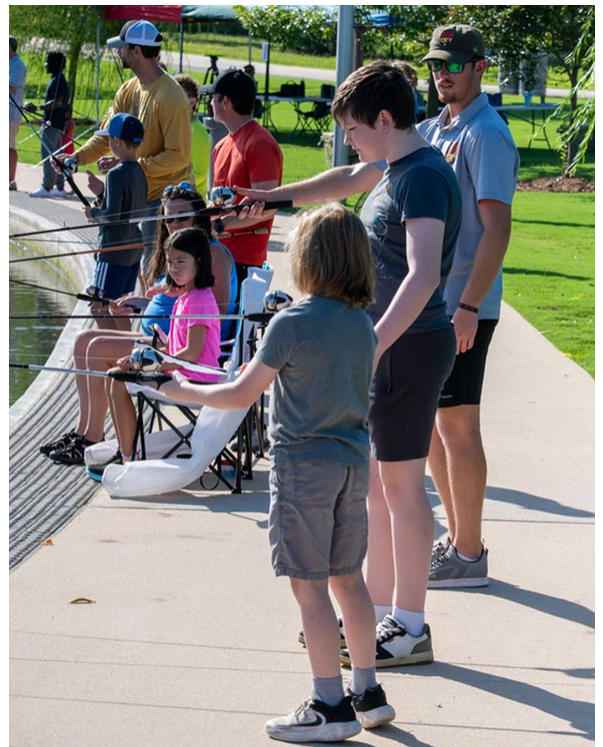
- 37 percent of Special Family Hunt applicants were female.
- Continued building new and improving current shooting ranges across the state.
- Continued improvement and addition of hunting and fishing access.
- 16 percent of anglers who attended a fishing clinic ended up purchasing a fishing license.
- Increasing the open rate of our agency communication emails. Currently at 15%.
- Agency mentorship program was a huge success in 2024!

**Barriers to R3 Efforts**

- Consistent tracking and evaluation of metrics.
- Staff to increase attendance at in-person events.
- Engaging specific demographics (younger, female, non-consumptive users, etc.)



A waterfowl field day (above)



A fishing clinic hosted at a city park (right)



# 2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting

(Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)

## State Report

<b>State:</b>	<b>South Carolina Department of Natural Resources</b>
<b>R3 Lead:</b>	Amanda Stroud Director of Creative Services <a href="mailto:strouda@dnr.sc.gov">strouda@dnr.sc.gov</a> 803-734-0256



### Significant R3 Effort #1: Agency Reorganization and Enhanced Branding

To enhance public engagement, strengthen brand recognition, and improve communications, SCDNR reorganized several forward-facing programs by consolidating governmental affairs, communications and select education and recruitment programs within the Office of Education, Outreach and Information. This reorganization created a more coordinated and consistent approach to recruitment and outreach. In addition, the Creative Services team advanced agency branding through the development of an online brand toolkit and a draft editorial style guide. Strong, consistent branding supports the recruitment and long-term retention of outdoor recreation participants by clearly communicating opportunities, building trust and encouraging repeat engagement with SCDNR programs.

### Significant R3 Effort #2: Website Improvements

SCDNR is actively improving agency webpages focused on hunting, fishing, boating, and shooting. Efforts include improving overall look and usability by standardizing the placement of key information, such as license purchase links, regulations, and public access databases. The team is reducing duplicative content, removing outdated pages, and ensuring all webpages are consistently branded.

### Other R3 Efforts of Interest and/or Active Participation Metrics

#### *Law Enforcement Education and Outreach*

- Clinics: 12 events, 44 participants, including many first-time adult hunters.
- Youth Hunts: 62 hunts, 193 participants (deer, turkey, hog, dove, duck, squirrel).
- Trailer Events: 36 events, 92,000+ attendees.
- Boater Education Classes: 220 in-person classes, 7,028 certified.
- Hunter Education Classes: 233 in-person classes, 13,843 certified; online courses also offered.
- Boating Simulator Events: 17 events, 5,300+ participants.
- Basic Handgun Safety Classes: 14 classes, 129 participants.
- State Shooting Complex Grand Opening & Tournaments: 111 participants.
- Scholastic Clay Program Events: Trap Open (489), Skeet Open (497), Sporting Clay Tournament (503), Skeet Championship (193), Trap Championship (190); \$73,000 in youth scholarships awarded.
- SC Archery in the Schools Program: 15 Basic Archery Instructor classes (198 new instructors), 11 NASP qualifier events, State Bullseye (1,300 participants) & IBO Championships (1,087 participants); \$52,000 in prizes awarded.

- Public Service Ads: 2 ads on life jacket safety and boating under the influence.

*Conservation Education*

- Workshops & K-12 Programs: 10,000+ participants.
- Project WILD Workshops: 10 workshops.
- Heritage Preserve Signage: newly placed signage on 3 preserves.
- Educational Hikes & Trainings: 14 hikes, 4 advanced conservation ethics trainings.
- SC Master Naturalist Volunteer Training: 40 new volunteers.

*Special Events*

- Camp Wildwood: 86 high schoolers; 100% Hunter Education certification rate; 98% more likely to purchase hunting/fishing license.
- Palmetto Sportsmen’s Classic: 34,250 attendees, 355 vendors.

*Saltwater Education and Outreach*

- Saltwater Education Outreach: 5 staff + 73 Certified Fishing Instructors reached 47,000+ people.
- Fishing Clinics: 59 clinics, 954 participants
- Fishing Classes: 17 classes, 277 participants.
- Youth Saltwater Fishing Rodeos & Tournaments: 5 events, 670 participants.
- Adult Saltwater Fishing Tournaments: 5 events, 93+ participants

*Community Engagement*

- Statewide Outreach Events: 5 events, 2,458+ participants (strong Latino/Black engagement).
- In-house Events: 19 events, 507 participants including environmental campaigns, workshops, and technology demos.
- Litter Cleanups: 4 campaigns, 7,300+ pounds removed.
- New Educational Programs: Leave No Trace, Coastal Overnight (fishing, crabbing, birding), and Camping programs.
- Spanish Hunting & Fishing Regulations: 5,000 booklets produced, digital version available.

**Barriers to R3 Efforts**

- Public lands and water access are limited in high-population communities.
- Lack of groomed trails and identified roadways within public lands.
- Complicated game regulations.
- Costs of gear required for shooting, fishing, boating, hunting, and birding.



# 2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting

(Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)

## State Report

**State:** Tennessee

**R3 Lead:** Daniel Musselwhite, R3 Coordinator  
[Daniel.P.Musselwhite@tn.gov](mailto:Daniel.P.Musselwhite@tn.gov) 615-961-4978



### Significant R3 Effort #1: R3 Plan and Implementation

- The TWRA R3 plan was finalized and presented to employees and partnerships statewide.
- Prioritized agency owned shooting ranges and focused on outreach events at those locations.
- Development of a full time go outdoors calendar and event manager to be used by staff and NGOs to accurately capture participation data.

### Significant R3 Effort #2: Partnerships and Grants

- Granted funds to Tennessee Wildlife Federation where they were able to put over 2000 people through some form of the Hunting and Fishing Academy whether in person or virtual.
- Continued funding of SCTP to assist with managing and running the program.
- Setup competitive grant process to eligible applicants to increase public access to shooting ranges through new builds or range improvements.

### Other R3 Efforts of Interest

- Developed ADA Transition Plan to improve accessibility
- Worked with Brandt on R3 dashboard to measure and track participation.
- Designed and implemented Firearms 101 (pistol, shotgun, and rifle) courses at TWRA ranges.
- Becoming an Outdoors Woman weekend workshop and Two Beyond BOW hunts totaling 150 participants. Of those participants 70 percent were new to the program and or hunting.
- National Archery in the Schools with over 1900 participants at State Tournament
- Launched Fishing in the School with 10 pilot schools
- Rebranded Free Fishing Day with Family Fishing Day to increase participation within the family social circle.

### Barriers to R3 Efforts

- Scalability of R3 efforts because lack of staff
- Consistent tracking and evaluation
- Complete buy-in with agency staff



## 2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting

(Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)

### State Report

**State:**

**Texas**

**R3 Lead:**

Jason Mercer  
R3 Coordinator Boat/Fish  
[Jason.mercer@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Jason.mercer@tpwd.texas.gov)  
512.705.6265



#### Significant R3 Effort #1: 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fishing Conservation Course

TPWD hosted its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fishing for Conservation Course, designed to educate media partners on the North American Model of Conservation, R3 principles, and our agency’s significant conservation efforts. The two-day course included presentations, hands-on learning activities, a hatchery tour, catch and cook demonstration, paddling and fishing excursions. By equipping media professionals with knowledge and resources, we aim to foster a deeper understanding of our conservation initiatives and encourage impactful storytelling that highlights the importance of our natural resources.

#### Significant R3 Effort #2: Shooting Sports Strategic Restructuring

The Shooting Sports program underwent a strategic restructuring to better align with agency goals and emerging participation trends. As part of this effort, a Shooting Sports Coordinator was hired to provide on-the-ground leadership, expand partnerships, and support the development of new programs as the agency increases its scope and influence within the shooting sports community.

#### Other R3 Efforts of Interest and/or Active Participation Metrics

- The Women’s TPWD R3 program experienced continued growth, delivering three mentored hunting opportunities and four shooting sports events designed to increase participation, confidence, and long-term engagement among women.
- The Hunting for Conservation workshop was successfully completed, providing agency staff and media members with an in-depth look at the role of hunting in wildlife management and conservation, and strengthening internal and external understanding of conservation funding and policy.
- Agency Wide Survey Follow up after sending the RBFF R3 One sheet showed drastic improvement in staff understanding of the value and importance of R3 and its initiatives.
- Bass Book – Everything Texas Bass fishing compiled into one book and included in our magazine subscription and made available for purchase and giveaways at events.

- Partnership with BassMaster Classic help to provide transport for live fish and dropped the kill rate to under .5% - losing only one fish in total.
- Cooking equipment purchased for the North Texas region, after shown success in the central Texas area, to accompany angler education events and provide catch-to-cook demonstrations for participants.
- Partnership with retailers to provide them with Where to Fish Brochures in major urban areas.
- All License types made available digitally in 2025 (LY 2026)
- Increased participation in our Social Media Ambassador program where social media influencers have provided TPWD with content for social media channels, website and magazine.
- Implementation of regular R3 content in the monthly magazine.
- Staff R3 Women’s Program has provided hunting, shooting, fishing and fly fishing opportunities for staff with information about the importance of R3. These programs have shown great success and increased the understanding and support of R3 throughout the department.
- Increase in Special Olympics Fishing events across the state with even more planned for 2026.
- 7% increase in fishing license sales for license year 2025.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> iteration of the R3 Strategic Plan developed. Inclusion of a pillar for Wildlife Viewing.
- R3 trainings provided to front line staff to help disseminate the importance and value of supporting conservation in the State of Texas to their participants.

### **Barriers to R3 Efforts**

- While we have made strides towards implementing a comprehensive CRM system, we continue to seek a solution that fully addresses our organization's evolving needs.



## 2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting

(Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)

### State Report

**State:**

**Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources**

**R3 Lead:**

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#### Significant R3 Effort #1: The Campfire & Become a Virginia Hunter Program

- Supporting partner groups in creating programs to support existing, new and youth hunters.
- The Campfire: Annual social event that brings together public, private and non-profit partners in or around the conservation mission to build relationships and encourage collaboration.
- Expansion of the Becoming a Virginia Hunter Program: A beginner level in-person and virtual program aimed at non-hunters to give them the skills and knowledge to hunt deer, turkey and waterfowl.
- Utilization of targeted, paid marketing to attract hunter/angler adjacent outdoors people to try hunting and angling.

#### Significant R3 Effort #2: Collaborative Partnerships

- Worked to develop collaborative partnerships with organizations such as Ducks Unlimited, Bass Pro Shops, Special Ops Xcursions, Delta Waterfowl, The Fallen Outdoors, Green Top Sporting Goods, Dance's Sporting Goods, Virginia Peninsula Sportsman's Association, Virginia-Carolina Deer Tracks Podcast, Discover the James, Reel Blonde Fishing, The Preserve at Dundee, Cumberland Plantation, Virginia Shooting Sports, Watkins Duck Calls, Hidden Valley Game Calls, Beyond Boundaries, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers. Monquin Creek Outdoors and First Hunts Foundation. These partnerships resulted in hundreds of new hunters, anglers, boaters, wildlife viewers and recreational shooters being exposed to new outdoor activities.

#### Other R3 Efforts of Interest and/or Active Participation Metrics

- Partnership with USFWS at James River NWR provided the opportunity for 6 hunts to take place on the refuge with first time waterfowl hunters.

- Occoquan NWR Youth and Female Mentored Turkey Hunt: Through a partnership with USFWS: 2 youth and 2 first-time female hunters were allowed to spring gobbler hunt on Occoquan NWR.
- Partnership with the Virginia Department of Forestry resulted in 4 youth/apprentice hunting opportunities and 2, first time turkey hunters harvesting a gobbler.

### Barriers to R3 Efforts

- DWR is disconnected with the recreational shooting community in Virginia.
- Still unable to track workshop participants through license sales.





**2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting**  
 (Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)  
**State Report**

**State:** **West Virginia**  
**R3 Lead:** Kayla Donathan, Outreach and Education  
 Program Manager  
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**Significant R3 Effort #1: Conservation Relevance Study**

The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources recognized that changing public needs and demographic shifts require new approaches to wildlife conservation and engagement. To address these challenges, the agency developed a relevancy plan designed to expand traditional market segments while also reaching new audiences. This plan emphasizes recruitment, retention, and reactivation (R3) of residents into fish and wildlife activities, ensuring that public investments deliver maximum benefits. Central to the plan are three goals: understanding residents’ wildlife-related interests, building long-term trust, and being recognized as reliable stewards of natural resources. The agency convened a Relevancy Project Team tasked with creating strategies to increase participation, beginning with West Virginia families as a key focus group. The plan outlines both external actions to engage families and internal efforts to overcome cultural and capacity barriers, positioning the agency to better serve the state’s residents and strengthen conservation for the future.

**Significant R3 Effort #2: New Email Marketing Platform - Braze**

In the second half of 2025, the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources began transitioning from the SendGrid email marketing platform to Braze, which is managed by their license vendor, Brandt. This move has strengthened collaboration between WVDNR, the Division of Commerce Communications, and the Brandt team, creating a more unified approach. Although the system is still being warmed to its full capacity, early metrics and automated emails are already showing promising improvements in email performance and audience segmentation capabilities. The agency is also seeing benefits from automated drip campaigns, which are designed to engage both new and returning hunters and anglers with timely communications.

## Other R3 Efforts of Interest and/or Active Participation Metrics

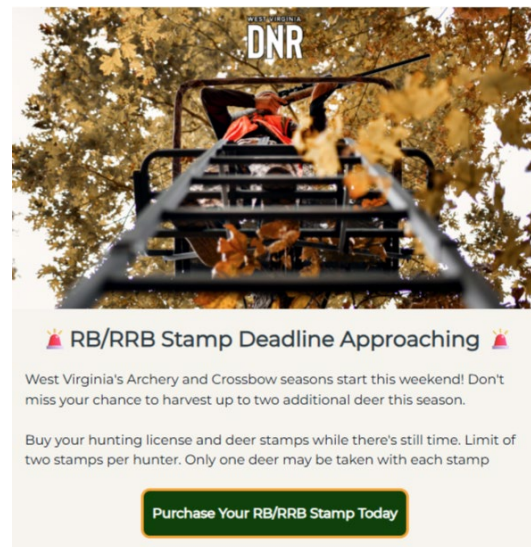
- Hired a Human Dimensions Specialist!!
- Becoming an Outdoors Woman Spring and Fall Workshops
- Beyond BOW events
- WV Celebration of National Hunting and Fishing Day
- NASP trainings, WV 3D State Tournament, and WV Bullseye State Tournament
- Mentored youth hunts (WVDNR Law Enforcement)
- Gold Rush trout stocking
- Monster Trout special stocking
- Big Buck photo contest
- Educational fishing events (especially during Free Fishing Weekend)
- School outreach through Wildlife Education team
- Citizen Science initiatives
- Paid and organic marketing efforts

## Barriers to R3 Efforts

- Program evaluation (until new HD specialist can assist)
- Staffing capacity
- Bureaucratic oversight
- Lack of communication between WVDNR and other agencies/ ad firm who implement paid marketing efforts
- Budget constraints
- Reaching non-traditional audience



Cover of Conservation Relevance Plan



New Email Template Example



## 2025 SEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting

(Hunting, Fishing & Wildlife Recreation Participation Committee)

### State Report

**State:**

#### Virgin Island Dept. of Planning and Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife

**R3 Lead:**

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Jen Valiulis  
Wildlife Chief of Fish & Wildlife Division

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#### Significant R3 Effort #1: Fisheries Education

- **Take Me Fishing Program:** The USVI Take Me Fishing program is designed to teach children in the community the fundamentals of recreational fishing. Participants receive hands-on instruction with casting, fish identification, and safe handling of fish and fishing gear. The program promotes responsible fishing practices by reinforcing angler safety and promoting the conservation of fish populations through catch-and-release techniques. The Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) partners with community organizations and provides staff, training, and equipment support for clinics held by these organizations. In 2025 the division partnered with four community groups to host three fishing clinics, and two children's fishing tournaments. DFW partnered with the Heliopolis after school program to host two fishing clinics for 20 children in June (fig. 4) and one fishing clinic with the Virgin Islands Marine Advisory Service (VIMAS) Youth Ocean Explorers program for another 20 youth in July. In addition, DFW co-sponsored and assisted the Virgin Islands Game Fishing Club, and Golden Hook Fishing Club hosted two Kid's handline fishing tournaments for over 30 participants in each district. The division has provided support and outreach materials to several new community groups including the Friends of the Virgin Islands National Park, to become new partners for fishing clinics in 2026.
- **Reef Responsible Sustainable Seafood Initiative:** The program was established in 2014 by The Nature Conservancy but is currently managed by the division. It uses a market-driven, educational approach to provide tools and incentives that support the health of coral reef ecosystems. Core program activities include education on fish biology, ecology, and fisheries regulations, as well as the promotion of sustainable and responsible seafood choices through social media outreach and in-person training for fishers and restaurants

In 2025, there were continued efforts to increase social media engagement by maintaining consistent social media engagement. Engagement with people not following the accounts rose significantly and accounted for 78 percent of all interactions, after a rebranding effort with Imkada Solutions, a local consulting business focused on community development.

### **Significant R3 Effort #2: Hunter Education & Invasive Species Management and Awareness**

- **Archery** : The division maintains 1 target archery field, two 3D archery fields on St. Croix, and supports the Archery Federation (Olympic Team) on St. Thomas. The fields are open to the public. Roughly 600 people use the field every year.
- **Invasive Species Eradication Community Program:** The division provided educational resources to produce certified wildlife removal agents who were trained to effectively eradicate invasive species within the community. This was an initiative designed to engage residents in managing invasive and nuisance species populations. In total, 4 removal agents have been trained and certified and can be hired by the public to remove nuisance species from properties. One agent renewed their certification this year. In 2025 DFW partnered with local artists Heidi Gonzales of Swashbucklin Art and Eliana Schuster- Brown of Eliana B Artistry to create murals to increase public awareness of invasive species in the US Virgin Islands and their harm to native species and the environment. These murals are on display at the Inter-island Seaplane terminals in both districts and were unveiled at ribbon cutting ceremonies during Exotic Pet Amnesty Week in June on St. Thomas and St. Croix (fig. 7). The event encourages the public to permit and microchip their exotic pets, promoting responsible ownership and improved monitoring. There were 40 attendees, and the division received 2 new permittees as a result, including distribution of wildlife control operator trainings to include archery.

### **Other R3 Efforts of Interest: Community Engagement**

- **Fishing Tournaments:** Each year, DFW staff provides support for fishing tournaments across the territory. In 2025, the division participated in 11 tournaments, assisting with weigh-in and collecting data on catch and effort. The division also partners with the Caribbean Oceanic Restoration and Education Foundation (CORE) to host the territory's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Lionfish Derby in both districts. The event drew 52 participants and resulted in the removal of over 700 lionfish from the territory's waters, contributing to invasive species management efforts.
- **Recreational License Program Development:** The USVI has become the first US insular area to have a recreational fishing license program. DFW partnered with Brandt Information Services in 2024 to develop a GoOutdoors recreational fishing license point of sale platform that was launched in August of 2025. This soft-launch of the platform has resulted in 339 people registered in the system, with a total of 158 license sales. DFW is working with media developers to create outreach materials aimed at raising awareness of the program and its requirements.
- **Outreach Events and Presentations:** The division has actively engaged with the community through a variety of outreach events. In the St. Thomas/ St. John district, staff attended three youth-centered events, engaging with over 50 children aged 4 to 13. Two of those events, the Kids Expo (March; fig. 5) and Worldwide Day of Play were hosted by the Virgin Islands Children's Museum, while the Coral Reef Fest held in April was organized by DPNR Coastal

Zone Management and catered to all ages. At these events, the division distributed outreach materials and designed interactive activities and displays to keep children engaged. These activities focused on sustainable fishing practices, fish identification, and the importance of native species. Display tanks highlighted native ecosystems such as beaches, mangrove, and freshwater habitats, to further educate about native ecosystems in the Virgin Islands and the species they support.

In the St. Croix district, staff participated in three events, including the Department of Agriculture's annual Agricultural Fair in February (figs. 1&2), which typically attracts over 300 attendees each year. The other two events consisted of the Week of the Young Child (April), aimed at school children, and the Kite Festival (June), which was open to a broader community. At those events, staff distributed educational outreach materials and conducted interactive activities, focusing on fish biology, animal identification, and boat terminology and safety. In addition to these events, staff conducted 3 workshops and presentations for local schools and camps. This year, the division held a fish dissection workshop for 15 children at a summer camp, where the participants learned about fish identification, anatomy, and otolith removal protocols. Staff also gave two presentations, one in March and July, to teach students about the importance of native species and the detrimental effect of invasive species on local ecosystems.

### **Barriers to R3 Efforts**

- Limited Staff
- Complicated requirements for procurement
- Increase and more complex administrative requirements for federal funding
- Supply Chain logistics (limited suppliers that ship and are willing to apply to the GVI database in the US Virgin Islands)
- Participation in in-person training declined due to staffing limitations and reduced community interest.
- There was a significant decline in participation in recreational fishing tournaments in the St. Thomas/ St. John district, primarily due to the cancellation of one of the largest tournaments.



Figure 1. (above) DFW staff engaging with the public at the 2025 St. Croix District Agriculture Fair.



Figure 2. (above) Display of the Division of Fish and Wildlife booth with activities and outreach materials at the 2025 St. Croix District Agriculture Fair.



Figure 4. (above) DFW staff assisting children handline fishing on the dock at the Gustave Quetel Fish House during the DFW and Heliopolis program fishing clinic.



Figure 5. (above on left) DFW staff providing outreach materials and assisting stakeholders in guided activities at the 2025 St. Thomas-St. John Kid's Expo hosted by the Virgin Islands Children's Museum at the Tutu Park Mall.

Figure 7. (below) USVI local artists Eliana Schuster-Brown pose with the invasive species murals developed for DFW during ribbon cutting ceremonies at the Seaplane terminals in each district during 2025 Exotic Pet Amnesty Week.

