Using Community Based Social Marketing to Improve Angler Retention in NH

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Introduction

- Over 48 million Americans went fishing in 2009.
- The economic impact of anglers is HUGE: $45 billion in retail sales and over 1 million jobs were provided for from anglers (in 2006).
- New Hampshire’s contribution amounted to $1.7 million in retail sales and roughly 3,000 jobs.

Much of this money is the means by which state agencies fund improvements to fish habitat, public access, and environmental education. All of the habitat users, human and non-human, benefit. Although these numbers seem to be a promising, fishing participation trends shed a different light. The most recent data shows that in 2010 participation was down 5% for the US. In New Hampshire participation decreased in 6 out of the last ten years. Much research has been done to understand the demographics of the angling population, however, less emphasis has been on the behaviors and attitudes of the demographic. To address this declining trend we are proposing to use Community Based Social Marketing (CBSM).

Previous Research

Many local and national organizations have put considerable efforts in research and outreach to help boost angler participation. (The Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF), Southwick Inc., Responsive Management, American Sportfish Association, FishAmerica Foundation, Trout Unlimited, etc.).

Needless to say, the research on angling in the United States is extensive. For example, RBFF’s 2011 Special Report on Fishing and Boating determined the demographic breakdown of anglers in the United States (Figure 1).

New Hampshire is no exception to the research, using NH Fish and Game’s data, Southwick Associates have graphically identified where New Hampshire anglers live (Figure 2). Matching that data up with US Census Bureau data they determined a wealth of information on the anglers in New Hampshire (age, income, home value, occupation, household type, education, and other consumer behavior characteristics).

CBSM Based Social Marketing (CBSM)

Community Based Social Marketing (CBSM) is a pragmatic community level framework that looks at specific behavior changes.

- Many studies that rely heavily on media advertising are very good at promoting awareness but are limited in their capabilities in fostering a behavior change.
- By incorporating the community you build social capital which maximizes locally relevant solutions. CBSM is traditionally broken down into five steps (See figure 4).

During this summer and fall we will be examining the first three steps of this process through a series of interviews, focus groups, and surveys as highlighted below.

Adapting CBSM for Angler Retention

Examine reasons for no longer purchasing a license using reports, interviews, and focus groups. Identify relative probability and impact of each behavior/raison (this helps to identify which behaviors to target)

For New Hampshire there is also a model developed by Southwick Associates using external drivers such as population, price of license, personal income, average temperature, gas prices, and the year, which can roughly predict the number of sales in fishing licenses (Figure 3). For New Hampshire is no exception to the research, using NH Fish and Game’s data, Southwick Associates have graphically identified where New Hampshire anglers live (Figure 2). Matching that data up with US Census Bureau data they determined a wealth of information on the anglers in New Hampshire (age, income, home value, occupation, household type, education, and other consumer behavior characteristics).

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This research has greatly advanced our knowledge on fishing participation. However after less than adequate results from a 2010 direct mail marketing program, we are proposing to take a different approach: CBSM.

References


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