

WORKSHOP: HOW TO SELL A NEW MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Session Chairman: Arthur Flynn

The general subject of selling a new management program has been divided into two related, but dissimilar topics by the organizing committee from Quebec: 1) hunting regulations; and 2) predator removal. Although very similar questions can be asked concerning both subjects, acceptance of management efforts are of potentially greater variance. The long process and repetition of effort in developing and eventually 'selling' a new management program reminds one of the words attributed to a Roman of the first century,

"We trained hard, but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form up into teams we would be reorganized. I was to learn later in life that we tend to meet any new situation by reorganizing, and what a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralization."

(Petronius - 66 A.D.)

Hunting Regulations

We posed to the five jurisdictions asked to summarize their hunting regulations the following series of questions:

- 1) From where did the initiative for changing the regulations come?
 - 2) How was the plan developed - data base, who involved?
 - 3) What plan was eventually settled on?
 - 4) If sufficient time has passed, what are the results to date?
- and 5) Was there a built in evaluation plan to aid in modifying the regulations?

Newfoundland, Maine, Ontario, Saskatchewan and British Columbia discussed their differing approaches to hunting regulations which have been in effect for varying lengths of time, up to 10 years. Although the historical perspective is important, this discussion of the Workshop will focus on the process rather than on the individual facts of history.

Newfoundland - Gene Mercer

In 1973, Newfoundland changed its hunting regulations instituting a quota system with a computerized draw. The change encompassed the establishment of 50 game management areas and was based on moose population trend data gathered since 1960. No public discussion, education or input was sought or meetings held and in 1976 when there was an effort to modify the regulations to control access, there was public outcry. The initial plan developed included a calf season, but this was politically unacceptable and was removed from the plan. Since 1980, significant changes in the quotas (>25%) for a management area must be accompanied by public hearings. This hearing process means that changes now take some 2+ years to enact.

Maine - Karen Morris

Over the last 30 years, a large number of bills have been introduced into the Maine legislature to reinstitute a moose hunting season, closed since 1935. In 1979, a bill stimulated by hunter groups was passed to permit moose hunting and a bull only season was developed by the wildlife department for 1980. A small amount of census data was available to aid in the development of the regulations, but recommendations to divide the state into distinct hunting zones was not accepted. In the first year, hunters were 92% successful and there developed a feeling that hunting was competing with tourism (the easily viewable bulls were taken first). The subsequent seasons have seen the regulations

include zones or management areas. In 1983, there was a referendum on the Maine ballot to stop the moose hunt, but it lost 60% to 40%. At the time of the referendum vote, the Department saw the wisdom in educating the news media and had a program that demonstrated the health of the moose population in the state.

Ontario - Tim Timmermann

The hunting regulations in Ontario have undergone a series of developmental changes over the last 5 years or so. Initiated by wildlife biologists, an approved provincial policy on wildlife was instituted in 1980 defining allocation, moose harvest control, inventory and assessment, research, predator control, habitat management, enforcement and hunter education. Prior to this new policy, the only control by the Ministry was regulating the length of season and license fee. In 1979, 72 public hearings were held involving over 7000 hunters where the various management options for a hunt were discussed. In 1980, a program to share a moose by 2 or 3 hunters was instituted with an unlimited number of permit applications offered. In two selected areas, a study was conducted on limited hunts with specific quotas. The quota system was politically unacceptable for broad Provincial implementation since it was felt that everyone should have the opportunity to hunt moose annually. A selective harvest program was initiated Province-wide in 1983 where everyone could harvest a calf, but adult moose could be taken only by permit for a specific management unit. This year the prepurchase of a hunting license was made a requirement to apply for an adult permit. Hunter education is currently voluntary, but will become mandatory for new hunters in the future.

Saskatchewan - Terry Rock

In the early 1970's Saskatchewan had a draw system which was generally disliked by the hunters of the province. Approximately six years ago the

province went to a selective harvest program. The moose population was low and static during the early 1970's, cow hunting was permitted and the need to change the regulations determined. In the mid-1970's, Bob Stewart of Saskatchewan and Tony Bubenik from Ontario developed the selective harvest program and sold the plan first to the Department and then the politicians. Public acceptance of the selective harvest regulations has to date been good.

British Columbia - Ken Child

The account of British Columbia is very similar to Saskatchewan in that they changed to selective harvest regulations from a draw system in the late 1970's. Declining hunter success and the development of a data base defining the low moose population played significant roles in the initiation of efforts to change the hunting regulations. Again the influence and scientific rationale of Tony Bubenik from Ontario played a significant role in the province developing a selective harvest strategy. A significant amount of effort has been put into educating the hunters of the province on the program and in gaining their support.

Questionnaire on Methods of Communicating Regulation Changes

The chairman then called on Tim Timmermann of Ontario to briefly review the results of a questionnaire sent to 19 provinces, states and territories in North America that conduct moose hunts on the methods used to communicate to their hunters. The following table summarizes the responses that were received.

Table 1. Means of Communicating Harvest Strategies in 19 North American Moose Jurisdictions.

Agency Use	METHOD OF COMMUNICATION								
	Special Seminars	Posters	Instruct. Booklets	Film/ Slides	News Articles	Radio TV	Special Brochures	Personal Contact	Hunting Regs.
	3	4	5	6	9	10	10	14	16

Open Discussion

After reviewing the five hunting regulation programs, the emphasis of the open discussion was on HOW to sell a new management program on hunting regulations, not on which type of regulations is better. Vince Crichton from Manitoba was called on to begin the discussion since he voiced such a strong opinion at the banquet about the subject the night before. Capsulized from the verbose and didactic response were three points: 1) that the selling of a new management program starts with a clearly defined policy on wildlife; then with that as the foundation and guide, 2) we must have credibility, communicating a sound scientific basis for the new program; and 3) you must understand who the target populations or team members are who you must make a part of the process. Components of all three were mentioned in the various descriptions of the five jurisdictions, but further discussion particularly focused on who should be involved, including the non-consumptive population. The proper education of the news media and their role in informing all the public was brought up as certainly a consideration to regulation developers. Work within the various governmental agencies in a jurisdiction, work within the various sections in the wildlife agency and work among the various members of the team developing the regulations

are all a must in team building for an acceptable new program. The entire process of having built a proposal on sound scientific data, that fits within the policies for wildlife and then taking the time to communicate and educate not just the hunters, but all will gain the general support needed for a successful program.

Predator Removal

Three predator control efforts, two recent projects in Western Canada and the other more senior in Alaska, were reported on to provide background for the discussion on how to sell such a predator removal program.

Yukon Territory - Rhonda Markel and Doug Larson

Earlier in the day, Doug Larson presented the results of a mortality study currently going into its second year, "The Rate and Causes of Moose Calf and Adult Female Mortality in Southern Yukon." As a part of that effort, the research design defined problems with wolf and bear predation on moose. Problems with wolf predation on other domestic animals, namely pet dogs, brought the issue of increasing wolf populations to the public arena. Rhonda described the public responses and the media coverage of the wolf predation on dogs. Since the plans to reduce predator species have become public, the Department of Renewable Resources in the Yukon has received mail from all over the world, mostly condemning the plans. Public support within the territory, however, has been good. Doug then described the plans for both wolf and grizzly bear removal in the study areas of southern Yukon. The plan includes comparisons between a control area and areas where bears and/or wolves are to be removed. The methods for removals of animals was discussed only briefly. This phase of the research/management project has just started and the results will be reported at subsequent meetings.

British Columbia - Ken Child

A wolf removal program in northwestern British Columbia which has been in existence less than a year was next described in brief detail. The project gained local support with reports of wolf packs killing live stock. It is far too early to determine the effects of removing wolves on moose populations, but that certainly is a consideration if funding for census work can be found. One interesting point was the concept that the news media had pitted one biologist against the other with regard to their judgement on this issue of predator control.

Alaska - Bud Burris

The history of predator removal, basically wolf removal, goes back to the days prior to Alaskan statehood when there was a vigorous poisoning program. More recent efforts at wolf removal date to the early to mid-1970's when the taking of wolves by trappers and hunters became legal and in some areas encouraged. An important issue was brought up by Bud concerning the purpose that one has for instituting a predator control program. Evaluations of population data, both predator and prey species, must be credible. Plans should be long range in their scope, especially when dealing with wolf control. Bud gave some examples where wolf populations were high, moose populations low, but there is really no interest in controlling or decreasing the wolf in the game management unit since it was doubtful that even with wolf removal moose populations would increase. In other areas of the state, plans that go out 10-20 years are in effect. These will require periodic predator removal to maintain a specific level of predator.

Open Discussion

The chairman called on Michel Crete of Quebec to describe the province's interest in a predator removal program. In south central Quebec there are plans

to use trappers and hunters to remove a part of the predator (wolf) population. The idea, however, is not to continuously remove wolves, but to do it once and evaluate the effect. The plans are based on the research studies that have been conducted in the wildlife preserves in the area. There has not been any public discussion of the plans for this wolf removal activity at this time.

Bud Burris from Alaska further amplified on the need for long range plans for predator removal. This comment elicited a response from Michel Crete of Quebec that annual predator removal was not needed. Bud answered that periodic removal of predators in a long range plan did not mean annual removal, but as needed, perhaps every 3-5 years.

The issue of differences in viewpoint between wildlife biologists on predator removal and how this had been capitalized on by the news media was discussed further. The major issue becomes the credibility of the information and data that make up the basis for the plan.

Chuck Schwartz of Alaska brought up an interesting issue that habitat assessment should be a part of a plan to control predators where increases in the prey species, moose, was a goal. The carrying capacity of the range may not allow for increases in the moose population even with the removal of predators.

In summary, both the hunting regulation and predator removal discussions highlighted the need for expanded communications based on good data. The three points of the early discussion basically capsulize the thoughts:

- 1) Have an official wildlife policy as the base for plans.
- 2) Develop credibility: good data, sound ideas.
- and 3) Clearly define those populations, within the agency and the groups of public outside to involve.