

RBFF STATE INNOVATIVE R3 PROGRAM GRANTS NEBRASKA GAME AND PARKS COMMISSION

FISHING RECRUITMENT PROGRAM ON-SITE PERMIT SALES AND PARTICIPANT MARKETING AND TRACKING

PARTNERS

- Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation
- Nebraska Game and Parks Commission Fisheries, Communications and IT Divisions
- State of Nebraska Office of the Chief Information Officer



Thank you for participating in our survey.

We are collecting feedback about our family fishing events to understand the value of this program to our participants and to assist us in planning future events and activities. We appreciate your assistance with this effort.

Your response will also enter you in a drawing for a half-price lifetime fishing permit for a Nebraska resident (15 or under) of your choice. If your name is drawn, you will be contacted (using the information you have provided) about this opportunity.

Want to fish today, but don't have 2016 Nebraska Fishing Permit?

If you have a credit or debit card, you can buy your permit on site. Just talk to one of the staff members taking a survey



OVERVIEW

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) conducts fishing recruitment efforts with their Family Fishing and other Fishing Education Events. While these events are fun, exciting and appealing, NGPC desired to better understand program outcomes by creating a simple method for selling on-site permits and collecting data on fishing program participants in order to track the recruitment and retention of participants.

The Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) granted \$17,580 to NGPC to assist in selling on-site permits to Family Fishing participants (via NGPC Mobile Permit ability) and collecting data that allows the tracking of and marketing to Family Fishing and Fishing Education program participants. This data would allow NGPC to connect with participants via digital communications and conduct participant surveys for program improvement.

METHODOLOGY

- Through the use of iPads and mobile hotspots, information on Family Fishing Events participants (name, date of birth, gender, email) was collected to a web-based data collection and storage program.
- Participants were encouraged to give information with the chance of winning a half-priced lifetime fishing permit.
- Participants were contacted to introduce and encourage NGPC Mobile Permit system and social media (Facebook) participation.
- Participant information was used to re-contact participants via email with program information and then compare participant email response activity as a metric of program engagement, and compare participation in Family Fishing Events with participant fishing permit ownership.

SUPPORT

“This grant greatly advanced our understanding and communications with participants in our fishing recruitment programs,” said Commission Director Jim Douglas

BENEFITS

- Through the development and use of this system, we have realized the possibilities and advantages of electronic collection and use of participant data. This has led to conversations within our agency education teams on broader use of this and an expanded program.
- The ability to track (i.e. permit purchases), communicate with, and market outdoor opportunities to participants has shown promise in testing of the data collected this past summer. Now that this is created, we are only limited by how we choose to use the system and data.

Participant Data Website:

[apps.outdoornebraska.gov/
FamilyFishing/](http://apps.outdoornebraska.gov/FamilyFishing/)

Mobile Permit Website:

outdoornebraska.gov/mobilepermits

Family Fishing Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/
familyfishingnebraska](http://www.facebook.com/familyfishingnebraska)

RESULTS

- Participant data was collected at 23 Family Fishing Events during the summer of 2016.
- Data (first/last name, date of birth, gender) was collected on 841 individuals, 271 as a group spokesperson and 578 as members of the group.
- Estimates based on attendance records show that about 52% of all participants were captured in the dataset.
- Emails were collected for each group spokesperson and two separate email communications were sent to these addresses.
- The first email in September, Family Fishing Nights – Connect With Us!, was sent to 226 recipients, had an open rate of 42% and click through rate of 7%. Family Fishing participants showed higher than normal interest in this communication. Similar non-Family Fishing participant emails to NGPC permit database email addresses have a 12-18% open rate and 1-2% click through rate.
- A second email, Rainbow Trout Stocking Schedule, was sent in October to 214 Family Fishing participants and 214 random samples of permit database anglers. The Family Fishing participants showed a slightly higher engagement with 29% open rate and 2% click through rate versus 22% and 0%, respectively, for the random angler group.
- Family Fishing participants were matched against the NGPC permit database to determine their activity with NGPC products. Family Fishing participants occurred 191 times in the NGPC database. Fishing permits (1-day, Annual, Hunt/Fish Combo and Resident Lifetime) for 2016 were held by 104 (16%) of Family Fishing participants. When considering only participants 16 years old or older, Fishing Permits were held by 29% of Family Fishing participants. The date of purchase of these permits in comparison to the individuals' date of participation at a Family Fishing Event found that 82 purchased before, ten purchased on, and twelve purchased after the day of the event.

LESSONS LEARNED/FUTURE PLANS

Lessons Learned

- IT development and production of a web-based data collection system is time consuming, expensive and complicated.
- Accurate data collection requires quality, dedicated and well-trained staff.
- The information gained from and use of the data is only limited by imagination, money and time.

Future Plans

- Develop a standard protocol for participant marketing and outreach.
- Create standard reporting on participants against their permit database involvement and recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) efforts.
- Develop and implement training and utilize this system at programs statewide with volunteers and outside staff.

CONTACT INFO

Larry Pape
Education Specialist
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
Larry.Pape@nebraska.gov
402-471-5447

This case study was produced in December 2016. For more information on RBF's State Innovative R3 Program Grants, please contact Stephanie Hussey at shussey@rbff.org or 703-778-5152.