

**Enhancing R3 by Exploring
New and Returning Anglers'
Attitudes Toward Fishing**

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Project Overview

Overall Goal: Learn from new and returning anglers in Virginia to enhance effective recruitment, retention and reactivation strategies.



RESPONSIVE
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Project Overview

Objectives:

1. Identify factors that aided in recruitment or changes in fishing participation among new and returning anglers.



Project Overview

Objectives:

2. Identify information and education resources that new and returning anglers want or that would help overcome barriers.



Project Overview

Objectives:

3. Identify the motivations for new anglers and returning anglers when they are choosing or changing fishing sites, and changes over time.



Project Overview

Objectives:

4. Identify angler perceptions and experiences regarding urban fishing sites.



Project Plan

Step 1

Use DWR database to identify new and returning anglers who had purchased a license between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020, but were not in the records as having purchased a license in 2016, 2017, or 2018.



Project Plan

Step 2

Survey to license holders to further identify groups of new and returning anglers.



Project Plan

Step 3

Invite participants to attend five virtual focus groups.

Incorporated four different regions, one all-woman group, people who have fished urban sites near Richmond and Northern VA, and one group of returning anglers.



Key Findings

Many Seemingly “New” and “Returning” Anglers Were Not

60% had fished between 2016 and 2018 but did not have a record of holding a license during that time period.

- 15% fished exclusively out of state.
- 45% fished without a license (28% no record and 17% not licensed because of various reasons).

***License database alone not able to identify a group of anglers exclusively new or returning.**



Key Findings

COVID-19 Created A Unique Opportunity For the Fishing Community

- Pandemic increased participation in fishing.
- Several types of people started or re-started fishing.



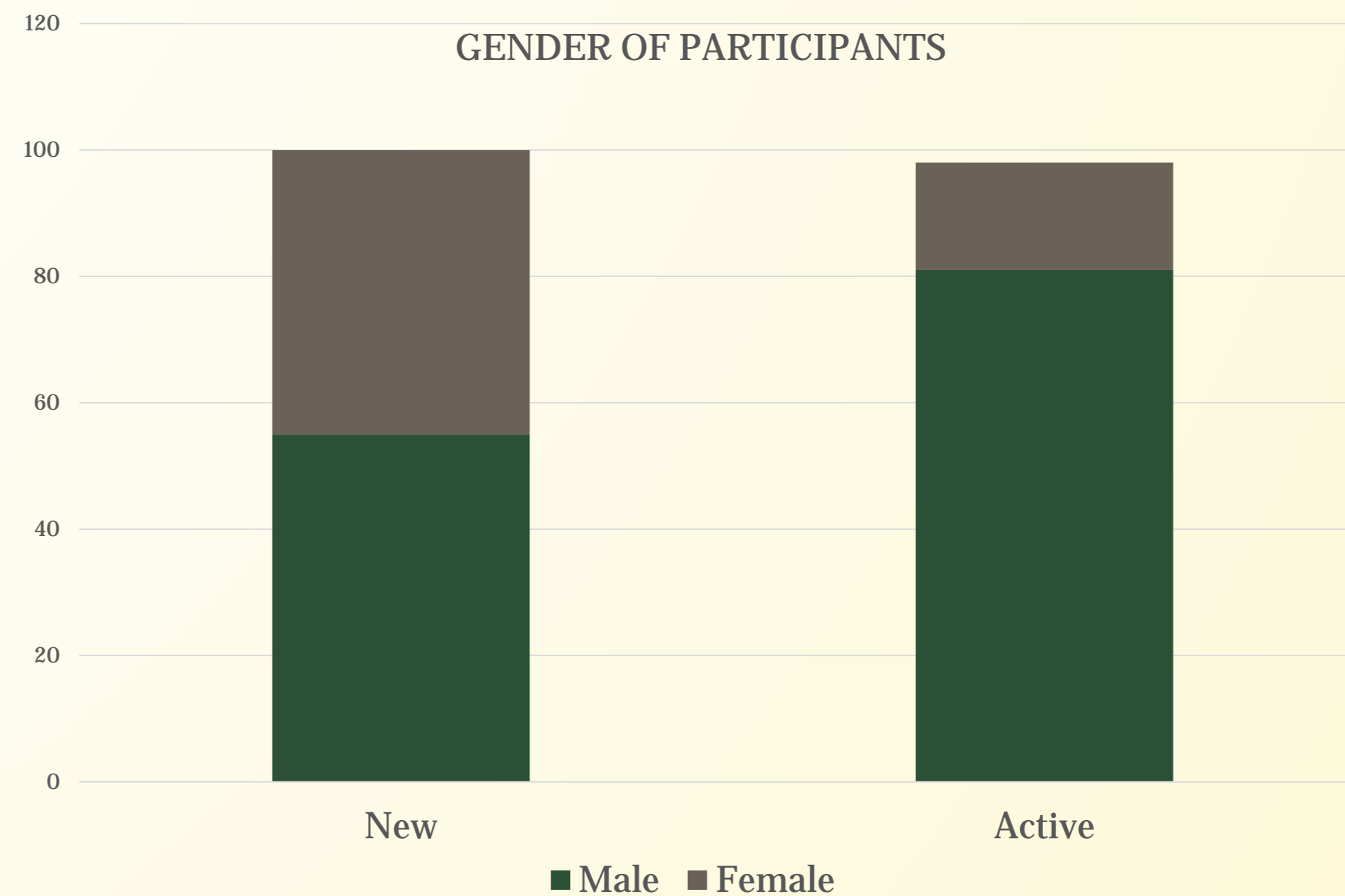
Key Findings

Characteristics of New and Returning Anglers



Key Findings

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Key Findings

Characteristics of New and Returning Anglers

- >50% reside in urban and suburban areas.



Key Findings

Characteristics of New and Returning Anglers

- Tend to stay closer to home and fish in their county of residence.



Key Findings

Characteristics of New and Returning Anglers

- More likely to have first gone fishing with a friend or organization rather than with family.



Key Findings

New and Returning Anglers' Reasons for Fishing

Low Draw	High Draw
To catch big fish	For relaxation
Solitude	To be close to nature
For the challenge	Camaraderie, to be with family and friends



Key Findings

New and Returning Anglers' Constraints

Lack of knowledge and skills

Cost or perceived cost to fish and try other activities

Regulations are too overwhelming

Finding places to fish with good access

Litter and pollution were dislikes about fishing urban sites

Intimidated by not knowing what to expect at different sites

Hesitant to fish on their own



R3 Implications

Lack of knowledge and skills	<i>Directing the right audience to basic fishing information</i>
Hesitant to try new fishing locations	<i>More information on where to fish and what to expect when they get there</i>
Lack of awareness of DWR information and resources	<i>Onboarding emails to new license buyers</i>
Interest in expanding their fishing with different baits, techniques, travel, and fish species	<i>Targeted communication, educational workshops, content</i>
Reluctant to fish on their own	<i>Refer-A-Friend, family events, “The Outdoors are Better Together”</i>
Regulations are too confusing	<i>Simplify regulations, education, signage</i>
Urban fishing sites are used and appreciated. Criticism over crowding, pollution and litter	<i>FishLocalVA, volunteer opportunities</i>



Thank You

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