

Project Abstract Summary

This Project Abstract Summary form must be submitted or the application will be considered incomplete. Ensure the Project Abstract field succinctly describes the project in plain language that the public can understand and use without the full proposal. Use 4,000 characters or less. Do not include personally identifiable, sensitive or proprietary information. Refer to Agency instructions for any additional Project Abstract field requirements. If the application is funded, your project abstract information (as submitted) will be made available to public websites and/or databases including USA Spending.gov.

Funding Opportunity Number

F-FWS-WSFR-23-001

CFDA(s)

15.628

Applicant Name

South Dakota State University

Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project

2023 MSCGP - Maximizing the impact of women's groups on hunting and fishing retention

Project Abstract

Award Purpose: The purpose of this applied research project is to support the long-term retention of women in hunting, fishing, and the outdoors, more generally. Women are making significant in-roads in these historically male-dominated sports. As a result, women are increasingly recognized as a key demographic to support the American hunting and fishing heritage. Even with successful recruitment, managers have identified problems with retention because even after initial training, women need more mentorship and support to do outdoor activities on their own.

Activities to be performed: We will conduct a program evaluation, create an interactive tool, establish a community of practice, and share our findings across a diverse audience to enhance mentorship opportunities and increase retention. We will use focus groups and interviews to better understand the types of programs are best for increasing women's retention in hunting and fishing sports. An online, interactive tool will describe and map the women's hunting and fishing groups so women can make connections to groups and groups can collaborate with one another. We will create a community of practice for leaders of women's hunting groups to share lessons learned, solve current problems and plan for the future. Last, we plan on sharing results with women's hunting and fishing groups, state fish and wildlife agencies, and researchers to enhance programming and increase women's retention in hunting and fishing.

Expected deliverables or outcomes: The results of this work will directly inform R3 mentoring programs for women in hunting and fishing across the Mountain Prairie Region in a few key ways. First, through a descriptive, mixed methods qualitative program evaluation, this work will inform women's R3 mentoring programs by identifying which features of programming are most effective for the long-term retention of women in hunting and fishing. This actionable information will be shared directly with program leaders who can adjust various aspects of their programming to ensure they are meeting the needs of participants and support them beyond initial recruitment. Second, the results of this work will support women hunting and fishing participants looking for more opportunities for mentorship through the creation of an online interactive social systems map and accompanying storymap. Participants will be able to identify programs of interest and in proximity to them, ensuring that they can access continual mentorship opportunities, thus maximizing retention of newly recruited participants.

Intended Beneficiaries: Taken together, this work will bring direct benefit to women's hunting and fishing groups and participants in the Mountain Prairie region. Additionally, this work benefits women's hunting and fishing groups and fish and wildlife agencies beyond the region because lessons learned are applicable across the country. This first trial of the online interactive mapping tool in the hunting and fishing context will also support the wider hunting and fishing mentoring community as they seek to improve program connectivity to maximize retention in hunting and fishing of historically underserved communities.

Subrecipient activities: Current collaborators include: Becoming and Outdoors-Woman (MT, SD, WY, and UT), Deer Camp (MT), Casting for Recovery (National), and DIVA WOW (headquartered in Texas with membership across the region), though we have identified and initiated contact with other potential collaborators and will continue to seek collaboration in the months leading up to the grant.