

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 USAspending.gov.

Funding Opportunity Number

F-FWS-WSFR-24-002

CFDA(s)**Applicant Name**

University of Montana, Dr. Josh Millspaugh

Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project

How governance, regulation presentation, and regulatory outliers affect hunting regulation complexity

Project Abstract

With hunting participation declining since the 1980s, this study will examine how governance, regulation presentation, and regulatory outliers affect hunting regulation complexity. Such factors have implications for hunter recruitment, retention, and reactivation (R3) objectives. Specifically, we will use surveys, focus groups, an in-depth state-by-state regulation review, and an analysis of state governance structures to 1) catalog how hunting regulations are promulgated in each state; 2) investigate how the presentation and delivery method of hunting regulations influences the perception of regulation complexity among prospective and current hunters; and 3) summarize hunting regulation outliers in each state. This research builds upon the Analysis of Hunting Regulation report (available in the National R3 Clearinghouse and funded by the MSCGP) we released in 2023 which encompassed a review of literature related to hunting regulation complexity and a state-by-state analysis of hunting regulations. For the current study we will add a critically useful human dimensions component through focus groups and surveys. The results of our research will provide tangible recommendations to state agency stakeholders and interested in mitigating regulatory barriers to achieving R3 objectives - from reducing barriers to hunting for diverse, non-traditional hunting demographics, to bolstering hunter satisfaction and retention. Research will be conducted at the University of Montana and through two subawards built into our grant budget. One sub-award will be for the State University of New York's College of Environmental Science and Forestry, which will provide support for Dr. Millspaugh's involvement given his co-appointment at that institution and the University of Montana. A second subaward will be issued to the Boone and Crockett Club which will be used to fund cooperator involvement, travel, and logistics, as well as administrative support for the project.