

CATEGORY: COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

ACTIVITY — NATIONAL HUNTING AND FISHING DAY

Description —

Many chapters host an educational or hands-on event to introduce the public to hunting and fishing. The event is often planned in conjunction with National Hunting and Fishing Day (NHFD), celebrated the fourth Saturday of each September. The event encourages a better understanding of hunters and anglers and their contributions to conservation and to wildlife and fisheries management.

Benefits —

National Hunting and Fishing Day events highlight the tremendous contribution hunting and fishing make to our economy and fish and wildlife management through fishing and hunting license sales and excise taxes on boating, fishing supplies, firearms, and ammunition. Such events publicly promote the positive contribution that hunters and anglers make to conservation and the League's mission. In addition, they offer opportunities for member recruitment.

Key Steps —

- Plan your local Hunting and Fishing Day celebration to coincide with the National Hunting and Fishing Day. This one-day event is held annually on the fourth Saturday in September.
- Plan your day's activities and decide on an appropriate staging location. You can organize the event as part of an open house on chapter grounds using outdoor recreational and educational activities. For example, you may organize hunter education skills workshops, hunting dog training and field trials, wildlife calling, muzzleloader shooting, and fly fishing demonstrations.
- If you decide to hold the event at a public place such as a park or shopping mall, reserve the area and coordinate with the mall owner or appropriate government agency on what activities are allowed.
- Recruit volunteers based on activities offered and the number of participants you expect.
- If you are conducting hands-on activities, coordinate with area sporting goods stores to obtain any necessary equipment for the event.
- Construct an informational display featuring some of the modern wildlife management success stories and accomplishments produced by hunter-angler involvement.
- Promote the event to the public and members.
- Have chapter provide food and refreshments.
- If you choose to include live-firing firearms and archery gear, have adequate shooting ranges and range safety officers available, along with shooting vests, shooting gloves, protective ear and eyewear, as well as first aid kits on site.

Who Can Help —

Volunteers: The number of volunteers will depend on the location of the event, the types of activities offered, and the number of anticipated participants. If the activity involves shooting, some volunteers should be National Rifle Association-certified instructors. Plan to have one volunteer instructor per two shooting participants, and at least one range officer in control of live-firing at all times.

Partners/Sponsors: Local (town, city, township, county) governments and state fish and wildlife agencies, other chapters, and local conservation organizations (such as Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Quail Unlimited, National Wild Turkey Federation), and area sporting goods stores.

Technical and Other Support: Wonders of Wildlife (National Hunting and Fishing Day clearinghouse: www.nhfd.org), National Shooting Sports Foundation (NHFDF founder), National Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (promoters of “Take Me Fishing”), and state fish and wildlife agencies.

Dollars and Cents —

Expenses: The event could cost very little or as much as \$1,000, depending on advertisements, promotional materials, hands-on outdoor activities, snacks, and beverages.

Revenue: Local businesses may contribute supplies and food for the day’s events.

Getting the Word Out —

Advertise through your chapter newsletter and Web site and through the state fish and wildlife agency’s public relations department. Post fliers at local sporting goods retailers and send a pre-event news release to local media. Advertise in local newspaper calendar or events sections. If you co-sponsor with other conservation organizations, coordinate outreach with their staff. Provide guests with information about the League’s mission, your chapter’s accomplishments, and membership. Take advantage of those non-members attending by promoting the League and recruiting them as new members.

Chapters With Successful NATIONAL HUNTING AND FISHING DAY Activities —

Rockville, MD
Orange, CA
Silverton, OR

Washington County, MD
Waterloo, IA
Argos, IN

Winchester, VA
Hamilton, OH
Evansville, IN

Note: For the most current specific chapter contacts, refer the *IWLA National Directory* or IWLA Web site (www.iwla.org).