Influences of the Wildlife Habitat Education Contest on Youth Motivation and Future Plans

Marie Laudeman
Final Examination Presentation
Purdue YDAE Master’s Degree Candidate
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Indiana 4-H Natural Resource Project Volunteer Blog
Background

- Natural Resource Club Kits
- 4-H Science Volunteer Training Workshops

Purpose: Explain how blog tool could influence the motivation and knowledge of Indiana 4-H Volunteers in Natural Resource 4-H projects.

1. Create Community
2. Provide Additional Support

Weekly Posts

Blog-Use Directions Postcard

www.indiana4hnrcclub.wordpress.com
Instrument & Results

- Qualtrics Survey Instrument
- Survey Response Rate was Low (12%)
- Reasons Volunteers Did Not Use Blog
  - No Time
  - Unfamiliarity with Blogs
- Volunteers reported that their fellow leaders were excellent at helping them succeed.

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Recommendations

- Try Blog Project in Future
- Provide Training on How to Use a Blog
- Younger 4-H Volunteer Audiences
- Longitudinal Case Studies
- Link Blog to Other Social Media
2015 Wildlife Habitat Education Program (WHEP) Evaluation Project
WHEP Contest

- Goal: Increase Youth Understanding of Wildlife Ecology and Management Practices
- 2015 WHEP Contest
  - Wildlife Challenge and Exam
  - Wildlife Management Practices

Challenges ID  Exam  Wildlife Practices
Study Purpose

- Youth Motivation to Participate in WHEP
- WHEP Influence on Youth Knowledge and Future Plans
- Questions:
  - What motivates youth to participate in the WHEP CDE?
  - Does the WHEP CDE influence participant knowledge of wildlife?
  - Does the WHEP CDE influence participant future career choice?
- Compare 2015 Data to Previous Evaluations

Indiana WHEP Participants

Year

- 2000
- 2001
- 2002
- 2003
- 2004
- 2005
- 2006
- 2007
- 2008 (Spring)
- 2008 (Fall)
- 2009
- 2010
- 2011
- 2012
- 2013
- 2015

Participants:

- 0
- 50
- 100
- 150
- 200
- 250
- 300
- 350
- 400
Instrument

- State WHEP contest participants were surveyed in the years of 2001, 2006, and 2008.
  - This survey instrument was revised for use in the 2015 evaluation.

- Major Differences is that the 2015 Survey:
  - DID NOT ask about the community size of the participant.
  - DID NOT ask for specific number of acres affected by youth implemented wildlife management practices.
  - DID ask for participant to self report amount of knowledge before and after the WHEP CDE.
  - Did ask, “Why did you decide to participate in the WHEP CDE?”
  - In general had more open answer questions.
  - Grouped Questions on youth future plans into one question.

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Regional Contests
April 11, 2015

Survey Administrators:
- Marie Laudeman (North) Salamonie Interpretive Center
- Dr. Natalie Carroll (Central) Fort Harrison State Park
- Rod Chapman (South) Purdue SEPAC

Poster
Sample

- 93 High School Students
- Response Rate of 94% (87/93 Youth)
Results

- Compared results to survey question similar to the 2006 and 2008 survey.

Youth Use of WHEP Management Practices

- 28% Already Use WHEP Practices 2015
- 56% Already Use WHEP Practices (Average 2006 & 2008)
- 71% Plans to Use WHEP Practices 2015
- 89% Plans to Use WHEP Practices (Average 2006 & 2008)
Results Cont.

- Does the WHEP CDE influence participant future career choice?
  - College Area of Study (47% Positive)
  - College or University Choice (29% Positive)
  - Future Career Choice (48% Positive)

Whether WHEP Influences Youth Future Career/College Choices

![Graph showing influence of WHEP on youth future career/college choices]
Results Cont.

- What motivates youth to participate in the WHEP CDE?

- Using Descriptive Coding the following Themes were Found:
  - Interest (20%)
  - Fun and Enjoyment (16%)
  - An Interest in Wildlife and the Outdoors (12%)
  - Future Careers and Education (28%)
  - Peers, Mentors, or Class (12%)
Results Cont.

- Does the WHEP CDE influence participant knowledge of wildlife?
  - Youth Self Reported
  - 10 Point Scale (1-low to 10-high)
  - Average Knowledge Before = 4.7
  - Average Knowledge After = 7.3

Level of Knowledge Perceived by Youth and Coaches Before and After WHEP
Recommendations

- Observations of Interaction with Natural Resource Professionals
- Look at Other Programs
- Collaborate with Indiana State DNR Park Naturalists
- More Education Opportunities for Teachers
Questions?
Thank-you!