

Applying Community Oriented Policing to the Conservation Law Enforcement Profession

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Abstract

Conservation law enforcement agencies are challenged by the fact that traditional constituents (people who hunt, fish and boat) are generally a declining segment of the population. Since Community Oriented Policing (COP) has proven effective, in part, at expanding public relationships, it was important to determine if COP principles could benefit the conservation law enforcement profession. This research examined officer knowledge of and attitudes about COP, the application of COP by other conservation law enforcement agencies around the nation, and methods of improving the application of COP to benefit officers, their agency, and the people they serve. The research showed that certain COP principles, properly applied, are critical to the well-being of conservation law enforcement agencies.

Introduction

Most conservation law enforcement agencies across the nation are facing critical challenges as a result of budget cuts, manpower shortages, aging equipment, and even attempts to strip or minimize their authority. This is due, in part, to the fact that their traditional customer group, consisting primarily of those who hunt, fish and boat, is generally a declining segment of the total population in most states. The long-term impact on those agencies tasked with providing services aimed at fish, wildlife, and boating law enforcement could ultimately result in reassignment to other duties or even dissolution should public support and the perceived need for these specialized services continue to dwindle.

Although there is little available published information relating Community Oriented Policing (COP) practices as they apply to conservation law enforcement, COP has been touted by many government officials and managers of traditional police agencies as an effective means of reducing crime and building relationships between these agencies and the people they serve. Cordner (n.d., ¶1) stated that “policing works best when officers know citizens and deliver personalized service – the opposite of stranger policing.” Ideally, officers should take advantage of every opportunity to engage in positive interaction with the people they serve and build meaningful, trusting relationships with them. Working as partners with the public will assist in police efforts to deal with criminal activity and solve local problems, but it takes a long-term commitment from the entire law enforcement agency to support and facilitate COP if the full potential is to be realized.

Research has shown that the public generally supports the need for more conservation officers, and they overwhelmingly believe there should be more high-visibility patrols by these officers. Research also supports the notion that conservation law enforcement agencies can better meet the needs and desires of the public while simultaneously improving public opinion through the appropriate application of COP practices (Responsive Management, 2005).

As Koenings (2002) aptly phrased it in his introductory remarks to the Western Wildlife Law Enforcement Association:

Today, to be truly effective, fish and wildlife enforcement requires far more from officers than the traditional arrest of the obvious bad guys or capturing the troublesome bear or cougar. Today, to be truly effective, enforcement programs must focus on new, expanded strategies emphasizing partnerships, environmental protection, public education, conflict resolution, voluntary compliance and cooperation; and yes, grass roots empowerment. This philosophy, which we call Resource Oriented Enforcement, is about many things. It's about establishing new and expanded partnerships and coalitions that enable us to work as teams that focus on fish and wildlife and their habitats. It's connecting people back to the resource. It's about establishing an honest, ongoing dialogue with the public to build trust and long term relationships that gives the community a legitimate voice in how to deal with its local fish and wildlife issues. It's about solving local resource issues by tailoring solutions to specific problems and needs. Simply stated, it's about doing things with and for people, as opposed to doing things to people.

It is quite likely that an adaptation of COP, specifically engineered to meet the needs of conservation law enforcement agencies, would help officers reduce violations while building trust and positive, supportive relationships with people both within and outside the traditional customer group. Deterrence of crime and improved criminal intelligence gathering are important benefits to be derived from an effective application of COP. Public confidence and support should grow as people became familiarized with the valuable role these officers play in areas such as general law enforcement service in rural and wilderness areas, highly specialized response to natural and manmade disasters, search and rescue on land and water, and world-class tracking and evidence collection through the use of highly trained officers and K-9 units. Through creative methods, officers can enhance their ability to perform their traditional roles while reaching out to people who either lack fundamental knowledge about these agencies or merely see no personal benefit from the services being provided. In general, both the involved agency and the entire population they serve will reap far-reaching benefits through appropriate application of COP principles within the conservation law enforcement profession.

The purpose and rationale of this research project is to identify viable solutions to challenges facing conservation law enforcement agencies relating to the areas of public support and trust. This research evaluates officer knowledge and attitudes about COP, identifies and evaluates innovative applications of COP in other conservation law enforcement agencies, identifies policies and

philosophies relating to COP from these agencies, and initiates a pilot effort to increase positive public interaction by officers employed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

Sworn members employed by the FWC, from the rank of Lieutenant and below, were surveyed to determine their attitudes about agency COP activities and the need for public support, their understanding and current application of the agency's policy on COP philosophy, and to gather information about potential acceptance of an agency-wide effort directed at improving relationships with a more diverse sample of Florida's residents and visitors. Conservation law enforcement managers from other states were interviewed to help determine how COP philosophy is being applied around the nation. Although this research placed emphasis on a very specialized law enforcement profession, the results are anticipated to be easily adaptable to all aspects of the law enforcement profession.

Methods

FWC Officer Survey

This research project required the initial establishment of a baseline relative to officer knowledge and attitudes with respect to Community Oriented Policing (COP) philosophy and its application to conservation law enforcement in Florida. This was accomplished through the use of a survey of officers employed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Sworn personnel from the rank of Lieutenant (first-line supervisors) and below (a total of 582 personnel) were sent a postcard (Appendix 1) personally asking for their help in this project and directing them to an online survey link on the agency's Division of Law Enforcement (DLE) limited-access Web page.

These postcards were sent through regular mail on August 18, 2006, with a deadline for responses advertised as August 30, 2006. The online survey was generated using a survey instrument (Appendix 2) created by the author and hosted by an external survey service doing business as SurveyMonkey.com. Completed surveys were received from 141 respondents (a 24% response rate).

The survey instrument was structured in a manner to allow respondents to anonymously rate their agreement or disagreement with eleven statements relating to the research topic. Respondents were also asked to describe their most recent COP-related efforts and their suggestions on how the FWC may better inform the public about who we are and the service we provide. One demographic question was used to identify each respondent's length of service in order to assist in identifying any tenure-related response variations. Finally, each respondent was provided an opportunity to opt-into a field experiment aimed at increasing positive public interaction with FWC officers.

Survey of Other States

An additional survey was conducted with seven managers employed by other conservation law enforcement agencies around the nation through both telephone and face-to-face interviews using a survey instrument developed by the author (Appendix 3). The managers from Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Nevada and Texas were asked a series of questions relating to COP policies, whether or not there is a distinct application of COP principles within their agencies, agency efforts to reach out to non-traditional users, and their thoughts about the need to improve agency visibility and build public trust.

Based on the author's personal knowledge of the other conservation law enforcement agencies around the nation, the selection of interviewees was performed in a manner which provided an appropriate cross-sectional view, including both large and small agencies, those with primarily rural to largely urban demographics, and adequate diversity in geographic location.

Field Experiment

Following the compilation and thorough evaluation of all survey data, a field experiment will be conducted to determine how officers might receive and implement a formal plan to improve relationships between FWC officers and the public. Ten of the initial 66 FWC officers surveyed who opted-into the field experiment will be selected and engaged in this experiment for a one month period, after which their evaluations will be solicited by telephone. Based on the officer evaluations, an effort will be undertaken to evaluate the likelihood of acceptance and success and to consider implementation of the revised plan statewide.

Results

FWC Officer Survey

Analysis of the FWC officer survey was simplified through the use of the data compilation and analysis tools available through the service provider. The service provides a Results Summary (Appendix 4), which shows the raw data from each question in a series of graphs. Additional filters may be applied to the data to further segment the responses, such as looking at tenure-related variations in the responses. The open-ended questions offering opportunity for the respondents to type in personal responses required each to be read and hand-categorized based on content.

Question 1 asked for the level of agreement with the concept that all FWC officers should be involved in activities related to the Division's COP philosophy. Of the 139 respondents to this question, 71.9% either agreed or strongly agreed, while 17.3% were neutral. There were only slightly more than 10% responses of disagreement with this statement.

Question 2 asked for the level of agreement with the concept that being lenient with violators is an important part of the FWC COP philosophy. All 141 respondents answered this question, and the majority (62.4%) disagreed, 22% were neutral, and only 15.6% agreed.

Question 3 asked for the level of agreement with the concept that agency recruiters, public information personnel, and a few specialized officers should be tasked with most of the efforts relating to improving agency visibility. The data shows an almost even split among the 139 responses, with 42.4% agreeing, 12.9% neutral, and 44.6% disagreeing with the statement.

Question 4 asked for the level of agreement with the concept that conducting talks for school classes is the primary field COP activity. The responses to this statement were also evenly split, with 36.9% in agreement, 24.8% neutral, and 38.3% in disagreement.

Question 5 asked for the level of agreement with the concept that applying the COP philosophy will help build positive relationships between the FWC and the public. Of the 139 responses to this question, the majority (79.9%) of respondents were in agreement. Only 8% disagreed.

Question 6 asked for the level of agreement with the concept that each FWC officer has a responsibility to improve agency visibility and standing with the public. Only one person skipped this question, and an overwhelming 92.8% of respondents agreed with this statement.

Question 7 asked for the level of agreement that the Division of Law Enforcement's "customers" should only be those who hunt, fish and boat in Florida. Of the 140 responses to this question, 85.5% of the respondents disagreed with this statement and 12.8% agreed.

Question 8 asked for the level of agreement with the concept that the Division of Law Enforcement is doing an adequate job of informing the public about who we are and what we do. A majority of the respondents (70%) disagreed, while 20% agreed with the statement. This question was skipped by one person.

Question 9 asked for the level of agreement that a high percentage of FWC officers are actively engaged in efforts that build our public image. The responses were split among the 140 respondents to this question, with only 22.1% in agreement, 50% in disagreement, and 27.9% neutral.

Question 10 asked for the level of agreement with the concept that a positive public image is critical for the long-term well-being of the Division of Law Enforcement. An overwhelming 92.1% of the 140 respondents agreed with this statement.

Question 11 asked for the level of agreement with the concept that the Division's COP efforts should also strive to build positive relationships with non-traditional "customers." 85.4% of the respondents to this question agreed, while 12.1% were neutral. This question was the one skipped by the most respondents (17 opted not to respond).

Question 12 asked the respondents to provide a description of the two most recent times they applied the Division's COP philosophy in their work. There were 53 respondents (37.6%) who opted not to respond to this question. The responses were categorized into seven general categories; I don't know about the COP philosophy, school/civic group/hunter education classes, general public contacts, neighborhood meetings, contacts with other law enforcement agencies, media contacts, and none. Of the 88 responses received, the two

highest activities reported were general public contacts (68 entries) and school/civic group/hunter education classes (25 entries). Six officers indicated that they didn't know about the Division's COP philosophy, two identified neighborhood meetings, four mentioned other law enforcement agencies, one mentioned working with the media, and two said they had not applied the COP philosophy in their work.

Question 13 asked respondents to list up to two suggestions about how the Division could better inform the public about who we are and what we do. There were 96 responses to this question, and 45 respondents chose not to answer. The majority suggested advertisements and an effective use of the media (62 entries). The second leading suggestion involved a focus on officer contacts and public speaking (23 entries). The other responses involved increasing visibility (9 entries), participation in boat shows/fairs/fishing tournaments/etc. (4 entries), working better with other law enforcement agencies (3 entries), management should do this (2 entries), taking ownership of an area (1 entry), and improving officer training (1 entry).

Question 14 asked about years of service. For comparison purposes, the tenure of the targeted sworn FWC members (officers through Lieutenants) and the respondents are depicted below in Figure 1.

Years of Service	Actual Percent of Total Sworn (Officers thru Lieutenants)	Survey Respondents (Percent)
5 or Fewer	34.7	26.0
6 to Less Than 10	20.4	20.3
10 to Less Than 15	7.6	12.2
15 to Less Than 20	13.5	12.2
20 or More	23.8	29.3

Figure 1.

The sworn members at both the top and the bottom of the tenure scale were the most misrepresented in this survey. Those with 5 years or less were under-represented (26.0% compared to 34.7% actual population), while those with 20 or more years of service were over-represented (29.3% compared to 23.8% actual population). The remaining tenure classifications more closely represented the actual sworn member population within FWC for the ranks from Officer to Lieutenant.

Based on the length-of-service data reported by the respondents, the survey results are adequately spread out among tenure classifications. On the other hand, it became apparent during the data analysis that an additional question relating to the geographic assignment of each respondent may have proved to be a valuable tool in determining any geographic response variations. It is likely that officers assigned to primarily rural portions of the state may have a significantly different perspective on community-involvement than those assigned

to and living in urban environments, but this research can neither prove nor disprove this hypothesis.

Survey of Other Agencies

Of the seven state conservation law enforcement managers surveyed by telephone it became apparent that “COP” is not a term widely used in this profession. Key elements and principles of COP were highly regarded by the entire group of respondents. Sample policies and public information products were obtained which best identified the positive public contact emphasis of several agencies, but formal COP program activities including problem-solving and community policing were not evident.

On the other hand, managers overwhelmingly felt the pressures related to watching their number of traditional users dwindle. Some efforts have been implemented to reach out to non-traditional users, such as “Watchable Wildlife” programs and “Becoming an Outdoors Woman” workshops, but nothing innovative or otherwise noteworthy was identified. It appears that each state conservation agency is engaged in similar efforts to stretch the limits by reaching out to a few new people, and there appears to be a distinct need for creative thinking and innovation if great numbers of non-traditional users are to become familiar with and supportive of conservation agencies.

There was one point upon which the agency managers wholeheartedly agreed: there is a tremendous level of importance placed on the need to improve agency visibility and the building of positive relationships with the public.

Field Experiment

The field experiment will be initiated in November of 2006. Based on the information learned through this research and drawing from the 66 FWC survey respondents who offered to participate in a field test effort to improve visibility, build public image, and generate positive relationships with the public, ten officers will be selected by the author. Consideration will be given to seeking individuals geographically spread out around the state and with variations in tenure and rank/job responsibilities. These ten officers will be individually contacted by telephone and offered an opportunity to make further commitment to the effort once they had a full understanding of what was expected.

The field experiment will require each participant to commit to an outreach project and agree to a goal of introducing themselves to one person each workday, with emphasis placed on looking for individuals who were less likely to be traditional FWC “customers.” Examples discussed will include anyone other than hunters, anglers, or boaters, such as those routinely encountered at gas stations, restaurants, or at a store. The participants will receive a supply of small information cards, which fold to the size of a business card, with a space on the back for the officer to write in their name and local contact information. The inside of the card will contain statements derived from the FWC Division of Law Enforcement’s strategic plan which have been modified to better explain the services provided by the Division in layman’s terms. Also included will be the agency’s Wildlife Alert phone number, which is the statewide toll-free phone

number established for callers to report fish and wildlife law violations and people suspected of operating a boat while under the influence. These cards are to be used as talk points during the introductions and left with the person for future reference. Officers will be asked to keep track of their introductions and the number of cards they hand out for the duration of the field experiment.

Following one full month of implementation of this experiment, each participating officer will be contacted and their opinions solicited. Particular emphasis will be placed on seeking public comments relating to the effort and any “success stories” resulting from the public contacts. The information gained will be used to further evaluate whether or not such an effort would be widely accepted by FWC officers and to examine its potential of effectively reaching the listed goals. The findings will be presented to FWC Command Staff and recommendations will be made for their consideration before further implementation efforts are undertaken.

Discussion

Both FWC officers and law enforcement managers from conservation agencies in other states clearly agree that improving agency image with the public through positive relationships is critically important, and it is widely accepted that the effort to do so must not be limited only to those who hunt, fish, and boat. It is agreed that the responsibility does not belong only to a few specialized officers or to members of management, but each sworn member must do their part.

The results of the FWC officer survey seem to reveal an inconsistency in understanding of how the concept of Community Oriented Policing (COP) applies to FWC officers. Over 37% of responding FWC officers either thought the agency’s COP philosophy included a key component of leniency toward violators or they were undecided. Over 28% of respondents were not convinced that each FWC officer has a role to play in the Division’s COP efforts, and more than 20% were not sure if application of COP philosophy would build positive relationships with the people we serve. Several stated that they were not aware of the FWC policy relating to COP when responding to survey question 12. Furthermore, FWC officers were evenly split on whether or not conducting talks with school children is the Division’s primary COP activity.

Officers were, on the other hand, in overwhelming agreement about the importance of improving the Division’s visibility and public image, and they clearly indicated that this effort should extend beyond those who hunt, fish and boat. They agreed that this role belongs to each FWC officer, and that the FWC is not currently doing enough in this area.

These perceptions also extended to the managers of other state conservation law enforcement agencies around the nation. The interviews revealed that public image is of critical importance to these agencies and that their “traditional customers” are considered to be a dwindling segment of their state population. In some cases there was a genuine concern that their officers

felt they were encouraged to be lenient with violators, and no innovative efforts toward the implementation of COP philosophy were discovered. Few agencies had a policy specifically addressing COP philosophy, but community involvement and relationships with landowners and traditional users were emphasized as officer priorities in most cases. The managers surveyed overwhelmingly agreed on two points; improved agency visibility and the building of positive relationships with the public are of very high importance, and each strongly believed that their agency should be doing more in this area.

It is interesting to note that crime reduction, one of the primary goals of COP, was never mentioned by any of the survey respondents. It is possible that the questioning was leading toward the public image and relationship components, but opportunities were available in each survey for the respondent to comment on COP activities and application, yet this dimension was not brought up. This may lead one to conclude that either crime reduction is not a high priority need in conservation law enforcement or perhaps this component of COP is neither widely understood nor utilized within this law enforcement profession. On the other hand, it appears that the public image issue is of such importance that it dominates the discussion of COP principles within conservation law enforcement.

Perhaps most important are the perceptions of the public. Although no research was found to target and evaluate the opinions of non-traditional "customers," the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GA DNR) recently surveyed Georgia residents, anglers, hunters, and landowners to determine public opinion about knowledge of and satisfaction with their Conservation Rangers. The research revealed overwhelming public support for GA DNR Rangers, but it also revealed that public perception about what a Ranger's job entails varied. The anglers, hunters, and landowners more accurately described the roles of the Rangers than did the general public. Of the 407 responding Georgia residents who were not large landowners or licensed hunters or anglers, 59% admitted they knew little or nothing about the roles of Conservation Rangers. Overall, it was clear that the public felt there should be more Rangers, and they strongly identified a need for increased high-visibility patrols by Rangers (Responsive Management, 2005).

Public perception about a law enforcement agency is very important. While agencies may fulfill a wide variety of law enforcement roles and handle them with great proficiency, image may be adversely affected if the public is dissatisfied with one small aspect of policing. For conservation law enforcement agencies, one area of dissatisfaction might come from people who launch their boats at remote boat ramps where recreational drug use is frequent. When these traditional "customers" see this activity, it is not uncommon for them to feel unsafe in using the area.

One mechanism to find out what the public needs and desires are is to simply ask them. In most cases, people will tell you what they think, especially if they perceive that their opinion really matters. When implementing their COP program, the Whiteville, North Carolina, Police Department used the following

plan described by Aragon and Adams (1997) to find out what was on the minds of their customers:

The department also used a survey to introduce COP to residents. Rather than adopting a long, complicated survey, which might have confused or unreasonably consumed citizens' time, the West-Side COP Team asked residents only three questions:

- 1) What crime-related problems have you experienced in your neighborhood?
- 2) As police officers, how can we improve conditions in your neighborhood?
- 3) Of the problems you mentioned in Question 1; please place them in order of priority – with the most serious at the top of the list.

As other research shows, residents tended to list quality-of-life issues - such as speeding, loitering, littering, creating disturbances, and using and selling drugs - rather than criminal activity such as burglaries or muggings. Quite often the desires of the public differ from the goals of law enforcement, and the greatest gains in COP-related efforts will be achieved by thoroughly knowing what people expect.

To make an appropriate determination about how COP may be most effective in the field of conservation law enforcement, it is important to first have a thorough understanding of the profession. This profession tends to attract individuals with a desire to protect natural resources and/or perform boating safety law enforcement. The roles of these officers are not often understood by the public, especially among those who do not participate in fishing, hunting, or boating. Conservation law enforcement officers have long complained about not being identified by the public as “real” law enforcement officers.

The nature of this profession exacerbates these identity problems. Conservation law enforcement officers are generally members of a law enforcement division or bureau housed within a resource protection and management agency consisting of biologists, researchers, and resource managers. Officers primarily tend to work alone performing self-initiated patrol in areas where hunting, fishing, and boating takes place, and little emphasis is given to interaction with people other than “traditional customers.” Historically, efforts to build relationships with the public centered around contacts with traditional customers and owners of large tracts of land. Significant emphasis has been placed on public interaction at boat shows, outdoor shows, and fishing expositions, once again leaving little opportunity to interact with people other than those traditionally contacted.

In some ways, the conservation law enforcement profession has been its own worst enemy. Acknowledging that the traditional customer segment of modern society has been largely declining over the past couple of decades, members of these agencies have attempted to extend their reach to women who may be new to outdoor activities and to those people who are often considered to be “non-consumptive users” such as bird and wildlife watchers. Like initiatives

implemented by many other organizations, these efforts gained rapid momentum at their inception but have subsequently “lost some steam” over the past several years. Effective efforts to reach out to people other than those already involved in specific outdoor activities are rare in this profession.

The conservation law enforcement profession has historically worked within a fairly well-defined “box” with borders around those people engaged in the traditional uses of the natural resources. This research supports the notion that conservation law enforcement agencies should strive to extend the perimeter of their “box” to include all state residents and visitors within its boundaries. As the “box” is extended and officers develop a new view of their customers, positive public interactions with an increasingly broad segment of the population will become the norm and “outside the box” thinking will not be necessary. Such an effort may require a cultural shift within the conservation law enforcement profession, but this research revealed that both officers and managers already recognize the need and potential benefits.

Members within this profession have unique capabilities, all of which benefit the state’s residents and visitors. The greatest gain in agency visibility results when the public becomes familiar with the benefits they derive from conservation law enforcement officers. These officers are independent and well trained, and their specialized expertise in survival skills, specialized equipment operation, land and water navigation, working in rugged and rural environments, and tracking are extremely valuable public assets. These unique capabilities became widely apparent during the disaster responses to hurricanes in 2004 and 2005. Deployed in both Florida and in Mississippi, FWC officers proved their unique capabilities and their ability to excel while working in the most challenging of conditions, and they quickly became both a critical component of Florida’s disaster response plan and welcome relief to those suffering as a result of the storms.

To determine how the elements of COP can provide the greatest benefit to conservation law enforcement agencies and those they serve, there are several key findings from this research that need consideration. These agencies provide a significant but poorly understood benefit to the general public. The COP goal of crime prevention is less of an issue for this profession than are agency image, visibility, relationships, and public support. Traditional “customers” largely understand and appreciate the roles of these officers. FWC officers and managers from other conservation law enforcement agencies around the nation wholeheartedly agree about the significance of reaching out to non-traditional “customers” and building positive relationships with them.

Although not exhaustive, data collection for this research provided significant insight into the issue of COP application to conservation law enforcement from the FWC officer’s perspective and that of the managers of other agencies. This research did not, however, collect opinions from the public, and little research has been located which can provide information from the non-law enforcement perspective. Additional research should be conducted to explore public opinions and attitudes about the COP-related efforts of

conservation law enforcement agencies to evaluate their effectiveness, especially among non-traditional customers.

With these findings in mind, perhaps the broad concept of community-oriented policing has limited application to conservation law enforcement agencies. Challenges arise relating how to define “community” in the context of statewide jurisdiction and very large areas of responsibility for officers. The research data clearly points to broadening the constituent base and becoming a known asset to all state residents and visitors as the critical needs and desires of this profession. One may very well conclude that the simple concept of “outreach,” which may for this purpose be defined as “befriending and building positive relationships with the public,” should become a priority goal for the conservation law enforcement profession.

To conclude that the conservation law enforcement profession should adopt outreach as a priority instead of traditional COP philosophy in no way infers that crime prevention and problem solving are of little importance. In fact, should strong positive relationships with the entire state population become a dominant force within this profession, information about resource-related violations would likely increase dramatically simply because more people would know who to contact when they encountered these violations or may avoid inadvertently violating the laws themselves since they are better informed. Increased dialogue between officers and the public would also foster opportunities to solve problems in the early stages, may help build a larger base of “traditional” customers as more people are introduced to conservation law enforcement, and should result in greater opportunities for recruitment of new officers. There is high likelihood that effective outreach efforts would provide a winning solution for all involved.

Identifying a solution to the agency visibility and relationship-building challenges is merely the first step in a lengthy process. Both officers and the public become discontent watching new programs come and go. As an officer from Savannah Police Department stated when describing the concerns of youth involved in their federally funded COP programs, “when the money runs out, where are you, and that’s what most citizens are scared of, and the ones that have been in Savannah for a while have seen many programs come and go.” (Coles, n.d.) Managers at all levels must first agree and commit to keeping such an effort alive. One sergeant with the Savannah Police Department explained the process well when he said:

I think what turns most of us around is just seeing it done...you kind of go through phases. Everybody is resistant to change-that’s natural...and gradually you resign yourself to it ‘cause it’s there, and it’s not going away and then ultimately you accept it once you start doing it. What is important...is having supervisors that have bought into it very enthusiastically...

If there is no long-term commitment to do so, it is best to just continue doing things the way they are being done and expect the usual results. But if all ranks of a conservation law enforcement agency committed to building public trust, increasing agency visibility, solving local problems at the early stages, and

gaining widespread public support, a simple day-to-day outreach effort between officers and the general public, such as the field experiment conducted as a part of this research, can provide a sound basis for reaching these goals.

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Appendix 1



Appendix 2

FWC Officer Survey – Public Interaction and Community-Oriented Policing

It will take approximately fifteen minutes to complete the following questions, and I would like to say thank you in advance for helping with this project. Your participation will help the Division of Law Enforcement identify ways we may better inform the public about who we are and the vital services we provide. Your individual responses will be kept confidential.

Please respond to each of the following statements by selecting the response that best identifies whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
All FWC officers should be involved in activities related to the Division's COP philosophy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being more lenient with violators is an important part of our COP philosophy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruiters, public information personnel, and a few specialized officers should be tasked with most of the efforts related to improving agency visibility.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At the field level, conducting talks for school classes is the primary COP activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applying the COP philosophy will help build positive relationships between FWC and the people we serve.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Each FWC law enforcement officer has a responsibility to improve the Division's visibility and standing among the public.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Division's "customers" should only be those who boat, fish, and hunt in Florida.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Division of Law Enforcement is doing an adequate job of informing the public about who we are and what we do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A high percentage of FWC officers are actively engaged in efforts that build our public image.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A positive public image is critical to the long-term well being of the Division.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Division's COP efforts should also strive to build positive relationships with non-traditional "customers."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide a one-sentence description of the two most recent times you applied the Division's COP philosophy in your work.

1.

2.

Briefly list up to two suggestion(s) about how we may better inform the public about who we are and the vital services we provide.

1.

2.

How many years of law enforcement service do you have with our agency?

☐ 5 or less ☐ 6 to less than 10 ☐ 10 to less than 15 ☐ 15 to less than 20 ☐ 20 +

If you were shown a simple step you could take to improve FWC and Division of Law Enforcement visibility, build our public image, and generate positive relationships with the public, would you be interested in participating in a test project?

Yes

No

If "yes," then please provide your name and best contact information. Your previous individual responses will remain confidential.

Name:

Contact info (telephone number, email address, etc.):

Appendix 3

FWC Community Oriented Policing Survey for Other States

1. Does your agency have a policy or directive related to Community-Oriented Policing (COP)?

Yes No

2. If “yes,” please send the policy or an appropriate excerpt from the policy/directive.

3. How does your agency apply COP principles?

- ☐ Public Information Officers (PIOs)
- ☐ Active contact with the media
- ☐ All officers to actively build positive relationships with the public
- ☐ Officer leniency when dealing with violations
- ☐ Systematic reporting and record-keeping of COP activities
- ☐ Informally with little or no reporting
- ☐ Other _____

4. Is your agency facing a downward trend in traditional users?

Yes No

5. Is your agency actively reaching out to non-traditional users?

Yes No

6. If “yes,” in what way are you reaching out and to whom?

7. How do you rank the importance of improved agency visibility and the building of positive relationships with the public?

Very High High Somewhat High Low Not Important
Importance Importance Importance Importance

8. Do you feel that your organization should increase its efforts to improve agency visibility and the building of positive relationships with the public?

Yes No

Results Summary

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[Add Filter...](#)
Total: 142

Visible: 142

1. Instructions:

1. All FWC officers should be involved in activities related to the Division's COP philosophy.

	Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree	20%	28
Agree	51.4%	72
Neutral	17.1%	24
Disagree	10%	14
Strongly Disagree	1.4%	2
Total Respondents		140
(skipped this question)		2

2. Being more lenient with violators is an important part of our COP philosophy.






	Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree	0.7%	1
Agree	14.8%	21
Neutral	21.8%	31
Disagree	39.4%	56
Strongly Disagree	23.2%	33
Total Respondents		142
(skipped this question)		0

3. Recruiters, public information personnel, and a few specialized officers should be tasked with most of the efforts related to improving agency visibility.






	Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree	12.9%	18
Agree	30%	42
Neutral	12.9%	18
Disagree	30%	42

Strongly Disagree		14.3%	20
Total Respondents			140
(skipped this question)			2






4. At the field level, conducting talks for school classes is the primary COP activity.

		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		4.9%	7
Agree		31.7%	45
Neutral		25.4%	36
Disagree		32.4%	46
Strongly Disagree		5.6%	8
Total Respondents			142
(skipped this question)			0

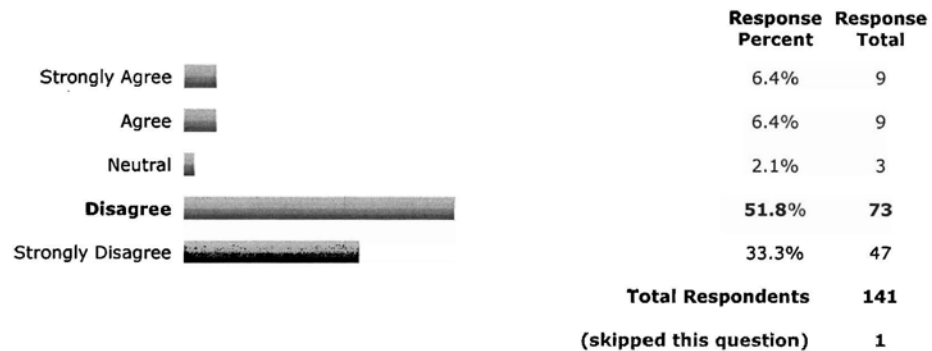
5. Applying the COP philosophy will help build positive relationships between FWC and the people we serve.

		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		18.4%	26
Agree		61%	86
Neutral		12.8%	18
Disagree		5.7%	8
Strongly Disagree		2.1%	3
Total Respondents			141
(skipped this question)			1

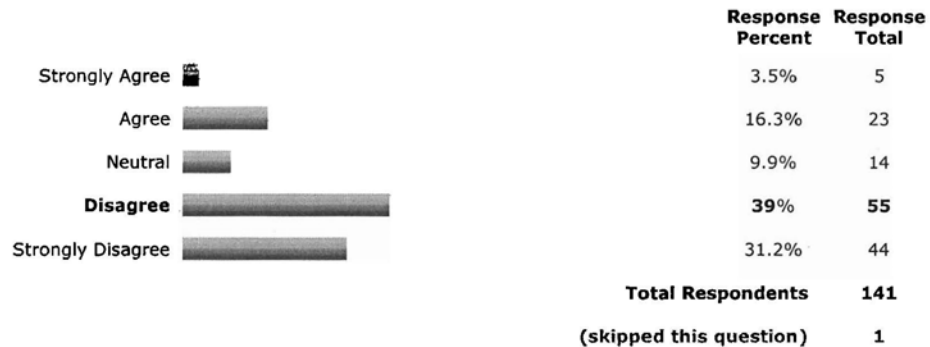
6. Each FWC law enforcement officer has a responsibility to improve the Division's visibility and standing among the public.

		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		51.1%	72
Agree		41.8%	59
Neutral		3.5%	5
Disagree		2.8%	4
Strongly Disagree		0.7%	1
Total Respondents			141
(skipped this question)			1

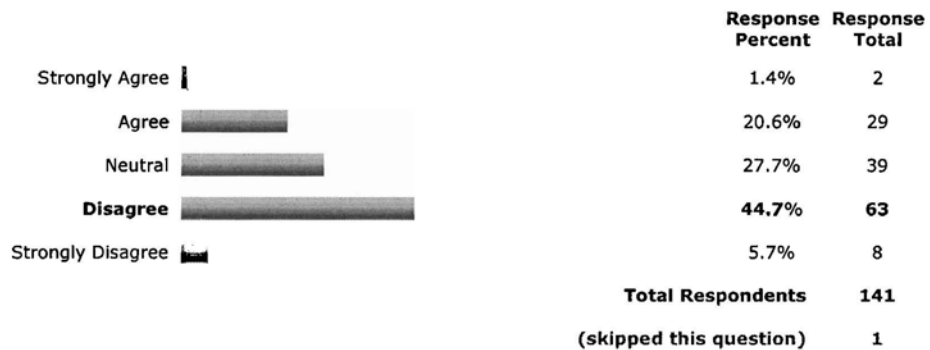
7. The Division's "customers" should only be those who boat, fish and hunt in Florida.



8. The Division of Law Enforcement is doing an adequate job of informing the public about who we are and what we do.



9. A high percentage of FWC officers are actively engaged in efforts that build our public image.







10. A positive public image is critical to the long-term well-being of the Division.



Neutral		2.1%	3
Disagree		2.8%	4
Strongly Disagree		2.8%	4
Total Respondents			141
(skipped this question)			1

2. Untitled Page

11. The Division's COP efforts should also strive to build positive relationships with non-traditional "customers."

		Response Percent	Response Total
Strongly Agree		16.8%	21
Agree		68%	85
Neutral		12.8%	16
Disagree		2.4%	3
Strongly Disagree		0%	0
Total Respondents			125
(skipped this question)			17

12. Please provide a one-sentence description of the two most recent times you applied the Division's COP philosophy in your work.

View	Total Respondents	88
	(skipped this question)	54

13. Briefly list up to two suggestion(s) about how we may better inform the public about who we are and the vital services we provide.



View	Total Respondents	96
	(skipped this question)	46

14. How many years of law enforcement service do you have with our agency?

		Response Percent	Response Total
5 or less		26.6%	33
6 to <10		20.2%	25
10 to <15		12.1%	15
15 to <20		12.1%	15
20+		29%	36
Total Respondents			124

(skipped this question) 18

15. If you were shown a simple step you could take to improve FWC and Division of Law Enforcement visibility, build our public image, and generate positive relationships with the public, would you be interested in participating in a test project?

	Response Percent	Response Total
Yes 	64.2%	77
No 	35.8%	43
Total Respondents		120
(skipped this question)		22

16. If "yes", then please provide your name and your best contact telephone number(s) and email address(es). Your previous individual responses will remain confidential.

[View](#) **Total Respondents** 66
(skipped this question) 76

Open-Ended Results Detail

<< Back Export...

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Displaying 1 - 88 of 88 Go

Please provide a one-sentence description of the two most recent times you applied the Division's COP philosophy in your work.

1. I have not been told about the cops philosophy
2. Volunteer work at Ocala Adventure Youth Camp & last boating holiday
3. regular land owner contacts and off duty emploment as well the rare traffic enforcement when public is curious as to who we are and what we do.
4. Recruiting events and public law enforcement gatherings.
5. Talked to elementary school children. Talked to local civic club.
6. Informing the public on a daily basis about rule changes and the reasons for the changes.
7. School talk related to alligators and hunter education talk related to laws and ethics.
8. Met with and trained State Attorneys on FWC issues Attended neighborhood meeting refference enforcing slow speed zones
9. Land-owner contacts White-tail expo
10. I volunteered at an agency kid's fishing clinic and assisted the PIO for the SEA with Sportsman's Season by talking to the public about the rules.
11. Meeting with hunting lessees to discuss hunting laws and enforcement of them. Doing the law portin of the Hunter Ed. class
12. Dealing with ATV issues & Dealing with Eco-Tour operators
13. touch a truck. Children and their parents came to touch trucks and i spoke to them about the FWC
14. Passing out bussiness cards with contact information, asking the "costomer" to call if they have questions.
15. Dealing with public in boating safety contacts/boating accident investigation.
16. I may have done it without knowing, mainly because I didn't know we had COP phil. I've gone in schools for career days and spoke at boating clubs and given breifings boating safety classes.
17. I assisted answering questions at the okeechobee job fair last spring and meet with lease holders at lykes brothers this summer.
18. By actively participating in community activities and strictly enforcing hunting and fishing regulations, we project an image of confidence that we believe in the regulations that we have in place and are dedicated to the protection of fish and wildlife in this state.
19. Hunter Safety Programs, Kids Fishing Clinic
20. spend some time and listen to concerned fishermen relay things they are seeing, give out business cards to these individuals and relay if an officer is available we will respond to their tips
21. I met with a dive shop owner and spoke to him about the services our agency provides.

- 22. I took time to explain to one individual the law he was in violation of, and to another the permitting process so that they would not be in violation of a state law.
- 23. In Wal-Mart yesterday, I talked to a perspective applicant about our criteria for hiring. A guy I walk with recreationally on weekends asked a lot of boating questions which I was happy to answer. Everyone in my neighborhood knows me because I walk dogs twice a day and I talk to everyone. They are all aware that I work for the Commission because they see the marked vehicle and me in uniform.
- 24. scored deer heads and taught laws at hunter ed.
- 25. Talking to kids at schools and at hunter education classes.
- 26. When im in the courthouse and they ask if im here to catch an alligator and i have to explain what we do or just laugh it off. When they call us grouper troopers, game wardens, bird and dog catchers.
- 27. none
- 28. Every time some one asks me "who are you and what do you do". This happens several times a week.
- 29. helped other agency, coach with local kids
- 30. I guess it would be a Hunters Ed class and a fair.
- 31. When contacting landowners and advising them of trespass issues that I found on their land. Utilizing a K-9 to open communication with citizens about what our agency does for them.
- 32. static display at local mall.....career day at a school
- 33. I am not sure what the division COP philosophy is. I know what it means from a General LE perspective, which is what I believe it should be for us.
- 34. Participated in Hunter Education instruction and several public speaking engagements within the past several months.
- 35. I EXPLAINED TO SOME INDIVIDUALS HOW TO NOT GET A BOATING SAFETY TICKET AND HOW TO WORK A SPOT LIGHT AND NOT GET CITED FOR FIREHUNTING.
- 36. hunting Safety Class instruction and School career day presentation
- 37. "on-the-street" encounters and phone call responses at the office
- 38. School visits and planned media blitz for special detail.
- 39. Illegal deer case worked with assistance from landowner due to landowner contacts that were made with him.
- 40. This may be bad but I don't know what the "Cop philosophy" is I am answering the survey using common sense on the questions I can and Neutral on those that refer to the "Cop philosophy"
- 41. Wildlife presentation in the classroom & responding to an Askthe FWC email
- 42. When I meet with a group of Recreational Fisherman. When I speak with a complainant on the Phone about a spicfic area of concern.
- 43. I routinely use our helicopter as a tool to reach out to the public, young and old alike. I recently completed a series of talks to groups from the Sheriff's Youth Ranch, and just last week spoke to a group from the EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association) about the role our agency plays in aviation law enforcement. This was the third time EAA invited me to talk.
- 44. hunter edu class assist with two non profit conservation related organizations
- 45. Talking to elementary school students. Teaching at USCG station.
- 46. Worked with the public and various agencies to remove a sunken vessel from a canal, provided information at an information booth.
- 47. Attended the pre-gator hunt meeting and spoke with customers that were first time hunters and passed out hundreds of management pamphlets about the new ATV requirements.
- 48. I treat the public with respect whenever I encounter them. I go out of my way to answer questions and provide information that they want.

- 49. I helped a woman with a 2 foot alligator she was worried about even though it was no threat to anyone.
- 50. Spent time Talking about issues & laws at local marina. Continue relationships with other agencies (USCG, SO, SAO).
- 51. I helped with a boating safety presentation at a sportman's club meeting.
- 52. At least once a week
- 53. Assisting members of the community following hurricane, assisting elderly commercial fisherman with completing SPL applications.
- 54. Just about everyday someone I see at a gas station blames FWC for the lack of fish being caught. I spend the time with the person explaining it is the habitat of the lake and not FWC to blame.
- 55. I went to career day and talked with students.
- 56. I stopped the other day to meet a business person and offer our assistance; later that day I spoke to a teacher and discussed how we could help her school children.
- 57. Hunter safety classes and career days at schools are good opportunities to apply the COP philosophy, because young people tend to receive information better and more open minded than adults.
- 58. with local airboaters to improve image and give attention to what they are doing for the river. Explaining BUI and safety equipment laws to local boating organizations to help them police among themselves before it becomes an issue for FWC
- 59. Discussion of DLE mission and philosophy with potential recruits and new hires.
- 60. Meeting with a hunt group and a school talk
- 61. Informing the public of current events that are division related whether on or off duty.
- 62. Answer questions from the public about LE duties at fishing tournament.
- 63. Teaching law at hunter safety classes & speaking at local hunting & fishing organizations & attending DU & Wild Turkey banquets in the public speaking area I let the audience know of my 30 plus years to community.
- 64. When enforcing changes in law as it applied to measuring of saltwater fish. Enforcing the marine mammal protection act in relation to dolphin feeding.
- 65. talking to fishing groups, and by being friendly to the public
- 66. I apply the COP philosophy every time I meet a landowner, marina worker, fisherman, hunter, or boater.
- 67. Hunter ed class, patrolling in rural area, meeting several land owners, hunt club cook out talking about trespass issues, public speaking with power squadron club (laws. etc.)
- 68. From the basics of getting out of my truck and giving a stick on badge to a little girl who was waving to me to walking the docks and talking with the recreational and commercial fishers.
- 69. While talking with members of the public, who knew nothing of what we do. In a non hunting or fishing environment. This occurs on a regular basis.
- 70. Provided presentations to homeowners groups, boy scouts, hunting oriented trade show
- 71. static displays at public venues and working with local media
- 72. dealing with disabled motorist
- 73. Meeting land owners and making contacts in the community. Meeting hunt club members and exchange information.
- 74. Everytime I conclude a stop I ask my "customers" if they have any questions, comments, concerns or anything they have seen.....it gives them a chance to share their issues.
- 75. Meeting with Land owners and airboat clubs about various issues, concerns.
- 76. NA
- 77. Visiting the commercial fishhouse/docks to discuss new regs and ongoing violations by repeat offenders, also

frequently visiting PWC liveries to discuss ways to keep renters safe after they leave the dock.

- 78.** I spoke to a group of kids at an elementary school Speak to individuals at fishing piers and boat ramps often.
- 79.** providing education and positive rapport with citizens (both residents and non residents) on an everyday basis
- 80.** Assisting a disabled motorist. employee was in a unmarked vehicle.
- 81.** Every time I wear the uniform I try my best to do positive agency PR.
- 82.** Interaction with users at a local marina
- 83.** Talking to children at my daughters school.
- 84.** I am not real sure what the cop philosophy is so this is hard to answer
- 85.** I provided manatee regulatory zone enforcement information to new boaters not familiar with regulatory signs.
- 86.** Just by talking to the public in the field and doing K-9 Demos.
- 87.** Responding to an alligator complaint and able to talk to a group of approx. 30 people about safety and laws pertaining to alligators. Special Operations Group activation at the Chassahowitzka WMA detail w/ media relations.
- 88.** I haven't seen the Division's COP philosophy. I assume it follows most models but I'm not sure.

Page Size: Show 100 per page

Displaying 1 - 88 of 88

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<< Back Export...

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Total: 142

Visible: 142

Page Size: Show 100 per page

Displaying 1 - 96 of 96 Go

Briefly list up to two suggestion(s) about how we may better inform the public about who we are and the vital services we provide.

1. Take the time to talk to the public and answer there questions. Have Supervisors and officers (together) in a county meet & greet with key service clubs & organizations, elected officials, business leaders. Meet & greet with us and key user groups with judges state attorneys, ASA's, public defenders,etc. Allow user groups to impress upon these key figures the importance of protecting our resources and how it impacts their home county.
2. Better positive advertisement & better PIO's
3. Become more visible. Stop trying to hide in the background. Top administrators need to wear the uniform more often. And use the word and act like POLICE.
4. Have postings of our reuglations and laws we enforce at public places and fishing piers.
5. Local officer involvement in radio/TV. More public speaking. Assign this to officers who enjoy it.
6. Step up our involvement in community activities. Such as fairs , fishing tournaments , school outings etc.
7. attend boat shows, hunting seminars and fishing events.
8. Media- You pay for what you get. Internally, encourage sworn officers to educate public instead of pressuring officers for stats on citations. Ownership of your area!! Currently officers are assigned a shift Lt., who covers an area that is 90 miles long. Local officers do not get to work with other local Officers because those officers are assigned to a different shift Lt. It is impossible to use the COPS philosophy under the current "Shift" squads. Ownership in your area and team building. Have a local Lt. with local officers implement the COPS philosophy. A Lt. does not need to be 10-8 when all of his people are 10-8. They need to work together as a team to handle all aspects of our job in their area.
9. More mainstream media coverage. Hill version of E-Force.
10. Utilize assigned, uniformed officers as public information officers. Train these officers in the art of media relations, basic public relations, and speaking on camera and radio.
11. I would like to see the word "police" on our uniforms, vehicles, and vessels in order to better inform the public of our responsibilities and arrest powers. I would also like to see increased positive media coverage showing all facets of our agency.
12. Be present at all county and state functions & also assist local sheriff dept.
13. Upper command needs to do this
14. It's not the field officers responsibility. We are here to do law enforcement. Between paperwork and waving the flag there is not much time to do what were supposed to do. Thats why no one knows who we are.
15. How about a TV comercial/adds in saltwater, game and fish magazines for boating saftey/BUI enforcement. Show officers hooking up the violator. standardizd markings on offshore,smallboats and trucks. examples: Some trucks are green, gold, or silver. Some are marked "Law Enforcement." Some have "State Law Enforcement." All the Offshore boats have a different paint sceem from the small boats They should be the same. Also, Officers are State Law Enforcement Officers, NOT just Game Wardens

16. Better PR through the media. Public information through this very important conduit to the public still needs improvement through the Divisions PIO's and non-LE PIO's. Division should have at least one sworn PIO in each region, with primarily, that sole responsibility.
17. Prime time T.V. on major channels ie News 13 Just as a safety thing like "you pick it, safety gaer or ticket." ADVERTISE ON SOMETHING EVERYBODY CAN SEE. DUH..... Get rid of the critters on the doors of our patrol vehicles. No other agency has the door decal on their shoulder patches. It's ugly.
18. Continue to speak at public functions and field officers making more contacts while patrolling.
19. More press releases on resource cases and life saving (search and rescue) efforts.
20. Commercials & More media coverage
21. TV commercials / hammer political figures to also relay this information to their constituents
22. We need statewide details accompanied by press conferences. We need to get involved in joint operations with other agencies. These details should adress major public safety issues (Ex. BUI)
23. 1)Boater ed classes incorporated into the driver's ed class at the high schools.
24. Our members should be more involved in their communities - business groups, citizen groups, even recreational groups (i.e. Kiwanis, Optimists, Big Brothers & Sisters, fundraising groups for good causes, bike clubs, walking groups, etc. as long as the groups do not have military tendencies like PETA or are not politically motivated) Help officers to overcome fear and discomfort in dealing with the press
25. listings in phone books
26. communicating to the public through local radio programs. newspaper
27. Try hiring a good officer to speak infront of the public who actually knows what is going on and knows something about law enforcement instead of a non law enforcemtn PIO. Have the commanders stop leading the officers on about equipment, incentive pay and raises..when they know for a fact they cant do it...i.e. rifles and laptops
28. Television. Also, Districts should encourage large details routinely that target marine and inland problem areas in "full force" to imprint our effort and dedication.
29. newspaper articles, ride alongs with public officials
30. More road side signs and T.V. commercials. Advertise!!! It is plain to me that because we do not see the motoring public as much as other agencies, we get left out in the cold by the state legislative body.
31. TV comercials reach both users and non users. They provide knowledge to both. Most fishing and hunting users are aware of what we do, most non users have no idea of what we do and what police powers we have. Shock comercials can be very informative (such as bui, boat accidents, no pfd's etc. These type of comercials are very memorable.
32. bill boards, tv, radio talk time, talking to and having a relationship with your local agencies
33. More TV air time and in print News Paper
34. Get the local newspapers to run human interest stories on our officers, the officers can talk about cases or activity (boat accidents, major cases, etc.). This would create interest in our agency and help the public get to know our officers. PSA's on major networks providing information that we want to get out to the public: boating safety, gopher tort. protections, alligator awareness, manatee awareness, etc... it would be worth every dime that it would cost.
35. fund a FULL TIME PR officer for each region whose job is solely PR work. continue with local officers efforts.
36. This survey is scarey. Who are "Non traditional" customers?
37. Television and in print-local newspapers, sporting magazines, etc.
38. BILLBOARDS AND COMMERCIALS.
39. Do some commercials showing what we did in Miss. with our hurricane response teams. It could be tied to recruitment activities. The U.S. military uses them effectively for recruitment. Secondly, we need to stress the importance of reaching out to children or the young people of this state. How many of us had a good encounter with a GFC or FMP Officer as a child or teenager and decided we want to grow up and do that

job. we should be promoting "good" encounters with FWC Officers every time we have an opportunity. Kid's fishing days, youth(family) hunts, disability hunts, fishing tournaments, and boat shows are excellent arenas to reach these young people. We need to budget monies for give away items to kids that are caught being safe with a gun, or wearing their PFD's (we did that once, but it was short lived) If we impress on the kids who we are and what we do, they will bring Mom and Dad to that realization! By the way, that DVD about our division is excellent and I plan to show it in future career day presentations. Anytime we have a public appearance that DVD should be running in a loop for all to see.

40. Advertisements in related publications. Create a billboard campaign
41. 1. More TV coverage - promotional ads 2. More media ride alongs in all vehicles, vessels, and aircraft during details
42. 1. News! Involve the news media of more of our law enforcement (Marine, Game, Fish and traditional Law Enforcement). Instead of waiting for an alligator to attack or something bad to happen show the positive things we do as well. 2. More talks at schools elementary through high school as well as working some traditional high publicized law enforcement activities. (special events like Super Bowl, which we have been but also maybe DUI check points too-only to show those non hunters, fishers and boaters that we are law enforcement officers to-not just "Park Rangers".
43. Occasional billboards placed in urban areas & high visibility travel lanes (I75, I10, I4). Some boards showing what we do for consumptive users; other boards showing what we do for non-consumptive users.
44. Public Service announcements. and/or use the publications we already have Saltwater/Freshwater fishing, and Hunting Reg.add a page or two about us. Contact Magazines such as Florida Sportsman, Saltwater fishing, etc. try to place articles or recruiting advertisements in these. Progressive Outside the box mindset guys/gals.
45. Billboards Commercials
46. (1) As much as possible, for any legitimate reason, have our officers and equipment (pictures) in the newspaper. (2) Continue with the public speaking events, static displays, PSAs, etc. I've seen a huge improvement in the last 27 years, but it's still rare to encounter someone who can accurately state the name of our agency.
47. TV and radio ads
48. Place the word "POLICE" on our uniforms and vehicles. Change our agency name to reflect an LE agency.
49. WE AS OFFICERS HAVE TO HAVE CONTACT WITH THE EVERYDAY PUBLIC WITHOUT THEM FEELING AS IF THEY ARE BEING DRILLED, INTERVIEWED, OR JUST FEELING UNCOMFORTABLE WITH OUR PRESENCE. I THINK THAT WE MUST LIVE IN THE COMMUNITY AND GET TO KNOW THE PEOPLE THAT WE WORK AROUND EVERY DAY. IF THE ONLY TIME THE COMMUNITY SEE'S AN OFFICER IS ON DUTY, THEN THERE WILL NEVER BE ANY KIND OF RAPPORT, OTHER THAN OFFICER/CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP. I KNOW THIS IS NOT A POPULAR SUBJECT IN OUR AGENCY. A LOT OF OFFICERS LIKE WORKING IN ONE AREA AND LIVING IN ANOTHER. I KNOW THIS IS TRUE BECAUSE I HAVE HEARD SEVERAL OFFICERS MAKE THIS STATEMENT. I GUESS WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY IS YOU CAN'T TALK TO OR TELL PEOPLE WHAT KIND OF SERVICES WE PROVIDE UNTIL THEY FEEL COMFORTABLE LISTENING TO WHAT WE'RE GOING TO SAY AND NOT WHAT THEY ARE AFRAID WE'RE GOING TO SAY. (HOPE THIS MAKES SENSE.)
50. 1. Television commercials 2. More television shows like "E-Force"
51. Public service announcements during boating safety holidays and special enforcement (lobster season, hunting season, Columbus Day regatta, etc.) Press releases in all newspapers around the state covering the same.
52. We have a PIO in Tallahassee. Why are we never in the news other than when we hear about how we aren't getting a raise? The public does not even know what FWC is or what we do. The PIO's should have relationships at various news outlets (papers, magazines, tv, etc.) and get out the word about what we do. A simple story in a newspaper after a big case, or a news spot after a big boating weekend.
53. we need more television exposure and credit in the newspapers about things we are doing and cases being made.
54. Training for two/three year Officers, on public relations. Assignment of small geographic areas to Officers, for COP contact during slower hrs. (ie bad weather, other Officers working)The Officer would be responsible for non emg. calls (DVs, vessel inspections, general information request) for service within their COP area. Dispatch via CAD would put these calls on hold until the officer goes 10-8.

55. News Stories

- 56.** Fix the *FWC phone number Have more than just a select few officers take the lead on public speaking Many officers feel that they already do to much for the money they make, it will not be easy to get them to be involved with any additional input.
- 57.** It's a matter of professionalism and practicing the COP philosophy while in daily contact with the public and taking an interest in thier problems and concerns. This requires that we be out there. There certainly is a time for covert patrol and surviellance. There is also a time for high profile patrol and the summer months is for the most part among those times especially on the water. We do not have adaqueate fuel and maintenance money to be out there doing a proper job. In a recent area meeting it was clearly shown that there is not funding available to meet our stated water patrol objective. Just being in a boat logging hours is not enough. We need to be actively patrolling. The public is taking notice!! We will never convince the public about what a great outfit we are when it is becomming commonly known that we do not have that funding to properly do the job.
- 58.** Replace the "Excepts and Unless" with "Always and Never" in the Rules and Regulations.
- 59.** 1) public image such as awareness as to who we are and what we do. 2) Better uniforms so we don't look like "Park Rangers"
- 60.** 1. Train our officers on how to handle the media. Our PIO's and regional media folks sure could use the help. 2. Get involved with the schools.
- 61.** Appoint employees with good communication skills to meet regularly with people at public events.
- 62.** Take out the all the red tape we have to go through to talk to media and groups. Eliminate GHQ on commenting on what we are doing in areas when they have no idea. For example Boating Waterways will comment on something they have no idea about in the field. The left hand does not know what the right hand is doing
- 63.** State wide PSA program. Formal presentations (professional) to groups (customer and non customer) statewide.
- 64.** Land Owner Contacts
- 65.** By being more visible in the Capital and getting the Sheriff's we help to go to the Legislature with us...
- 66.** Recently, the local Park Patrol was citing people for having animals on a local island. The media and the public was pointing their fingers at our department, accusing us of this unpopular enforcement. I feel our department should have educated the public on this misconception.
- 67.** Everyone I talk to has seen E force and likes the show. However, it only shows a very small part of our services.
- 68.** newspaper articles when good cases are made
- 69.** GIVE US A UNIFORM THAT LOOKS PROFESSIONAL, THAT LOOKS SOMEWHAT LIKE A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.
- 70.** Officers need to be more people person orientated & take time to stop at local marinas, bait shops gun shops & sporting goods stores, and farms to talk to employees & customers while on patrol & to & from patrol. I found out it harder to win trust of farmeers but it can be done they are always afraid of retribution if the assist us or complain about violaatores on their Property. I have lived in community over thirty years & its is hard for me not to make contacts on my day and get asked quetions about the Commission
- 71.** More TV spots statewide other than large markets that are already marketed. Billboards leading into tourist areas on major highways.
- 72.** more media cover on the t.v. and papers
- 73.** 1) An "E-Force" type TV program. 2) College and high school job fairs.
- 74.** more public service announcements, TV commercial showing a boating check, field sobriety test BUI, hunting license check, field sobriety check DUI(poss. of firearm while intoxicated/driving)
- 75.** 1. Allow field Lts. to issue brief press releases. When a news worthy incident happens (boating accident, resource arrest, etc.) the media isn't interested in covering/reporting it days later when the press release is sent out by our PIO's. 2. We need to do what FHP has done so well over the years. WAVE THE FLAG!

- There's not a niche in relation to law enforcement that FHP won't fill. They realize that is the key to survival. You watch a college football game and whose guarding the Florida teams coaches, who drives the Governor around, and who do you think would take over the highly visible mission our SOG teams perform if our agency in the future has questions as "how do the SOG teams fit into boating and resource enforcement". The series E-Force was a great start in showing the public some of what we really do!
- 76.** We need phone numbers listed in the phone books in each county, that are not long distance for the public to call for assistance. We have very little information on hunting and fishing regulations to educate the spanish speaking public. I have been complaining to anyone that would listen, but unfortunately it has fallen on deaf ears.
 - 77.** The division PIO should be more proactive and more involved. We should give the press cameras face time when requested.
 - 78.** T.V. commercials, e-force, q & a call in T.V. shows etc.
 - 79.** more media (newspaper articles, magazines, etc)and cooperative endeavours with other agencies
 - 80.** billboards and commercials, advertize at sporting events.
 - 81.** Allow Officers to work the feild by streamlining paper work. Focus on doing the job and address issues in local communities. Leaders lead, not direct.
 - 82.** -Let us listen for a change and hear what the public has to say instead of us lecturing them. -Ride alongs for the public. I know it can be a liability issue and safety issue but somehow incoporate them in our shifts.
 - 83.** Bring back the emphasis of land owner contacts and encourage officers to meet with user groups on a regular basis. Implement the Volusia Model in all areas to help focus officers on Inland or marine issues instead of spreading officers reponsabilities out.
 - 84.** Local newspapers, Radio/TV
 - 85.** Make drastic improvements to the PIO program/ Officer. Seems all they do in this particular region is pass along contact numbers to set up ride alongs. I have yet to once see our PIO on TV. I am still trying to figure out why she gets 5% with weekends off. We need to work better with the media and take every advantage of getting the UNIFORM on TV.
 - 86.** Seperate us from the biologists so they don't think we are non LEO Seperate the Marine from the wardens so we can get respect again
 - 87.** media, and public education.
 - 88.** Have local officers aggressively utilize media in arrest situations/details when possible. Take the extra time to talk with the public
 - 89.** Better communication with the public at the officer level. Like the "Old Time Game Wardens" were.
 - 90.** TV spots More proactive in non resource/boating enforcement details
 - 91.** PSA referring to boating/hunting/fishing and advising the powers & authority of our Officers.
 - 92.** 1. Hire better quality people that have a genuine concern and interest in RESOURCE LAW ENFORCEMENT so that they can spread that care to the public. 2. Promote people that believe in resource protection and have proved it by their work and not just those that test well.
 - 93.** 1. Full time PIO in every field office, instead of just one assigned to each region. 2. TV public service announcements.
 - 94.** Good profesional attitudes and inform the public when they ask questions.
 - 95.** 1) Brief TV Commercials. 2) Advertise at the movie theatres (AMC, Regal Cinemas etc.. 3) Billboards on our WMA's, we have a great opportunity to advertise on the Babcock Webb WMA (I-75 and HWY 41) By using the term "State Police." People tend to understand what that means. FYI: As you already know, until the pay issue is resolved, the morale in the field is not going to help this issue.
 - 96.** 1) FHP does not describe themselves as the DHSMV Division of Law Enforcement. The term "Patrol" in the name is critical in separating them from other Department employees such as the personnel who oversee the D/L testing. "Patrol" quickly and readily identifies them as State Law Enforcement. "Commission" does not do that. We need to somehow incorporate some term such as "Patrol" into our Division title. Maybe

FWP?? 2) Put a PIO in each office.

Page Size: Show 100 per page

Displaying 1 - 96 of 96

