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This past 2024 ACI Conference in Arlington Virginia covered various topics. One session that was important and applied to all Fish & Wildlife Agencies in the world of R3 world was “Unveiling Key Advancements in Hunting & Shooting Sports R3,” presented by Lance Cherry. Lance Cherry is the Communication and Marketing Manager for the Council to Advance Shooting Sports. Throughout this session, Lance Cherry covered new case studies and tools that R3 professionals in each state can utilize.

Hunting and shooting sports programs are such a key part of Fish & Wildlife agencies all over the country. Council to Advance Shooting Sports takes a deep dive into hunting and shooting sports topics as well as marketing techniques. Council to Advance Shooting Sports also shared the statics of hunting license sales in participating states which held relatively steady in 2023, with over 80% of participating states. Reporting a 5% or less change from 2022. Throughout the years with this study Council to Advance Shooting Sports has realized the dip in approval of hunting and the change in hunting license sales. R3 is a statewide initiative so each person in each agency plays a crucial role in R3.

Council to Advance Shooting Sports conducted a new case study called “Americans’ Attitudes Towards Hunting and Shooting 2024.” This case study asked questions to determine the attitudes toward hunting and shooting. This showed the drop in disapproval of hunting. In the 2023 results, it was concluded that there was a drop in the disapproval towards hunting. This was the first drop in hunting approval since 2015. Throughout the study, it was also concluded that 85% agree that it is okay for people to go sports shooting if they do so legally and in accordance with laws and regulations. Overall observations in the “Americans’ Attitude towards Hunting & Shooting Sports” concluded that utilitarian motivations still rank higher with hunting for food, management, and protecting humans. While getting into the shooting is for self-defense, competition, and hunting.

Every two weeks, the Council to Advance Shooting Sports sends out new case studies just like “Americans’ Attitudes Towards Hunting and Shooting 2024,” and the case studies are located on the National R3 Community and National R3 Clearing House. Council to Advance Shooting Sports are actively looking for new case studies. There are currently 18 case studies that are published.

Lance Cherry highlighted two online platforms called R3 Community and the National R3 Clearing House. Both platforms allow R3 professionals to ask questions and get real-time responses from their peers as well as having access to different R3 resources such as the case studies that were mentioned above. On the R3 Community, there is also a live dashboard that other states can use as a comparison across states. The R3 Clearing House is an online platform where states can have access to over 14,827 photos involving activities from hunting, shooting, and boating to use for marketing campaigns.