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MAT delivers services in three program areas: State-focused leadership development, the National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI), and consulting services. In 2008, MAT had significant accomplishments in each program area. Our online courses continued to grow in popularity, and the NCLI continued to gain extraordinary recognition for the program quality and results from the Fellows completing the program. From our state agency clients a high demand continued for our consulting services.

The National Conservation Leadership Institute started its third cohort of Fellows in fall 2008. Since program inception, MAT has served as the Institute’s staff and has been instrumental in the program’s success. There are now 104 NCLI Fellows and alumni, and as the NCLI continues, more NCLI graduates will mean a greater leadership capacity among the conservation community’s incoming upper echelons.

We are most proud that our relatively small six-person team continues to maintain such a high level of productivity. Through a combination of face-to-face and online learning opportunities, MAT’s leadership training services are reaching a large portion of state fish and wildlife agencies. In 2008 our state leadership program course participants received a total of 12,350 contact hours of training, a 56% increase over 2007. Employees from 38 states received MAT training services through 44 workshops and courses. We had 45 consulting projects serving 16 states directly; 5 of our consulting projects were of regional or national scope directly benefiting multiple states.

MAT continually searches for ways to deliver our programs more effectively, and in 2008 we continued to grow our National Faculty program to help us deliver our online leadership courses more broadly. MAT certifies and mentors the National Faculty before they instruct our online courses, and MAT now has five active members of the National Faculty.

In 2007 we saw a spike in interest in workforce planning among state fish and wildlife agencies, and workforce planning became a principle focus for our consulting services. In July 2008, MAT conducted a national workforce planning workshop at the National Conservation Training Center. MAT continued to work directly with state agency clients to help them identify key positions and strategies to keep their agencies moving forward in the face of high retirement rates.
Hard Economic Times – What it takes to survive

Again, we are in the throws of economic hard times that many compare with the Great Depression. Most experts forecast the current economic situation to last for one to two more years at least! We see the impacts on state fish and wildlife agencies in many ways including shrinking budgets, layoffs, inability to fill vacancies, and travel restrictions.

An exacerbating factor is that now many of our agency leaders are retiring and the exodus of Baby Boomers is taking with it their leadership skills and experience as well as a wealth of institutional memory. Add to this the fact that economic crisis is often dealt with by cutting the travel and training budgets just when preparing the remaining leaders and developing new leaders is most critical.

The normal human tendency is to hunker down and wait for the turmoil to pass. This is not leadership and may result in others in state government making strategic decisions for your agency that may negatively affect its future. Boldness is required but boldness alone is not enough, it takes leadership knowledge and finely honed leadership skills to deal effectively with hard times.

Just as FDR exhibited strong leadership in the 1930’s – so can state fish and wildlife agencies, and not just at the Director’s level, but at all levels. Do your agency leaders have the leadership capacity to handle downsizing and make the best decisions on how to restructure? Do they know how to maintain morale and commitment in these trying times? Do they know how to use these challenging times to achieve agency redirection that may have been needed but difficult to implement when things were “business as usual?” Can they see the big picture and look ahead strategically, or do they just focus on getting through this budget cycle and hope things will improve?

In 2008 MAT contributed to helping states begin to deal with hard times:

- Conducted a national workforce planning workshop to help states deal with the exodus of Baby Boomers. This workshop was attended by teams of 2–6 people from ten different states.
- Taught six different online leadership courses each quarter (total of 24) for open enrollment by state fish and wildlife employees to increase their leadership skills. Approximately 280 state fish and wildlife agency employees participated in these online courses.
- Went to 6 different states and taught 17 face-to-face leadership courses for state fish and wildlife agency employees. Approximately 550 state fish and wildlife agency employees participated in these face-to-face leadership workshops.
- Maintained a database to keep track of those who completed MAT leadership courses and those who take enough courses to earn a certificate in the Conservation Leadership Program of Study (CLPS) sponsored by MAT.
- Provided train-the-trainer components built into MAT’s online and face-to-face leadership courses so that states could take the MAT materials and teach the courses themselves without dependence on MAT staff.
- Consulted with eight states on leadership program development and/or workforce planning strategies.
- Conducted the world-class National Conservation Leadership Institute which has had 104 Fellows participate as of 2008. This group of top leaders for conservation now has the knowledge, skills, abilities, trust networks, and common leadership terminology to better address major conservation issues nationwide.
Using the five point leadership model outlined by Kouzes and Posner in their classic book, *Leadership Challenge*, gives us a basis for structuring potential actions.

1. **Model the Way**— Directors, division administrators, bureau chiefs and others in leadership roles must model the way their agency will respond to crisis.

*MAT* provides insights for modeling through its online courses such as “Going from Good to Great”, and its face-to-face course on “Emotional Intelligence”. This latter course deals with connecting employees and communicating at the gut level as well as the intellectual level.

2. **Inspire A Shared Vision**— A shared vision is a tool to help align everyone’s efforts in dealing with crisis. Without vision, the organization degenerates into scattered activities with varied and sometimes opposing purposes.

*MAT* provides an online leadership course entitled “Visionary Leadership” which addresses how vision can be used effectively and covers the common components of successful visioning.

3. **Challenge The Process**— Using the same old processes and procedures will no longer suffice in a crisis. This is where boldness is needed. Boldness cannot be blind. The secret to success is to only take “smart risks”.

*MAT* provides an online course entitled “The Adaptive Leader” which addresses how to take smart risks, pitfalls to avoid, as well as leadership actions to take whether in a position of authority or not. This course builds on the works of such renowned experts as Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government’s Ron Heifetz and Marty Linsky.

4. **Enable Others To Act**— No one can do all that it takes to address crisis alone. It requires the cooperative efforts of your whole organization. Just telling people to do it differently is not enough. Much more is needed.

*MAT* provides an online course entitled “Power” that teaches three kinds of power and when to most effectively use each. The course also delves into the most effective ways to use power. In addition, *MAT* provides another course entitled “Secrets of Agency Assessment and Development”. This course addresses how to adjust and align all the major components of an organization to get the desired results and allow full empowerment.

5. **Encourage The Heart**— Creating enthusiasm for a shared vision, getting buy-in from the “troops”, and generating commitment to doing things in a new way are all emotional tasks! Employees provide a set of hands to work, but they also provide a “heart” with emotions that, if properly harnessed, can lead to great leaps in agency effectiveness even when addressing crisis.

*MAT*’s face-to-face course, entitled “Emotional Intelligence” is based on the works of award-winning author Daniel Goleman. In addition, *MAT* provides a face-to-face course entitled “People, Problems, and Politics” which addresses how to bring your publics along with you when making major changes in a public agency. *MAT* also provides a face-to-face course entitled “Mastering Agency Change” that is based on the works of renowned change expert, John Kotter.

In addition, *MAT* provides consulting help (at no cost) for state fish and wildlife agencies. *MAT* consulting can bring to bear the experiences of other states in dealing with critical events in this downturn of the economy. Perhaps one of the most critical offerings is also the National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI) which provides leadership training and skill development opportunities to 36 Fellows each year. If your leaders are struggling with the economic downturn in today’s economy and are unsure how to guide the agency through this crisis, participation in the NCLI is one way to help them.

The Management Assistance Team is an AFWA component dedicated exclusively to assisting state fish and wildlife agencies. Feel free to contact us at any time.
Launched in 2007, the Conservation Leadership Program of Study (CLPS) continued in 2008 to be a highly successful program providing a state-of-the-art leadership development experience—both on an individual and state level. The CLPS is a leadership development curriculum developed from the perspective of fish and wildlife conservation and delivered through online and face-to-face courses.

One of the major strengths of this program is its scalability. States may choose to adopt this program in its entirety, use portions to compliment an existing state program, and for those states without a program in place, the CLPS offers employees access to an in-depth leadership development program they can pursue on their own.

Currently there are 41 professionals enrolled in the CLPS program representing 20 states. Five participants are in the last phase of the curriculum and working on their final projects—soon to be the first graduates of the Conservation Leadership Program of Study!

Jason DeCoskey, a Law Enforcement officer with the Pennsylvania Game Commission, stated “The biggest thing I am learning in the CLPS program is that I don’t have to be the one to come up with answers all the time. I can be the person helping the group to work together for answers.”

Similarly, Stormi Johnson, with the Information & Education Division of the Arizona Game and Fish Department, had this to say about her experience with the CLPS...

“Participation in the Conservation Leadership Program of Study has provided a cost effective method for my agency to help with my continued leadership education. Personally and professionally, participation in the program helped to broaden the way I think about things and to experience greater confidence in my work with both internal and external contacts. I have learned not only about myself and the leadership skills I already possessed but to expand on new skills. I have and will continue to refer my colleagues to check into the program.”

The Management Assistance Team would like to applaud those individuals near completion of the CLPS, offer continued encouragement to those currently enrolled, and welcome new and future participants.

To find out more visit: www.matteam.org
Virtual Campus

Leadership development, all the time, from anywhere — creating a learning environment with such a high level of access is to say the least, an extraordinary challenge.

MAT delivering that level of service with a relatively small staff to all 50 states—now that's an accomplishment.

In our experience, we have found that fish and wildlife personnel are passionate about increasing their leadership capability and at the same time they are very busy. How do they take on the challenge of increasing their leadership capacity while working full-time and leading their lives?

The traditional professional development model focused on workshops: employees would often have to travel to a central location and spend time away from the field to take courses. The costs were numerous and often included hotels, lodging, transportation, and a block of time dedicated to taking the course.

In 2006 MAT launched an online learning program for working fish and wildlife professionals that focused on leadership development. The online courses offered by MAT have opened new doors to our clients, and we are proud of the response to this program.

MAT uses online learning approaches that are now standard at colleges and universities across North America: asynchronous, online learning. Learners work on their schedule, and there are no set meeting times. All the learner needs is an Internet connection and a word processor. Our courses are a learning revolution replacing older distance learning technologies like CD-ROMs.

While there are no set meeting times, the courses are highly interactive through discussion boards. The courses are instructor led and participants are required to “voice” their experiences by posting their learning for the entire class to read. Unlike in a classroom, everyone has a voice, and in fact, must participate to successfully complete the course requirements.
MAT delivers services in three program areas: State-focused leadership development through workshops and online courses, the National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI), and consulting services. In 2008, MAT had significant accomplishments in each program area. Our online courses continue to grow in popularity, and the NCLI continued to gain extraordinary recognition for the program quality and results from Fellows completing the program. From our state agency clients a high demand continued for our consulting services.
**Consulting**

45 Consultations in 2008

16 States received individual consulting services (some states received multiple consultations)

12 Consulting projects benefited all states

**Consultation examples:**

- Began a comprehensive agency review to be completed in 2009 and at no cost to the agency (Estimated cost would be at least $50,000 if done by a private vendor)
- Analyzed problem-solving plans and political situations for one state and recommended against a $50,000 effort that would require specific political circumstances in order to have a good chance to succeed
- Made recommendations on first steps in workforce planning specific to one state's circumstances
- Conducted one-day event for one section of a state F&W agency to revisit their mission and direction in light of changes within that state's economics and demographics

**Training**

44 Workshops and courses delivered in 2008

- Number of States Served Directly: 34
- Approximate Number of Participants: 840
- Total Number of Training Hours Delivered: 12,350

1 New workshop developed and field tested

Leader as Supervisor—Online

1 New workshop developed and field tested

Public Speaking – A Key Leadership Competency

12 National Projects

- Consulted with National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI) board on promoting and managing the NCLI
- Consulted with the AFWA Leadership and Professional Development Committee regarding delivery of the NCLI and States’ Program Toolbox, direction for MAT during the next grant cycle and balance of work between NCLI and state toolbox
- Consulted with the AFWA Education, Outreach, and Diversity Committee regarding conservation education strategies
- Participated in development of White Paper for the White House at technical workshop of Sporting Conservation Council
- Consulted with AFWA regarding improving information technology so that staff would be better able to serve state fish and wildlife agency interests. Assisted with office network consultation and recommended approaches for the MSCG grant review website
- Consulted with the AFWA Technologies and Data Utilization Committee on committee direction
- Consulted with AFWA Education, Outreach and Diversity Committee regarding meeting process
- Consulted with AFWA on strategic planning needs
-Consulted with Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Wildlife Administrators on leadership development opportunities
- Consulted with the Organization of Wildlife Planners, (OWP) regarding their organization’s strategic direction
- Consulted with AFWA and conducted workshop for Directors at the Director’s Retreat on increasing committee efficacy
- Consulted with directors and employees of state fish and wildlife agencies who were NCLI fellows. Through peer consulting helped them address leadership projects and issues

**Conducted the third National Conservation Leadership Institute Residency in 2008**

- 33 Fellows attended the NCLI to begin their residency as Cohort 3 in 2008. These 33 Fellows represented 21 states, 6 Federal Agencies, and 6 represented NGOs, tribes, and Industry
- 36 Fellows from Cohort 2 completed their leadership projects and culminating event at Big Cedar Lodge in Missouri and graduated from the Institute in 2008
Budget By Line Item*
January 1–December 31, 2008

- Postage 0.64%
- NCLI 1.14%
- Contractors 2.09%
- Office Space 2.64%
- Supplies/Printing 3.03%
- Overhead 8.04%
- Travel/Training 11.79%
- Personnel 71%

- MAT Professional Development 3.62%
- Outreach Services 4.75%
- Management Consultations 5.01%
- Course & Tool Development 7.14%
- Training Delivery 11.53%
- Program Administration 17.88%
- Manage NCLI 20.71%

Cost Analysis By Grant Objective*
January 1–December 31, 2008

- MAT Professional Development 4.98%
- Management Consultation 5.55%
- Course & Tool Development 7.14%
- Outreach Services 8.44%
- Training Delivery 17.09%
- Manage NCLI 22.67%
- Program Administration 34.12%

*MAT Total Expenditure $680,390
A Look at the Money

MAT Expenditures:*

11% went directly to developing leadership programs including the State Leadership Toolbox and the National Conservation Leadership Institute.

79% went toward providing assistance to state fish and wildlife agencies (e.g., personnel to assist states, training and consulting for states, and equipment and supplies to assist states)

11% went for office space and for Association overhead charges (3% and 8% respectively)

* Total percentage adds to 101% due to rounding.

MAT Time:

45% went directly to developing leadership programs including the State Leadership Toolbox and the National Conservation Leadership Institute.

30% went toward providing assistance to state fish and wildlife agencies (e.g., personnel to assist states, training and consulting for states, and equipment and supplies to assist states)

25% of MAT time was spent on administration and coordinating programs to states.

Our Funding Sources:

- Multistate Conservation Grant 72.7%
- US Fish and Wildlife Service 19.5%
- National Conservation Leadership Institute 7.7%

A Look Ahead

MAT has many things scheduled for 2009:

- Conduct fourth National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI) residency in October (application deadline May 15, 2009)
- Facilitate graduation of NCLI third cohort of Fellows at Big Cedar Lodge, April 2009
- Assist states to use MAT developed leadership courses by conducting train-the-trainer classes for states
- Continue to implement the online Conservation Leadership Program of Study (CLPS)
- Continue to maintain websites for MAT, NCLI, and NCLI Alumni
- Offer open enrollment quarterly for seven online leadership courses for state fish and wildlife agency employees
- Conduct all-employee survey of DE employees and interview approximately half the DE employees and triangulate data from these efforts with focus group data collected in December 2008 to complete a comprehensive agency review
- Meet with WY Game and Fish headquarters’ office staff to advise on workforce planning and leadership development within the agency
- Conduct a two-day leadership workshop entitled “Mastering Agency Change” for approximately 30 New Hampshire fish and wildlife employees
- Conduct a two-day leadership workshop entitled “Mastering Agency Change” for approximately 30 Montana fish and wildlife employees
- Launch a new, six-week online course entitled “Leader as Supervisor” for state F&W agencies
- Conduct a workshop on The Speed of Trust for UT Division of Wildlife
- Conduct a new workshop for AZ Game and Fish, “Team Leader Skills”, in May 2009
- Develop White Paper “Conservation Education: Alias I & E”
- Conduct “Team Leader Skills” workshop for WY
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