

# **“Quick Start Guide”**

To your

## **Take A Warrior Fishing**

Event

### **INTRODUCTION**

As the host of a **Take a Warrior Fishing (TWF)** event, you are challenged to organize a core group of volunteers dedicated to providing this unique fishing opportunity to Military personnel (especially, wounded warriors) in your area. The Quick Reference Guide is provided to assist in your immediate effort to organize your Planning Committee and assign tasks to those best suited for the specific duties associated with your event. The Quick Reference Guide is not intended to replace the “How to Plan and Run a Take a Warrior Fishing Guide”, although it does fast track the information needed in the early stages of planning. Each committee chairperson should be provided detailed information found in the “How to Plan and Run a Take a Warrior Fishing Guide needed to perform their assigned duties and organize additional volunteer groups. It is important to remember that every topic discussed in the “How to Plan and Run a Take a Warrior Fishing Guide is not required for the success of your event. They are suggestions that are designed to improve the quality of your event and add to the safety of the participants.

### **How to Plan and Run a Take a Warrior Fishing Guide (TWF Guide)**

Use of the TWF Guide will assist in the successful planning of your Take a Warrior Fishing event. An enthusiastic committee, detailed planning, promotion, and adequate planning time are equally important. The TWF Guide provides a detailed source of information required for organizing and conducting a TWF event. Most past events have taken approximately three to six months of planning, but for organizations that have not sponsored such an event, more time may be required. Some events may require less time to organize when an existing TWF program is in place, or an organization with a similar program elects to elevate their current format to a Take a Warrior Fishing Event.

Sections of the TWF Guide may be removed, copied and provided to the chairperson of each committee, allowing a more detailed reference of information needed to assist the chairperson to prepare for the event. Every phase of each committee is documented in detail for your consideration, in an easy to follow step by step format. Following the suggestions and recommendations provided in the TWF Guide will insure a successful effort on the part of the Planning Committee.

### **SPONSORSHIP SUPPORT**

The involvement of other organizations will simplify your planning and ensure a more successful event. The CAST Foundation recommends sponsoring organizations to work closely with the State or local Bass Federation, Walleye, or other fishing clubs. They provide an enthusiastic volunteer base with fishing and water safety experience. In addition, Federal, State, or local water and wildlife management agencies may easily assist the sponsoring organization in finding potential event locations. Costs associated with sponsoring an event may be shared by establishing a partnership with other organizations or agencies in your area.

### **SPONSOR REQUIREMENTS**

Event sponsors should be prepared to provide materials for the event either through a loan arrangement or purchase (which can be used for subsequent events). Loaned items may include personal flotation devices (life jackets), use of bass or pontoon boats (use donated by Bass Federation Clubs or local boating clubs), blankets, and hand held radios (local amateur radio group) or cell phones. The CAST Foundation provides fishing rods and reels, tackle boxes, award plaques, TWF logo t-shirts and hats. Donated items include prizes, tackle, food, fun-pack fillers, and decorations.

## **VOLUNTEER SUPPORT**

TWF is best conducted with at least a one to one ratio. Not every volunteer will be assisting with registrants; however, they will be involved with some essential aspect of the event. Fewer or more volunteers may be necessary depending on the participants attending. Organizations conducting Take A Warrior Fishing Events are encouraged to obtain the assistance of their State Bass Federation, Federal, State, or local water and wildlife management agencies, local fishing tackle dealers, service clubs, and community volunteers.

## **LIABILITY**

The CAST Foundation provides liability insurance for sanctioned TWF events. For more detailed information about this issue contact Jim Owens, Executive Director of the Foundation, or your local Take A Warrior Fishing Regional Director.

A trained medical professional present for the entire course of the event is an excellent precaution, as well as an emphasis on safe practices.

## **ITEMS FOR REGISTRANTS**

Pre-registered participants of a TWF event receive a t-shirt with logo, rod, and reel; tackle box, photo plaque, and bait free of charge to the participant. Each registrant is encouraged to bring along their spouse and kids to accompanying them on their fishing adventure, who are encouraged to bring along their own gear. Only participants receive the complimentary gear.

After the fishing outing, all registrants and their companions receive a Fun pack containing miscellaneous items which may include water safety information, pencils, stickers, color books, etc. donated by sponsoring organizations. Knowing the number of participants is essential to this element.

## **LENGTH OF EVENT**

The TWF events generally last about 5-6 hours. If disabled participants are involved, a tight reign on time is necessary. Their endurance can be very limited and health concerns quickly arise as the temperature rises.

Most events begin at 8:00 a.m. with a brief Welcome, Introduction and schedule of the day's events. However, for volunteers the day's preparations begin much earlier. Participants should arrive at 7:30 a.m. to register. Volunteers should be present by 6:30 to receive directions, their assignments, and information about the participants.

By 7:45, participants are matched up with boaters and are loaded onto the boats. The participants then head out for about 3-3 ½ hours of fishing and boating.. The staggered arrival attempts to prevent chaos, as the boats are coming into the boat ramp and taken out of the water.

## **BARBECUE**

At noon, the participants are treated to a barbecue lunch provided by sponsoring organizations. There are several ways to provide this. Sponsoring organizations may enlist the support of local service organizations, restaurants, grocers or request cash donations to purchase food items.

## **TAKE A WARRIOR FISHING LOGO**

Use of the official TWF Logo is required to maintain a consistent appearance on any extra premiums, printed materials or other promotional items produced for the event. Consider adding your organization's name as a sponsor.

## **TAKE A WARRIOR FISHING MATERIALS**

Use of the materials in the appendices (certificates, news release forms, etc.) is optional. However, to minimize cost and time, their use is encouraged.

Items such as Participant t-shirts, hats, rods and reels, tackle boxes, and award plaques are provided by the CAST Foundation to be given to registrants. Extra t-shirts and hats may be purchased from the Foundation for volunteers.

## **REGISTRATION FORMS**

Each participant should fill out a registration form as soon as they arrive at the event site, If they have not already done so. The use of a Registration Table with a sign should draw participants in. All participants should be provided a name tag, to be worn for the remainder of the day. Name tags provide easy identification of the participants as well as encourage conversations with other participants and volunteers at the event.

## **“Getting Started”**

Organizing your Planning Committee is the first step in planning a TWF event. It is intended to be a group effort utilizing the strength of volunteers and community groups in your area. As the Host, when you begin selecting members for the planning committee, select individuals that are willing to dedicate the time needed to fulfill the objectives detailed in the How Plan and Run a TWF event. If you follow the recommendations provided your event is on its way to being a well run, successful event with a committed group of individuals, sponsors and volunteers willing to participate for years to come.

It is recommended that you keep your first event as simple and basic as possible. Determine the number of participants you are able to invite based on the number of volunteer boaters and financial support you are able to generate to support the event. Determine if an on the water event is possible or a shore line event is best suited for your event. Information for both is addressed in the Quick Start Guide. With that in mind, let's get started.

### **EVENT FUNDING**

#### **What does the sponsorship fee provide:**

The CAST Foundation provides a Planning Manual, coordination support from CAST, Liability Insurance for your event, Background Information for your sponsors and onsite support the day of your event. In addition, through a discount program with our vendors, a rod & reel, T-shirt, tackle box and plaque are provided for each registered participant, plus T-shirts for any equal number of shore volunteers, and hats for Boat Captains.

#### **Why is there a sponsorship fee:**

A sponsorship fee is needed in order to provide these services and equipment for your TWF event. The equipment is purchased in bulk by the CAST foundation to insure a discounted rate for your TWF Event. T-shirts and plaques are ordered, on as needed bases, to include your sponsor names, logos and event information.

#### **How much is the sponsorship fee:**

The sponsorship fee is \$5,000 for up to 40 Warriors and their families. Everything described in the opening statement is included in that cost. The only additional cost at that point is equipment for each additional participant. Based on past event information, a cost of \$75 per each additional participant is needed to support the cost of a TWF event.

#### **How do we secure the sponsorship fee:**

Once you decide to host a TWF event, all members of the planning committee, should solicit support for your program. You will find that in most cases, local merchants, civic groups and chambers of commerce are willing to support your effort, for the benefit of the participants in their immediate area, and may elect to provide all the funding for your event. Name recognition as a sponsor shows community involvement and support in your area. Friends and merchants will most always support your efforts, to provide activities to our Military, when your request is within their financial ability to participate.

# EVENT PLANNING COMMITTEES

## 1. PLANNING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Coordination of all details for the event is managed by the Planning Committee Chairperson. This person will schedule meetings as needed with all members of the Event Planning Committee to insure every detail is being addressed in a timely manner.

**Tasks:** Contact participating entities, registrant groups, direct correspondence, coordinate for barbecue, send out invitations, coordinate on-site efforts, and coordinate publicity and all required graphic work.

**Planning Committee Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE

All members of the Planning Committee should actively participate in obtaining sponsorship for the event. Sponsorship is defined as anyone contributing financially or in kind to the event. One individual should be assigned the task of coordinating the effort of all members of the Planning Committee. It should be a collective effort to support the event. The Sponsorship Chairperson should maintain a list of sponsors both financial and in kind to be included on the event t-shirts. An updated report should be made available to the other Planning Committee members at all meetings called by the Planning Committee Chairperson.

**Sponsorship Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. BOATERS AND BAIT COMMITTEE

The chair person of the Boater and Bait Committee should be a person with boating experience such as a member of the Local Federated bass fishing club. Federation bass anglers have many hours of experience and access to numerous individuals willing to participate in fishing events. The Boater and Bait Chairperson is challenged to secure an adequate number of boats and bait for the event as well as personal flotation devices (PFD's) for the participants. It is very important that the number of boats be consistent with the number of participants invite to attend the event.

**Boater and Bait Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. BANK FISHING AND BAIT COMMITTEE (if on shore event)

The chair person of the Bank fishing and Bait Committee should be a person with fishing experience such as a member of the local Federated bass club. Federation bass anglers have years of fishing experience and are able to instruct participants on the skills of fishing. The Bank fishing and Bait Chairperson is challenged to secure an adequate number of volunteers and bait for the event as well as personal flotation devices (PFD's) for the participants. It may be necessary to outfit some participants with a PFD when physical abilities are limited for onshore fishing. It is very important that the number of volunteers be consistent with the number of participants invite to attend the event.

**Bank Fishing and Bait Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **5. PARTICIPANTS REGISTRATION COMMITTEE**

The Participants Registration Committee will work with the Planning Committee members to establish military personnel to invite as the participants in the event. All active military personnel are well, but wounded warriors should be especially targeted. Once the target group has been established, the committee Chairperson will contact that group with information regarding the event. The number of participants, predetermined by the group, will be invited and a pre-event registration will be requested from the appropriate source. On the day of the event, the Registration Chairperson will be responsible for checking in/registering the participants and their families, and assigning them to the boaters. Name tags will be filled out and assigned to each participant by the Registration committee. It is very important that each participant be registered and assigned to a specific boater or volunteer, to insure the safety.

**Participant Registration Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **6. SITE SERVICE COMMITTEE**

Organize all onsite requirements. Reserve pre-determined event site, obtain tables, coordinate emergency services, organize clean-up committee, security, and obtain local permits. It is important to understand the space and facilities requirements for conducting events for groups that will include disabled participants. It is recommended that the facility have restrooms which are handicap accessible, and adequate parking for volunteers and boaters is essential for a successful program. In the event that an onshore fishing event is planned, make sure the site is easily maneuverable and accessible to wheelchair bound participants. Precautions must be taken to insure that wheelchairs have stop blocks located between the water and the chair. Wooden 2"x 4" blocks may be used as a barrier in the event of shore fishing. Areas with handicap accessible fishing piers are available at most lakes providing easy access to your participants as well. An area with a limited amount of traffic is recommended. Once the Site team has selected the event site, a pre-event site visit with the Planning Committee is recommended. Any concerns may be addressed at that time.

**Site Committee Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **7. FUN PACK AND AWARDS COMMITTEE**

Obtain materials for fun packs; coordinate with the donors for their educational and fun materials. Secure Polaroid cameras and film for award plaques, or use digital cameras and print photos on site. Names of registered participants are to be written on the bottom of the picture, which is inserted into the plaque, to be presented to each participant and their Boat Captain..

Organize completed awards for all registered participants in the order to be presented. Provide a list of all registered participants for the Master of Ceremonies to use during awards ceremony. Provide a list of sponsors for the event to be recognized during the awards presentation.

**Fun Pack and Awards Committee Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **8. MEALS AND DRINKS**

Make arrangements for breakfast snacks, drinks and lunch for all in attendance. Make sure all, if any health codes are followed, to insure food serving issues are addressed and followed. Distribute bottled water to the boaters for their use during their time on the water. Prior to the event, check with the registration committee to make sure any registered participant with special

diet issues are addressed and provided. Make sure paper plates, condiments and disposal containers are available at the food area.

In the event the food is being catered by one of the event sponsors, make sure the tables and serving area are prepared and ready upon arrival. Discuss the arrival time with the donor to avoid a delay in the lunch.

**Meals and Drinks Committee Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **9. EVENT PHOTOGRAPHER/REPORTER/POST-EVENT REPORT**

Documentation of the event is a vital source of information to track how many folks we've impacted and a way to remember what we've done. Please send jpg formatted photos and a Post-Event Report to [Ashley@castforkids.org](mailto:Ashley@castforkids.org) by the following Tuesday in order to be posted to the website following your event. The Post-Event Report tracks the following information: Number of Participants, Number of Volunteers, Number of Boaters, Location, Body of Water, and a List of Sponsors. You are also encouraged to write a less than 1-page overview of the event. This will also be posted on the CAST website for reading.

**Event Photographer / Reporter:** \_\_\_\_\_

It is important to remember, this document is intended as a Quick Start Guide to planning a TWF event, and the TWF Guide is the ongoing resource for information and ideas to support your planning effort. CAST is also ALWAYS available to assist with any questions or concerns you might have.

Thank you for considering the Take a Warrior Fishing Program for our military personnel in your area. Our goal is to work with you to make these events safe, fun, and successful, and to give back, in some small measure, to those that have given so much for us.