

Winyah Rivers Foundation

Approved as Working Document on 11.4.16 at WRF Board Meeting

Vision

Clean water and healthy communities.

Mission

The mission of the Winyah Rivers Foundation is to protect, preserve, monitor and revitalize the health of the lands and waters of the greater Winyah Bay watershed.

Core Values

As a mission driven, grass roots, non-profit organization working throughout the Winyah Bay watershed to protect our right to clean water we

- 1) Uphold a high standard of honesty, integrity, and consistency of message and action throughout the organization including the board, staff, and volunteers.
- 2) Demonstrate a conscientious practice of environmental stewardship in our general operations and messaging.
- 3) Commit to using our mission to guide our programs.
- 4) Serve as a liaison for the community on behalf of water quality
- 5) Conduct activities that inform the community on water quality and help to guide water quality protection efforts as well as help to enforce water quality standards. Activities include but are not restricted to monitoring water quality on the Waccamaw River from its source at Lake Waccamaw to the mouth at Winyah Bay.
- 6) Advocate for best management practices and enforcement of water quality standards and regulations and against threats to swimmable, drinkable, fishable water for all.
- 7) Educate the community (general public, youth, and decision makers) about the importance of this communities water resources, water quality and associated threats, and our mission.
- 8) Empower citizens to be stewards of the Winyah Bay watershed through our volunteer programs. Our volunteers and membership act as a widespread and continuous patrol along the Waccamaw and throughout our watershed.
- 9) Recognize of the importance of and a commitment to land conservation and smart and sustainable land use practices throughout our watershed for the sake of water quality protection.
- 10) Strive for cooperation and collaboration in order to achieve the most efficient and effective solution/ approach to any matter.
- 11) Serve as a trusted source of water quality information and a resource to the community.
- 12) Support and empower our members and volunteers as our eyes and ears on the river. They serve as our eyes and ears on the river.
- 13) Maintain a connection with the rivers and the public critical to grassroots advocacy.

Goals, Planned Accomplishments & Strategies

Broad Goal 1: Assess and Strengthen the Governance Structure

Objective 1-1: Define and adapt WRF nonprofit governance model towards a sustainable future by adopting sound, ethical and legal governance and financial management policies.

Action Steps

- a) Develop a Governance/Board Development Committee
- b) Develop Guidelines for Board Roles/Responsibilities including Board self-evaluation process, orientation, etc.
- c) Develop standards of conduct and specific “best practices” including ethical and accountable principles, strategic plan and periodic review guidelines.
- d) Identify resources and documents available from similar organizations, such as Waterkeeper Alliance, other Riverkeeper organizations, including calendar of meeting dates, policies, procedures, budget training, etc.

Objective 1-2: Strengthen and diversify Board membership, responsibility and involvement in order to engage and empower the Board of Directors

Action Steps

- a) Develop Board Recruitment Plan
- b) Strategically recruit new Board members.

Broad Goal 2: Assess WRF Human Resources and Need

Objective 2-1: Clarify staff roles, responsibilities and capacity.

Action Steps

- a) Establish staff policies and procedures, chain of command, and clear roles and responsibilities.
- b) Optimize staff capacity.
- c) Develop a plan for establishment of Executive Director position.
- d) Hire new staff as financially feasible and as needed in response to expanded programmatic efforts.

Objective 2-2: Recruit and retain required staff.

Action Steps

- a) Implement a staff evaluation process.
- b) Increase employee compensation.
- c) Ensure that staff, programs and organizational strategic initiatives have adequate administrative and technological support.

- d) Improve office infrastructure to provide optimal workplace effectiveness and efficiency.
- e) Provide human resources training of business best practices and services for all staff.
- f) Develop an Emergency Response plan.

Objective 2-3: Refine Volunteer Program through adoption of policies and procedures including definition of roles, development of training program, and ways of sustaining.

Action Steps

- a) Establish a people development plan.
- b) Increase grass roots support for WRF through expanded membership and volunteers.

Broad Goal 3: Long Range Plan for Financial Sustainability

Objective 3-1: Assure WRF has adequate resources to advance its mission by continuing to expand WRF's funding base.

Action Steps

- a) Establish a Development Committee focused on strategize growing WRF financial resources i.e. grants, fundraising, major donors and sustainable income.

Objective 3-2: Diversify funding sources focusing on increasing both unrestricted and guaranteed income.

Action Steps

- a) Establish a process for identifying and pursuing new resources.
- b) Pursue major gifts.
- c) Develop financial guidelines for soliciting and accepting monies.
- d) Develop a plan for guaranteed income including an endowment plan/trust.

Objective 3-3: Grow WRF (Board and staff) financial literacy and capabilities.

Action Steps

- a) Connect Board, finance committee, and staff on long range and short term financial planning, budgeting, and accounting in order to efficiently and effectively achieve this broad goal.
- b) Refine/ define financial policies and procedures appropriate for our current situation.
- c) Clarify board and staff roles in regard to fundraising.

- d) Increase investment in tools and technology, including a financial dashboard, to expand our reach, increase transparency in our dealings and strengthen connection to our audiences.

Broad Goal 4: Strategic Organizational and Program Development

Objective 4-1: Adopt an effectiveness assessment policy to help direct strategic programming decisions.

Action Steps

- a) Develop an annual work plan through evaluation and prioritization of existing and potential new programs based on importance to overall mission, current local water quality concerns, and resource availability. An emphasis should be placed on setting defined, measureable goals and objectives which in turn allows for clear evaluation of the success of the program.
- b) As an organization whose mission encompasses a very large geographic area (bi-state and multi-jurisdictional), develop a plan that 1) in adhering to our mission, continues to consider implementing programming at this larger area for which we are responsible and 2) that capitalizes on this unique situation.
- c) Define roles and responsibilities/ policy and procedures for consideration and implementation of strategic programming decisions
- d) Employ/ develop appropriate rubric or other tool for standardized decision making.
- e) Implement annual work plan review to regularly assure responsiveness to the changing landscape of local water quality issues.

Objective 4-2: Assessment of our land conservation strategies/ efforts. In light of 2015 purchase of Rocky Point Community Forest and upcoming acquisition of the Singleton Tract special attention needs to be given to this aspect of our programming.

Action Steps

- a) Evaluate WRF's position on incorporating land acquisition into the strategy including budget, time frame, and resources.
- b) Continue to explore resources to support our existing land conservation efforts including Rocky Point, Singleton, and land conservation advisory partnerships such as the Upper Waccamaw Task Force and source water protection efforts.

Objective 4-3: Develop a plan for enhanced community outreach

Action Steps

- a) Prioritize collaboration, partnerships and group participation efforts within the community.
- b) Clarify WRF role and niche in the community through expanding expertise, and bolstering position with other stakeholders.
- f) Enhance collaboration with like-minded organizations to advance programmatic and organizational initiatives

Objective 4-4: Establish a way to incorporate community feedback into our programming decision making. As a grass roots organization our programing should reflect our core values and the concerns of the community (expert/professional as well as general public).

- a) Regularly assess community concerns in regards to our mission.
- b) Recognizing that effective programing helps to attract and retain members and volunteers, develop a media and PR procedures to highlight/ communicate program efforts and successes (also see objective 5-1).

Broad Goal 5: Increased Public Awareness and Improved Community Perception

Objective 5-1: Develop and implement a strategy to ensure compelling story telling across all media platforms and consistent messaging to more deeply engage our audiences and strengthen our brand.

Action Steps

- a) Increase development team capacity
- b) Develop a public relations and marketing plan to strengthen brand recognition to establish WRF as the most effective organization for protecting local waterways.
- c) Establish impact measures to determine progress on meeting goals.

Objective 4-2: Assess community awareness and need.

Action Steps

- a) Establish a committee to evaluate community awareness and knowledge of water quality issues.
- b) Develop an education plan based on what the community wants and needs.
- c) Tie into marketing and fundraising.
- d) Seek outside resource help.