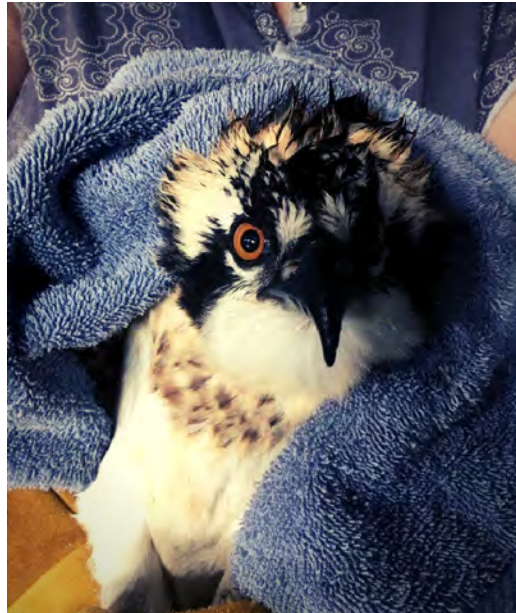




STRATEGIC PLAN

FOR THE WILDLIFE CENTER OF THE NORTH COAST



2021-2026





Strategic Plan for the Wildlife Center of the North Coast:

2021-2026

Executive Summary

The Wildlife Center of the North Coast (hereafter, WCNC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose three-part mission includes rescue, rehabilitation, and release of injured wildlife; education of the general public; and conservation of resources and habitat. Strategic direction for governing WCNC is provided to the Executive Director by a volunteer Board of Directors. Prior to 2015, there had been no formal strategic planning activity undertaken by the Board of Directors, and as WCNC transitioned from a founder-driven nonprofit to a board-driven nonprofit after the untimely passing of founder Sharnelle Fee in 2015, it was recognized that the organization needed to engage in strategic planning if it was to grow and thrive in the future.

Beginning in 2017, WCNC's Strategic Planning Committee initiated a strategic planning process whose ultimate goal was to generate a solid conceptual framework on which the Board and the Executive Director could link goal-setting, decision-making, and resource development with mission accomplishment. WCNC sought to develop five specific written, Board-approved strategic elements:

- a Mission Statement,
- a Values Statement,
- a Vision Statement,
- a 5-year Strategic Plan, and
- a process by which to operationalize the Strategic Plan on an annual basis.

Given the strategic planning process started from scratch with nothing but a draft mission statement and had to be accomplished in-house without any additional resources, the Strategic Planning Committee mapped out a multi-step process to create each of the five tools. Work began in May 2017 and concluded four years later in May 2021. The process also specifically included activities to solicit input from staff, volunteers, and board members along the way, and used that information to shape the content and verbiage of each of the plan elements. Although not specifically part of the strategic planning process, a related 2018 assessment of WCNC by the University of Oregon's Nonprofit Clinic (<https://law.uoregon.edu/become-practice-ready/clinics/nonprofit>) provided a number of governance best-practices recommendations for WCNC that were folded into the strategic planning process.

The foundation on which the plan is built includes the WCNC **Mission Statement** explaining the organization's purpose and principal activities (*Promoting compassion, empathy and respect for all life through wildlife rehabilitation, ecological teachings, and*

wildlife conservation), WCNC **Values** showing the organizational behaviors necessary to accomplish the mission (*Professionalism, compassion, teamwork, stewardship, and service*), and the WCNC **Vision** of what the future looks like when the mission is fulfilled (*A community where wildlife thrives*). The Values and Vision elements are supported by narrative statements describing, in concrete terms, how the Values and Vision are expected to manifest through WCNC.

The Strategic Plan itself lays out not only the purpose and process of strategic planning, but **Strategic Goals** - defined by organizational needs and shaped through staff, volunteer, and board input - for each of four major organizational themes:

- Rehabilitation (Goals R1-R5)
- Education (Goals E1-E3)
- Conservation (Goals C1-C4), and
- Organizational Excellence (Goals OE1-OE6).

Finally, the plan then provides a **flexible template for Annual Work Plans** whose purpose is to translate Strategic Goals into concrete objectives for a given year by providing for task/resource assignments, metrics, timelines, monitoring, and evaluation along the way. The Strategic Plan as a whole should be viewed as the guiding star keeping WCNC on course to a bright future in the face of opportunities and challenges to come.

It is expected that the Mission, Values, and Vision elements for WCNC will not change much over the lifetime of the organization, but if the need arises, the processes documented in this plan may be used again to address any necessary changes. It is expected the Strategic Goals for the first five-year plan will be reviewed and updated for the next five years during 2026, or sooner if unexpected circumstances merit doing so. The timeline for creation of the next five year plan should be considerably shortened as much of the structure and process needed is now in place.

Purpose Statement and Strategic Planning Process

Purpose Statement

Strategy can be defined as a proactive, general plan to achieve long-term mission goals under conditions of uncertainty. Strategic plans for any organization typically contain five major components – (1) A Mission Statement, (2) A Values Statement, (3) a Vision Statement, (4) an intentional, forward-looking, flexible framework containing priorities, mission-focused goals, and decision aides, and (5) a process whereby strategic goals are translated into concrete objectives and the means to achieve them. The purpose of this WCNC Strategic Plan is to provide strong, unified guidance for setting priorities, developing and deploying personnel and resources, and making higher-level decisions for the organization during changing internal and external environments. We see this document as a foundational reference for all key decision-making by the Board of Directors and Executive Director, to be reexamined and renewed every five years as the organization changes and grows.

The Mission Statement spells out the purpose of the WCNC, the Values Statements specify the manner in which the organization pursues its mission, and the Vision Statement describes what fully-realized mission accomplishment looks like in the ideal future. The Strategic Goals section sets forth high-level goals specific to each of the four primary categories covered by the plan – Rehabilitation, Education, Conservation, and Organizational Excellence. Following the Goals sections, the Annual Work Plan Template provide the mechanism by which each year’s objectives are linked to and provide forward progress towards strategic goals.

Timeline and Planning Process

The 2021-2026 Plan is the first Strategic Plan ever written for the WCNC. The Strategic Planning Committee, Board of Directors, and Executive Director were working entirely from scratch and constrained by budget to accomplish planning with in-house resources only. We present the process here by which this first strategic planning took place, so that how things were developed is documented in a transparent way and any future strategic planners are familiar with the tasks involved. For the purpose of brevity, key events in the timeline are presented; for complete and detailed documentation of the entire process see the WCNC Strategic Planning Directory on the organizational Google drive.

APRIL 2017 – PROPOSAL OF THE OVERALL STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Initially, a two-person Strategic Planning Committee met to hammer out the general planning process for presentation to the Board. Two books were used as primary references: *Strategic Planning Kit for Dummies* by Erica Olsen (Wiley 2012) and *Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Organizations: a Practical Guide for Dynamic Times (3rd Edition)* by Michael Allison and Jude Kaye (Wiley 2015). Prior personal experience and internet resources were also consulted. Background research determined that WCNC needed to first develop Mission, Values, and Vision Statements for adoption by the Board prior to developing the written five-year strategic plan. WCNC had several variations of a Mission

Statement already in circulation, but no draft Vision or Values Statements, and no draft strategic plan.

MAY 2017 – BOARD UNDERSTANDING AND APPROVAL OF PROCESS; FINALIZATION OF MISSION STATEMENT

The Strategic Planning Committee presented key definitions, examples, and a broad outline/timeline of the entire strategic planning process to the Board of Directors (including the Executive Director). Existing variations on a Mission Statement were also presented to the Board. The process was explained, and the Board agreed to first develop official Mission, Values, and Vision statements and then proceed to developing the first written five year strategic plan. Agreement on a single, definitive Mission Statement was reached and that statement adopted. There was unanimous support for taking time necessary to solicit and incorporate input from all WCNC staff and volunteers, including the Board of Directors, when developing the new Values and Vision statements for the organization.

MAY-JUNE 2017 – SOLICITING AND RECEIVING VALUES INPUT FROM BOARD, STAFF, AND VOLUNTEERS

All staff, board members, and volunteers invited to submit, anonymously, up to three words or short phrases that best express the values they want to see in WCNC workplace culture and behavior, as well as to provide a short explanation of why a chosen value(s) was important to them (the “Word in a Box” activity).

JULY 2017 – VALUES INPUT SUMMARIZED, THEMES IDENTIFIED, AND CORE VALUES CHOSEN

The Strategic Planning Committee summarized the values input received (e.g. a spreadsheet including all the values input received, how frequently a given value word or close synonym was mentioned). The Board discussed the themes and logical groupings that arose from the input, and decided on five words (professionalism, compassion, teamwork, stewardship, service) that seemed to capture the breadth of input received. The Strategic Planning Committee was then tasked with writing draft narrative statements for each value that incorporated the input received.

NOVEMBER 2017 – DRAFT VALUES NARRATIVE STATEMENTS DISCUSSION

The Strategic Planning Committee presented draft values statements for discussion. A number of edits were agreed upon. It was also agreed that two versions be prepared: one “long form” full-sentence narrative statements and a second “short form” of more concise, bullets suitable for rapid reference on the web or during presentations.

JANUARY 2018 – FINAL VALUES AND VALUES NARRATIVE STATEMENTS ADOPTED

Final versions of WCNC Values and Values Narrative Statements were unanimously approved by the Board and officially adopted.

APRIL 2018 – PROPOSAL OF VISIONING PROCESS AND ACTIVITIES

The Strategic Planning Committee presented key definitions, examples, objectives, and a broad outline/timeline for the visioning process to the Board.

MAY 2018-FEBRUARY 2019 – VISIONING ACTIVITIES AND INPUT

For logistical reasons, identical yet separate brainstorming vision activities were led by the Strategic Planning Coordinator with board members, staff, and volunteers. These activities secured input for two vision elements: a concise vision statement and

visualization bullets that vividly describe what the world looks like once the vision is achieved.

MARCH - MAY 2019 - VISIONING INPUT COMPILED AND SUMMARIZED

Using methods similar to summarizing the Values input, Visioning input was compiled and summarized for presentation to the Board.

JULY 2019 - BOARD RETREAT TO DISCUSS VISIONING INPUT AND CHOOSE

A two-hour mini-retreat was held on a Saturday afternoon to focus on discussion of candidate vision statements and visualization bullets. Themes from the raw input were noted and crafted into a draft Vision Statement and Visualization Bullets.

SEPTEMBER 2019 - FINAL VISION STATEMENT, VISION NARRATIVE, AND VISUALIZATION BULLETS ADOPTED

NOVEMBER 2019 - STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT (BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

The Strategic Planning Committee organized and ran a day-long strategic planning retreat (meals provided) for Board members on a Saturday. The objective was to generate input sufficient to choose Strategic Goals in each of four categories recommended by the Strategic Planning Committee: Rehabilitation, Education, Conservation (mission-related) and Organizational Excellence (values-related). A series of brainstorming, strategic-thinking, and discussion activities resulted in raw input captured on flip-charts, photos, and notes. The Strategic Planning Committee was tasked with compiling and summarizing input from the retreat, as well as creating an outline for the strategic planning document itself.

MARCH - AUGUST 2020 - STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE DRAFTS STRATEGIC GOALS

During this period, an outline for the complete strategic planning document and full drafts for each of four Strategic Goal categories were crafted. Also, beginning in March 2020, WCNC was affected by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and an unplanned change in Board leadership.

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2020 - HIATUS IN STRATEGIC PLANNING PROGRESS

Challenges imposed by the Strategic Planning Coordinator also having to fulfill Board President duties stalled progress in the strategic planning progress.

JANUARY - MAY 2021 - STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE COMPLETES FULL DRAFT OF 2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

During this period, remaining sections of the Strategic Plan were assigned to and written by members of the Strategic Planning Committee, with the goal of circulating a complete draft of the plan to the Board for their review two weeks prior to the May 2021 Board meeting.

MAY 2021 - BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADOPTS FINAL 2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

After reviewing a full draft and final discussion, a final version of the text for the complete 2021-2026 Strategic Plan is expected to be approved by the Board of Directors by the end of May.

A review of strategic progress to date and creation of the first Annual Work Plan for 2022 will take place in November of 2021.

Mission, Values, and Vision Statements

Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement describes the purpose of our organization and what we do. The WCNC Mission Statement is:

Promoting compassion, empathy and respect for all life through wildlife rehabilitation, ecological teachings, and wildlife conservation.

Values and Values Narrative Statements

Our Values provide the guiding principles for organizational culture and conduct. The Values chosen by WCNC are:

Professionalism, Compassion, Teamwork, Stewardship, and Service

Our Values Narrative Statements show, with specific examples, how our values are visible on a day-to-day basis in the organization. We have two versions of our Narrative Statements, a “long form” and a “short form.” Both are presented below.

VALUES NARRATIVE STATEMENT - LONG FORM

Professionalism - WCNC is committed to best practices in wildlife rehabilitation, public outreach, and conservation science. This commitment requires building and maintaining a respectful, progressive, stimulating work environment that encourages personal accountability and integrity and creates opportunities for staff and volunteers to learn new skills. Pursuit of excellence in wildlife care and public education is guided by data-driven scientific principles and fiscally-responsible business practices.

Compassion - Compassion is at the core of our work, not only with the animals entrusted to our care, but also with the human members of the communities we serve. We are mindful of our own conduct and believe in the importance of relating to all living beings with empathy, awareness, kindness, and respect. WCNC is a safe, welcoming place for both wildlife and people.

Teamwork - Working collaboratively and cooperatively to achieve common goals is the foundation of teamwork at WCNC. Open and honest communication coupled with genuine concern, respect, and support for one’s teammates are all necessary to cultivate an enjoyable, flexible, and positive atmosphere in all aspects of WCNC operations.

Stewardship - WCNC stewardship embodies a commitment to the enrichment and sustainability of futures for both native wildlife and our human communities interacting with that wildlife. Through responsible and wise use of our present resources, we act to support the conservation of native wildlife and the natural environment on which it depends.

Service - Volunteers, staff, and board members at WCNC are dedicated to providing dependable, high-quality wildlife rehabilitation to our communities in northwest Oregon and southwest Washington. In addition to wildlife rehabilitation, we provide education, outreach, and other opportunities for community members to learn about and become actively involved in wildlife conservation.

VALUES NARRATIVE STATEMENT – SHORT FORM

Professionalism

- best practices in data-driven wildlife rehabilitation, education, and conservation
- respectful, progressive, accountable work environment
- fiscally responsible business practices

Compassion

- empathy and respect for animals, humans, and the environment
- mindfulness and self-awareness
- welcoming, safe haven

Teamwork

- collaboration and cooperation in pursuit of common goals
- open, honest communication
- supportive, enjoyable, flexible, positive interactions

Stewardship

- conservation of native wildlife and the natural environment
- responsible use of present resources
- commitment to sustainable future for both wildlife and communities

Service

- volunteerism in direct support of professional wildlife rehabilitation
- community education, outreach, and involvement in wildlife conservation
- dependable, high-quality rehabilitation for northwest Oregon and southwest Washington

Vision Statement, Vision Narrative Statement, and Visualization Bullets

The purpose of a Vision, Vision Narrative Statement, and Visualization Bullets is to very specifically describe what the future will look like after WCNC fully accomplishes its mission and makes the Vision a reality.

VISION STATEMENT

A community where wildlife thrives.

VISION NARRATIVE STATEMENT

In our community, all people recognize the inherent value of wildlife to the fullness of human experience. Wildlife is viewed as a part of, and not apart from, our communities. When making decisions, the needs of wildlife are considered and given a voice through active advocacy by members of the human community. By working together, the community

eliminates harmful human impacts to wildlife, and promotes healthy wildlife habitat to ensure it is there for future generations, thus honoring and protecting all living things.

VISUALIZATION BULLETS

Where all people:

- *Recognize the inherent value of wildlife to human experience*
- *View wildlife as part of – and not apart from – communities*
- *Consider the needs of, and advocate for, wildlife in all decision-making*
- *Eliminate harmful human impacts to wildlife*
- *Promote healthy wildlife habitat*
- *Honor and protect all living things*

Strategic Goals - Rehabilitation

Needs statement

Keeping up with the growing demand for quantity and complexity of patient care requires scaling resource levels to address patient needs and ensure WCNC can take in all patients with potential for rehabilitation. The strategic planning process specifically highlighted the need to:

- improve staffing levels for both paid and volunteer positions,
- update infrastructure and equipment needs, and
- support ongoing professional development and best practices.

Without such improvements, there is a risk of being over capacity, under staffed, and under trained, which then limits the amount and type of patient care WCNC can provide.

While operating at or above maximum capacity may be possible for short periods of time under unusual circumstances, it is not sustainable and eventually results in undesirable burnout and turnover. Stability and growth of staff and volunteer levels, as well as maintenance and improvement of enclosures and equipment were therefore identified as specific priorities. In addition, it was pointed out that at present WCNC still has only one licensed rehabilitator; future staffing must ensure there is always licensing redundancy, because a loss of licensing would curtail rehabilitation activities. There are likely unexploited partnership opportunities with other facilities or organizations that would assist WCNC in meeting specific needs. To make progress in meeting these needs, we propose the following strategic goals to address our rehabilitation mission.

Strategic Goals - Staffing

GOAL R1 – GROW STAFFING LEVELS TO MEET PROJECTED PATIENT CAPACITY FOR THE NEXT 5 YEARS AND ENSURE COVERAGE OF CRITICAL STAFF FUNCTIONS.

There is a need to add licensed rehabilitators to ensure existing staff can cover seven-day-a-week operations as well as shifts when any given individual rehabilitator is on leave. It is also clear that on-call or on-site veterinary expertise is highly desirable for increasing the range of evaluation and care we can provide to patients. WCNC should move to identify and fill gaps in rehabilitation staffing.

GOAL R2 – DEVELOP REDUNDANCY IN REHABILITATION PERMIT HOLDERS TO ENSURE CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS DURING STAFF TURNOVER.

The primary mission of the WCNC relies upon having qualified rehabilitation staff possessing valid rehabilitation permits. WCNC needs to enact staffing and organizational structure that guarantees continuity of operations during staff turnover, for example by having multiple permit-holders are in place at any one time.

Strategic Goals - Infrastructure & equipment

GOAL R3 – UPDATE/IMPROVE EXISTING ENCLOSURES AND ADD FILTERED POOL CAPACITY.

Affecting needed repairs and improvements to existing structures, and providing for better protection against natural disasters (fire, flooding) and vermin, will improve patient outcomes and prevent unnecessary deterioration of infrastructure. Expanding capacity will be needed to address projected future patient needs.

GOAL R4 - EXPAND CURRENT ON-SITE CAPABILITIES.

As a broad category, there is a need to expand currently available services on site. Suggestions included adding new capital equipment for the hospital (e.g. in-house x-ray machine for immediate evaluation of suspected injuries), improving in-house food production for patients, and developing chick-rearing capacity.

Professional development & best practices

GOAL R5 - IDENTIFY AND PROVIDE FOR HIGH-PRIORITY TRAINING NEEDS OF BOTH PAID STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS.

Improving the quality, scope, and availability of training is identified as important to maintaining best professional practices and staff/volunteer retention. Current training needs must be assessed, and gaps identified and prioritized. This includes considering not only enhancement of training for on-site individuals, but also for the more dispersed network supporting patient transport or release. Strategic planning identified a specific need to expand training to include the Tillamook area because this geographic region is important to the WCNC mission and remains underserved.

Strategic Goals - Education

Needs statement

In order to foster good stewards of the environment, education and engagement of the general public is vital. Proper education can ultimately lead to a better co-existence with wildlife and their habitats, which would decrease unnecessary harm. Wildlife education is an unfilled niche in our community that WCNC has the unique opportunity to fill. Strategic planning activities identified three focal areas for growth, including:

- hiring staff to implement and oversee an education program
- growing the education and outreach program to include both on- and off-site programs, and
- increasing the educational ambassador collection to include a larger variety of native species

Without expansion in these areas, WCNC will not be able to meet the educational needs of the communities we serve.

With respect to these programmatic needs, we have identified goals to help advance our education program.

Strategic Goals - Staffing

GOAL E1 - GROW STAFFING LEVELS TO EXPAND EDUCATION PROGRAM.

Currently WCNC's education program has one seasonal staff person who is focused on administering our Summer camps. Additional staff are needed to develop and oversee the education program (e.g. Education Coordinator) and manage the educational ambassador species (e.g. Ambassador Animal Coordinator) if expansion of the educational program is to take place.

Strategic Goals – Development and Outreach

GOAL E2 – EXPAND EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROGRAM TO INCLUDE BOTH ON- AND OFF-SITE PROGRAMMING.

Currently our program only allows for private, pre-scheduled tours and a limited number of summer camps. To grow this aspect of the program, WCNC would like to include off-site education programs delivered to school groups or other public assemblies. In addition, we see a need to offer more on-site opportunities through educational trails on the property as well as increasingly more open to the public.

Strategic Goals – Educational Ambassadors

GOAL E3 – INCREASE EDUCATIONAL AMBASSADOR COLLECTION

One large and highly effective draw of our education program is the opportunity for the public to see native wildlife up close. Offering the experience of an up-close encounter with native species helps to create a better appreciation for wildlife and fosters compassion, empathy, and respect for the natural world. Having more animal ambassadors increases the opportunity to engage with the public, and more evenly distributes the workload across individual ambassadors, thus increasing their quality of life. WCNC would need to add more animals to serve our communities' educational needs without jeopardizing the mental and physical well-being of the ambassadors.

Strategic Goals - Conservation

Needs Statement

Successful release of rehabilitated wildlife depends on healthy habitat being available for released animals. Without conservation efforts to minimize human impact while at the same time protecting and enhancing habitat for wildlife, release success is compromised, and the rate of sick and injured animals will only rise. Therefore, the strategic planning process identified three areas of conservation concern:

- implementing sustainability practices in WCNC operations
- directly supporting research and restoration actions, and
- providing conservation-focused education and advocacy.

As part of WCNC mission, conservation is an essential strategic focus. It is important to not only use the most environmentally friendly practices at the Center, but also to educate the local community on the necessity of active stewardship of

the planet to ensure a healthy environment for all living beings for generations to come. Given these needs, we outline the following strategic goals for meeting our conservation mission.

Sustainable use of WCNC resources

GOAL C1 - IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES IN DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND LESSEN OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT.

Strategic planning identified specific ways in which WCNC could move towards more environmentally-friendly procedures which include implementing recycling, a compost program, water conservation, and use of alternative products to replace single-use items.

GOAL C2 - PLAN FOR UPGRADING TO SUSTAINABLE VEHICLES/EQUIPMENT, AS WELL AS SEEK PROFESSIONAL INPUT ON LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY GOALS.

When the time comes to purchase new vehicles/equipment, priority should be placed on purchasing items that meet the sustainability industry standard. The advice of a Sustainability Consultant can be sought, if necessary, to ensure that WCNC is doing everything possible to incorporate sustainable practices.

Funding research and restoration

GOAL C3 - DEVELOP A PROGRAM(S) TO INCORPORATE RESEARCH AND RESTORATION INTO WCNC ACTIVITIES.

Habitat restoration or research actions (e.g. bee/pollinator habitat and native plants) at WCNC may include the development of a nature trail or small “in-house” research projects that also serve as a resources for education and outreach programs provided to students and visitors. Ongoing activities to keep up with the latest information, methods, and technology for implementing habitat conservation should become part of WCNC operations.

Conservation-focused educational/outreach/advocacy

GOAL C4 - IMPLEMENT EFFORTS TO INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS, EDUCATION, AND SUPPORT FOR CONSERVATION.

A variety of platforms can be used to accomplish this goal including, but not limited to, showcasing specific films in alignment with WCNC values in a public setting, participation in local government/legislation related to the WCNC mission, and selling reusable tote bags or other “swag” featuring conservation information for the public.

Strategic Goals - Organizational Excellence

Needs Statement

Ensuring the WCNC is resilient, adaptable, and capable of responsible growth requires healthy organizational practices and financial management. Ultimately, we would like to see WCNC grow into a fiscally self-sustaining organization with a highly professional and welcoming workplace culture.

Strategic planning feedback (2019), along with elements from the University of Oregon Nonprofit Clinic (2018) identified the following actions as key elements for growing organizational excellence in WCNC:

- Develop a full array of written Policies and Procedures for
 - human resource needs
 - fund-raising and fiscal practices
 - day-to-day operations and
 - a strategic plan
- Strengthen and retain the volunteer base
- Strengthen community relationships

The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 introduced both operational and fiscal challenges for WCNC, and clearly demonstrated the need for WCNC to have strong yet flexible organizational practices in place to deal with the unexpected, especially:

- Robust continuity of operations/succession planning

Long-term volunteer, donor, and community support are critical, and loss of that critical support can be avoided by having thoughtful strategic and contingency plans in place that allow for continuity of operations in a safe work environment.

We also note here that several Organizational Excellence goals dovetail with goals found in the Rehabilitation section of this document.

Best Practices in Policies & Procedures

GOAL OE1 - HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES

Creation of a professional, positive, respectful, team-oriented environment allows an organization to excel and at the same time minimizes the chance of undesirable litigation. The 2018 nonprofit clinic and the 2019 strategic planning retreat identified the need to develop a complete set of written human resource policies with clearly-defined roles, responsibilities, and accountability for all positions on the team (i.e., board members, paid staff, and volunteers). Written policies should balance the need for transparency with required needs for confidentiality. Benchmarks for evaluating progressive, effective leadership in leadership positions require development.

GOAL OE2 - FISCAL PRACTICES

Growth of WCNC programs and long-term financial stability can only come through prudent stewardship of financial resources. Strategic planning identified needs to develop and implement a purposeful long-term investment strategy for fiscal growth with reasonable risks. For example, if WCNC would like to have funding for a research budget, budget growth needs to be planned accordingly to support it. WCNC also needs to implement adequate written checks and balances for all money-handling procedures to avoid the hazards of theft, embezzlement, and mismanagement of funds.

Board, Staff, & Volunteer development

GOAL OE3 – RECRUITMENT

Recruitment processes for board members and leadership positions need to define and attract the diversity of *bona fide* professional expertise necessary to run all facets of the organization. As such, one strategic objective is to identify the key areas of expertise that are needed. Another is to develop a recruitment strategy to grow the volunteer base to the point where there is a surplus of capable people. Finally, development of a diversity, equity, and inclusion objective for recruitment will be needed to move toward the future goal of having the WCNC board, staff, and volunteers reflect the socio-economic and cultural diversity of the communities we serve.

GOAL OE4 – VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION/ RETENTION

The successful rehabilitation of patients admitted to WCNC relies heavily on volunteers. Therefore it would be beneficial to implement a reward/recognition system based on predetermined and unbiased tiers of achievement which could include things such as limited edition or one-of-a-kind merchandise, recognition at WCNC events, and opportunities to further enhance skill levels through continued education and professional development. Concrete forms of appreciation can also increase retention of experienced volunteers.

GOAL OE5 – SUCCESSION PLANNING

To guarantee continuity of care for patients and maintain organizational stability in the event of expected/unexpected staff or board member turnover, it is imperative to have succession plans for key positions in place. The backbone of any plan should provide detailed job descriptions with clearly written duties/responsibilities for each position. Implementing a mechanism for sharing and tracking critical internal deadlines and essential dates (e.g. permit renewals, taxes, annual grants) among staff and board members is needed.

Community Relationships

GOAL OE6 – UNIFIED MESSAGING AND BRAND RECOGNITION

To better serve wildlife in need, it is important that all citizens - including WCNC staff, donors, and volunteers - are fully aware of the WCNC mission and strategic goals. Consistent, unified, fact-based messaging internally and externally is critical to developing strong community relationships. Activities that increase community awareness of and engagement with WCNC need to be implemented to achieve “brand recognition” throughout our regional community such that citizens know the proper actions to take when assisting injured wildlife. “Good press” through a positive relationship with news and social media is seen as a key factor to enhance the WCNC reputation. Actions that make it easier for the public to contact WCNC and drop off patients (e.g. improving

entrance/campus signage), increase opportunities for the public to engage in educational programs, and support conservation of resources, wildlife, and habitat are desired.

Annual Work Plan Template

Overview

PURPOSE OF ANNUAL WORK PLANS

In order to realize Strategic Goals of the Wildlife Center of the North Coast (WCNC), it is necessary to create and implement Annual Work Plans (AWPs) for each calendar year that lay out specific objectives, task assignments, resource allocations, and timelines to make measurable progress towards goals. To that end, we include a template to be used in the creation of AWPs. Some objectives can be met in a single year (e.g. writing of a new governance policy), whereas other long-term objectives will take more than one year in a 5-year strategic cycle to accomplish in full (e.g. growing the endowment fund to \$250K). It may be that not every Strategic Goal has an objective in a given year; if that is the case, then any goal without an objective can be noted in that year's plan with a brief explanation of why that is the case.

ANNUAL WORK PLAN TEMPLATE

The WCNC Annual Work Plan Template below is a resource guide based on the needs and goals identified for the 2021-2026 planning period. The primary function of this template is to make clear, explicit connections between proposed actions for a given year and how those actions support implementation of the goals in the Strategic Plan. Please refer to the Strategic Goals section for full details describing each area of focus, as well as specific goals outlined within those sections.

ANNUAL WORK PLAN CREATION/REVIEW

To provide flexibility according to current internal and external circumstances affecting WCNC, the AWP will be reviewed and updated each year. We recommend the Strategic Planning Committee organize and facilitate a half-day Board Retreat in October or November, to be attended by both the Executive Director and the full Board. This timing is intended to coordinate with yearly budget planning and goal-setting for the Executive Director that takes place during November/December, since there should be good alignment with AWP objectives and those planning components for the same year. Inclusion of the whole Board in crafting the AWP ensures that everyone is familiar with strategic goals and objectives for the upcoming year.

The AWP should be finalized and approved by the Board no later than the January Board Meeting in the year when the plan is to be implemented (e.g. the 2022 AWP should be approved in January of 2022).

Annual Work Plan - Rehabilitation

Strategic Goal - Staffing

ACTION ITEM R1 – GROW STAFFING LEVELS TO MEET PROJECTED PATIENT CAPACITY FOR THE NEXT 5 YEARS AND ENSURE COVERAGE OF CRITICAL STAFF FUNCTIONS.

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

ACTION ITEM R2 - DEVELOP REDUNDANCY IN REHABILITATION PERMIT HOLDERS TO ENSURE CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS DURING STAFF TURNOVER.

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Strategic Goal - Infrastructure & equipment

ACTION ITEM R3 – UPDATE/IMPROVE EXISTING ENCLOSURES AND ADD FILTERED POOL CAPACITY.

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

ACTION ITEM R4 – EXPAND CURRENT ON-SITE CAPABILITIES.

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Strategic Goal - Professional Development & Best Practices

ACTION ITEM R5 – IDENTIFY AND PROVIDE FOR HIGH-PRIORITY TRAINING NEEDS OF BOTH PAID STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS.

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Annual Work Plan - Education

Strategic Goal - Staffing

ACTION ITEM E1 – GROW STAFFING LEVELS TO EXPAND EDUCATION PROGRAM.

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Strategic Goal – Development and Outreach

ACTION ITEM E2 – EXPAND EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROGRAM TO INCLUDE BOTH ON- AND OFF-SITE PROGRAMMING.

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Strategic Goal – Educational Ambassadors

ACTION ITEM E3 – INCREASE EDUCATIONAL AMBASSADOR COLLECTION

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Annual Work Plan - Conservation

Strategic Goal Sustainable Use of WCNC Resources

ACTION ITEM C1 - IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES IN DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND LESSEN OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT.

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

ACTION ITEM C2 - PLAN FOR UPGRADING TO SUSTAINABLE VEHICLES/EQUIPMENT, AS WELL AS SEEK PROFESSIONAL INPUT ON LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY GOALS.

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Strategic Goal - Funding Research and Restoration

ACTION ITEM C3 - DEVELOP A PROGRAM(S) TO INCORPORATE RESEARCH AND RESTORATION INTO WCNC ACTIVITIES.

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Strategic Goal - Conservation-focused Education/Outreach/Advocacy

ACTION ITEM C4 - IMPLEMENT EFFORTS TO INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS, EDUCATION, AND SUPPORT FOR CONSERVATION.

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Annual Work Plan - Organizational Excellence

Strategic Goal - Best Practices in Policies & Procedures

ACTION ITEM OE1 - HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

ACTION ITEM OE2 - FISCAL PRACTICES

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Strategic Goal - Board, Staff, & Volunteer development

ACTION ITEM OE3 - RECRUITMENT

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

ACTION ITEM OE4 - VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION/RETENTION

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

ACTION ITEM OE5 - SUCCESSION PLANNING

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Strategic Goal - Community Relationships

ACTION ITEM OE6 –BRAND RECOGNITION

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Task 4:

Task 5:

Personnel Assignments, Metrics & Timeline:

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Dedication and Acknowledgements

This document is dedicated to the memory of WCNC Founder Sharnelle Fee, whose tireless work and passionate commitment to helping wildlife in need gave birth to an organization that is now maturing and thriving.

We thank all those who individuals who contributed hours and hours of time to the great endeavor of creating this document for the benefit of WCNC. Staff, volunteers and Board Members serving the WCNC during the period 2017-2021 all contributed in some way to the content of this document. Their efforts will guide WCNC for years to come.