



Conservation Federation
MISSOURI

Five-Year Strategic Plan
March 2015 - March 2020

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Message from the Board

As the Conservation Federation of Missouri moves through its 80th year of existence, we can look back with a great sense of pride. We have accomplished much as an organization on our own and in partnership with others. Our foundation is solid and our purpose over the years has been clear. However, the challenges we face today and in the future are many and great.

As it was 80 years ago, the battle for conservation and scientific management of our natural resources wages on as political forces continue to seek ways to control the work of conservation and natural resource professionals. The demands and shifting character of society today requires all of us to think differently about the management and use of the land, water, and related forests, fish, and wildlife resources. And with so many voices trying to be heard, it is increasingly difficult to squeeze through the crowd to find a place at the table.

This strategic plan is an effort to fine-tune and focus the Federation in order to better prepare for the immediate challenges and what lies ahead in the future. It does not address everything the organization needs to do, but it does highlight our most fundamental priorities, with the overriding idea that we exist primarily to further the cause of conservation and to provide the citizens a voice in the ongoing debate.

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This Plan identifies goals and objectives that will guide CFM over the next five years. Objectives are supported by an initial set of strategies that will be evaluated and modified over time as needed. Staff will use objectives and strategies as the basis for development of annual work plans and accomplishment reporting.

Strategic Planning - Anticipatory decision-making meant to establish a framework for making day-to-day decisions, and a means by which those decisions may be evaluated.

Goals - Generalized directional statements for an intended purpose (e.g., to improve, increase, maintain, decrease, provide, etc.); qualitative and usually not quantified.

Objectives - Concise statements of what will be accomplished.

Introduction

The Conservation Federation of Missouri (CFM) Board of Directors has the responsibility to conduct and manage the business of the Federation. An essential prerequisite for effectively meeting that responsibility is the availability of a strategic plan that articulates organizational goals and objectives that may be used as the basis for effectively conducting CFM activities for the next 3-5 years.

In December 2014, CFM's Board approved Priority Goals recommended by the Strategic Planning Committee. Pursuant to that action, on December 13 and 14, 2014, the Committee conducted a Strategic Planning Summit. Recommendations and ideas from the Summit and input from subsequent discussions with the Strategic Planning Committee have been incorporated into this updated strategic plan.

The Mission of the Conservation Federation of Missouri

To ensure conservation of Missouri's wildlife and natural resources, and preservation of our state's rich outdoor heritage through advocacy, education and partnerships.

Advocacy and Coordination

For nearly 80 years, CFM has been known as "The Voice for Missouri's Outdoors." Actively involved in state and national issues relating to conservation and natural resources, the Federation has long been a prominent and effective leader,

respected for our opinion and fairness. Our history of standing tall for Missouri conservation speaks for itself.

Today, however, many voices are vying for the listener's ear, and it has become increasingly difficult to distinguish which issues are important and worthy of our time. We believe it is our duty to sort through the clutter, and to advance a balanced opinion representative of the views and values held by all Missourians who believe in the idea of wise use and scientific management of our state's abundant natural resources.

We also understand that no single organization can tackle the challenges alone. We are committed to the notion that the work of well informed citizens is the quickest path to success when armed with facts and an understanding of the process.

For these reasons, we are committed to serving as a convener, facilitator, and coordinator for the purpose of building relationships and achieving common goals between and among interest groups; to working with all organizations and agencies to develop and advance programs and policies important to our members, affiliates, and conservationists across the state; and to formulating well developed, defensible positions on topics of interest to our members and affiliates.

Conservation and Natural Resources

The Federation's history is deeply connected to the departments of Conservation and Natural Resources through the many common goals we share. As a result, our relationship is significant and complex. We clearly feel a responsibility to advocate for continuation of authorities and funding that have been granted to these agencies by the voters of Missouri. We also seek opportunities to support the programs and actions of these agencies consistent with our own mission. And finally, we serve as a watchdog and overseer, understanding that a special

level of public accountability is required of these agencies because of their unique standing and responsibilities.

These two agencies, however, are not the only entities with a similar vested interest and set of responsibilities. We also look for opportunities to work in partnership with other local, state, and federal agencies that have the ability to influence the conservation of our precious natural resources, and how those resources might be used and enjoyed by citizens today and in the future. In addition, many state and national non-governmental organizations (e.g., many CFM affiliates, the National Wildlife Federation) can influence and achieve favorable outcomes when working together.

GOAL I - To successfully advocate for scientifically sound and necessary conservation and natural resource laws, regulations, policies, and programs at the local, state, and federal levels.

GOAL II - To preserve and ensure continuation of the authority and dedicated funding assigned to the Missouri Conservation Commission as articulated in the State Constitution.

GOAL III - To preserve and ensure continuation of the authority and dedicated funding assigned to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources for the purposes of soil and water conservation, and state parks.

Objective A. Monitor legislative and policy initiatives at the state and federal levels, and regularly engage and inform the board, members, and general public about the need for action.

Objective B. Actively work to influence the outcome of legislative and policy initiatives through all means available consistent with our mission and limits of our 501(c)(3) tax status.

Objective C. Develop and implement an advocacy component for the Missouri Stream Team Program that meets the advocacy goals of both CFM and the Missouri Stream Team Watershed Coalition.

CFM Resolutions

A critical activity performed by CFM is the monitoring of conservation and natural resource issues and the formulation of an organizational stance or position based on the best available information and/or science. Member and board supported resolutions are frequently developed as a means of expressing CFM support, opposition, recognition, or advice on a particular topic. CFM resolutions are one of the most powerful expressions of our opinion as a conservation organization.

GOAL I - To regularly monitor issues important to CFM and to prepare well researched, vetted, and timely resolutions consistent with our organizational mission and goals.

Objective A. Improve and formalize the resolution development and approval process by October 1, 2015; fully implement changes ahead of the 2016 convention.

Legislative Action Center

The CFM Legislative Action Center exists for the purpose of establishing a community of citizen-activists interested in taking action in support or opposition to legislative, regulatory, or policy issues affecting the use and enjoyment of our state and nation's natural resources. Through the Action Center, interested citizens may join and receive regular and timely updates about issues of concern with information to help them engage in the legislative and policy making process.

GOAL I - To create a community of citizen-activists and provide them with the information and tools needed for tracking and taking action on issues of common interest.

Objective A. Develop a political action tool box and training for board members, affiliates, and general members as a method of strengthening CFM's ability to address political/legislative issues.

Outreach and Education

As we carry forward the work and vision of those who came before us, we must ensure CFM remains relevant and that our purpose is clear and well understood. Engaging and convening members and non-members around issues of common interest, inspiring action, and creating a long-term commitment to Missouri's natural resources is our ultimate goal. Fundamentally, we are a community of citizens who care deeply about conservation, natural resources, hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation. Our biggest challenge is achieving statewide name recognition and trust in a way that leads to substantial growth of this community, and an expectation that CFM will help lead the way for the future.

As we have done in the past, CFM will bring the full force of its name and reputation to programs and initiatives that focus on the involvement and engagement of our members and affiliates, with a special emphasis on advocacy, education, leadership, community service, and the youth of Missouri.

GOAL I - To be recognized as the leader and voice of Missouri citizens regarding the conservation, use, and enjoyment of Missouri's outdoors and natural resources.

Objective A. Develop and implement a basic two-year communications and marketing strategy by July 1, 2015.

Objective B. Increase CFM's overall media presence statewide; produce regular communications about programs, projects,

successes, and funding needs via magazine, website, social media, presentations, and other appropriate methods.

Objective C. Develop and improve CFM's digital and print media capabilities consistent with contemporary, mainstream trends and use patterns.

GOAL II - To promote and support educational programs that help citizens discover and understand the importance of natural resources and the outdoors to their quality of life and economic well-being.

Objective A. Collaborate with affiliates and other organizations on programs that address hunter/angler recruitment, participation, retention, and ethics.

Objective B. Collaborate with affiliates and other organizations on programs that promote nature-based outdoor recreation and education.

Conservation Leadership Corps

Securing Missouri's natural resources for their use and enjoyment today and in the future depends strongly on the interest and direct engagement of an informed citizenry. Ensuring future generations are prepared to tackle the challenges ahead and provide leadership is a critical role for CFM.

The Conservation Leadership Corps (CLC) offers high school and college students a unique opportunity to learn about conservation advocacy with an emphasis on policy development, communication skills, teamwork, and leadership. CLC also provides a meaningful, educational experience while interacting with established conservation leaders.

Through this program, we hope to develop the next generation of conservation leaders as well as enthusiastic future CFM members. Regardless of where their chosen careers lead them, it is our hope that CLC participants are prepared to personally influence the management and conservation of Missouri's natural resources for the benefit of all Missourians and beyond.

GOAL I - To develop the next generation of natural resource conservation leaders through educational programs and mentorship, while also promoting a life-long affiliation with CFM.

Objective A. Appoint a small (6) member work group to assess CLC performance and write a three-year implementation strategy by September 1, 2015.

Objective B. Recruit up to 90 qualified Missouri students into the CLC each year by engaging teachers, CFM members, and affiliates in the recruitment process.

Objective C. Seek 75% retention rate of student participation of each year's CLC program.

Objective D. Develop a funding strategy for secure long-term funding of CLC and staff support.

Objective E. Hire a (full or part- time) CLC Coordinator position.

Outdoor Action Committee

A product of the 2009 Summit on the Future of Missouri Outdoors, the Outdoor Action Committee (OAK) was formed as a way to collectively tap the mission, thinking, and capabilities of many different public and private organizations, all who have a vested interest in Missouri's outdoors and natural resources. Essentially a roundtable of inspired leaders, OAK works to

leverage actions and resources around overarching priorities critical to the future of Missourians and the natural resources on which they depend.

As all organizations have limitations and constraints, OAK seeks ways to bridge the gaps through a fostering of ideas and shared communications. OAK also provides a venue for leveraging resources and coordinating action. As a citizen-led organization, CFM provides a perfect environment for facilitating the efforts of this important group.

GOAL I - To serve as convener and partner for collaboration and enhanced efforts among agencies, organizations, and citizens in the creation and fulfillment of a vision for Missouri's outdoors.

Share the Harvest

In 1992, Missouri archers initiated a system to share deer meat (venison) they harvested with people in need. From that beginning a statewide program was developed in partnership between the Department of Conservation and the Conservation Federation of Missouri called *Share the Harvest*. Today, this program provides an easy way for hunters to donate lean, high protein venison to Missourians in need of food. Moreover, cooperating meat processors get positive feedback for their involvement, other participating organizations win by having a ready-made community service project to support, and the Department of Conservation has yet another tool to use in management of Missouri's valuable deer resource.

GOAL I - To achieve 6,500 whole deer donations annually.

Objective A. Increase the number of deer hunters actively donating deer to the *Share the Harvest* program to 5,000 (2014-15 season baseline: 3,961 Missouri deer hunters).

Objective B. Secure one additional significant funding source each year for the next three years.

Awards and Scholarships

The work of conservation and natural resource management is accomplished in many different ways and at many different levels. Awards are an important way for CFM to recognize commitment and achievements that may otherwise go unnoticed or be underappreciated. Moreover, timely recognition of accomplishments and excellence serves to inspire and build long-term relationships.

Supporting the pursuit of dreams and the next generation of professionals is the purpose of CFM scholarships. Investing in today's youth as they work to achieve their educational goals is an important way for CFM to demonstrate its commitment to the future of Missouri and natural resource management.

GOAL I - To seek out and annually recognize those who demonstrate an extraordinary level of commitment and accomplishment with regard to the conservation and management of Missouri's natural resources, and all that it represents.

Objective A. Identify a pool of nominees by January 1 of each year, adequate to advance one nominee in each award category.

GOAL II - To promote and enhance the CFM scholarship series while facilitating the annual process of screening and awards.

Objective A. Promote the availability of scholarships and screen applicants by January of each year, adequate to advance one award for each scholarship at the CFM convention.

Funding and Finances

Organizational growth, and to some degree, effectiveness depends heavily on our ability to seek and maintain a steady stream of financial supporters whether it be members, donors, or other means. Moreover, proper management of existing funds and investments is critical to our future success because those funds have been given to us in a moment of trust and with an implied or explicit expectation.

Asking for money is difficult but a core part of most any active non-governmental 501(c)(3) organization. Fortunately, our over-arching purpose is highly regarded by most people, and our history shows that when the cause is clear and justified, support will come. However, competition among and between groups and various causes means we must continuously seek financial support, but to do so in a strategic way with an eye on securing our future as an organization.

GOAL I - To aggressively increase CFM's funds development activities for the purpose of significantly enhancing our conservation programs and general operating capacity.

GOAL II - To achieve a level of annual income (from all sources) adequate to support and sustain the operational needs of the organization.

Objective A. Develop and implement a three-year diversified funds development strategy by September 1, 2015 followed by an annual fundraising work plan each year.

Objective B. Achieve annual operating/program income adequate to meet anticipated needs and growth.

Objective C. Develop and implement by September 1, 2015 a reserve/investment fund strategy.

Objective D. By March 2017, CFM has at least ten new donors (\$5,000+), and 3 major donors (\$10,000+).

Organizational Development

All successful organizations must change and adapt to meet the challenges of their environment. Even the Federation, with its long, storied history must be aware of changing conditions and the need to be agile, timely, and relevant. So as we look to the future, we will remain aware of our past and those who have come before us; but we will not rest on the laurels of our history.

Building our organizational capacity will be critical to effectively fulfilling our mission and growing programs and initiatives. Key elements will include choosing our priorities carefully and adding or maintaining staff so that we may accomplish our goals while growing and living within our means.

Finally, inspired volunteerism has always been a centerpiece of CFM. Of course, some people give more of their time than others, but it's important to understand that regardless of whether someone is an avid, occasional, or potential contributor to the CFM cause, everyone is important to our future success. Therefore, it is critical that we engage our members in ways that are respectful and worthy of the trust and commitment they bestow to the Federation. Inspired volunteers/members, adequate funding, and a dedicated professional staff are the core organizational elements that make CFM strong.

GOAL I - To develop and sustain a substantial dedicated membership representative of the diverse character and interests found within Missouri.

Objective A. Develop and implement a 3-year membership strategy by July 1, 2015.

Objective B. Increase membership (individual/family/student/sustaining/lifetime combined) annually (i.e., positive growth), achieving 10,000 members by 2020 (January 1, 2015 baseline: 3,680).

- Individual Memberships \$35 (January 1, 2015 baseline: 3,151)
- Family Memberships \$60 (January 1, 2015 baseline: 10)
- Student Memberships \$20 (January 1, 2015 baseline: 119)
- Sustaining Memberships \$100 (January 1, 2015 baseline: 183)
- Lifetime Memberships \$1,000 (January 1, 2015 baseline: 217)

Objective C. Increase the number of affiliate memberships (January 1, 2015 baseline: 76); diversify affiliate members to include more non-traditional members (e.g., mountain bikers, campers, horseback riders, etc.)

Objective D. Increase the number of business alliance members by 100% over the next five years (5 contribution levels \$250 - \$10,000; January 1, 2015 baseline: 58 all levels combined).

Objective E. Determine member satisfaction regarding CFM direction and program goals through a general membership survey in January 2016.

GOAL II - To build organizational staff capacity sufficient to fully accomplish our mission and enhance CFM's stature and operational ability.

Objective A. Assess current and future staffing needs; develop a prioritized, position-based staffing strategy.

Objective B. Assess training needs for professional staff and provide training/workshop opportunities as appropriate.

GOAL III - To relocate CFM offices to a new, contemporary building that will adequately handle the need for staff work space, meeting space, and storage needs.

Objective A. Develop a conceptual building and office space plan by January 1, 2016.

Governance

Among the factors determining organizational success are 1) clear sense of purpose and direction, 2) inspired members, 3) an engaged and visionary leadership, and 4) a dedicated, passionate staff.

Meeting organizational needs and future challenges requires us to continuously improve leadership and management as well as our supporting processes and procedures. As we move forward, we must give special attention to keeping board members diverse and enthusiastic, staff roles and responsibilities clearly defined, and governing processes and procedures up-to-date.

GOAL I - To maintain a diverse and active board of directors engaged in organizational leadership, direction setting, and funds development.

Objective A. Produce and regularly update a succession plan for board members and officers, including a list of potential, future board members.

Objective B. Conduct regularly planned board and committee meetings for purposes of conducting CFM business, training, and maintaining organizational cohesiveness.

Objective C. Conduct a comprehensive review of the board structure and function and make recommendations for modifications and improvements by January 1, 2016.

GOAL II - To ensure CFM has an up-to-date set of by-laws, rules and operational policies adequate to protect the integrity and needs of the organization.

Objective A. Ensure all needed operational policies have been identified, updated, and/or developed.

Objective B. Regularly review the status of the by-laws and make annual recommendations for action.

GOAL III - To ensure all critical staff operational and procedural activities are identified, reviewed, updated, and readily accessible.

Objective A. Develop a staff operational/procedures manual by January 1, 2016.

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