

WVOA Strategic Plan 2020-25

Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2021-22

GOAL I - Financial Stability

- ❖ Become financially independent and/or less financially dependent on one-time donors and donations by expanding membership by 25% by 2023, increasing advertising income by 0.5% per year by 2025, identifying specific expenses that could be sponsored and inform members of these (named or anonymous) opportunities by June 30, 2020; present these opportunities to the membership by December 31, 2020.

Membership Committee is working on ideas to make more woodland owners aware of WVOA. New Advertising Sales Consultants were hired during the fiscal year. Unfortunately, we were not able to hold the 2020 Annual Meeting. During this time, WVOA developed new online educational seminars including the winter woodland owner conference series, legal seminars, and a timber tax workshop. WVOA hopes to provide more online programming in the future to diversify our income.

WVOA has had a series of Advertising Sales Consultants that have been unable to increase magazine advertising. The position is currently vacant. WVOA hopes to provide more online programming in the future to diversify our income. WVOA investments were moved to Edward Jones for more timely management. The Board continues to work on creating a self-directed Endowment Fund. WVOA greatly appreciates the Memorial Funds designated by families of deceased members. Some funds are used for special purposes such as a portion of the Helen Moberg fund went to the Women of WVOA, the Rachel Jordan fund helped us purchase a new laptop computer, the Janet Lehrer fund grew our Endowment Fund, while the Al Steele fund helped defray 2022 Annual Meeting expenses.

- ❖ Create a long-term fundraising strategy, which does not cause donor fatigue, leveraging input from WVOA volunteers and consultants by June 30, 2025.
Special thank you to Mark Erickson and the Fundraising Committee for a second year record for the Annual Fundraiser!

GOAL II - Leadership

- ❖ WVOA volunteers are instrumental in achieving WVOA's mission. WVOA will design and implement a more formal volunteer program by December 31, 2023. *Through generous donors, WVOA has been able to continue to host an AmeriCorps Volunteer Wisconsin member, Tristan Persson, in 2020-2021. As WVOA's volunteer coordinator, she led the inaugural year of the WVOA Woodland Mentor Program. Volunteer mentors and Aspens (inexperienced members) donated a total of 828.25 hours. WVOA's volunteer Board of Directors and Chapter Officers donated time to continue to lead WVOA during this difficult time. The Publications Committee members continued to produce an amazing magazine. While the 2020 (now 2021) Annual Meeting Planning Committee members persevered to create and host the 2021 Annual Meeting in Hudson.*

Through generous donors, WVOA has been able to continue to host an AmeriCorps member, Violet Thielke, in 2021-2022. As WVOA's volunteer coordinator, she led the 2nd year of the WVOA Woodland Mentor Program, increasing its resources. WVOA's volunteer Board of Directors and Chapter Officers donated time to expand WVOA programming as we move out of the pandemic. The Publications Committee members continued to produce an amazing magazine.

- ❖ WWOA will annually conduct leadership training for WWOA Board of Directors, Chapter Chairs, staff and other members interested in leadership development. *WWOA Board of Directors, chapter board members and staff attended a half day of online leadership development on January 19, 2021. Haley Frater of the WI Forestry Center provided a Zoom training session. Attendees learn more about each WWOA chapter. The group also reviewed the 2020-25 Strategic Plan and timeline. WWOA Board of Directors designed and scheduled a Leadership Retreat for January 2022, however the COVID-19 rates increased significantly resulting in postponement and finally cancellation of this event.*
- ❖ Establish a subcommittee of the Chapter Chairs Committee to review the chapters' operating structure, and clarify state and local membership looking for common ground and ways to streamline how chapters function within WWOA. Committee will report findings to WWOA Board at September 2021 quarterly meeting. *This has been put on hold until in person meetings can be regularly scheduled.*
- ❖ President to appoint an ad hoc committee focused on evaluating the current and future committee structures by March 2020 quarterly Board meeting and by September 2020 report findings to WWOA Board at quarterly meeting. *President Randy Cooper appointed director Tom Kempen to work with a committee to review WWOA's committee structure. This was completed at the April 7, 2020, Board of Director's meeting where the new committee structure was approved.*

GOAL III - Communication

- ❖ WWOA Board will appoint a committee of select chapter chairs to create a new statewide communication plan with a goal of implementing the plan statewide by September 30, 2021. *Chapter Chairs from Chippewa Valley, Northwest, Phoenix Falls and Wolf River chapters have been working on this communication plan under Debbie Schroeder Fisher's leadership. Due to COVID-19 in person chapter activities have been cancelled or subsequently limited so the communications plan implementation is on hold. The document was completed in Fall 2021 and is available for chapters to implement. As part of the plan, the WWOA office is assisting chapters in communicating their events to WWOA members through direct emails, postings on the website, and our Facebook page.*
- ❖ Enhance WWOA's visibility by presenting or providing WWOA displays at 10 events for other conservation groups in 2021; increase presentations 40% per year by 2025. *In person events were very limited in 2020-21 as they were in 2019-20.*
- ❖ Review and possibly revise WWOA's current mission and vision statements. *Draft approved by WWOA Board on April 28, 2020. WWOA members will vote on this proposed change at the 2021 Annual Meeting on September 18, 2021. WWOA members approved the proposed change at the 2021 Annual Meeting on September 18, 2021. The new Mission Statement has replaced WWOA's Purpose.*

REVISED ARTICLE IV – MISSION STATEMENT

Section 1. The mission of the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association is to conserve and enhance the private woodlands of the state through the following actions:

- *Sustainably manage our woodlands with informed management plans that utilize best silviculture* practices;*
- *Assist private landowners in achieving their management goals by connecting them with natural resource professionals and fellow woodland owners;*

• Educate the public on the value of woodlands for economic, environmental, recreational, and wildlife habitat purposes.

These actions will ensure future generations can enjoy the natural beauty and benefits of our woodlands.

Our vision is to be the “go to” organization to assist woodland owners in achieving their sustainable forestry goals.

**Silviculture – The care and development of forests in order to obtain a product or provide a benefit.*

GOAL IV - Building Membership

- ❖ In effort to increase membership by 25% by 2023, complete an analysis on a variety of innovative methods and select five approaches to implement. *WWOA Board approved creating an online advertising campaign and allocated funding for this effort in 2021-22. The Membership Committee developed 5 Facebook advertisements in 2021-22. These ads reached more than 98,000 people resulting in more than 1400 clicks through to our website. This increased awareness of WWOA and grew our Facebook audience.*
- ❖ Create a 5-year marketing strategy supporting WWOA’s mission leveraging an ad hoc committee of WWOA volunteers and professionals (with marketing/advertising/communications skills) by March 31, 2020 to develop a plan. Present the plan to the WWOA Board for approval at the March 2021 quarterly meeting. *The Membership Committee has been working on ideas to create an outreach and marketing strategy.*
- ❖ Supported by the WWOA Membership Committee, develop one collaborative project with 1-2 statewide partners to increase the membership base by interfacing with a minimum of 1,000 non-WWOA, private woodland owners in Wisconsin by 2022. *In 2020-21, WWOA led a partnership of the various organizations that hosted the six Winter Woodland Owner Conferences across the state to create three online Saturday morning sessions on a variety of topics. WWOA incorporated the use of Eventbrite allowing for online registration for this conference. WWOA applied for a grant in 2022 to work on this, however the project was not funded.*

GOAL V – Education

- ❖ President will appoint an ad hoc committee by January 31, 2020, to develop a sustainable plan to determine an annual meeting site by January 31 of the prior year. This will include at least one alternative to chapter sponsorship. Plan to be developed and presented to the WWOA Board for approval by December 31, 2021. *Committee was formed at the Leadership meeting on September 18, 2021 and Nancy Bozek contacted them for assistance in selecting a site for 2023. Some of these committee members did serve on the 2022 Annual Meeting Planning Committee.*
- ❖ Website Chair and committee members starting in January 2020 will gather costs, feasibility, and information related to creating a web-based interactive forum to be presented to the WWOA Board at their March 2021 quarterly meeting for approval. *The Membership Committee has discussed creating a new website for WWOA with the Website Committee.*

- ❖ Establish a volunteer committee, with AmeriCorps member assistance, in 2020, to analyze 2018 membership survey responses to identify valued WWOA services and create a plan to improve them starting in 2021. *A volunteer committee of WWOA Board members with assistance from the AmeriCorps member reviewed the 2018 membership survey results and assembled suggestions to improve various valued WWOA services. Learn Something New email series was created during the COVID 19 virus emergency to keep in touch with WWOA members and provide online information on a variety of topics. New online seminars were offered during the year in place of in person programming.*
- ❖ Continue WWOA's Growing Your Legacy project and promote use of the My Land Handbook through educational workshops and outreach materials during 2020-2025. *WWOA has continued the Growing Your Legacy project by connecting woodland owners to WDNR foresters for woods walks, providing our Growing Your Legacy brochure, and My Land Handbook to those requesting these resources. The My Land Handbook is also incorporated into WWOA's Woodland Mentor program and is available on WWOA's website under Resources.*
- ❖ Promote and grow WWOA's Forestry Leader Scholarship at UW-Stevens Point providing a minimum of one \$5,000 scholarship to a student majoring in Forest Management per academic year. *In early 2020, WWOA presented a \$5,000 scholarship to Steven Krueger of Withee. The University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives, Cooperative Forestry Funding grant received in Spring 2020 allowed WWOA to present two additional \$5,000 scholarships in the Spring of 2020 to Colby Powers of Sauk City and Brody Fischer of Exeland. In 2021, Tou Ger Vue of Eau Claire was the recipient of WWOA's Forestry Leader Scholarship. WWOA sends out a postcard to eligible UWSP forestry students each autumn to inform them of the scholarship. In 2022, the Scholarship Committee requested that the WWOA Board support two scholarship recipients since they had two very qualified students. This was approved by the WWOA Board. Members continue to support this initiative through their donations and through word of mouth promotion of the Scholarship to family members and friends.*
- ❖ Leveraging AmeriCorps employee and WWOA volunteers create a mentoring program with a goal of supporting 50 new members by 2023; scale the program to support 100 new members by 2025. *WWOA received a University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives, Cooperative Forestry Funding grant in Spring 2020 to create WWOA's Woodland Mentor program with the goal of assisting inactive or new WWOA members in finding the resources they need to move toward sustainably managing their woodlands. The inaugural year resulted in 13 "Aspen" or inexperienced members mentored by 11 experienced WWOA members. WWOA's Woodland Mentor program continued in Fall 2021 with our AmeriCorps member, Violet Thielke, reviewing the curriculum and adding online resources such as videos, podcasts, and other multi-media resources. The second year of the program, we had 11 Aspens and 9 Mentors. Evaluations of the program continue to show that Mentors and Aspens feel it is a valuable experience. WWOA is currently seeking volunteer Mentors and Aspens for the 2022-2023 class starting this Fall.*

The WWOA Board of Directors encourages members interested in working on any of these goals or sharing their talents to assist us in implementing this plan to contact the WWOA office.