

Network of Oregon Watershed Councils

Strategic Plan 2014-2017

Executive summary

This strategic plan is the culmination of a comprehensive planning process undertaken by the Network of Oregon Watershed Councils from late 2013 through 2014. The process included extensive input from board and staff members, as well as key organizational partners, funders, and council leaders who do not serve on the Network’s board of directors. The plan—in concert with the Network’s vision and mission—is intended to guide work over the next three years. It may also be adapted to reflect the Network’s changing operating environment and capacity.

We affirm the Network’s continuing roles in supporting and enhancing the effectiveness of Oregon’s watershed councils to achieve greater collective impact on watershed health. We bring a collaborative discipline to our work. Strong partnerships are critical to our success, and we intend to build upon the partnerships we currently have with the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD), Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts (COLT), and other conservation organizations.

We also recognize that OWEB alone cannot singlehandedly fund the Network. While the new partnership with OACD leverages our capacity, extends our reach, and provides greater opportunity for our members, our work faces increasing competition and limited resources. To meet this challenge, the Network must build strong institutional support from a broader network of public and private partners and funders.

This strategic plan will focus on five priorities concerning both program and organizational goals, each with a specific set of strategies and intended outcomes.

The Board adopted the final version of this strategic plan on November 12, 2014.

2014 - 2017 Strategic Direction: Goals and Priorities

Organizational Goals	Build our Leadership	The Network has a deeply engaged board that provides programmatic support functions to staff as well as strong guidance for the organization’s direction.
	Enhance our Staff Capacity	The Network attracts and retains talented staff with the necessary skills to lead programs and operations.
	Expand our Revenue	The Network has the secure, consistent, and diverse resources it requires for mission delivery.
Program Goals	Grow our Impact	Watershed Councils have opportunities to build peer relationships, engage in peer-to-peer learning, and enhance their effectiveness.
	Advance the Field	Policy makers, funders and partners understand the value of watershed councils and their work.

Organizational Goals

Build our leadership. To meet the programmatic goals outlined in this strategic plan, the Network requires the support of a deeply engaged board of directors to support staff and ensure the organization remains aligned with and focused on its strategic priorities. Following the adage “many hands make light work,” Board leadership development and board and committee re-structuring will provide a more sustainable leadership model and increase long term efficiency and capacity in organizational governance. New committees will be supported by clear committee charters, work plans and job descriptions to clarify roles and responsibilities. The Executive Committee in particular will take the lead on board development activities include identifying and cultivating prospective board members with appropriate skill sets and providing existing board members with annual training opportunities on relevant nonprofit and watershed conservation topics.

The role of our Executive Committee will be focused into the areas of fundraising, financial management, and personnel support and oversight. This committee will drive the two final goal areas, concerning staffing and revenue.

Enhance our staff capacity. The Network faces capacity challenges associated with a single staff person and an all-volunteer board. In order to meet programmatic goals and provide sustainable support to Network members, the Network must have the staff capacity to meet its stated needs. This means supporting and investing in the development of existing highly skilled staff and exploring additional sources of revenue to bring in support staff. The Network will also continue to focus on partnership opportunities that leverage and extend staff capacity.

Expand our Revenue. In order to fulfill its mission, the Network must develop a secure, consistent, and diverse set of funders and resources. The Network will update its revenue model by implementing a new membership dues structure and pursuing additional sources of revenue. To attract and maintain broad participation, the Network must ensure that program deliverables are valuable to its members and articulate its value to the sector. To grow membership, the Network will form a board-driven Membership Committee to lead annual outreach and member renewal campaigns. Membership recruitment will begin immediately upon the formation of this committee. The Network will also increase its efforts in seeking private grants and corporate sponsorships, and by building and leveraging agency partnerships.

Program Goals

Grow our impact. The Network is expanding its role as a convener of conservation organizations, with a focus on watershed councils as its primary constituency. A greater focus on resource sharing and collaboration reflects the importance of the continued partnership with OWEB and the developing partnership with OACD and COLT. Our partnerships serve as replicable models for our member councils. The Network’s efforts in cultivating and

maintaining these and other partnerships builds our capacity, which then extends to our member councils, increasing the impact of watershed council work in the general field.

Over the next three years, we will actively grow the impact of our member councils by providing capacity-building opportunities and facilitating peer-to-peer learning, peer relationships, and other collaborative efforts. Our annual conference, regional meetings, and technical assistance trainings will all feature peer-developed, peer-led content that will showcase innovation and best practices by member councils and highlight member successes.

Our Outreach and Education Committee will play an active role in advancing this programmatic area.

Advance the field. The Network advances the field through effective policy work to help policy makers, government agencies, funders, and partners understand the value of watershed councils and their work. We help identify emerging policy issues, define the Network's position, raise general awareness of these issues, and support individual Network members in their advocacy efforts when appropriate.

Advancing the field through policy work requires an understanding of key issues, deep relationship building, and effective communications. The Network will establish a board-driven Government Relations Committee to oversee this focused policy work.

Letter from the Board Chair & Executive Director

The Network of Oregon Watershed Councils remains dedicated to supporting the work of watershed councils throughout the state by increasing council capacity, improving key relationships, and promoting public awareness of watersheds and watershed councils. These three primary goals—identified early in the Network’s formation—were officially adopted by council representatives at the first Network Gathering in 2004. The current strategic planning process is intended to further refine the Network’s focus on these goals and develop a plan that engenders more stability and support for Network programs into the future.

Over the past decade the Network has weathered periods of transition, but has also proven itself an adaptable organization capable of responding to council needs, providing representation in Salem, and delivering regular programming to councils. Through this process, we hope to build on past successes (some of which are outlined on page 6 of this report) to develop a focused, flexible, and sustainable model that consistently responds to councils’ changing needs and concerns.

The greatest challenge remains articulating the very real, yet often intangible, value the Network brings to councils and their partners. It’s far easier to gauge the value of a conference or training than it is to understand the impact of the Network’s engagement in key fora of statewide significance. Yet, this engagement—even if passive at times—gives councils a collective identity so they remain a relevant and positive participant in statewide dialog.

Sustaining the Network’s presence in Salem and its ability to consistently offer responsive programming requires a commitment of support from councils and their partners. We’re working to build and maintain an organization worthy of that support.

Ryan Houston, Board Chair

Ryan Gordon, Executive Director

Planning process

Solid Ground Consulting worked closely with the Network’s planning committee to guide the process and help the Network work through the critical issues it faces as it refocuses its mission and roles to best serve watershed councils.

Through individual and small-group interviews, opinions and ideas were sought from external stakeholders including funders (Meyer Memorial Trust, OWEB), partners (Natural Resources Conservation Service, OACD, ODA), and member watershed councils. In addition, all Board members and the Executive Director provided input. Finally, the consultant researched the membership structure and member benefits provided by seven comparable associations in various sectors. All of the stakeholder input, as well as details from the comparison, was summarized in a report distributed to the Network Board prior to a focused planning retreat.

Allison Handler facilitated the planning retreat on January 30-31, 2014 at the Network’s office in Salem, Oregon. At the retreat, the Network Board and Executive Director worked through a set of fundamental questions about the organization’s niche, role, and business model, as well as the role of the Board.

This plan reflects the decisions that came out of this collective process.

Our challenge

Oregon is an extraordinary place, in terms of social, biological, and geographical diversity, as well as watershed interconnectivity. The Network represents watershed councils operating across the state in regions with distinct politics and ecological biomes. Some work in relatively small geographic areas with dense populations; others serve vast rural geographies with thousands of stream miles. For some, the core stakeholders are suburban homeowners and industrial businesses; for others, they are farmers and cattle ranchers. Rural organizations face unique challenges in fundraising, particularly in areas with significant public land holdings and low population. Council coordinators are quick to point out these differences, and to identify how each of their organizations is unique.

In spite of these very real differences between watershed councils, there is more that binds them. Many struggle with public misperception that they are arms of government. Some maintain a relatively low profile. Many are small organizations with limited resources. All are affected by state policies and funding decisions that are challenging to influence. They face the ongoing challenge of identifying prospective board members and attracting and retaining professional staff with skills in nonprofit administration and watershed restoration. Their work faces increasing competition for funding – more than their core funder, the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board alone can provide – and with limited resources there is increasing pressure for organizational effectiveness. The very nature of their model, as diverse coalitions of stakeholders living and working within the watershed of each council, presents a decision-making challenge. In spite of these challenges, or perhaps because of them, watershed councils are, as a general rule, enterprising and impactful organizations.

The Network of Oregon Watershed Councils formed in 2004 in response to a variety of needs in the sector, including building the capacity of watershed councils, improving key relationships between councils, agencies, policy-makers, and funders, and promoting public awareness of watersheds and watershed councils. It has played an important role in advancing the field, with significant programmatic successes since its inception:

- The **passage of Measure 76**, during which Network staff and board members worked to refine language in the Measure to ensure that watershed council interests were protected, making use of key relationships, demonstrating political savvy, and serving as the watershed councils' voice to the legislature
- **Regular conferences**, now organized annually in partnership with OACD, that fulfill critical convening, networking, and peer-to-peer learning functions. The Network has offered six conferences since 2004.
- **Outreach to councils** that has begun to build stronger relationships with and between members in the field
- An *Atlas of Accomplishments* that highlights the achievements and demonstrates the value of watershed councils
- **Capacity building support** via the New Coordinator Guidebook, trainings (such as the new coordinator training, GIS training, and Watershed Management Camps), and online resources
- A **regular presence** with key agencies, funders, and other conservation organizations, as well as **engagement with the legislature**, which gives councils a collective identity so they remain a relevant and positive participant in statewide dialogue
- **Strategic partnerships** that enhance the work of councils and help them respond to key changes in funding for council activities

This strategic plan

This plan builds on prior successes while recognizing the limits of a current single staff person and an all-volunteer board. The plan clarifies and focuses the Network's role based on its organizational strengths and the needs of its primary constituency. It also seeks to take advantage of a new strategic focus, encouraged by OWEB and reflected in a new partnership with OACD, on increased resource sharing and collaboration.

There are four parts to this strategic plan:

1. Over-arching **Strategic Direction** that includes our high level goals and strategies
2. A **Three-year Plan** showing phasing of our strategic priorities and associated tactics
3. An **FY 15 Workplan** that details the tasks to be accomplished this year
4. A **Revenue Model** that reflects the business side and the relationship between our plan and our revenues shows revenue growth to increase Network effectiveness

Network of Oregon Watershed Councils

I. Strategic Direction 2014-2017

Mission

The Network supports the work of Oregon’s watershed councils to enhance watershed health and benefit their local communities.

Vision

We envision increasingly strong, resilient watershed councils throughout Oregon sustaining healthy land, water and economies. Oregon watershed councils are the pride of our local communities and a model for our country and the world. By focusing the Network’s resources, we help councils be more effective, in order to advance the organizations individually and to further watershed health collectively.

Goals and Strategies

Organizational Goals

Goal #1. BUILD OUR LEADERSHIP. The Network has a deeply engaged board that provides programmatic support functions to staff as well as strong guidance for the organization’s direction	LEAD
a. Focus the role of the Executive Committee to provide oversight for the Network’s key governance functions, including board development, personnel, financial, fundraising and strategic issues.	Board
b. Enhance the structure and function of board committees to complement the work of the board as a whole	Executive Committee
c. Identify and cultivate prospective board members with expertise in program areas or nonprofit management (e.g., policy, government relations, communications, technical training, fundraising)	Executive Committee
d. Identify and provide Board training opportunities on relevant nonprofit and watershed conservation topics	Executive Committee
Goal #2: ENHANCE OUR STAFF. The Network attracts and retains talented staff with the necessary skills to lead programs and operations	LEAD
a. Invest in the development and support of existing staff to ensure retention	Board, ED
b. Encourage & support opportunities for ED skill development	Executive Committee
c. Invest in the growth of staff, both in terms of capacity and	ED

capabilities, to expand into new as well as deepen current areas of focus.	
d. Leverage and extend staff capacity and capabilities through organizational partnerships.	ED, Board

Goal #3: EXPAND OUR REVENUE. The Network has secure, consistent, and diverse resources to obtain the funding it requires for mission delivery	LEAD
a. Establish a board-driven, board-led Membership Committee to conduct member outreach and renewals	Board
b. Establish and communicate a membership dues structure (tiered-to-budget for watershed councils and flat-rate associate membership category for businesses or other entities)	Membership Committee
c. Increase the Network’s membership to support our operations and expand our influence	Membership Committee, ED
d. Ensure all program deliverables are valuable to membership and articulate that value to the sector.	Membership Committee, ED
e. Cultivate business partnerships that lead to corporate sponsorships of the conference and other trainings.	OE Committee, ED
f. Pursue funding partnerships with foundations and agencies whose interests align with our programs, including seeking targeted grants from private foundations.	ED

Program Goals

Goal #4. GROW OUR IMPACT. Watershed Councils have opportunities to build peer relationships, facilitate peer-to-peer learning, and enhance their effectiveness	LEAD
a. Conduct a biennial survey of councils and districts, in cooperation with partners, to identify organizational needs and evaluate the Network success in meeting those needs.	ED, OE Committee
b. Organize an annual conference for member organizations and partners in partnership with OACD (and potentially others, including COLT, OCEAN, and OSU Extension, other watershed restoration practitioners private and public). Actively seek watershed councils to provide program content as a way to facilitate peer learning and showcase success.	ED, OE Committee
c. Host regional meetings, in partnership with OACD, COLT, and others, for member organizations and their partners to share information and build and maintain relationships.	ED, OE Committee

d. Build the capacity of watershed councils through an annual technical training opportunity.	ED, OE Committee
e. Maintain regular communication with councils, districts, and partners about programming, funding and partnership opportunities, and issues of statewide interest.	ED, OE Committee

Goal #5. ADVANCE THE FIELD: Policy makers, funders and partners understand the value of watershed councils and their work.	LEAD
a. Establish a board-driven Government Relations Committee that will proactively define the Network’s position on emerging policy issues and also serve responsively as an ad-hoc sounding board.	Board
b. Build and maintain positive working relationships with policy makers and agency partners.	ED
c. Support member councils in developing and cultivating relationships with their state and local policy-makers so they can advocate effectively when appropriate.	ED and Board
d. Identify emerging policy issues that require Network input, and define the Network’s position	ED, Government Relations Committee
e. As appropriate, provide input and / or mobilize member councils to provide input on key policy issues	ED, Government Relations Committee

Network of Oregon Watershed Councils

2. Three-Year Plan 2014-2017

Goal #1: BOARD DEVELOPMENT. The Network has a deeply engaged board that provides programmatic support functions to staff as well as strong guidance for the organization’s direction

Strategy	Lead	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17
a. Focus the role of the Executive Committee to provide oversight for the Network’s key governance functions	Board, Executive Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and approve bylaws changes to facilitate development of new committee structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and update organizational policies; evaluate need for new policies 	
b. Enhance the structure and function of board committees to complement the work of the board as a whole	Executive Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clearly define the expectations and roles of each Board Committee in a committee charter, and revise as needed ▪ Develop an annual calendar of key Board activities. ▪ Annually at Q4 board meeting, examine meeting structures and work to improve efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review Committee work plans and outcomes at Annual meeting ▪ Review and update calendar at Q1 meeting. ▪ Annually at Q4 board meeting, examine meeting structures and work to improve efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update work plans ▪ Evaluate committees and purpose ▪ Review and update calendar at Q1 meeting. ▪ Annually at Q4 board meeting, examine meeting structures and work to improve efficiency
	<i>By each Committee other than Executive</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify committee chair and members ▪ Develop a committee work plan and calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify committee chair and members ▪ Develop a committee work plan and calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify committee chair and members ▪ Develop a committee work plan and calendar

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Revise committee charter and seek approval ■ Populate relevant sections of 3-year plan. 		
c. Identify and cultivate prospective board members	Executive Committee, staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop and maintain Board member and officer position descriptions ■ Develop a clear board development process, including Board member solicitation and selection process; communicate process to constituency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Update position descriptions ■ Outreach to prospective new board members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Update position descriptions ■ Outreach to prospective new board members
d. Identify and provide Board training opportunities	Executive Committee		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Annually at Q2 board meeting, identify training topics ■ Identify and recruit prospective presenter(s) on those topics ■ Provide training at Q3 board meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Annually at Q2 board meeting, identify training topics ■ Identify and recruit prospective presenter(s) on those topics ■ Provide training at Q3 board meeting

Benchmarks

- Add at least two new non-council staff Board members by spring 2015, add an additional in 2016
- Each committee has a committee description and work plan

- All board members serve on at least one committee but no more than two committees. Each committee, with the exception of the Executive Committee, has at least one committee member who does not serve on the Network Board.
- Board members participate in an annual training

Goal #2: STAFF DEVELOPMENT. The Network attracts and retains talented staff with the necessary skills to lead programs and operations

Strategy	Lead	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17
<p>e. Invest in the development and support of existing staff to ensure retention</p>	<p>Executive Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop a position description for the ED that reflects the Network’s strategic direction, partnerships, and grant requirements. ■ Conduct an annual review of the ED consistent with the position description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Review position description annually. ■ Conduct an annual review of the ED 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Review position description annually. ■ Conduct an annual review of the ED
<p>f. Encourage & support opportunities for ED skill development</p>	<p>ED, Executive Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify trainings that would support professional development ■ Ensure annual workplan includes time to participate in trainings; budget includes funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify trainings that would support professional development ■ Ensure annual workplan includes time to participate in trainings; budget includes funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify trainings that would support professional development ■ Ensure annual workplan includes time to participate in trainings; budget includes funds
<p>g. Leverage and extend staff capacity and capabilities through organizational partnerships.</p>	<p>ED, board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Focus on expanding capacity through OACD partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work with COLT, OCEAN, RiverNetwork, other partners to increase capacity/funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support and grow existing partnerships

Benchmarks

- Shared administrative support staff hired by June 2014
- Staff and ED participate in at least two trainings per year
- Shared Outreach staff hired by June 2015 (funding dependent)

Goal #3: EXPAND OUR REVENUE. The Network has secure, consistent, and diverse resources to obtain the funding it requires for mission delivery

Strategy	Lead	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17
a. Establish a board-driven, board-led Membership Committee to conduct member outreach and renewals	Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify Membership Committee chair and members ▪ Develop a committee work plan and calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify at least one person not on the NOWC board & recruit to serve on committee ▪ Develop a committee work plan and calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set up “phone tree” for outreach calls for membership recruitment ▪ Develop a committee work plan and calendar
a. Establish and communicate a membership dues structure.	Membership Committee, ED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Articulate the case for paid membership and specifically define member benefits ▪ Conduct mini-training regarding member recruitment phone calls to build board members’ confidence to conduct this outreach ▪ Define and implement a strategy for communicating membership structure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct member outreach drive in the spring ▪ Conduct renewals with fall conference ▪ Conduct mini-training regarding member recruitment phone calls to build board members’ confidence to conduct this outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct member outreach drive in the spring ▪ Conduct renewals with fall conference ▪ Conduct mini-training regarding member recruitment phone calls to build board members’ confidence to conduct this outreach
b. Increase the Network’s membership to support our operations and expand our influence.	Membership Committee,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Launch the 2014 membership drive in the fall (coincide with Gathering) of 2014 with a goal of 30 watershed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seek a 50% increase in watershed council membership by the fall of 2015. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seek an additional 20% increase in watershed council membership by the fall of 2016.

		council members by the end of the calendar year.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Expand membership to include other entities beyond watershed councils
c. Ensure all program deliverables are valuable to membership and articulate that value to the sector.	Membership Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Review current materials articulating Network value; revise if necessary ■ Define member benefits ■ Facilitate work session discussion at annual conference aimed at evaluating Network programs and identifying membership benefits. ■ Conduct biennial survey of councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Facilitate work session discussion at annual conference aimed at evaluating Network programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conduct biennial survey of councils ■ Facilitate work session discussion at annual conference aimed at evaluating Network programs
d. Cultivate business partnerships that lead to corporate sponsorships of the conference and other trainings.	Outreach & Education Committee, staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work with partners (OACD, OCEAN, COLT, others) to identify potential corporate sponsors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop outreach strategy, including defined sponsorship offerings and sponsor benefits, to attract additional corporate sponsors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Maintain and expand conference and training sponsorships
e. Pursue funding partnerships with foundations and	Staff, Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to identify and expand funding opportunities, as well as 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify potential targeted capacity-building grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consistently meet or exceed funder/agency contract requirements

<p>agencies whose interests align with our programs, including targeted grants..</p>		<p>resource-sharing, via partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consistently meet or exceed contract requirements with partners and government agencies to enhance the chances of renewal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Meet with program officers from prospective funders to begin to build relationships ■ Consistently meet or exceed funder/agency contract requirements 	
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Possible Benchmarks

- 15 members by December 31, 2014
- 35 members by December 31, 2015
- 45 members by December 31, 2016
- 55 members by December 31, 2017

Goal #4: GROW THE IMPACT. Watershed Councils have opportunities to build peer relationships, facilitate peer-to-peer learning, and enhance their effectiveness

Strategy	Lead	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17
<p>Conduct biennial survey of councils and districts to identify organizational needs and evaluate the Network success in meeting those needs.</p>	<p>ED, OE Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate the survey tool used in 2012 – update as appropriate. ▪ Conduct member survey in fall/winter 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and analyze results from 2014 survey ▪ Produce report and send to constituents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate the survey tool used in 2014 – update as appropriate, repeating standard measures for longitudinal analysis ▪ Conduct member survey in fall/winter 2016
<p>Organize an annual fall conference for member organizations and partners in partnership with OACD and others</p>	<p>ED, OE Committee, Partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with partners to identify location and develop joint agenda ▪ Survey councils to develop council-specific program elements ▪ Identify corporate sponsorships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with partners to identify location and develop joint agenda ▪ Survey councils to develop council-specific program elements ▪ Identify corporate sponsorships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with partners to identify location and develop joint agenda ▪ Survey councils to develop council-specific program elements ▪ Identify corporate sponsorships
<p>Host regional meetings, in partnership with OACD, COLT, and others as appropriate, for member organizations and their partners.</p>	<p>ED, OE Committee, Partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with partners to identify locations and agenda for meetings ▪ Invite key agency supporters ▪ Encourage broad participation with active social element 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with partners to identify locations and agenda for meetings ▪ Invite key agency supporters ▪ Encourage broad participation with active social element 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with partners to identify locations and agenda for meetings ▪ Invite key agency supporters ▪ Encourage broad participation with active social element

<p>Build the capacity of watershed councils through an annual technical training opportunity</p>	<p>ED, OE Committee, Partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Partner with OCEAN to offer councils access to CONNECT ■ Conducted targeted outreach to increase council participation in CONNECT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Partner with OCEAN to offer councils access to CONNECT ■ Conducted targeted outreach to increase council participation in CONNECT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Partner with OCEAN to offer councils access to CONNECT ■ Conducted targeted outreach to increase council participation in CONNECT
<p>Maintain regular communication with councils, districts, and partners about programming, funding and partnership opportunities, and issues of statewide interest.</p>	<p>ED</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In partnership with OACD, develop a joint communications plan ■ Prepare and send a quarterly newsletter to councils and partners ■ Send regular updates, as appropriate, to councils and partners ■ Maintain Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Prepare and send a quarterly newsletter to councils and partners ■ Send regular updates, as appropriate, to councils and partners ■ Consider options for regular statewide conference calls ■ Maintain Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Prepare and send a quarterly newsletter to councils and partners ■ Send regular updates, as appropriate, to councils and partners ■ Sponsor open-ended statewide conference calls. ■ Maintain Website
<p>Develop, produce, and distribute educational and outreach program materials.</p>	<p>ED, OE Committee, Partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work with OACD and COLT to develop a ‘conservation toolbox’ publication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Finalize & distribute the ‘conservation toolbox’ publication via regional meetings, other venues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Seek funding for production of outreach materials to coincide with 2017 legislative session
<p>Consider and develop additional outreach opportunities consistent with funding and staff capacity</p>	<p>OE Committee, ED</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Focus on existing programs and grant deliverables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consider adding one additional program element 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consider adding one additional program element

Benchmarks:

- For the Gathering:
 - Increase registration by 10% over the three-year period, especially among council board members, partners, and supporting agencies
 - By 2016, at least half of attending councils are dues-paying members of the Network
 - Participants assess conference as valuable in a post-event survey
 - Increase corporate sponsorships by 10% each year.
- Indicators in the biennial survey indicate growing satisfaction with Network-sponsored programming, as well as increasing council capacity
- Regional meetings reflect diverse participation from broad spectrum of partners, with a 10% increase over the three-year period.
- Council participation in CONNECT increases by 10% each year.
- Network/Partnership capacity increases to support additional program elements.

GOAL #5: ADVANCE THE FIELD. Policy makers, funders and partners understand the value of watershed councils and their work.

Strategy	Lead	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17
a. Establish a board-driven Government Relations Committee	Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify Government Relations Committee chair and members ▪ Develop a committee description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify at least one person not on the NOWC board & recruit to serve on committee ▪ Develop a committee work plan and calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revise work plan and calendar as necessary
b. Build and maintain positive working relationships with agency leaders and other partners	ED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meet regularly with agency leaders and other partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meet regularly with agency leaders and other partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meet regularly with agency leaders and other partners
c. Support member councils in developing and cultivating relationships with their state and local policy-makers.	ED, Government Relations Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and disseminate a list of key elected officials and other policy makers to each member council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and distribute basic talking points to member councils ▪ Host a legislative training for member councils (staff and boards) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update talking points
d. Build strategic alliances, such as with OACD and COLT, to combine advocacy resources.	ED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain regular communication with partners about key advocacy issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain regular communication with partners about key advocacy issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain regular communication with partners about key advocacy issues.

<p>e. Identify emerging policy issues that require Network input, and define the Network’s position.</p>	<p>ED, Government Relations Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invite representatives from OACD and COLT to participate in a meeting with the Network ED to discuss emerging issues and shape a joint agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invite other potential partners to join this conversation 	
<p>f. As appropriate, provide input and / or mobilize member councils to provide input on key policy issues</p>	<p>ED, Government Relations Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meet with policy-makers, agency leaders and other partners to provide policy input and give testimony as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meet with policy-makers, agency leaders and other partners to provide policy input and give testimony as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meet with policy-makers, agency leaders and other partners to provide policy input and give testimony as appropriate

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3. FY15 Work Plan by Primary Tasks

Primary Tasks	Lead	Timeline
<i>Board & Organizational Tasks</i>		
Finalize committee formation, descriptions, and work plans	Board, ED	Adopt at Q3 Board Meeting
Committees provide updates to Board	Working Committees	At each Board meeting
Finalize strategic planning process and document	Consultant, Board, ED	Adopt at Q4 Board Meeting, Publicize at Gathering
Update Bylaws to reflect new committee structure, address Board appointment procedures, and address Nonprofit Clinic review	ED, EC, Board	Adopt at Q4 Board Meeting
Develop and maintain Board member and officer position descriptions	ED, EC	Review at Q1 Board Meeting
Develop and maintain a job description for the ED	EC, Board, ED	Review at Q1 Board Meeting
Develop an annual calendar of key Board activities	ED, Board	Finalize at Q1 Board Meeting
Recruit at least two non-council staff Board members	EC, Board, ED	Appoint by Q2 Board Meeting
Identify Board training topic and presenter for Q3 meeting	EC, ED, Board	Finalize at Q2 Board Meeting
Conduct an Annual Review of the ED	EC, Board	Complete by end of FY15
<i>ED & Administrative Tasks</i>		
Identify staff training to support professional development	ED, EC	As appropriate, min 2/year
Perform annual staff evaluations	ED	As Needed
Work with staff to maintain and improve office and administrative procedures, improve record retention and filing	ED	Ongoing
Through the partnership, seek to hire an outreach specialist	ED, EC	Fall 2014
Through the partnership, seek expanded office equipment and space to accommodate growing staff	ED	As Necessary
Complete fiscal review, file appropriate tax forms	ED	November 15, 2014
Work with partners to secure at least one additional revenue source to support a new program or initiative	ED	Complete by end of FY15
Meet or exceed contract requirements with key funders	ED	On-going

Primary Tasks	Lead	Timeline
<i>Formal Membership Structure Development</i>		
Develop Dues Structure	Membership Committee, ED	Fall 2014
Develop & Articulate Membership Benefits	Membership Committee, ED	Fall 2014
Develop materials to communicate membership program and benefits	ED, Membership Committee	Publicize at Fall Gathering
Facilitate discussion of Network programs, membership at Gathering	Membership Committee	November 2014
Develop materials to help individual Board members articulate membership program and benefits	ED, Membership Committee	Fall 2014
Conduct recruitment phone calls	Board	Fall 2014/Winter 2015
Initiate 2015 Membership Drive	Membership Committee	Spring 2015
<i>Regular Programming</i>		
Maintain regular communications with constituents via the Website, regular e-mails, newsletters, and other mechanisms	ED	Ongoing
In cooperation with partners, complete six regional meetings	ED	Summer 2014
In cooperation with OACD, produce a joint communications plan	ED, O-E Committee	Fall 2014 / Winter 2015
In cooperation with partners, identify corporate sponsors for annual conference	ED	Fall 2014
In cooperation with partners, plan and implement annual conference	ED, O-E Committee, Membership Committee	November 2014
In cooperation with partners, complete biennial survey	ED, O-E Committee	December 2014 / January 2015
In cooperation with partners, plan and implement an annual technical training opportunity	ED, O-E Committee	Spring 2015
In cooperation with partners, produce a 'conservation toolbox' publication	ED, O-E Committee	Spring 2015

Primary Tasks	Lead	Timeline
<i>Agency Support & Engagement; Advocacy</i>		
Maintain a regular presence with key supporting agencies, including OWEB, ODA-SWCC, and NRCS; expand as possible and appropriate	ED	Ongoing
Maintain regular contact with other key statewide partners and organizations	ED	Ongoing
Provide regular updates and analyses to councils as necessary, mobilize councils as appropriate	ED, Government Relations Committee	Ongoing
Develop and disseminate a list of key elected officials and other policymakers to each member council	ED, Government Relations Committee	Late 2014
Meet with key partners to strategize for the legislative session and develop a shared agenda, as possible	ED	Late 2014
Work with partners to maintain regular engagement in the 2015 legislative session; develop positions and provide testimony as necessary	ED, Government Relations Committee	Winter/Spring 2015

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4. Revenue Model

The Network has identified the need for more diversified revenue streams. This section describes the organization's revenue model.

OWEB funding

OWEB will continue to be a critical partner to support the Network's work. OWEB recognizes the value of the Network's role in supporting and enhancing the effectiveness of OWEB grantees; its contracts with the Network and OACD reflect this understanding. The Network anticipates that OWEB funding will continue to represent a significant part of the revenue stream, complemented by increasingly diversified revenues.

Budget goal

OWEB funding currently represents over 50% of the organizational budget. OWEB funding will represent 35% of the total organizational budget by the end of 2017.

Membership

The Network will begin charging membership dues midyear in 2014. The success of the membership revenue stream will depend on board members' willingness to reach out to their peers and make the case for dues. As is common for associations like the Network that have organizational members, dues are tiered to organizations' operating budget.

Currently there are 89 watershed councils, with operating budgets shown in the table below. The Network recognizes that this field will shrink as a result of changes to OWEB funding requirements; several councils are already exploring structural integration as a strategic option. It may prove to be the case that a smaller number of organizations remain as the field evolves, but they are stronger, larger, and/or more stable organizations capable of a higher dues amount.

The Network's revenue model depends upon gradually growing its membership base of watershed councils over the next two years. In the third year of this plan, the Network intends to expand its membership to include other types of entities such as businesses, natural resource professionals, and others who share an interest in watershed health.

Operating Budget	Dues level	Number of councils in bracket	25% participating	50% participating	75% participating	100% participating
< \$100K	\$200	15	\$750	\$1,500	\$2,250	\$3,000
\$100K - \$250K	\$275	25	\$1,719	\$3,438	\$5,156	\$6,875
\$250K - \$500K	\$375	24	\$2,250	\$4,500	\$6,750	\$9,000
\$500K - \$1M	\$500	18	\$2,250	\$4,500	\$6,750	\$9,000
> \$1M	\$750	7	\$1,313	\$2,625	\$3,938	\$5,250
		89	\$8,282	\$16,563	\$24,844	\$33,125

Budget goal

Memberships, which are informal, currently contribute 2% of the Network's organizational budget. Formal membership dues will represent 10% of the budget by the end of 2017.

Fee for service

Conference. The conference is now a shared event with OACD. While this reduces the administrative burden on Network staff and the Outreach & Education Committee, it also lowers the upside in conference revenues. Nonetheless, conference revenues fall into two categories: participant fees and sponsorships. This plan includes a strategy for increasing sponsorships over time. The Network also recognizes the need for the conference to add real value for watershed councils, and to grow the attendance year over year as a revenue stream.

Trainings. From time to time, the Network has offered other trainings. At this point, it lacks the capacity to develop and conduct its own trainings; fee-for-service trainings are likely to be conducted in partnership with COLT, OACD, OCEAN, or others, with revenues split accordingly.

Budget goal

Fee for service activities, including associated corporate sponsorships, currently contribute about 15% of the organizational budget. They will contribute 20% of the budget by the end of 2017.

Private foundation grants

Having relied on OWEB as its primary funder for many years, the Network recognizes the need for private funding to complement state funding. The Meyer Memorial Trust, which funded the preparation of this strategic plan, has been an important partner. Relationships with other potential funders will likely be sought in collaboration with the Network's partners, to fund specific capacity-building activities of their member organizations. Examples include the Oregon Community Foundation, Collins Foundation, Ford Family Foundation, and others. For any prospective grant-maker, the Network and its partners will identify the grantor's interests and the degree to which they align with those of the collaborative, and approach the funder to build a relationship before seeking funding.

Budget goal

Foundation funding (from Meyer Memorial Trust along) represents about 15% of the total organizational budget in 2014. It will represent 25% of the budget, and will be sourced from more than a single foundation, by the end of 2017.

Partnership

The NOWC-OACD partnership has brought increased capacity through shared resources and staffing. The Network and OACD currently share office space and split many operational expenses, as well as a shared staff position.

Goal

The Network will continue to maintain and build the partnership with OACD and other organizations to support continued resource sharing. By the end of 2017, the partnership anticipates expanded office space and at least two additional shared staff positions.