

# 2014 WPWA Plan of Work



## The Challenge

WPWAs highest level goal is to maintain and restore the ecological health of the watershed, and over the past 6 years great strides in achieving this goal have been made through work in opening the watershed to migratory fish. As the dam reconstruction/fish passage projects come to completion, the large grants that have been the mainstay of the WPWA funding stream will likewise come to completion. As a result, WPWA must diversify its revenue stream to improve long-term financial stability.

To successfully move in this direction, WPWA must better develop its existing members and donors to maximize potential giving by building strong, long-lasting relationships with each. The current body of knowledge suggests that a “Donor Centric” approach that provides highly personalized services is a mechanism by which to build these lasting relationships. WPWA will embrace a donor centric approach, configuring its fund and membership development goals and activities accordingly.

It is recognized that a significant amount of time by the Executive Director will need to be spent in successfully making the shift from grant/project funding reliance to donor/member funded sustainability. In order to ensure that the Executive Director has sufficient time and capacity to focus on this critical area of work, the following directive becomes a primary mechanism for success:

**\$20,000 in unrestricted funds must be immediately raised to provide a “salary bridge” that will allow the Executive Director to focus on non-grant/project fund development.**

- A “call to action” direct mail campaign to the WPWA membership requesting donations specifically for this purpose, explaining why it is critical to the long-term success of WPWAs efforts on behalf of its membership, must be developed and implemented. A goal of \$2,500 is set for this effort (50 members gifting \$25 each).
- High gifting members (e.g., those giving \$250 or more in the Annual Appeal) will be targeted with a direct mail request to provide a “special gift” of \$250 to help WPWA achieve this critical step in organizational development. A goal of \$5,000 is set for this effort (20 members gifting \$250 each).
- A proposal to the Rhode Island Foundation for \$12,500 to provide “bridge” funding will be developed and submitted, playing upon the progress made with the previous \$10,000 organizational grant and inviting WPWA participation in the INE program.

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The pitch will be that this funding will allow WPWA to make the leap into a donor-centric, more financially sustainable future enabled by them.

In moving towards a new model for fiscal and operational sustainability, the following longer-term goals are set forth, and by which progress will be measured through 2019.

## 5 Year Goals:

1. 60% of income is derived from non-grant/non-project directed sources.
2. 250 new members are added to the WPWA membership roster.
3. 30 businesses support WPWA activities on an annual basis.
4. The WPWA campus becomes a vibrant center for member and watershed conservation related activities.
5. WPWA will be designated a nationally recognized Wild and Scenic River.
6. A plan for river conservation that is developed and implemented.

At its March 2013 organizational planning retreat, WPWA recognized the following areas as its core areas of activity and service:

- Outreach and Education
- Advocacy
- Conservation and Preservation

As a test of the validity and robust nature of these core areas of service, each element of the FY14 WPWA Plan of Work is put into the context of and/or directly linked back to one or more of the core areas of service.

## MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

*Responsible Staff: Chris*

### FY14 GOALS:

- Foster ownership of WPWA by the membership
- Increase membership size by 10%
- Increase membership revenue by \$2,000

### FY14 ACTIONS:

- Enable a standing Membership Committee, with clear guidance for their work, that will:

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- Plan and implement the Annual Meeting,
- Standardize database input of needed member and donation data, and include mechanisms by which to efficiently track and report on membership and giving status and trends,
- Define annual membership development goals/targets
- Develop and implement a plan to achieve goals and reach targets  
*Suggested Committee Members: Pete A. (chair), Alisa M., Tom B. + at least 2 non-board participants*
- Quarterly newsletter redesign and content revision
- Website and membership database reformat
- Develop top donor Newsletter with a personalized communication approach
- Develop improved methods for obtaining new members and volunteers with attention toward long term retention
- Query membership to secure volunteers to assist in program and event staffing
- Develop and strictly follow a calendar of membership related activities

The above actions help WPWA achieve its mission in its core service areas:

Outreach & Education — All activities that engage WPWA members are an act of outreach and/or education, whether it be through a newsletter article or an on-campus activity. Many of the actions above will improve WPWAs ability to educate and improve outreach regarding critical issues within the watershed.

Advocacy —

Conservation & Preservation —

## FUND DEVELOPMENT

*Responsible Staff: Chris*

### FY14 GOALS:

- Engage 10 new businesses and 5 new families who contribute over \$500 each
- Revitalize existing donors to maximize their long term revenue potential
- Realize a new standard for donations resulting in a one-time increase of \$6,000

### FY14 ACTIONS:

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- Enable a standing Fund Development Committee, with clear guidance for their work, that will:
  - Design a process and a plan of work to guide WPWA's efforts in annual fundraising and long term fund development,
  - Define annual donor development goals/targets
  - Develop and implement a plan to achieve goals and reach targets*Suggested Committee Members: Gerry C. (chair), Kim C., Walt G., + at least 2 non-board participants*
- Identify, approach and sell WPWA to a host of new corporate and family donors
- Identify and cultivate select members as prospects for higher giving
- Replace "Annual Appeal" with "Fund Drives" during the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters
- Research and design a Legacy Giving Program for launch in 2015
- Develop and strictly follow a calendar of donor related activities

The above actions help WPWA achieve its mission in its core service areas:

Outreach & Education —

Advocacy —

Conservation & Preservation —

## EDUCATION, RECREATION, AND SERVICE PROGRAMMING

*Responsible Staff: Denise*

### FY14 GOALS:

- WPWA programs become profitable
- Engage volunteers in program planning and implementation to reduce staff burden
- Improve customer satisfaction

### FY14 ACTIONS:

- Assess past, current, and potential programs for profit and sustainability
- Implement a suite of programs that evenly serves interest groups
- Programs will be planned and implemented with rain dates (if weather dependent)
- Volunteer program coordinators will be cultivated to reduce program costs

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- Test market programs in 2014 and assess success and profit at year's end

The above actions help WPWA achieve its mission in its core service areas:

Outreach & Education —

Advocacy —

Conservation & Preservation —

## Campus Use

Responsible Staff: Heather

### FY14 GOALS:

- Better serve members who typically use the campus on the weekends
- Increase sales and membership revenue by increasing opportunities to interact with non-member patrons
- Define what draws people to the campus and what WPWA can provide to them

### FY14 ACTIONS:

- Perform grant dependent renovation of the Conference Room and morphing of the Education Center into an Information Center (for education, sales, member relations)
- Develop a schedule of weekend staffing, focused on use of board and other volunteers, to man the new Information Center
- Survey patrons for interest in existing and potential services and items
- Set seasonal office hours

The above actions help WPWA achieve its mission in its core service areas:

Outreach & Education —

Advocacy —

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Conservation & Preservation —

## **BRANDING**

*Responsible Staff: Chris*

### **FY14 GOALS:**

- Reach out to children and their families through fun activities that aren't designed to educate, but simply engage. The reason for this is that the average resident of the watershed does not care as they should about water. Our mission is to inform them why they SHOULD care.

### **FY14 ACTIONS:**

- Modernize outdated digital and printed advertising/outreach resources
- Investigate worthiness of a gimmick to overcome the challenge of our name (e.g., Got Milk?, Smokey the Bear, etc)
- Offer free programs, not directly related to water, that will captivate a wider audience
- Begin to architect "WPWA Mobile"; a team of volunteers, visual aids, and handouts to perform outreach and advertising at events that have high visibility and attendance

The above actions help WPWA achieve its mission in its core service areas:

Outreach & Education —

Advocacy —

Conservation & Preservation —

## ***WILD AND SCENIC DESIGNATION***

*Responsible Staff: Denise*

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***Vision: The Wild and Scenic study phase will be completed, sections of rivers will have permanent NPS W&S status, annual congressional funding will support a WPWA staffer to carry out the recommendations of the management plan created during the initial 3 year (pre-designation) study phase.***

*If the passage of the “Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Protection Act” occurs in 2013 or 14, an immediate shift in staffing will need to occur, appropriate to the level of anticipated annual funding from the NPS. Realistically, WPWA’s current program director would become the Wild and Scenic coordinator, the program coordinator would move up to program director, and a new hire sought to fill the vacant program coordinator slot. This effort would trigger a scaling down or deferment of some 2014 actions and goals.*

## **FY14 ACTIONS:**

- Staff reorganization, candidate search, and partner engagement will be complete
- WPWA staffing logistics will be addressed and resolved
- W&S coordinator will identify what existing reports, studies and data exist
- Determination made as to what additional research must be conducted
- Partner planning meeting will be held and roles will be defined
- Draft management plan will be in early development

The above actions help WPWA achieve its mission in its core service areas:

Outreach & Education —

Advocacy — HUGE ROLE HERE

Conservation & Preservation —