



# WYE MARSH

*'Fostering environmental stewardship'*

STRATEGIC PLAN  
2015 - 2018

## Executive Summary

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The Strategic Plan is our road map for the future. This plan will inform the ongoing business planning and budgeting processes and become our basis for reporting back to our stakeholders on our progress against goals. It will serve to ensure we are successful in achieving our goals and our mission.

It specifically identifies the objectives and strategies we will adopt for the next 2-3 years:

- Be recognized nationally as a premier destination to experience the natural environment.
- Become a leader in the development and execution of experiential environmental education.
- Attract, engage and retain a dedicated pool of volunteers and donors.
- Facilitate the creation of “Marsh Memories”.
- Foster a positive, engaged and welcoming atmosphere at the Marsh for all guests, members, volunteers, suppliers, partners and staff.

Our **goals** over the next 2-3 years are to:

- Ensure revenue generated exceeds costs incurred each fiscal year.
- Revamp our overall marketing strategy to reflect our core product; facilitating the creation of “Marsh Memories”.
- Develop a strong governance structure to support our network of volunteers.
- Develop a strong operational structure to support a sustainable organization.

Taken together, these steps will allow us to realize our fundamental mission – fostering environmental stewardship.

### **Performance Measurements & Benchmarking**

A core enabler to the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan is the development of qualitative and quantitative performance measures. To measure our achievement against our objectives, and goals, it is critical that we develop internal and external benchmarks against which to measure our performance. Reporting back to our stakeholders on our benchmarks will also allow us to meet a vital part of our strategy – to be transparent and accountable in all that we do.

## Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre Today

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Today, the Foundation's activities are organized across six functional areas:

- Experiential environmental education.
- Tourism opportunities.
- Environmental stewardship of the Wye Valley.
- Development of revenue streams.
- Community and Donor Relations.
- Finance and Administration.

Experiential environmental education experiences includes: curriculum based outdoor education programming for schools, badge requirement based programs for Girl Guides and Scouts, educationally focused holiday activities (Easter, Halloween etc) and special interest workshops offering hands on experiences with outdoors/nature and environmentally focused topics.

Tourism opportunities includes: open 362 days a year to general visitors, interpretive signage , guided tours (by canoe/kayak or walking), hand held wands in three languages providing a self-guided tour, Nature oriented festival experiences (Sweetwater Harvest festival and Get Outdoors festival) and changing exhibits in our interpretive centre.

Environmental stewardship of the Wye Valley includes: participating in monitoring programs (ie MMP, Trumpeter Swan monitoring etc), installing and maintaining nest boxes (wood ducks, blue birds, and tree swallows), monitoring invasive species within the valley and determining the potential mitigation techniques that could be used to ameliorate the environmental condition and biodiversity of the Wye Valley.

Development of revenue streams includes: generating financial resources, and is comprised of the following programs: annual giving (membership, sponsorship and general), major giving, and events.

Community & Donor Relations includes: stewardship and donor relations, volunteer management, marketing, and communications.

Finance & Administration includes: finance and accounting, investment management, gift administration, office administration, and human resources.

### **Performance**

For the fiscal year 2013/2014, the organizations accomplishments included:

- Developing a business model for the expenses of the organization.
- Increased participation in donor sponsorship for our events.
- Improved donor stewardship – specifically regular thank you calls.
- Completion of an audit on our membership rates and a resulting structure change/update.

## Overall Strategic Plan

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### CREATE A SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATION THAT WILL CONTINUE TO GROW AND THRIVE MOVING FORWARD

- 1. Ensure revenue generated exceeds costs incurred each fiscal year.**
  - a. Implement travelling exhibit schedule to increase visitor attendance.
  - b. Create a partnership program with the Martyr's Shrine and Sainte Marie Among the Hurons – reciprocal program or 50% coupon for their patrons to visit us.
  - c. Hire a Fundraising staff to explore and develop increased annual and major giving.
  - d. Develop adopt a programs.
  - e. Solicit funding from all levels of government (Colin's plan).
  - f. Revamp interpretive centre to improve atmosphere, functionality and visitor comfort.
  
- 2. Revamp our overall marketing strategy to reflect our core product; facilitating the creation of “Marsh Memories”.**
  - a. Develop and implement a Marsh Memory campaign – this will target awareness about the marsh and bring additional visitors in each year complementing goal #1.
  - b. Select and secure travelling exhibits – targeting nature oriented exhibits and launch with powerful and well thought out marketing campaign.
  - c. Create partnerships with local media in order to regularly feature the marsh.
  
- 3. Develop a strong governance structure to support our network of volunteers.**
  - a. Board Terms of Reference.
  - b. Board of Directors Succession Plan.
  - c. Formalized volunteer structure with clear governance.
  
- 4. Develop a strong operational structure to support a sustainable organization.**
  - a. Create and implement the fundamentals of an organization.
  - b. Perform annual audits/reviews of our fundamental areas.
  - c. Develop a plan to increase human capital proportionately, as the organization grows.

## Implementation & Monitoring

The Strategic Plan will “come to life” through the Business Plan, which includes specific tactics and actions that need to be taken in order to accomplish the objectives laid out in the Strategic Plan. The Business Plan will in turn flow into specific and actionable objectives for all Staff in their annual performance evaluations and be linked to the organization's ongoing budgeting processes.

There will be a formal review of the plan every spring (April/May) by the Chairman of the Board and the Executive Director, with an overview of findings, and any recommendations for changes in strategy, coming forward to the Board by the AGM.