



2022 - 2026

**Strategic**

**Plan**

**WISCONSIN COUNTY  
FORESTS ASSOCIATION**



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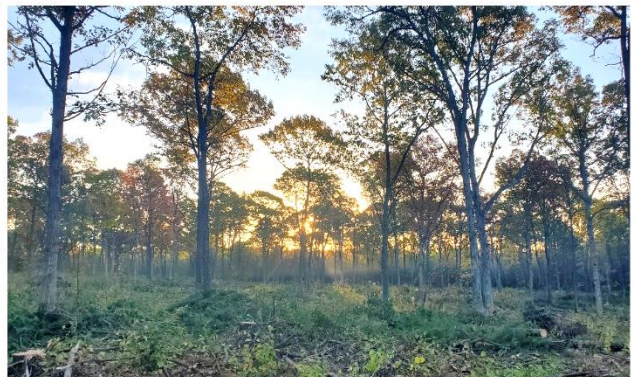
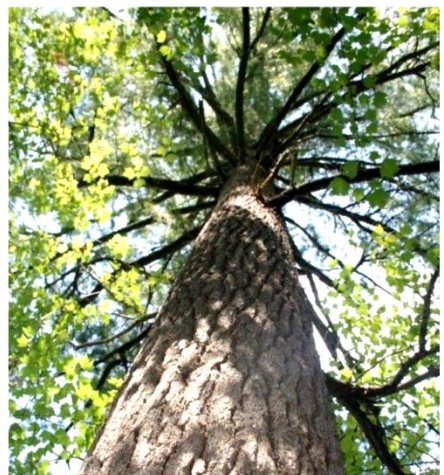
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## The Wisconsin County Forests Association, Inc

The Wisconsin County Forests Association (WCFA) is a collaborative platform for members to discuss issues, programs, and policies affecting the county forests in Wisconsin. Established in 1968, WCFA is a not-for-profit, quasi-government organization whose membership is made up of the 30 counties in Wisconsin with lands enrolled in §28.11. Instead of each individual county dealing with issues on their own, WCFA takes on the responsibility to advocate on everyone's behalf.

The Association's professional staff acts as a clearinghouse, providing communication and administrative services and serves as spokesperson for the organization. WCFA members and staff advocate for and represent the entire county forest system in a multitude of capacities. Since its formation, WCFA has provided an invaluable service to its 30 member counties, Wisconsin's forest products industry and to the people and visitors of Wisconsin. On many issues of concern, volunteer counsel and leadership by dedicated WCFA members and staff has enhanced the County Forest program. WCFA members also provide leadership on proposed legislation affecting forestry and forest land in Wisconsin.

The priorities and work of the Association are steered by a strategic plan geared towards the care and sustainability of its members and the important work they do. The 17-member Board of Directors is comprised of elected County Board officials who serve on their respective County Board Forestry Committees. There are also several internal committees who help direct and craft the work accomplished by WCFA.



## **VISION – the future we will achieve**

### **The people’s forests are sustained and enjoyed**

We support each member county to manage their forests sustainably in the face of biological and socioeconomic challenges.

Residents, and state and local elected officials understand the benefits of their county forests.

People benefit from their forests in many ways:

- Better health
- Recreation
- Food and medicine
- Thriving rural communities with strong forestry and tourism businesses.
- County programs funded by timber sale revenue.
- Local forestry businesses and employment supported by forest product industries which employ people and serve markets around the world.

## **MISSION – the work we will do**

### **We provide resources for our member counties to succeed in their many forestry endeavors.**

We grow trusting relationships with state and local elected officials.

We provide leadership on forest policy.

We partner with state agencies and recreation user groups.

We partner with, support and advocate for forest industry in Wisconsin.

We tell the story of forestry in ways that make sense to different people:

- New county forest staff
- County supervisors
- State legislators
- Children
- Adults

We build a diverse funding structure to provide these resources.

## **VALUES – our “why”**

### **We stand together for . . .**

- thriving forests
- thriving counties and communities
- work we can be proud of





## Principal Goals & Priorities

*(Bolded goals are first or second priority)*

### Principal 1 – Develop and Expand Connections with Local Elected Officials and State Legislators

- Goal 1.1** Continue education of elected county officials on forestry and recreation issues.
- Goal 1.2** Maintain and expand contacts with legislators on WCFA issues.
- Goal 1.3** Improve performance and effectiveness of lobbying efforts on issues important to WCFA.

### Principal 2 – Collaborate with Forest Industry Partners to Promote Markets

- Goal 2.1** Diversify, improve and increase WCFA funding sources.
- Goal 2.2** Spur new investment in the wood industry by promoting wood availability and inventory.
- Goal 2.3 Develop a market strategy with WCFA brand for products from county forests.

### Principal 3 – Use Knowledge Base to Educate

- Goal 3 Use knowledge base to educate youth and adults about sustainable and sound forest management.

### Principal 4 – Grow the Number of Peer Organization Partnerships and Idea Sharing

- Goal 4.1** Foster active relationships with partner organizations.
- Goal 4.3 Promote forest industry careers to improve recruitment and retention of county and industry staff.

### Principal 5 – Network and Share Ideas

- Goal 5.1 Identify new and foster existing collaborations with wildlife and recreation organizations.
- Goal 5.2 Create an online site for member Q&A discussion as part of WCFA website.
- Goal 6 Develop research opportunities with new partners.



## Five Year Action Plan - Timeline

A February 2022 survey asked board members, county forest administrators (CFAs) and WCFA staff to indicate how much effort each group should apply to each of the goals.

Twenty-six people responded. Their distribution is shown in the table.

Board	2
CFA	17
Staff	2
Unknown	5

Individuals and organizations can address three to five goals. For WCFA in the next five years two steps set the goal priorities. First priorities are allocated at least 15% of effort. Second priorities are allocated 9% to 14% of effort. The goals with 8% or less effort allocation may be addressed when additional time and resources are available.

Goal		Effort by Role		
		Board	CFAs	Staff
1.1	County Engagement	18%	15%	16%
1.2	Legislature Engagement	16%	11%	12%
1.3	Lobbying	10%	5%	8%
2.1	Increased Diverse Funding	9%	8%	9%
2.2	Promote Available Timber	7%	13%	8%
2.3	WCFA Brand	7%	6%	6%
3	Youth & Adult Education	5%	7%	7%
4.1	Foster Partnerships	9%	10%	11%
4.2	Industry Career Development	4%	5%	4%
5.1	Rec & Wildlife Org Partnerships	6%	8%	8%
5.2	Online member area	4%	5%	5%
6	Research	4%	6%	6%

Summary plans for each of the next five years follow. The action plans are detailed in the worksheets in Appendix B, as compiled from the work day on September 21, 2021.

It is common for the first year of a strategic plan to have the most detail. It is also common for long-term efforts to appear in the final year. Add to annual plans work to achieve later year outcomes.

## 2022 / Annual

OUTCOMES	TIME	END DATE	LEAD	ACTIONS
Assessment of local election changes to WCFA and County forestry agendas in each county.	80 hours	Bi-annual	Board Staff CFAs	Goal 1.1
Visit 6 county forest committees each year.	80 hours	Annual	Staff Board CFAs	Goal 1.1
Information packets and fact sheets updated	80 hours	Annual	Staff	Goal 1.1
New and engaged WCFA Board Members	Continuous	Continuous	Board ED	Goal 1.1
County supervisors are more aware of WCFA and county forests	Continuous	Continuous	Staff CFAs	Goal 1.1
Legislators are more aware of WCFA and county forests	40 hours	Annual	ED Lobbyist	Goal 1.2
Legislation passed that has positive impacts on county forests and/or supports sustainable forest management in Wisconsin.	160 hours	Annual	CFAs Staff Lobbyist	Goal 1.2
Improved relationships of county forest staff and committees with their legislators	160 hours	Annual	CFAs	Goal 1.2
Lobbyist work plan adopted by WCFA board.	40 hours	Annual/ Fall Meeting	ED Leg/Cert Cmt Board	Goal 1.3
Lobbyist time and accomplishment reports	80 hours	Annual/ Fall Meeting	Board Lobbyist	Goal 1.3
New or enhanced existing relationships with other state and local organizations such as WTA, WCA, WATVA, and GLTPA.	160 hours	Annual	Staff CFAs Board	Goal 4.1
Report on the current understanding by new and potential partner organizations of Wisconsin county forestry impacts on their work.	80 hours	Bi-annual	Staff Leg/Cert Cmt Board	Goal 4.1
Demographic report on County forestry staff and contractors	160 hours	2023	Staff	Goal 4.2
Relevant wildlife & recreation organizations identified.	80 hours	2023	Staff CFAs	Goal 5.1
Member online forum and library	6 months	2022	Staff	Goal 5.2



## 2023

OUTCOMES	TIME	END DATE	LEAD	ACTIONS
Assessment of state election changes to WCFA and County forestry agendas in each county.	160 hours	Bi-annual	Lobbyist Staff CFAs	Goal 1.2
Host Legislative Field Day	160 hours	2023 or 2024	Lobbyist Staff CFAs	Goal 1.2
Brainstorm comprehensive list of funding opportunities	80 hours	2023	Budget Cmt Staff	Goal 2.1
An inventory of harvestable red pine and report of the need for a red pine utilization facility	80 hours	2024	CFAs Staff	Goal 2.2
Analysis of current outreach strategies	160 hours	2023	Staff	Goal 3
Cross promotion between WCFA and wildlife/recreation organizations attending events, writing articles, etc.	160 hours	Annual	Staff CFAs	Goal 5.1

## 2024

OUTCOMES	TIME	END DATE	LEAD	ACTIONS
Hold Spring CFA meeting in Madison	6 months	2024	Staff CFAs	Goal 1.2
Legislative hearing and legislative reception	6 months	2024	Board Staff CFAs	Goal 1.2
Lobbying capacity report	80 hrs	2025	ED	Goal 1.3
Prioritize list of funding strategies	12 months	2024	Budget Cmt Staff Board	Goal 2.1
WCFA/County Forest brand development	6 months	2026	Staff	Goal 2.3
Message development and presentations to youth and adults	80 hours	Annual	Staff CFAs	Goal 3
Report on changes in understanding of WCFA by partner organizations.	80 hours	Bi-annual	Staff Leg/Cert Cmt Board	Goal 4.1

## 2025

OUTCOMES	TIME	END DATE	LEAD	ACTIONS
New funding projects implemented as part of annual work plan.	40 hours	Annual	Board Staff	Goal 2.1
An inventory of harvestable northern hardwood and report of the need for a northern hardwood utilization facility	80 hours	2026	CFAs Staff	Goal 2.2
Report on changes in understanding of new and potential partner organizations by WCFA staff and members.	80 hours	Bi-annual	Staff CFAs Board	Goal 4.1
County Forest staff retention increases	Continuous	Continuous	Staff	Goal 4.2
Logging and wood product employee numbers increase.	Continuous	Continuous	Staff	Goal 4.2
Increased awareness of WCFA and county forests by wildlife and recreation organizations.	80 hours	Annual	Staff	Goal 5.1



## 2026

OUTCOMES	TIME	END DATE	LEAD	ACTIONS
Increased lobbying efforts by WCFA staff, CFAs and others are effective	Continuous	Continuous	Staff Board CFAs	Goal 1.3
Lobbyist is a member of the WCFA staff.	NA	2026	Board ED	Goal 1.3
Association funding comes from at least 5 sources and reliance on county membership dues is reduced.	160 hours	Annual	Budget Cmt Staff Board	Goal 2.1
More services, programs are funded	160 hours	Annual	Budget Cmt Staff Board	Goal 2.1
An assessment of needs to maintain an inventory of available wood.	80 hours	2026	CFAs Staff	Goal 2.2
Feasibility studies of facilities to make products from available lumber that may otherwise not be used.	80 hours	2026	CFAs Staff	Goal 2.2
New, diverse and strong markets.	80 hours	2026	CFAs Staff	Goal 2.2
WCFA brand is applied to one or more products. Increased awareness of WCFA and County Forests by the people and visitors of Wisconsin.	160 hours	2026	Staff	Goal 2.3
Users are good and responsible stewards.	80 hours	Annual	CFAs Staff	Goal 3
Partner organizations and their members have a better understanding of Wisconsin county forest impacts on their work and mission.	80 hours	2026	Staff CFAs Board	Goal 4.1
WCFA has a better understanding of other organizations' issues	80 hours	2026	Staff CFAs Board	Goal 4.1
Expanded research on current County Forest issues	320 hours	Continuous	Staff CFAs	Goal 6



## Appendix A: Glossary and Acronyms

- BOD – Board of Directors. Referring to the WCFA Board of Directors
- CFA – County Forest Administrator. Referring to the Department heads or key responsible person for the forestry program of each individual county.
- DNR – Department of Natural Resources
- DOF – DNR Division of Forestry
- ED – Executive Director. Referring to the WCFA Executive Director
- GLTPA – Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association
- LEAF – Refers to Wisconsin's K-12 Forestry Education Program
- SAF – Society of American Foresters
- TFT – Trees for Tomorrow
- USFS – United States Forest Service
- UW – University of Wisconsin
- UWSP – University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point
- WATVA – Wisconsin ATV Association
- WCA – Wisconsin Counties Association
- WTA – Wisconsin Towns Association



## Appendix B: Action Plan Worksheets

*(Click the link for each goal to be redirected to its individual action plan)*

<b><u>Goal 1.1</u></b>	Continue education of elected county officials on forestry and recreation issues.
<b><u>Goal 1.2</u></b>	Maintain and expand contacts with legislators on WCFA issues.
<b><u>Goal 1.3</u></b>	Improve performance and effectiveness of lobbying efforts on issues important to WCFA.
<b><u>Goal 2.1</u></b>	Diversify, improve and increase WCFA funding sources.
<b><u>Goal 2.2</u></b>	Spur new investment in the wood industry by promoting wood availability and inventory.
<b><u>Goal 2.3</u></b>	Develop a market strategy with WCFA brand for products from county forests.
<b><u>Goal 3</u></b>	Use knowledge base to educate youth and adults about sustainable and sound forest management.
<b><u>Goal 4.1</u></b>	Foster active relationships with partner organizations.
<b><u>Goal 4.2</u></b>	Promote forest industry careers to improve recruitment and retention of county and industry staff.
<b><u>Goal 5.1</u></b>	Identify new and foster existing collaborations with wildlife and recreation organizations.
<b><u>Goal 5.2</u></b>	Create an online site for member Q&A discussion as part of WCFA website.
<b><u>Goal 6</u></b>	Develop research opportunities with new partners.

GOAL 1.1		Continue Education of Elected County Officials on Forestry and Recreation Issues					
		Outcomes	Actions	Resources	Time Needed	Completion Date	Who is Responsible?
ACTION PLAN	Benchmark Outcomes						
	1	Assessment of changes to WCFA and County forestry agendas in each county after elections	Review election results Note new county supervisors Identify county forest champions Note county supervisors not returning Assess changes in support of WCFA agenda	Time	80 hours in even numbered years	Summers in even numbered years	CFAs WCFA BOD WCFA staff
	2	County Committee visits	Determine which county committees and boards to visit Schedule visits	Time Budget	80 hours annually	2026	CFAs WCFA BOD WCFA staff
	3	Fact sheets prepared	Review existing printed and digital information Make work plan to write new material. Work in parallel with educational material development.	Time Budget	80 hours annually	2023	WCFA staff
	4	Recruitment of new WCFA BOD members	Communicate with county forest committees via email, mail, and in person Develop information sheets on being a board member	Time Budget	40 hours annually	Summers of even numbered years	WCFA ED CFAs WCFA BOD
	Final Outcomes						
	1	Information packets	Update fact sheets every two years, include WCFA history, public and county benefits of WCFA. Review existing printed and digital information, and revise if necessary. Make work plan to update by removing old information and including new information. Make sure WCFA website is always up to date	Time Budget	80 hours annually	continuous	WCFA staff
	2	Formally visit 6 county forest committees each year. Meet with all committees every 5 years.	Schedule face-to-face meetings For each visit, write an after-action report with follow up plan	Time Budget	30+ days of travel days over 5 years	2026	WCFA staff, CFAs WCFA BOD
	3	New and engaged WCFA BOD members equaling a full board	Outreach and recruitment of WCFA BOD Periodically review benefits of WCFA Boardship. Assess appropriate number of Board members needed.	Time Budget	continuous	continuous	WCFA BOD WCFA ED
	4	County supervisors are more aware of WCFA and county forests	Address county boards every 2 years to ensure new board members are educated and informed Track engagement	Time	continuous	continuous	CFAs WCFA staff



GOAL 1.2		Maintain and Expand Contacts with Legislators on WCFA Issues					
		Outcomes	Actions	Resources	Time Needed	Completion Date	Who is Responsible?
ACTION PLAN	Benchmark Outcomes						
	1	Spring County Forest Administrators meeting held in Madison	Set date and time of spring administrator meeting.	Time Budget	6 months	2024	WCFA staff CFAs
	2	Schedule legislative hearing and host a legislative reception in conjunction with Spring CFA meeting in Madison.	Work with selected legislator and WCFA lobbyist on agenda. Invite representatives and senators to discuss forestry issues. Work out logistics and catering with hotel & Capitol Identify guests and send invitations.	Time Budget Host legislator	6 months	2024	WCFA staff Lobbyist
	3	Election changes assessed related to WCFA's legislative agenda	Review election results Note new legislators & perform outreach to key newcomers Note legislators not returning. Assess changes in support of WCFA agenda. Lobbyist and WCFA ED meet with legislators Identify forestry champions	Time Budget	160 hours in odd numbered Novembers	2023/2025	WCFA staff CFAs Lobbyist
	4	Legislative Field Day	Host field day with legislators Work with partners on agenda and logistics	Time Budget	160 hours	2023 or 2024	WCFA staff CFAs Lobbyist
	Final Outcomes						
	1	Legislators are more aware of WCFA and county forests.	Track recognition of WCFA, county forest issues, WCFA staff and lobbyist by legislators.	Time	40 hours annually	continuous	WCFA staff CFAs Lobbyist
	2	Legislation passed which has positive impacts on county forests and/or supports sustainable forest management in Wisconsin.	Track WCFA supported proposals to final outcomes.	Budget Cooperation w/ legislators Time	160 hours annually	continuous	WCFA staff CFAs Lobbyist
	3	Improved relationships of county forest staff and committees with their local legislators	Increased outreach (phone calls, emails, one on one meetings), personal invitations to local field days, etc	County staff time	160 hours annually	2026	CFAs with some WCFA support

GOAL 1.3		Improve Performance and Effectiveness of Lobbying Efforts on Issues Important to WCFA					
		Outcomes	Actions	Resources	Time Needed	Completion Date	Who is Responsible?
ACTION PLAN	Benchmark Outcomes						
	1	Lobbying capacity report presented to WCFA board.	ED conducts analysis to decide if more or different lobbying capacity is needed and/or if contract lobbyist(s) is effective.	WCFA ED discussion with Legislative Committee and Board of Directors Time	80 hours	2-3 years	WCFA ED
	2	Lobbyist work plan adopted by WCFA board.	Prepare focused list of tasks and issues for lobbyists to represent WCFA. Solicit issues from WCFA Legislative Committee.  Each year develop list of goals and tasks for lobbyists. Include anticipated work in future years.	Lobbyist time  Time	40 hours annually	Prior to fall meeting annually	WCFA ED  WCFA Leg/Cert Committee  WCFA BOD
	3	Progress report on lobbyist accomplishment of WCFA issues	Lobbyists reports on time spent, by task, on WCFA issues, summarizes contacts, key points, decisions, successes. Report contacts with legislators and impacts to legislative decisions/outcomes	Time	40 hours annually	Before each WCFA BOD meeting	Lobbyist(s)  WCFA ED
	4	Annual time report from lobbyist(s)	Lobbyists reports on time spent by task working on WCFA goals. Chart of time invested by issue by lobbyists with comments.	Time	40 hours annually	Before each WCFA BOD meeting	Lobbyist(s)
	5	Lobbyist(s) provides list of upcoming issues important to future of WI county forests	Lobbyists provides regular update on new, emerging, and key issues with potential to impact WCFA, provides heads up scouting report on potentially key future issues with recommendation and/or comments by lobbyist(s) for WCFA consideration.	Time	40 hours annually	Annually	Lobbyist(s)
	Final Outcomes						
	1	Lobbyist is a member of the WCFA staff.	Review and assess lobbying efforts to determine if a government affairs position would be beneficial and advantageous.	Time  Budget	NA	2026	WCFA ED  WCFA BOD
	2	Increased lobbying efforts by WCFA staff, CFAs and others are effective.	Monitor engagement Track outreach Track accomplishments Evaluate change in activity and results over time.	Time	ongoing	continuous	WCFA staff WCFA BOD CFAs

GOAL 2.1		Diversify, Improve and Increase WCFA Funding Sources					
		Outcomes	Actions	Resources	Time Needed	Completion Date	Who is Responsible?
ACTION PLAN	Benchmark Outcomes						
	1	A comprehensive list of opportunities to diversify and increase funding.	WCFA BOD tasks Budget Committee to spearhead Brainstorm ideas Get information about how similar organizations are funded	Time Budget Committee	80 hours	2023	Budget Committee WCFA staff WCFA BOD
	2	Priority list of strategies and related projects.	Investigate new funding sources for WCFA. Evaluate opportunities to determine suitability for WCFA. Choose priority projects to test. Obtain BOD approval	Budget Marketing consultant Time	12 months	2024	Budget Committee WCFA staff WCFA BOD
	3	Two or three new funding projects implemented.	Budget committee leads planning and management of the new priority funding projects and products.	Budget Time Marketing consultant	80 hours annually	2026	Budget Committee WCFA staff
	4	Evaluation report for each funding project.	Assess return on investment in new funding strategies. Determine which projects to continue.  If needed, choose new projects to test & implement.	Time  Budget	40 hours annually	annually	WCFA ED Budget Committee
	Final Outcomes						
	1	Successful projects become part of annual work plans.	Budget committee incorporates new funding work in the budget and work plan.	Time	40 hours annually	annually	Budget Committee WCFA staff
	2	WCFA funding comes from at least 5 different sources including existing sources	Increase and diversify funding for WCFA by implementing new strategies as needed.	Time Budget Expert help	160 hours annually	2026	Budget Committee WCFA staff WCFA BOD
	3	WCFA relies less on county member dues to balance budget.  Membership dues decreased.	Determine if new funding is sufficient and stable enough to reduce county membership dues.	Time  Budget Expert help	80 hours annually	2026	Budget Committee  WCFA staff WCFA BOD
	4	Support to counties increases each year as more services and programs are funded.	Hire additional full-time staff.	Time Budget Expert help	160 hours annually	2026	Budget Committee WCFA staff WCFA BOD



GOAL 2.2		Spur New Investment in the Wood Industry by Promoting Wood Availability and Inventory					
		Outcomes	Actions	Resources	Time Needed	Completion Date	Who is Responsible?
ACTION PLAN	Benchmark Outcomes						
	1	An inventory of harvestable red pine at present and 10 years in the future	Seek partners and funding to create red pine availability reports by product over time (10 years)	Partners (UW, USFS, DNR, GLTPA, Legislators, etc.) Time Budget	80 hours annually	2026	WCFA staff
	2	A report of the need for a red pine utilization facility	Conduct a study of the feasibility for a partner red pine mass production facility	Partners (UW, USFS, DNR, GLTPA, Legislators, etc.) Time Budget	80 hours annually	2026	WCFA staff
	3	An inventory of harvestable northern hardwood at present and in the future	Seek partners and funding to create northern hardwood availability reports by product over time (10 years)	Partners (UW, USFS, DNR, GLTPA, Legislators, etc.) Time Budget	80 hours annually	2026	WCFA staff
	4	A report of the need for a northern hardwood utilization facility	Conduct a study of the feasibility for a partner northern hardwood mass production facility	Partners (UW, USFS, DNR, GLTPA, Legislators, etc.) Time Budget	80 hours annually	2026	WCFA staff
	5	An assessment of needs to maintain an inventory of available wood.	Seek partners to determine the need for annual reports of harvestable available wood volumes.	Partners (UW, USFS, DNR, GLTPA, Legislators, etc.) Time Budget	80 hours annually	2026	WCFA staff
	Final Outcomes						
	1	Feasibility studies to site facilities that make products from available lumber that may otherwise not be used.	Seek partners to conduct feasibility studies. Conduct the feasibility studies.	Partners (UW, USFS, DNR, GLTPA, Legislators, etc.) Time Budget	80 hours annually	2026	WCFA staff
	2	New, diverse and strong markets exist	Collaborate with DNR to track available wood utilization.	Partners (UW, USFS, DNR, GLTPA, Legislators, etc.) Time Budget	80 hours annually	2026	WCFA staff

GOAL 2.3		Develop a Market Strategy with WCFA Brand for Products from County Forests					
		Outcomes	Actions	Resources	Time Needed	Completion Date	Who is Responsible?
ACTION PLAN	Benchmark Outcomes						
	1	A manufacturer with existing production and interest agrees to test WCFA county forest brand.	Seek local producers with existing county forest relationship. Estimate the increase in production cost to apply the brand. Define criteria for success for WCFA and for manufacturers.	Marketing consultant Staff time Budget	160 hours	End of this strategic plan	WCFA staff
	2	A WCFA county forest product brand.	Develop a recognizable brand. Work with willing manufacturers to identify which products would generate the most benefit from branding. Apply the brand to identified products.	Marketing consultant Staff time Budget	160 hours	End of this strategic plan	WCFA staff
	3	A market strategy	Develop a market strategy. Implement the market strategy.	Marketing consultant Staff time Budget	160 hours	End of this strategic plan	WCFA staff
	4	Additional products to brand are identified	Evaluate success of first product. Determine whether or not to continue the branding program. Identify other potential products.	Staff time Budget Market study analysis skills.	80 hours	End of this strategic plan	WCFA staff
	Final Outcomes						
	1	WCFA brand is applied to one or more products.	Track use of branding and monitor changes in consumer purchases.	Staff time Budget	160 hours	End of this strategic plan	WCFA staff
	2	Increased awareness of WCFA and county forests by the people of Wisconsin and county forest visitors.	Measure awareness of WCFA and county forests over time.	Staff time Budget Market study analysis skills.	160 hours	End of this strategic plan	WCFA staff

GOAL 3		Use Knowledge Base to Educate Youth and Adults about Sustainable and Sound Forest Management					
		Outcomes	Actions	Resources	Time Needed	Completion Date	Who is Responsible?
ACTION PLAN	Benchmark Outcomes						
	1	A report about current youth and adult education and outreach strategies and opportunities	Evaluate current education and outreach strategies and their effectiveness: social media, field days, school visits, job shadowing, working with partners that do forest education, etc.  Perform online survey to learn topics of interest.	Time  Survey skills and software.	160 hours	2023	WCFA staff
	2	New educational and outreach resources.  Improved existing educational and outreach resources.	Formulate programs, presentations and information to educate youth and adults about the importance of sound forestry and the impacts of County Forests.  Gather information from existing resources & experts. Reach out to LEAF or equivalent as starting point within one year.  Financially support other entities who perform forestry education.	Time Budget CFAs  Educators  Partner organizations	320 hours	2024	WCFA staff, possible ad hoc committee
	3	Standardized presentation material that suits county forest needs which can be tailored to individual counties	Reach out to schools, WCFA members and DNR to collaborate with WCFA to create content. WCFA has the final say.	Time Budget Willing CFAs Educators Partner organizations	320 hours	2024	WCFA staff, possible ad hoc committee
	Final Outcomes						
	1	Information and presentations with a good message about county forests that WCFA and counties can all use	At least 6 presentations per year at schools, workshops, field days, other organizational meetings, etc.	Time Budget Willing CFAs Educators Partner organizations	80 hours annally	continuous	WCFA staff CFAs
	2	More youth choose forestry higher education and/or forest industry related work	Monitor youth engagement with WCFA. Monitor enrollment in forestry education and training programs.	Time Partners (UW, DNR, etc..)	80 hours annally	continuous	WCFA staff CFAs
	3	Users are good and responsible stewards of the forests.	Monitor user engagement Interactions between county forest staff and forest users are positive. Track outreach. Utilize QR codes (or similar tech)	Time	80 hours annally	continuous	CFAs WCFA staff



GOAL 4.1		Foster Active Relationships with Partner Organizations					
		Outcomes	Actions	Resources	Time Needed	Completion Date	Who is Responsible?
ACTION PLAN	Benchmark Outcomes						
	1	New or enhanced existing relationships with other state and local organizations such as WTA, WCA, WATVA, and GLTPA.	Create individualized legislative agendas that addresses issues shared by WCFA, county forests and other organizations. Attend and speak at each other’s meetings. Create action items which benefit WCFA and one or more partner organizations.	External partners Time Budget	160 hours annually	continuous	WCFA staff Leg/Cert Committee WCFA BOD
	2	Report on the current understanding by new and potential partner organizations of Wisconsin county forestry impacts on their work.	Ask prepared questions in conversation with organization leaders and record the responses. Analyze the data. Write the report.	Time	80 hours annually	bi-annual	WCFA staff Leg/Cert Committee WCFA BOD
	3	Report on changes in understanding by new and potential partner organizations of Wisconsin county forestry impacts on their work.	After relationship changes are established ask prepared questions in conversation with organization leaders and record the responses. Analyze the data. Write the report.	Time	80 hours annually	bi-annual	WCFA staff Leg/Cert Committee WCFA BOD
	4	Report on the current understanding of new and potential partner organizations by WCFA staff and members.	Ask prepared questions in conversation with WCFA leaders and record the responses. Analyze the data. Write the report.	Time	80 hours annually	bi-annual	WCFA staff Leg/Cert Committee WCFA BOD
	5	Report on changes in understanding of new and potential partner organizations by WCFA staff and members.	After relationship changes are established ask prepared questions in conversation with WCFA leaders and record the responses. Analyze the data. Write the report.	Time	80 hours annually	bi-annual	Leg/Cert Committee WCFA staff WCFA BOD
	Final Outcomes						
	1	Partner organizations and their members have a better understanding of Wisconsin County forestry impacts on their work and mission.	Monitor engagement Track outreach	Time	80 hours annually	continuous	WCFA staff Leg/Cert Committee WCFA BOD
	2	WCFA has a better understanding of other organizations’ issues	Monitor engagement Track outreach	Time	80 hours annually	continuous	WCFA staff Leg/Cert Committee WCFA BOD

GOAL 4.2		Promote Forest Industry Careers to Improve Recruitment and Retention of County and Industry Staff					
		Outcomes	Actions	Resources	Time Needed	Completion Date	Who is Responsible?
ACTION PLAN	Benchmark Outcomes						
	1	New foresters are working in county forestry departments.	Local school (K-12, trade, college) outreach made. Forestry education organizations (TFT, etc..) supported.  Develop, fund and implement forestry education scholarships.  Training and networking offered to support professional development.  Work with UWSP to recruit youth to forestry careers.	Time Budget  Local schools & colleges  SAF	320 hours	2026	WCFA staff
	2	New contractors are working county forests.	Local school (K-12, trade, college) outreach made. Forestry education organizations (TFT, etc..) supported.  Develop, fund and implement forestry education scholarships.  Training and networking offered to support professional development.  Learn how to support initiatives such as technical college logging programs.	Time Budget  Local school partnerships  Relationships with legislators and GLTPA	320 hours	2026	WCFA staff Lobbyist
	3	Report on demographics of county forest department staff and contractors working in county forests.	Survey CFAs.  Survey contractors working in county forests.	Time  Budget	160 hours	2023	WCFA staff
	Final Outcomes						
	1	Report on demographics of county forest department staff and contractors working in county forests at project completion.	Survey CFAs.  Survey contractors working in county forests.	Time  Budget	1 year	2023	WCFA staff
	2	County forest staff length of employment increases.	Build workforce to lessen turnover and vacancies  Legislative action to allow years of service to substitute for education in certain situations	Legislative, WCA, local counties, SAF  Time  Budget	continuous	continuous	WCFA staff
	3	The number of logging and wood product contractors increases.	Support for new business startups Support for existing businesses Legislature support for mills, new markets State agencies are equipped to support new and existing markets	Schools, new legislative actions (grant/loan opportunities), GLTPA, WCFA, SAF, industry, DNR	continuous	continuous	WCFA staff

GOAL 5.1	Identify New and Foster Existing Collaborations with Wildlife and Recreation Organizations					
	Outcomes	Actions	Resources	Time Needed	Completion Date	Who is Responsible?
ACTION PLAN	Benchmark Outcomes					
	1	WCFA staff and members attend four to six events of wildlife and recreation organizations each year.	Offer to attend events as speaker and staff a booth at annual meetings and tours. Develop and maintain current info in publications and kiosk displays.	Time Budget	80 hours annually	continuous WCFA staff CFAs WCFA BOD
	2	WCFA hosts staff and members wildlife and recreation organizations at WCFA events.	Invite other organization leaders to speak and staff a booth at WCFA annual meetings and tours.	Time Budget	80 hours annually	continuous WCFA staff
	3	Newsletter and trade journal articles published that cross promote the organizations.	WCFA staff and CFAs write articles to publish in other organization publications. WCFA highlight projects funded/assisted by organizations	Time Writing and technical expertise	160 hours annually	continuous WCFA staff CFAs WCFA BOD
	4	Projects completed in collaboration with organizations' experts and biologists.	Maintain roster of organization technical experts. Develop list of possible projects to collaborate on and strategy on how to complete them	Time Budget Technical expertise	160 hours annually	continuous WCFA staff CFAs WCFA BOD
	5	Facilitate communication between counties and organizations in both directions.	Develop contact list Regular check ins Surveys and email contacts	Time	80 hours annually	continuous WCFA staff CFAs WCFA BOD
	Final Outcomes					
	1	Relevant wildlife & recreation organizations identified and contacted.	Identify local contacts for national/regional organizations. Find local organizations that may be interested and nontraditional organizations with similar goals. Reach out to all.	Time	80 hours annually	continuous WCFA staff CFAs
	2	Increased project work & funding through wildlife & recreation organizations.	Promote new funding opportunities. Monitor awarded funds Track accomplishments	Time	80 hours annually	continuous WCFA staff
	3	Increased awareness of WCFA and county forests.	Measure awareness before and after the collaboration strategy is implemented. Monitor and track engagement	Time	80 hours annually	continuous WCFA staff

GOAL 5.2		Create an Online Site for Member Q&A Discussion as part of WCFA Website					
		Outcomes	Actions	Resources	Time Needed	Completion Date	Who is Responsible?
ACTION PLAN	Benchmark Outcomes						
	1	Website includes member area for library and online forum	Build software plugin for WCFA website	Budget for webmaster Time	6 months	Spring 2022	WCFA ED Webmaster
	2	A list of topics and resources	Solicit counties for needs and interests for topics	Time Budget for webmaster	1 month	2022	WCFA ED CFAs
	3	A master calendar	Build software plugin for WCFA website	Time Budget for webmaster	1 month	Spring 2022	WCFA ED CFAs
	Final Outcomes						
	1	An effective, usable online forum & library	Monitor use Measure usage of questions and answer forum	Time	40 hours annually	Annually	WCFA ED Webmaster



GOAL 6		Develop Research Opportunities with New Partners					
		Outcomes	Actions	Resources	Time Needed	Completion Date	Who is Responsible?
ACTION PLAN	Benchmark Outcomes						
	1	Support of county forest research needs and issues	Solicit research ideas from counties  Explore options on how, and with whom, to implement research studies (UWSP, DNR, USFS, consultants, contractors, etc.) Graduate student studies	Time  Budget	160 hours annually	continuous	WCFA staff  CFAs
	2	Facilitate gathering of information and answers to county forest questions	Develop and implement research program with new partners	Time  Budget	160 hours annually	continuous	WCFA staff  CFAs
	Final Outcomes						
	1	Expanded research on current topics & issues	Develop and implement research program. Develop designated funding mechanism.	Time Budget Consultant (or the like)	320 hours annually	continuous	WCFA staff  CFAs

## Appendix C: SMART Goals

Goals are SMART when they are:

- Specific – What exactly the organization is striving for
- Measurable – The final outcome or condition to achieve
- Action-Oriented – The activity that will produce results
- Realistic – Make it practical and achievable
- Time and Resource Constrained
  - Timeline for progress and final measurable outcomes
  - People (knowledge), time and money resources necessary to succeed

The group who met September 21, 2021 created goals after a review of all previous work. The goals are organized by business principal. Subgroups detailed the goals as SMART goals.



## Principal 1 – Develop and Expand Connections with Local Elected Officials and State Legislators

### Goal 1.1 – Continue education of elected county officials on forestry and recreation issues

- Measure: More contacts are made with county officials.
- Action:
  - Make six County Forest Committee visits each year. Follow-up.
  - More presentations to county boards and like organizations (WCA)
  - Track county election results
  - Prepare fact sheets & update information packet
  - Recruit new WCFA board members
  - Track engagement results
- Realistic: 30 County Forests. There is time, knowledge and budget to accomplish these actions.
- Time & Resources: WCFA staff and member county assistance required

### Goal 1.2 – Maintain and expand contacts with legislators on WCFA issues

- Measure: More contacts are made with state legislators. Legislators receive more information on WCFA issues.
- Action:
  - Legislative hearing and reception
  - Track state election results
  - Legislative field day
  - Track issue engagement
  - Phone calls, meetings
- Realistic: More support for county forests and the forest industry
- Time & Resources: WCFA staff, Lobbyist, CFAs

### Goal 1.3 – Improve performance and effectiveness of lobbying efforts on issues important to WCFA.

- Measure: Increase presence of WCFA in the state legislature through added capacity and/or by improving performance of contract lobbyists.
- Action:
  - ED Analysis of Lobbying
  - WCFA develops an annual list of tasks and goals for contract lobbying
  - Lobbyist progress reports on the tasks
  - Annual time reports submitted by lobbyists
  - Bi-weekly lobbyist contact with WCFA ED
- Realistic: Measure effectiveness over time
- Time & Resources: WCFA staff, Lobbyist, Legislative & Forest Certification Committee

## Principal 2 – Collaborate with Forest Industry Partners to Promote Markets

### Goal 2.1 – Diversify, improve and increase WCFA funding sources, new funding that funds new activity.

- Measure: Increased funding for new programs and staff. Decreased reliance on county membership dues.
- Action:
  - Assess diversification opportunities
  - Set priorities
  - Implement at least 2 or 3 strategies
- Realistic: There are opportunities WCFA can capitalize on to diverse funding while also promoting WCFA's name and mission.
- Time & Resources: WCFA staff, CFAs. Seed money for projects or events.

### Goal 2.2 – Spur new investment in the wood industry by promoting wood availability and inventory. Inform DNR feasibility studies.

- Measure: Immediate and long-term inventory of wood products by volume and species. Feasibility studies completed.
- Action:
  - Push partners directly and through state budget and legislative initiatives to develop a statewide database. Start with red pine and move to hardwoods.
  - Facility feasibility study
  - DNR utilization collaboration
- Realistic: Current awareness of struggling forest products markets and forest management gives opportunity to make strides in studies and inventory.
- Time & Resources: Prioritize species and products based on market constraints. Expect first inventory within two years. Conduct mill feasibility species by potential product feasibility study in the next three years.

### Goal 2.3 – Develop a market strategy with WCFA brand for products sourced from county forests.

- Measure: By end of this strategic plan have one or more products with WCFA brand
- Action:
  - Identify First Partner
  - Develop Brand and Marketing
  - Implementation
  - Measure Effect
  - Evaluate
- Realistic: Possible small or niche market to partner with.
- Time & Resources: Led by WCFA staff. Seed money for development and marketing.



## Principal 3 – Use Knowledge Base to Educate

### Goal 3 – Use knowledge base to educate youth and adults about sustainable and sound forest management

- Measure: Multi-media curricula for youth and adults is produced.
- Action:
  - Evaluate current outreach strategies.
  - Reach out to environmental education specialists for assistance.
  - Continue to financially support natural resources education organizations.
  - Present to six or more classes or organizations as there is demand.
  - Get it into classrooms or on other media (social media) used by the target audience. Expand web and social media content.
  - Monitor changes in forestry education and training
  - Monitor changes in forest user behavior
- Realistic: Several resources already exist to capitalize on, won't need to reinvent the wheel.
- Time & Resources: Partner with PLT, LEAF, Trees for Tomorrow. WCFA staff, CFAs. Budget for content development and support of other entities.



## Principal 4 – Increase the Number of Peer Organization Partnerships and Idea Sharing

### Goal 4.1 - Foster active relationships with partner organizations.

- Measure: Work with the Wisconsin Towns Association (WTA) and other partners on WCFA issues, collaborations, interactions such as attendance at each other's meetings and county forestry committee meetings
- Action:
  - Create collaborative legislative agendas
  - Attend and speak at each other meetings
  - Monitor and evaluate mutual understanding
- Realistic:
  - Shared issues such as roads, funding.
  - Close association based on overlay of responsibility and usage
- Time & Resources: WCFA staff, Lobbyist

### Goal 4.2 – Promote forest industry careers to improve recruitment and retention of county and industry staff.

- Measure: County staff retention. Increased number of contractors. More contractors bidding on sales and projects.
- Action:
  - County forest staff demographics assessment.
  - Industry staff work with K-12, trade schools and colleges.
  - Help contractors with new business startup with outreach and business support programs
- Realistic: Legislative action can facilitate opportunities for growth and retention, either staffing or business related. Support grant and loan programs for new contractors, similar to other agricultural or trades programs.
- Time & Resources: WCFA staff, Board, Legislative & Forest Certification Committee, Lobbyist. Legislative action could be accomplished in the life of the strategic plan. The recruitment and retention impacts will probably be seen in 6-10 years.

## Principal 5 – Network and Share Ideas

### Goal 5.1 - Identify new and foster existing collaborations with wildlife and recreation organizations.

- Measure: Organizations are identified and contacted. Increased project work and funding through other organizations.
- Action:
  - Find out how these organizations view county forests
  - Increase in completed wildlife projects.
  - Invite wildlife or recreation organizations to attend WCFA events. Attend their events.
  - Publish articles highlighting county forests and WCFA in other organization venues.
  - Facilitate cooperation between counties and wildlife organizations on landscape level projects, possibly with multiple counties
  - Maintain roster of experts and other contacts
- Realistic: Capitalize on base network, grow through contacts made.
- Time and Resources: WCFA staff, outreach

### Goal 5.2 – Create an online site for member Q&A as part of WCFA website

- Measure: Useability (access from WCFA site, quick login). Questions posted. Answers posted. User interaction with the site.
- Action:
  - Identify topics
  - Build plugin
  - Monitor use
- Realistic: Currently have the webmaster and funds to make project reality.
- Time & Resources: Webmaster time. Budget allocated.

### Goal 6 – Develop research opportunities with new partners.

- Measure: Projects, presentations and publications completed.
- Action:
  - Identify research topics
  - Identify potential partners
  - Develop and implement research programs and studies
- Realistic: Opportunity to capitalize on existing network on contacts
- Time & Resources: WCFA staff, possible separated/dedicated funding

## Appendix D: The SCOPE Planning Model (<https://in2marketing.wordpress.com/2011/10/07/the-scope-planning-model-an-alternative-to-swot-analysis/>)

SCOPE allows freedom to present a breadth of information and reflections pertinent to the planning process.

SCOPE outlines the past, present and future conditions. It considers both internal and external factors which have led the organization to its current status, and which have a bearing on the identification of future opportunities, trends and plans. SCOPE is intended to be ongoing, a repeated exercise.

The Situation is everything that must be considered as the strategic plan is developed. Focus on external and internal factors that have led the organization to its current and position. The focus is on factors that

1. are relevant and have a material impact on the planning decisions to be made and
2. have a bearing on the identification of future opportunities, trends and plans.

Core Competencies are specific factors that are strengths of the organization, things that are central to the way it operates. They fulfill three criteria:

1. A core competency is not easy for others to imitate, i.e., it is unique.
2. A core competency can improve more things that we do and market to more patrons.
3. A core competency adds benefit or value to clients' lives.

Core competencies provide the basis for the organization to find its role in the market area given the surrounding conditions.

Obstacles are internal and external. They are specific current issues which need to be addressed if the organization is to realize future opportunities. In this respect, they should not necessarily be defined as either a "Weakness" or "Threat" but rather as hurdles to jump over the duration of the strategic plan. Obstacles are shorter-term situations that need to be resolved.

Prospects are chances for the organization to create additional services and/or income streams by taking advantage of its Core Competencies in the context of its Situation. Identification of Prospects provides the foundation for both goal setting and strategic development going forward.

Expectations are anticipated developments in the wider world to consider when planning. They are things that you see happening in the future which could

1. take advantage of opportunities or
2. have either a direct or indirect influence on the execution of the strategic plan.

Expectations can be observable and measurable as well as based on one's opinion and philosophy. Expectations take the future seriously. SCOPE provides an alternative way to categorize factors to consider to plan strategic development. It structures analysis and problem solving to develop strategies and plans in a natural progression.



## Core Competencies

**Unique strengths** and abilities of the business which provide the fundamental basis for the provision of added value to customers and are critical to the delivery of competitive advantage.

## Situation

**Rear-view** pertaining conditions which have a relevant and material impact on the planning decision with regards to internal or external environmental factors.

## Prospects

Possibilities, chances and **opportunities** existing both internally or externally to the business that have an apparent probability of enhanced sales and / or profits created through the leveraging of its Core Competencies.

## Expectations

**Future-view** anticipated developments in internal and external conditions that could materially influence or impact the delivery of plans to meet the identified Prospects.

## Obstacles

**Potential issues** and threats that could jeopardize the realisation of future Prospects.

## Appendix E: SCOPE Analysis – What is WCFA's Situation?

These statements were gathered from the member surveys that were done in early 2020 and Fall 2021.

### Respected

- Solid, respected organization
- Referenced by the public and industry in forestry management
- Well respected by many internal and external partners
- Trust within the forestry community
- A leading organization on forestry issues at a local, state, and regional level
- Built a positive reputation at many levels
- Recognized leader throughout the state and nation in forest policy
- Through hard work one of the leaders in Wisconsin Forestry
- The WCFA organization and individual County Forest programs continue to gain confidence, experience, and statewide respect within Wisconsin's overall forest industry and culture.
- WCFA has grown over time to become a well-respected authority on public land forest management. This has come from hard work and constantly striving to make ourselves better as individual counties and as an organization.
- WCFA is an extremely well positioned organization compared to many groups that have an effect on all levels of governmental bodies.
- We are at the front line of Forestry issues in Wisconsin and we have to make sure that continues

### Strong

- Well set for the next five years.
- Five-decade history
- Currently financially solvent

### A union of county forests, stronger through membership and involvement

- Continue to represent the interests of county forests in Madison.
- The counties are more vulnerable to Madison's whims than ever before. The legislature took measures to weaken the WCFA: financial restrictions, new forestry budgeting process, denied \$50,000 Assistance Grant, repeal of the Mil Tax with no long-term funding source, and attempts to weaken the ability of counties to acquire additional lands through Knowles-Nelson cutbacks scheduled to end in 2021.
- Protection from outside influence on the county forests
- Holding 2.4 million acres of timber lands has a powerful effect on Madison.
- WCFA represents 30 unified county forests
- High priority to maintain stable funding levels
- Political environment in Madison.

### County differences

- Each county will have issues that may affect just their county or it may affect all counties.
- WCFA needs to be involved in all issues to keep up with potential changes to the program.
- Small WCFA staff may limit ability to do everything and meet expectations.

### **Mission alignment with partners**

- Maintaining separation from WDNR
- DNR is a strong partnership and supporter
- Active and friendly partners
- Reputation of trustworthiness and thoughtfulness in relationships WCFA cultivated.
- Regular face to face engagement with legislators and DNR policy makers has built rapport and trust that has proven invaluable.
- Maintain a presence in as many working groups and committees as possible, especially those that would have a direct impact on member counties.
- WCFA influences forest management policies and legislation, policy and forest management science.
- Partnership potential with WCA, WTA, and UWSP

### **Priority Setting**

- Forest Certification has driven our organization in the way we manage our forests governed by DNR/County Forest Partnership - Chapter 28.11 Wis. Stats
- Opportunities and work planning revolve around legislative issues and changes within the DNR.
- Evaluate each individual program so each program is "in line" with the WCFA goals.
- Improve prioritization of staff tasks to target what is essential first.
- The strategic plan is infrequently referenced. It is perceived as a chore to develop with limited working value.

### **Effective Communication among WCFA and County Boards**

- Stay abreast of current research efforts and issues, and continue to share those with member counties, in an approachable way.
- Strong leadership, strategic planning, partnerships, and a shared desire to unite behind a common purpose developed WCFA as a forum for discussing ecological, economic and social concerns important to our 29 counties and the State (concerns/needs of the public and forest industry).

### **WCFA Role**

- The primary role is to assist the County Forest Administrators in their mission to manage 2.4 million acres of public lands for maximum productivity.
- Provides essential services to its member counties in ways that would be extremely difficult for individual counties to address on their own.
- Protection of each county's local control of their county forest
- WCFA promotes sustainable forest resource management to benefit the citizens of Wisconsin and the member counties.
- Attend to financial changes, especially potential decreases in local timber harvest revenues by member counties.
- We have many partners in our organization and it's vital to keep the focus on the chosen path of forestry management.

## **Quality leadership**

- Strong executive director and assistant, plus a board of directors willing to follow
- A new Director that needs direction for work planning in order to continue the WCFA's overall impacts on Forestry in Wisconsin
- The new ED will need to continue and improve on the strong work that was done by Jane to continue the organization forward.
- The success of WCFA lies primarily in the ED's role.
- One Executive Director, and one assistant director
- Leadership transition
- New Executive Director has to tackle a wide range of issues with little training.
- Executive director transition and on-boarding
- Integrating executive director's strengths and style
- Turnover of county forest leadership and Board due to retirements, etc.
- There are 30 member counties, each with an Administrator, 17 Board members who are elected County Board Supervisors
- The expanding [leadership] role of WCFA creates a leadership vacuum in the organization
- Skilled WCFA staff retention.

**Federal, state and local policies and the market affect management of the forest.** Administrators must address all of these issues, while formulating their work plans, and managing their employees.

**We have well maintained assets which will continue to increase in value.** The only real limitations are stumpage rates paid to counties and available markets which we must continue to work on with our partners both private and public.

## **An example of properly managed forests to leverage**

- Members, partners and stakeholders have vast knowledge to use educating decision makers.
- The quality of the leadership within WCFA, county forest committees, and county forest staff has shown a history of continued improvement. This has been recognized by the State of Wisconsin agencies, industry, and other organization has these other groups seek out participation from Wisconsin's County Forest members.
- Everything relies on how we manage the forests.

## **Who Cares?**

- There are un-informed residents who don't know what they don't know.
- Loggers make the on-ground decisions that realize forest plans.
- The people who care most about the forest are the people who use it directly: loggers, hunters, trappers, fisherman, campers and ATV/snowmobile enthusiasts. These users have skin in the game and engage in forest management.
- Support from elected state officials in legislature and administration varies.



**Ability to adapt and meet challenges**

- The organization is proactive
- Reassess what needs to be tweaked to fit today's needs and changing circumstances

**The timber industry changes.**

- The Park Falls and Verso mills closed in 2020 increased market instability.
- Counties face unstable stumpage income. In 2020 lower demand for timber reduced stumpage income.
- WCFA and counties can be partial owners of forest product industries.

**Recreation changes.** Increasing motorized recreation increases user expectations and demands of the forest.

**Role of forest certification**

**Impact of climate change on tree species and wildlife habitat**



## Appendix F: SCOPE Analysis – What are WCFA’s Competencies?

These statements were gathered from the member surveys that were done in early 2020 and Fall 2021.

### **The mix of services provided to counties**

- WCFA provides member training opportunities not otherwise available
- Training loggers
- Solving shared problems
- Identifying and addressing issues for the benefit of its members.
- Conflict resolution
- Forest management facilitation
- Provision of scientific management

### **Maintain leadership in forest management.**

- Reputation built over 50 years.
- WCFA a reference and guide to the public and private sector because the number of professionals who manage large forest acreage contribute input and guide the organization.
- WCFA's reputation in working for Forestry as a whole for the State of Wisconsin.
- Continue to be a respected and valued collective voice with the legislature and others.
- WCFA is the single strongest voice for county forests.

### **Unified voice for member Counties**

- Maintaining union of county forests through membership and involvement.
- Ability to organize 30 separate counties into one voice.
- Utilize the combined experience of 29 county forest administrators, committees, and staff.

### **Balance forest management to generate income and provide other benefits for taxpayers**

- We see the big picture, we see the impacts that forestry can have on communities and industry, and we fight to minimize issues that adversely impact forestry
- Timber harvesting goals: no other public land agencies manage their lands to maximize the local economic benefits as the County Forests do.

### **Recreational opportunities**

- Provide more recreational opportunities than other public land: ATV trails, snowmobile, hunter and walking trails, mountain biking, parks, boat landings, campgrounds, waterfalls, etc.
- We have unique resources that make our lands destinations for local citizens as well as regional attractions.

### **Educating youth and others about the forest industry**

### **The largest public land owner in the state.**

- Represents the largest county forest system.
- The only County Forest program authorized by statute.
- Represent the largest public landowner in the State - county forests.

### **Experience and knowledge**

- Executive Director, Assistant Exec Director, Forest Administrators and Board of Directors
- Knowledge of forest management practices in Wisconsin
- Knowledge of the forest products industry
- A member county is learning how to partner in mill ownership and operation

Even though the **County Forests** are well linked with DNR by statute, **WCFA is an organization that does its own "heavy lifting" on controversial issues.**

**WCFA is a stable organization that does not tend to go through ideological shifts or re-alignment every election cycle.** WCFA's stance on issues stays relatively steady.

### **Integrate management across all units of government.**

- County forest administrators work with oversight committees of elected locally County Board Supervisors
- The relationship WCFA has with local governments via the Board of Directors
- Relationship building, e.g. State of Wisconsin, state legislature, federal representatives
- WCFA has a history of working closely with state legislators in close cooperation with member counties
- Manage collaboration of administrators and county board members who are well informed on forestry and natural resources issues

### **Member networking opportunities**

- Maintain working relationships between the SFI and FSC organizations, DNR, and counties during certification process and participates in annual audits.
- Facilitate information flow between the state legislature and DNR and county forestry departments.
- WCFA provides a working conduit with DNR forestry leadership.
- WCFA provides member networking opportunities not otherwise available.
- Collect and disseminate information among county forest administrators and committees.
- Maintain county relationships with the State of Wisconsin Division of Forestry, the liaison foresters, and other technical staff over 80 years that also benefits other forest ownerships in Wisconsin.

### **Collaborative lobbying**

- WCFA and stakeholders participate in important State and national forestry decisions.
- WCFA's understanding of issues affecting county forests makes it the best organization to represent and address those issues.

**Affirm WCFA member wisdom and independence with operational guidelines rather than rule enforcement.**

## Appendix G: SCOPE Analysis – What Obstacles does WCFA face?

These statements were gathered from the member surveys that were done in early 2020 and Fall 2021. The obstacles county forests and forest managers face are obstacles for WCFA to address.

### Regulatory obstacles to forest management

- Endangered Species Act
- Invasive Species
- Climate Change Legislation
- Cost to maintain forest certification
- Demands of forest certification [on county forest departments]
- EPA and Army Corp of Engineers “waters of the United States” (WOTUS) definition
- County Boards demanding increased revenue/profits from Timber Sales
- Transportation over town roads
- Townships who close their roads for hauling cut forest products.
- County Deer Advisory Councils (CDACs)
- Renewal of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program depends on the legislature and governor.
- Political challenge to update old statutes.

### Obstacles to forest management set by the public

- Recreational demands by the public, particularly for motorized trails and the evolving legislative changes permitting road access.
- Emerging trend to recreate without regard to forest health.
- Limits to production made by increasing forest recreation.
- The public demands more transparency
- Public Input
- Deciding who gets what as recreation threatens the forest.

### Political and social challenges to forest management

- Anti-logging lobbyists
- Trends toward reduced harvests
- Environmental activists’ pressure on timber harvesting, wood product manufacturers, paper mills, and value-added companies that utilize wood fibers

### Market obstacles to forest management

- Fluctuating markets
- Potential decreases in local timber harvest revenues.
- Variable] stumpage rates paid to counties
- Markets must continually be developed with private and public partners.
- Too few markets for the timber that is produced.
- The loss of mills which demanded wood which in turn enhanced forest management.
- Fewer timber contractors buying sales.
- Unstable forest industry.



### **Funding forestry in the state**

- Lack of funding to counties.
- Securing programmatic funding through the state budget process.
- If the legislature does not fund the forestry programs at their current level, then programs will be cut
- Forestry loans and grants

### **Tightening county budgets**

- Tight county budgets pressure County Boards and Administrators not to recognize forestry management needs.
- If counties start to see a significant decrease in revenue, questions about ownership and reasons to have so much public land start to surface.
- If wood product markets are poor and we can't sell the wood, all other programs, including recreation, are impacted.
- County board requests to withdraw forest land to sell land for income.

### **Change resistance, e.g. county forest administrators and supervisors need to recognize recreation is growing**

#### **Forest administrators' daily tasks**

- Lack of Best Management Practices that reduce burdensome regulations
- More endangered and threatened species
- Management costs of legislation
- County forest personnel cost
- County forest department costs of regulation compliance and reporting.

### **There are obstacles WCFA faces directly:**

#### **Growing demands**

- Recruitment of WCFA representatives from member counties to help cover the growing requests for WCFA participation from outside agencies and organizations.
- The increasing number of statewide issues that tug on limited WCFA resources.
- How to develop committee structures so that the right people are representing WCFA in the right situation, without stretching people too thin or burning out those that have a little more time to contribute than others.

#### **Making the value proposition to external stakeholders**

- Little or no knowledge of the county forests and the value of county forests to their constituents (recreation, jobs and products) by downstate legislators.
- Informing downstate legislators of the value and benefits of county forests.
- Educating the general public in regard to forestry and multi-use management.
- A new governor and staff require working on relationship with them.

### **Legislature and DNR**

- Need for regular face-to-face engagement with legislators and DNR policy makers to build invaluable rapport and trust.
- WDNR red tape and politics.
- Weak relationships with legislators.
- Madison politics
- At times we put too much faith in elected officials to follow through with promises.
- Changes in elected officials' support
- Changing ideologies within the legislature
- Changes in governor's administration support
- Navigating the political dynamics across the State and within Capital Square.
- The number of committees and groups that shape natural resource policy and practice to keep involved in
- Adversarial relationships that result from opposing or supporting legislation.
- Educate legislators, county board members and the public on the importance of Wisconsin's county forest program.
- State legislation that is no benefit or detrimental to WCFA members.
- To stay up on legislative issues that impact our members as well as any DNR policy changes that impact county forests
- Opinion that there is too much public land already.

### **Making the value proposition to internal stakeholders**

- Keeping member counties aware of the value of their membership.
- Keeping members by showing value in face of tighter county budgets
- Member counties question the value of WCFA in relation to dues. If WCFA cannot show value added, we have an issue. Counties continue to see local budget cuts and no increases allowed by the state, eventually it will impact WCFA as well.

### **Increasing ORV recreation**

- Policy and funding challenges related to recreational trail funding mechanisms
- Non-WCFA member subversion of sustainable trail management practices and project priorities.
- Issues with ORV council and trail standards document.

### **Resistance to change**

- WCFA at times has a difficult time with change. We have done things a certain way for so long that we cannot or will not open ourselves up to other possibilities.
- WCFA is open to change
- Holding the status quo.
- Thinking long term (in addition to short-term) and planning for long-term success.

### **Board development**

- Not having enough involvement by Forest Administrators to achieve the goals of the organization.
- A handful of Administrators that do the bulk of the work.
- Recruit County Board members that are on the Forestry Committees to serve on the WCFA Board of Directors.
- Keeping WCFA involvement a priority among County Forest partners.
- Turnover and the loss of experienced County Forest Administrators or other leadership.
- Developing new leadership.
- Filling Board of Director positions.
- Recruiting new and active board members.
- Capacity of WCFA Board members to reduce staff workload and improve effectiveness.
- Not all board members are active.
- Burnout
- Some WCFA members carry more than their share of the burden or policy development, technical committee representation, and overall involvement.
- Increase participation from all WCFA members.
- Loss experienced, tested leaders within WCFA.
- Capacity and willingness to mentor and involve new members and administrators
- Board members aren't engaged. Don't have interest in learning and participating.
- Lack of interest in filling board positions.
- Current board structure needs to be evaluated.

### **Counties differ, needs differ**

- The tendency of counties with different needs and resources not to see the benefits of membership, representation and investment in the organization.
- Communication value to County Board members not on forestry committees.
- Different needs of small and large forest counties
- Internally, every county is different. Some have massive programs with lots of staff and some are rather small with very little staff. As a result, participation in various internal committees and events can vary.
- Resolving common issues
- Inconsistent policies among member counties.
- Obtaining agreement on priorities among 30 different Counties.
- WCFA counties need to align so we are not pitting one against another.

### **Continuing to operate at high standards: value to members, forest management and certification expertise.**

### **Future timber workforce**

- Meeting the need for improved industry infrastructure, e.g. loggers
- Logging is as much of an art as it is science and it's difficult to replace this workforce when lost.
- Meeting the education needs of the next generation of forest managers and loggers.

### **Lack of stable funding to WCFA**

### **Public awareness and understanding**

- Public Awareness
- Effective promotion of the vast resources that we have in this state
- Market county forests as a stable, constant source of raw wood products.
- Lack of understanding about the needs and benefits of active forest management, i.e. timber harvests.
- Lack of public awareness of the importance of forestry in Wisconsin

### **Staff**

- How to address the increasing demands for WCFA involvement not only in WCFA internal business operations but also in cooperation with non-WCFA organizations and events/committees/requests.
- Setting priorities for limited staff and resources, e.g., relationship work with special interest groups.
- WCFA has a very small staff for the current workload/demands.
- More WCFA staff especially clerical
- Maintaining current staff
- Lobbying will become ever more important



## Appendix H: SCOPE Analysis – Prospects

These statements were gathered from the member surveys that were done in early 2020 and Fall 2021. Prospects suggest future programs and services of WCFA.

### **Relationships with legislators lead to new relationships**

- Work with legislators and universities to promote forestry curricula and research to address county forest needs
  - Advocate for more financing to support county forests, e.g., grants for research, acquisition, education, etc.

### **Use knowledge base**

- Participate in K-12 teacher training workshops
- Offer education kits to teachers and schools
- [Create and] promote new video series on county forests and related forestry issues
- Increase multi-media efforts to educate the public on WCFA and county forests
- Forestry scholarships

### **Use forest land base, reputation and knowledge to collaborate with industry stakeholders and large forest product suppliers to promote fiber use**

### **Public awareness of County Forest ownership**

- Develop "Grown in Wisconsin County Forest" label
- Brewing partnership - profit percentage
- WCFA statewide county forest pass
- WCFA/Forestry license plates

### **Reputation & relationships with legislators**

- Maintain lobbyist in Madison
- Maintain participation on Governor's Council on Forestry and other organizations

### **Relationship with legislators and WCFA knowledge**

- Influence state and federal legislation to address sustainable energy sources, product development and climate change solutions
- Maintain participation on Governor's Council on Forestry and other organizations

### **Capitalize on relationships with people that know forestry**

- Public banquet
- Donation campaign
- Different types of membership

### **Restructure membership dues. Diverse & increase revenue for WCFA.**

### **WCFA has data to show benefits**

- Demonstrate to legislators and organizations long term benefits of Knowles Nelson Stewardship acquisitions to support continued funding the program



## **Appendix I: SCOPE Analysis – What Expectations does WCFA have of the wider world?**

These statements were gathered from the member surveys that were done in early 2020 and Fall 2021.

### **Increased challenges to forest stewardship and Wisconsin forest industries**

#### **Need to work with NGOs, DNR, USFS, State Legislature [and congress] to shape natural resource policy and practice in Wisconsin**

- Endangered Species Act
- Climate change and related legislation
- Waters of the United States (WOTUS) - EPA and the Army Corp of Engineers

#### **Invasive Species management will become more critical**

- Impact of invasives on forest regenerate
- Invasive species and endangered species regulations could suspend harvest activities in certified forests. The only timber income recourse is to exit certification and harvest without regard to the EPA as private forest owners do.

#### **Fluctuating markets**

- Lower wood prices and/or no bid sales could reduce available funding support from some counties.
- Market variability.
- Declining markets for timber results in less income to programs.

#### **Anti-logging lobbyists**

#### **Uncertain cost and availability of transportation**

#### **Transportation issues over town roads**

#### **More pressure from users, especially motorized sports.**

- As machines (UTVs) get larger and more powerful, the toll they take on the land is intensified.
- Recreational demands by the public, particularly concerning motorized trails
- Legislated road recreational access permitting changes

#### **If WCFA needs more member funding the member counties start to question the value of WCFA and return on dues**

#### **Additional Funding Opportunities**

#### **WDNR**

- Loss of WDNR interest or focus on the value of Wisconsin's County Forest program.
- Red tape and politics
- DNR attempts to encroach on WCFA's independence.

### **Knowles-Nelson changes**

- Proposals to cut or eliminate the Knowles Nelson stewardship fund that helps counties acquire more forest land. The program has been of tremendous value to the counties. Need to keep our stories out there and show the positives of this program.
- Reduced funding would slow county forest land acquisition

### **Loss of funding**

- Tighter and more competitive state budgets
- The legislature will use annual county timber sales income of \$38 million a year to justify funding cuts: DNR assistance (hours), administrators grant.
- Increased competition for state money.
- Pressure for the state to reduce state participation/resources/financial incentives in Wisconsin's County Forest system.
- Policies change to try to get more done with less.
- Counties continue to see local budget cuts and no increases allowed by the state.
- County Boards demand increased revenue from Timber Sales

### **Newly enrolled county forest programs**

- Changes in Ch 28 that weakens the core values and qualifications to become a County Forest to enable other counties to become county forests for non-forest reasons: i.e. access to Stewardship Funds; access to WDNR staff time; financial entitlements; etc.
- Need to ensure newly enrolled county forest programs are committed to the full spectrum of county forest values.

### **Forest Certification**

- New Forest Certification criteria significantly change focus or impose new obligations on certified forest operations.
- The burden of third-party certification on forest managers.

**Pressure to invest in low priority programs, e.g., the DNR and the Forest Service Good Neighbor with the Forest Service program.**

### **Fewer qualified foresters**

## Appendix J: Vision, Mission and Values Background

The February 13, 2020 group identified the WCFA Vision, Mission and Values statements. The conversations built on survey responses submitted by members.

### Vision Statement Detail

- 1. The future will commend us for our insight in 2020**
- 2. The Public Trusts WCFA**
  - People know about WCFA
  - WCFA is independent with strong partnerships
  - WCFA values are recognized statewide and nationally
- 3. Important Projects Funded**
  - Projects are staffed as needed
  - The funding structure is robust
  - Funding sources are diverse
- 4. WCFA Develops Forest Leaders**
  - Coordinate education to supervisors, administrators and staff
  - New administrators have mentors
  - Members' problems are solved
- 5. The Public Supports Forestry**
  - People recognize the value provided by county forests
  - The public supports sound forest management
  - WCFA educates the public about the economic and social value of county forests
- 6. Staff Structure is Robust**
  - Staffing is appropriate to workload
- 7. Strong, Diverse Markets**
  - Forest industry is strong
  - The forest products industry thrives
  - Carbon storage on forest lands mitigates undesirable global climate changes
- 8. The Numbers Are Bigger**
  - New non-county industry members
  - New county members, some from outside Wisconsin
    - Increased member revenue
    - Consistent forest management
  - Organizational development
- 9. Fully Engaged Membership**
  - Committed members
  - Working members
- 10. WCFA is an Influencer**
  - Information clearinghouse
  - Coordinates with agencies and researchers for threat responses
- 11. Lawmakers Ask for Our Opinion**
  - Full legislative engagement
  - WCFA is an influencer on statewide economic issues

## Mission Statement detail

The group stated the mission based on the business principals and future programs the principals suggested.

## Values Statement detail

The group identified much that is part of the values that motivates WCFA's work. These are our "why".

### 1. We . . .

- work together
- look to each other
- stand together
- stick to our ethics
- do work worthy of pride
- do well by the forest

### 2. We Promote Use of Resources Without Using Up the Resources

- Sustainable forests
- Sustainable county forest resources
- WCFA is the Go-To sustainability organization
- Preserve what we have

### 3. People Like Their Forest

- Forests provide direct benefits such as recreation, clean water, wood products, ecological services, wildlife habitat on a sustainable basis.
- People support WCFA because it supports their forest
- Balance economic, social and environmental concerns
- The forest is a recreation resource

### 4. Organizational Strength for Good Work

- 30 county partnership - unity
- Collaboration
- Speak with one voice
- Coordinate development and delivery of management tools
- Resource management advice trusted by county forest staff

### 5. WCFA Supports Forest Industries

- Jobs
- County program revenue
- County forest staff jobs

### 6. We Use Our Voice to Educate

- Sound management advocacy
- Advocate for statewide forestry concerns
- Reach the public with natural resource education

### 7. In Control of Our Destiny

- Long term forest management leadership
- Maintain rural Wisconsin
- Advocate for local forest management decision making

## Appendix K: The Strategic Plan Development Process

In January 2019, Executive Director Jane Severt, Assistant Executive Director Gary Zimmer, and Myles Alexander, University of Wisconsin – Extension Oneida County Community Development Educator began discussions to update the WCFA strategic plan. Work was to start in May 2019 but when Ms. Severt announced her retirement, the WCFA Board of Directors decided to wait until the new executive director was in place.

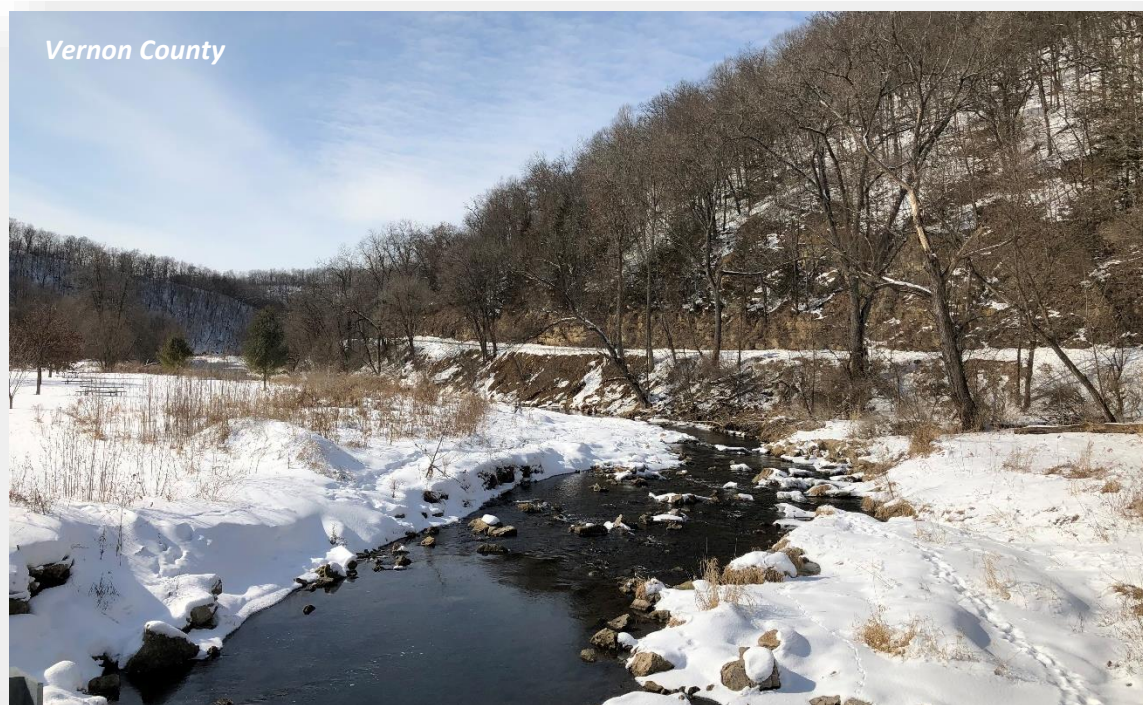
Executive Director Rebekah Luedtke and Mr. Alexander planned to begin with a facilitated workshop on February 13, 2020. The work included:

- Values, Vision and Mission
- SCOPE analysis (Situation, Competencies, Opportunities, Prospects, Expectations) to arrive at new growth prospects for WCFA.

Further work in March 2020 was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To prepare for the resumption of in-person work, a survey was conducted in August 2021. The survey reviewed the February 2020 accomplishments and invited updates. In a virtual meeting on September 2, 2021 participants reviewed the survey results and concluded the first phase of work.

The final work day on September 21, 2021 identified priority prospects and wrote SMART goals and actions to implement those prospects. After the September 2021 meeting, Executive Director Luedtke and Mr. Alexander communicated several times via phone, email and in person to flesh out submitted ideas and concepts, add more detail and fill in gaps where needed. Administrators, Board members and WCFA staff were then asked in a January 2022 survey to assign efforts to the goals and actions.





## Appendix L: Measuring Strategic Plan Progress

The most important piece of developing a solid strategic plan is the follow through and the implementation of action plans. In order to evaluate the strategic plan's effectiveness and impact, the following steps will be taken to measure success and keep WCFA's mission at the forefront.

- Invest in a strategic plan dashboard to aid in monitoring, tracking and reporting.
  - Having a qualitative and quantitative avenue to capture impacts, accomplishments and problem areas is vital to understanding performance (good or bad) of the plan.
- Quarterly review and monitoring of the plan by WCFA staff.
  - At minimum, WCFA staff will review the plan's goals, actions and tactics to ensure work is aligning with the plan, or if adjustments need to be made, every quarter.
- Annual review monitoring of the plan by WCFA Board of Directors.
  - At the fall Board of Directors meeting, the board members will review the plan's goals and actions, their progress, what has been achieved for the year and set out needs for the next year.
- WCFA staff, members and directors will keep an eye out for opportunities throughout the year and life of the strategic plan to capitalize on, leading to the accomplishment of goals and actions.
- It should be noted that if through the life of the strategic plan, adjustments or amendments should be made to the plan, the WCFA Board of Directors, in consultation with WCFA staff, has the ability to do so.

