



Sulphur River Basin Authority

2019-2021 Strategic Work Plan

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Sulphur River Basin Authority

Summary

On April 23, 2019 the Sulphur River Basin Authority began a 2-Year Strategic Planning process for 2019-2021. The following is the process used to reach the conclusions for the plan.

The process began with a preliminary meeting between the facilitator and SRBA staff to discuss key economic development issues facing the organization, review the programs and projects underway through the SRBA, and to prepare the agenda and process for the planning retreat.

The participants spent the day reviewing and revising the Mission and Vision Statements, conducting a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats) Analysis, and developing goals, strategies and key performance indicators/metrics.

Expectations

The facilitator asked the participants to list their expectations for discussion for the day. The following is what they listed.

- Identify our goals
- 3-7 Goals
- How do we include more locals?
- Get stakeholders to help fund organization
- Identify needs of our stakeholders and help them meet those needs
- Work with other agencies in the basin to help
- Upper Region – need more participation from them
- Soil erosion
- Define what a stakeholder is
- How do we mitigate the issues we identify?
- Who are we and what are we here to accomplish?
- Ensure that stakeholders are treated fairly

New Mission Statement

To manage, conserve, develop, and protect the natural resources of the Sulphur River Basin in a responsible and cooperative manner that provides opportunity for growth and benefits to the Basin and the citizens of Texas.

New Vision Statement

To be the champion of the stakeholders in the Sulphur River Basin through the conservation and development of its natural resources.

SWOT Analysis

The facilitator guided the participants through an analysis of their current Strengths, the current Weaknesses or Challenges they are facing, Opportunities that may come their way in the near or distant future, and Threats that are possible to occur in the future. Note that there are no right or wrong answers and no implication of likelihood. This is simply a brainstorm of the opinions of the participants to get them thinking about goals in the next portion.

Strengths

- Enabling legislation
- Untapped water resource
- Largest contiguous hardwood forest in Texas (supports local industry)
- Extensive agriculture
- Diverse board representing all of Basin
- Board members who are knowledgeable on water
- Good leadership
- Nancy's experience
- New Executive Director Meg joining us

Weaknesses

- Board needs to embrace stakeholders in the Basin
- Lack of shareholder involvement
- We need to educate/inform others such as Rotary, etc.
- Lack of trust
- Future funding
- Too narrowly focused
- Lack of collaboration
 - Among municipalities in Basin
 - Among stakeholders
 - Regarding planning groups
- Communication challenges
- Lack of transparency
- No initiative for soil erosion/log jams/sedimentation
- Mitigation – we need to define it
- Mitigation is the elephant in the room
- Mitigation is brutal and unfair
- Municipalities in Basin need improved collaboration
- We must determine what is reportable and what is not
- Publishing drafts has been a weakness/mistake – we will NOT publish draft reports in the future; only final reports

Opportunities

- Funding development
- Explore more independent sources of funding
- Cooperation with all stakeholders
- Establish rapport with federal, state, and local agencies
- New Executive Director
- Relationship Building (visitation schedule, organizational structures)
- Increased and improved transparency
- Extract value
 - Monetizing services
 - Put value on it
- Innovation
 - What else can we do with our resources?
 - Equitably compensating entities that are affected by development

Threats

- Lack of cooperation among stakeholders
- Abolishment by the State
- Lack of local support
- Being a little fish in a big pond
- Lack of interest in our mission from stakeholders
- Land mitigation/resource availability
- Defunding
- Socio-economic impacts

Start, Stop, Continue Retrospective

Based on the current operations and current situation, the facilitator asked the participants to think about what actions they should start, stop, and continue doing as an organization. The following is what they listed.

Start

- Building relationships with stakeholders
- Building relationships with elected officials and other public/community leaders
- Training and empowering our new Executive Director
 - TWCA (Texas Water Conservation Association)
- Providing legislative updates and monthly newsletter to the board of directors and the public
- Determining level of participation, funding, and benefits of local stakeholders
- Using social media, specifically Facebook
- Conducting public input meetings
- Focusing on Basin stakeholder priorities

Stop

- Fighting
- Emphasizing reservoir development
- Divulging incomplete information
- Blaming others internally and externally
- Open-ended untimed public comments
- Digressing from posted agenda
- Focusing outside the Basin
- Dysfunction

Continue

- Local funding
- Looking for more local funding
- “Clean Rivers” Program
- Funding and conducting sedimentation study/studies
- Attending regional water planning meetings
- Providing information to stakeholders

2019-2021 Goals

The following are the list of goals developed by the board and staff throughout the process described above.

GOAL 1: ADVOCACY

To serve as an effective advocate to address the needs of the Sulphur River Basin.

STRATEGIES:

1. Identify entities with whom we need to begin a dialog
2. Leverage State Representative Flynn’s office, specifically his conservation and water representatives
3. Facilitate meetings with elected officials and stakeholders to discuss solutions to the logjam at Highway 71 and develop an action plan, including the costs of action and inaction
4. Adopt and support/implement that action plan from #3.

How will Goal #1 be Measured?

Did we identify the entities to target for discussions?

% of those entities we actually had discussions with? _____

Did we leverage Representative Flynn’s office staff?

Did we facilitate meetings with the following stakeholders to discuss the Highway 71 logjam?

Representative Flynn himself

TCEQ

Van Deaver

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- TxDOT
 - Texas Parks & Wildlife
 - County Commission
 - County Judge
 - Congressman Ratcliff
 - Commerce (Waste Water)
 - Senator Bob Hall
- Did we create an action plan with the above stakeholders?
 - Did we adopt that action plan?
 - Did we take action regularly to implement that action plan?

GOAL 2: ENHANCE FUNDING

To secure local and diverse funding partners.

STRATEGIES:

1. Meg/Chris to meet with entities who verbally volunteered cooperation in the strategic planning workshop
2. Secure support from a variety of sources throughout each county
3. Seek and secure an experienced and successful grant writer
4. Explore funding from a variety of environmental groups
5. Explore financial support from corporate environmental advocates

How will Goal #2 be Measured?

Did Meg & Chris conduct one meeting with all three leaders participating?

Did we pursue participants from 10 counties?

of counties sending participants? _____

Did we hire a grant writer?

Did Gary call 2-3 environmental groups and begin a dialog?

of environmental group solicitations Gary made? _____

% of those calls that resulted in funding support? _____

of corporate environmental advocate solicitations we made? _____

% of those calls that resulted in funding support? _____

GOAL 3: COMMUNICATIONS

To ensure effective communication and relations

STRATEGIES:

Internal:

1. Develop a Communications Plan that includes:
 - a. Channels
 - b. Who
 - c. How
 - d. How often/when
 - e. Messaging
 - f. Internal audiences
 - g. External audiences
2. Identify training needs for staff
 - a. TWCA
 - b. TML
 - c. TCEQ
 - d. Others?

External:

3. Increase trust and transparency
4. Build relationships with our stakeholders
 - a. Build a database of contacts and conversations
 - b. Intentional scheduled follow-up procedures in place
5. Consider/implement stakeholders' ideas as a focus

How will Goal #3 be Measured?

- Did we develop a detailed Communications Plan?
 - Did we implement that Communications Plan?
 - Did we identify training needs of staff and book those trainings?
 - Did we increase trust and transparency?
 - If yes, how?
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- Did we produce monthly progress reports on relationship development progress including visits and calls?
- Did we track stakeholder feedback and ideas and share those with the board of directors?

At the end of the strategic planning process, the facilitator reminded the participants that the path to successful implementation of any strategic plan is the rigorous adherence to using the document as a living document and measuring progress throughout the year. She encouraged the participants to benchmark successes along the way and take note of what works and doesn't work as planned. The group committed to using the document regularly. She thanked the Sulphur River Basin Authority for their dedication to setting and achieving goals and wished them well.



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