

WISCONSIN CONSERVATION CONGRESS STRATEGIC PLAN

2013-2018

Project led & report produced by

Art Lersch

University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension (Lincoln County)

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Joe Weiss (District 1)	Dale Maas (District 7)
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Mike Riggle (District 3)	Lee Fahrney (District 9; Congress Secretary)
Roger Sabota (District 3)	Mike Rogers (District 9)
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Background

With 360 delegates throughout the state of Wisconsin elected by the public in each county, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress' (WCC) official purpose is to advise the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board (NRB), the policy setting body of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), on how to best manage the state's natural and wildlife resources. It is the only statutorily authorized body of its kind in the state charged with this advisory capacity.

Established in 1934 and elevated in 1972 through state statutes to its current legally recognized status, the Conservation Congress represents citizens' interests by providing an avenue for input on a variety of natural resources issues. One way the WCC does this is through presenting advisory questions to citizens at annual Spring Hearings held throughout the state. Citizens also use the Spring Hearings to suggest ideas as part of resolutions calling for changes to natural resources policy or law. The non-binding citizen votes on the advisory questions and proposed rule changes are reviewed and voted upon by delegates during the Conservation Congress' late spring annual convention. Advisory questions that are supported are forwarded to the NRB for its consideration.

Recently, the 78 year old Conservation Congress' Executive Council, upon recommendation of the organization's Outreach Committee, approved undertaking a strategic planning process meant to strengthen the WCC in an effort to at least in part address Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker's charge that it should do more to help simplify regulations and eliminate barriers to participating in hunting, fishing, and trapping. The desire and commitment for strategic planning was reinforced when the entire delegation approved the project during the 2012 WCC Annual Convention. Known as an authority on designing and facilitating the development of strategic plans, Art Lersch, University of Wisconsin – Extension Community Resource Development Educator, Lincoln County was asked by the delegation to lead the WCC process.

As part of its action formally approving strategic planning, the Executive Council authorized the creation of a Strategic Planning Committee. Delegates were nominated and chosen by the Council for Strategic Planning committee positions. The Strategic Planning Committee completed its work during six day-long meetings from June through November 2012. Committee members represented each of the Conservation Congress' 12 districts.

The WCC Strategic Planning Committee



Pictured in the back row from left to right are Ralph Fritsch (District 4), Joe Weiss (District 1), Wally Trudeau (District 2), and Mike Riggle (District 3). Pictured in the middle row from left to right are Dale Maas (District 7), Bill Yangst (District 5), Jayne Meyer (District 10), Mike Murphy (District 9; Committee Chair), Doug Burrows (District 5), and Greg Wysocki (District 6). Seated from left to right are Art Lersch (Project Facilitator), Kari Lee-Zimmerman (DNR Liaison), Frank Reith (District 6), and Larry Bonde (District 8; Committee Secretary). Not pictured are Andrew Limmer (District 12), Dave Tupa (District 8), Laurie Groskoph (District 3), and Sharon Fandel (DNR Coordinator).

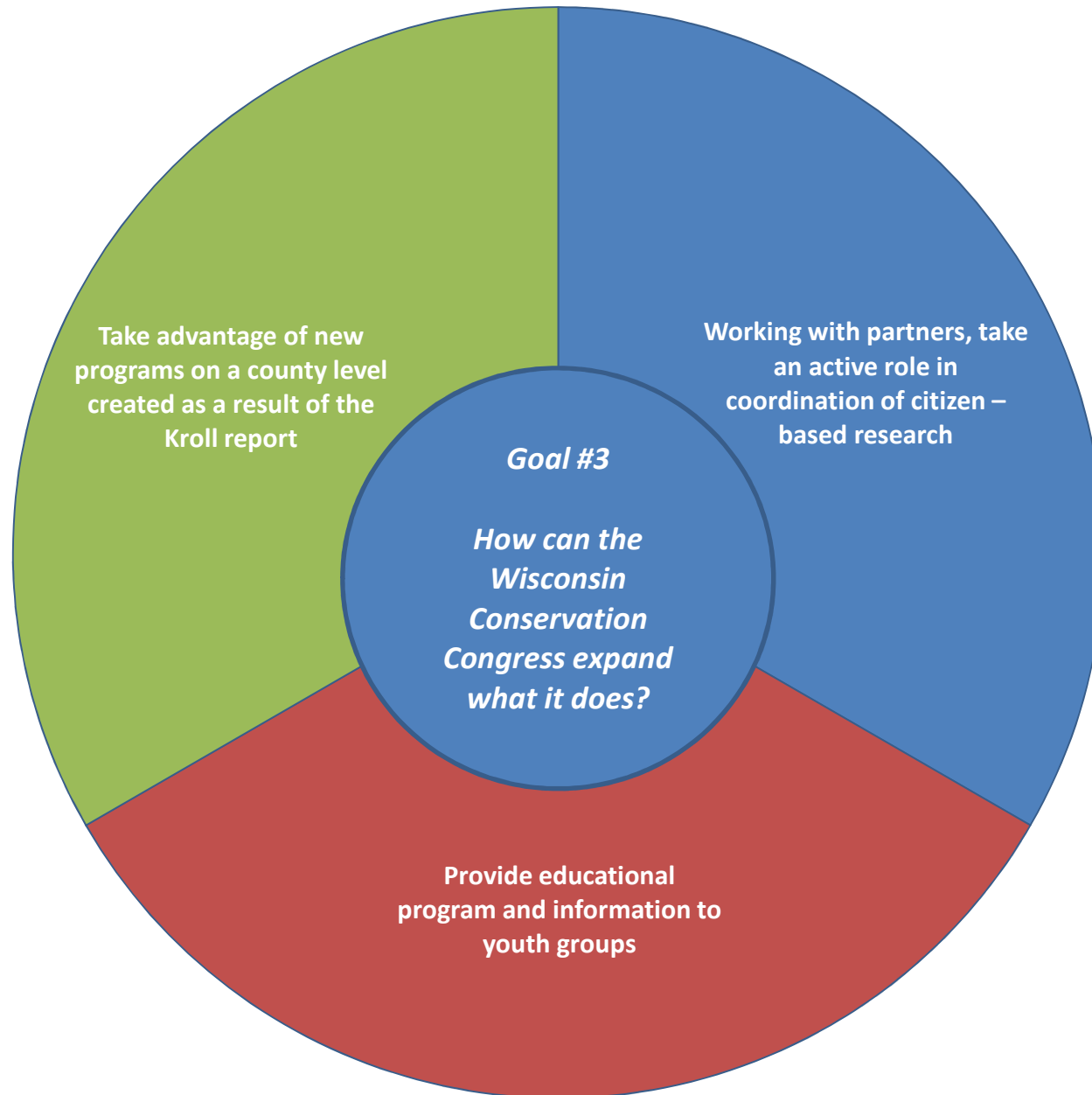
Plan Summary

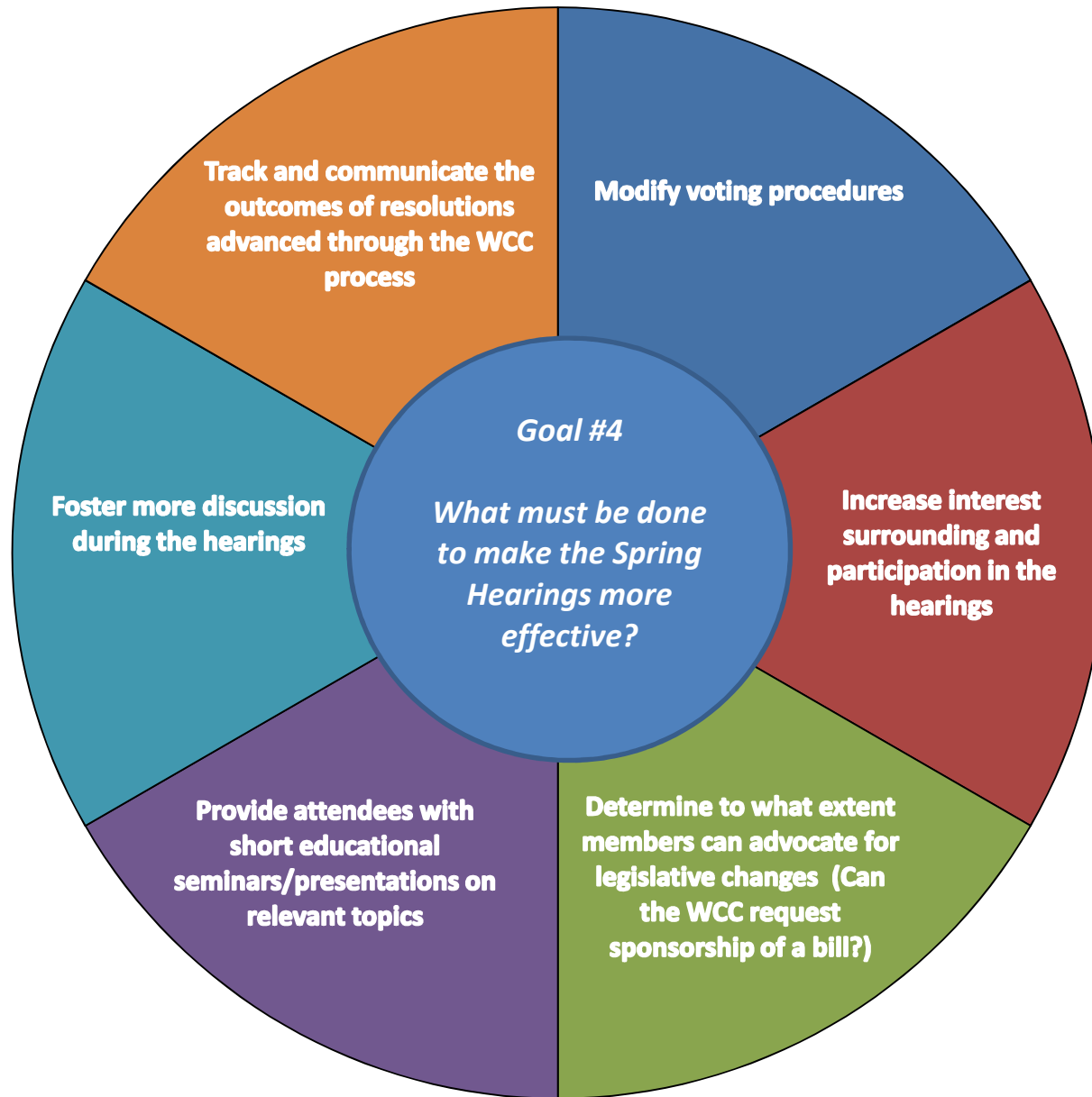
During the six meetings, Strategic Planning Committee members engaged in an organizational visioning exercise and a situation analysis (SOAR+C), modified the WCC mission statement, identified and prioritized key organizational issues that should be addressed in the coming years, set and prioritized goals based on identified issues and expected results, developed strategies to achieve the goals, and identified initial responsible parties to implement the strategies and general timelines. Committee members also recommended that the Executive Council take primary responsibility for plan oversight with Strategic Planning Committee members acting as liaisons to it and standing committees charged with implementing plan strategies.

The illustrations beginning on the next page summarize each goal and their strategies. (For a detailed overview, go to the tables that begin on page 17 of this report.) Goals are written in the form of questions. When action planning, many groups find it easier to identify strategies when asking how they want the organization to answer a specific question rather than working with an often more nebulous statement. Although a great deal of thought went into identifying and prioritizing all goals and implementation methods, the committee focused most of its time on Goal #1. Part of the reason for this was that committee members heard from other delegates before and during the planning process that the WCC could not become more proactive unless organizational inefficiencies were first addressed. Committee members and many of their fellow delegates were also greatly concerned about the public's lack of knowledge about what the WCC actually does. This concern goes deeper than merely wanting to make the WCC name more known throughout the state. Committee members articulated during planning discussions that more knowledge about the organization will lead to greater public participation in Spring Hearings and ultimately in natural resources management practices. The third goal discusses potential new initiatives that complement the organization's primary purpose as advisor to the NRB. The final goal addresses how the WCC's primary tool for gathering citizen viewpoints can be made more effective.









Visioning

To begin the planning process, the committee developed a draft vision statement. In order to think about what the long-term vision of the organization should be, committee members thoroughly discussed the questions and scenario below.

- *What do you feel makes the WCC unique?*
- *What do you love most about the work the WCC does?*
- *What is WCC's greatest impact on the state of Wisconsin?*

Scenario

"You have been asleep for 10 years. You awaken to find that the WCC is recognized throughout the nation, and especially by Wisconsinites, as the most efficient, democratic, and influential organization helping to determine state natural resources policies. Delegates are highly respected in their communities and are seen as active and influential community leaders."

- *What is already in place within the organization to help make this a reality?*
- *What must change in order for this to occur?*



Building on those discussions, committee members identified key words, core values, phrases, and ideas they felt should be reflected in the statement. Those items were:

- Open/impartial
- Participatory
- Respected
- Transparent
- Knowledgeable
- Credible
- Functional
- Influential
- Well organized
- Broad range – delegates have different areas of expertise
- Focused
- Adaptable to changing circumstances
- Forward thinking
- Communication
- Members of public have large stake
- Advocacy
- Ability to review regulations and to suggest adaptations
- Follow through
- Accountable
- Express that the Congress desires enhanced accountability
- Broader representation
- Carry the wisdom, weight and influence of citizens
- Vehicle/conduit to get the public's views to the Natural Resources Board
- Congress should take positions on natural resources issues year around, not just during the spring hearings. (But, an increase in attendance at the local spring hearings is much desired.)
- Education - creates awareness building externally and internally
- Want to build overall awareness of what the Congress does with delegates and the general public
- Active, respected/having impact
- Member views are more valued; the Congress enjoys comparable standing with the Department of Natural Resources because of its ability to work more directly with the public (but is still seen as an advisory body). – Respected and listened to
- Statement should reflect a desire of the Congress to become more active at the local/county level as is suggested in the recently released Kroll Report
- Relevancy/demonstrate change
- Congress' work is valued
- Recognized as impactful
- Valued
- Develop closer working relationship with the DNR, primarily the agency's division leaders
- WCC will become the "go to" entity when there are questions about natural resources policies

Using these words, phrases, and concepts, two work groups made up of committee members developed draft statements. The entire committee reassembled to reconcile the draft statements into the following:

"The vision of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress is to strengthen and enhance its ability to gather and convey the wisdom and influence of Wisconsin citizens in the formation of natural resource policy, research, education, and conservation."

Since this is a new vision statement for the organization, the committee requested that both the Executive Council and delegation endorse it when the plan itself is formally approved.

SOAR+C Analysis

Instead of a traditional SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats), the committee undertook what is called a SOAR+C analysis (strengths, opportunities, achievements, results, challenges). This method focuses stakeholders involved in planning processes more on positive rather than negative organizational features. This exercise is often the most help to groups seeking to identify pressing issues the organization must address and what positive organizational attributes should and can be maximized. The table below lists all committee members' SOAR+C responses.

Strengths	Opportunities	Recent Achievements	Expected Results	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Defined organization ✓ Individuality; people from different backgrounds, etc. ✓ A great deal of knowledge and experience ✓ People in the organization are passionate; dedicated about beliefs ✓ Statutorily recognized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Technology, Internet mobile use/email, etc. ✓ Increased acknowledgement by the DNR of public input ✓ Wildlife counting data; citizen based monitoring ✓ Citizen – based research; communicate results statewide with WCC as disseminator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Eliminating or slowing down bad ideas ✓ Research partnerships with DNR; various wildlife associations, universities, etc. ✓ Successful at appointing WCC delegates to sit on other bodies such as the Great Lakes Forum. This is recognition of our stature and what we do. It also signifies that these other groups believe the WCC is a viable partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Achievement of strategic planning and other organizational goals ✓ <u>Education</u> (more people participating in WCC supported instructional sessions) ✓ <u>Mentoring</u> (recreational safety, boating safety, etc. More needs to be done to tell the story of the WCC helps with this.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The experts the Congress works with should perhaps make fewer formal presentations during the conference and instead use that time to hold formal and informal listening sessions with delegates and the public. (Less of a top down approach.) ✓ Technology and social media: How will the Congress use these resources in the future? ✓ Increase citizen satisfaction with WCC processes and progress on environmental issues ✓ Influential in all areas of conservation not just policy

Strengths	Opportunities	Recent Achievements	Expected Results	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Statewide organization with equal representation ✓ Past achievements ✓ Good working relationship with the DNR. (This could also be a weakness because there might be a perception that the WCC is “too close” to the DNR.) ✓ Leadership – take the extra initiative ✓ Public funding creates ties to the state and counties (this could also occasionally hinder our activities) ✓ Most of the organization’s work gets done at the committee level ✓ The WCC concept is supported statewide by the general public. The organization has the backing of the state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ People seeking sustainable lifestyles – “locavores”/local foods (WCC as promoter) ✓ Early insight into future issues; DNR activities, etc. ✓ Act 21 helps provide impetus to conduct more rigorous research on natural resources issues. ✓ Act 21 gives WCC opportunity to fine tune what it sends forward ✓ Partner with other groups that could increase interest in the WCC in the future (e.g. young forests initiatives, etc.) ✓ Act 21 – 55 counties passed resolutions calling for the WCC to work with the Governor, Legislature and DNR to “restore the former rule making process;” now legislature can step 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Still holding the Spring Hearings ✓ Played a major role in Youth Expo ✓ Wall of Fame display; displayed all over the state ✓ Delegates donating time to the Learn to Hunt program ✓ Walleye issue; helping to persuade DNR not to pursue ✓ Viable after 78 years of existence ✓ WCC has done some adapting to changing situations already by creating new committees to help address specific important current issues ✓ Engaging in this strategic planning process demonstrates that the WCC admits that changes are needed within the organization and that it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enhanced and constant collaboration among WCC, DNR and legislature to pass legislation ✓ Delegates should not feel disconnected from leadership (better communication between leadership and delegates, committees, etc.) ✓ More interaction/discussion in WCC meetings and between delegates and WCC partners (rather than lectures & presentations) ✓ Collection of data on how well WCC is known and perceived (perhaps use a survey, focus groups, etc.) ✓ More and better public relations ✓ WCC is more representative of age, gender (based on hunting/fishing license sales) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensuring that top level state officials have adequate knowledge of important natural resources issues facing the state. ✓ Creating awareness about what the WCC does ✓ Retaining and recruiting interested delegates that want to make positive contributions to the organization ✓ Obtaining additional funding; diversifying funding sources; increasing in-kind contributions ✓ How does the WCC remain relevant and influential? (Note: Nearly everything the committee has discussed to date has included this very broad but very important question.) ✓ How does the WCC become respected/credible? ✓ Strengthen the WCC’s relationship with the DNR, both the NRB and DNR staff. This must be done while continuing to communicate to stakeholders how different the WCC’s role is in comparison to what the DNR does ✓ Maintaining WCC representation on other organizations’ committees/boards ✓ Increasing accountability. The organization needs to review disciplinary actions to help ensure that

Strengths	Opportunities	Recent Achievements	Expected Results	Challenges
	<p>back and think about/tweak the act to help prevent unintended consequences</p> <p>✓ Act 21 – lesson could mean improved communication between WCC and state government stakeholders</p> <p>✓ Act 21 is forcing WCC to do a gut check – forcing us to change (this is a good thing)</p> <p>✓ Opportunity to be adjunct communicators about natural resources issues without taking a stand (disseminate information)</p> <p>✓ Opportunity to educate, recruit and retain youth and other underrepresented groups. Youth are often more in tune, more focused on issues. Hmong and Hispanics are typical underrepresented groups</p>	<p>is doing something about it</p> <p>✓ WCC worked with the legislature to pass hunter harassment legislation</p> <p>✓ Advancing ideas through resolutions and a democratic process</p> <p>✓ Open access reauthorization - Knowles Nelson Stewardship programs</p> <p>✓ Tyvek Deer Tag occurred because of WCC work on the issue</p>		<p>its leadership and delegates are appropriately responding to negative press and other challenges. This review needs to occur at every level of the organization</p> <p>✓ Awareness – outreach to educators, clubs, etc. needs to improve. Develop product (such as a WCC DVD) that we can provide to these groups</p> <p>✓ Garnering support for the implementation of this plan (overcoming resistance to change)</p> <p>✓ Modifying the WCC organizational structure in such a way that will help the WCC make meaningful progress toward achieving its vision</p> <p>✓ Code of Procedure does not allow college youth who attend school most of the year outside their permanent residence area to run for delegate positions</p> <p>✓ Educate stakeholders that the WCC, as a quasi-government entity, has to follow state open meetings laws/procedures, etc. People need to understand that this at times helps or hinders what the organization is attempting to accomplish</p> <p>✓ Maintaining spring hearings. Developing new ways to conduct them</p>

Strengths	Opportunities	Recent Achievements	Expected Results	Challenges
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How do we accurately measure delegates' expectations about this planning process and the plan that is produced? ✓ Diversify and broaden research initiatives – who we communicate with, how committees develop their agendas, etc. Increase education of members on these matters ✓ Conducting surveys at the committee level – e.g. Did committees receive reliable information, etc.? ✓ Bringing fresh perspectives from the DNR to WCC committees. (Perhaps changing DNR liaisons to WCC committees. The downside is that the committee could lose the experience and knowledge of a DNR specialist that has served as liaison to it for years.) ✓ Delegates often do not have enough background on an issue to make informed votes or to accurately convey to the public what the issue is about. This also prevents more discussion about these issues from taking place at the district level before the spring hearings. (More information sheets?) ✓ Local delegations need to better understand their roles and responsibilities

Mission Statement Revision

An important component of any strategic planning process is to determine whether an organization's current mission statement describes its primary purpose at a particular given point in time. An organization that frequently reviews and updates when necessary its mission statement is more likely to remain true to it.

By consensus committee members agreed that the following current WCC purpose statement found in the organization's Code of Procedures needed revision in order to more accurately reflect the WCC's primary purpose.



"To represent the citizens of Wisconsin by working with the Natural Resources Board and the Department of Natural Resources to effectively manage Wisconsin's greatest asset, our abundant natural resources, for present and future generations to enjoy."

Committee members were asked to think about what key words, phrases, or concepts were missing from the statement. After much discussion and wordsmithing the committee developed the following revised WCC draft mission statement which features more active language.

"The Wisconsin Conservation Congress is the only statutory body in the state where citizens elect delegates to advise the Natural Resources Board and the Department of Natural Resources on how to responsibly manage Wisconsin's natural resources for present and future generations. The Congress accomplishes this through open, impartial, broad ranged actions."

As was the case with the newly developed vision statement, debate took place about whether the Strategic Planning Committee should formally endorse the new mission statement. By consensus, committee members agreed that they should not do so,

reserving that right to the Executive Council and delegation as part of their review and presumed approval of the entire strategic plan.

To supplement the new mission statement, the Strategic Planning Committee also developed and formally approved the following sentence identifying and acknowledging WCC stakeholders.

Wisconsin Conservation Congress stakeholders (i.e. those who have an interest in or support the WCC's activities) include all people in Wisconsin who are interested in the responsible management of the state's natural resources.

Goals, Strategies & Tasks

Goal #1: What must the WCC do to improve its organizational structure?

The planning committee agreed that most of what is detailed in the table immediately below should begin as soon as the plan is approved by the delegation. However, members also felt strongly that work on the first two strategies should begin soon after the Executive Council approves the strategic plan presumably at its January 2013 meeting. Strategies under this goal, with the exception of #6, should be completed no later than the end of 2015.

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
1. Improve the process of study committee selection and how study committees function	<i>Annual District Driven Selection Process</i> a. Develop <u>an application process for committee delegate selection</u> . The application process should be in addition to the PDQ. Applications should be presented to the district. Maintain practice of district request at that level and at the convention, etc.	Rules & Resolutions Committee with the Executive Council	<i>Are the most interested and qualified individuals serving on the committee?</i> <i>How has their committee membership helped advance WCC positions?</i>

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
<p><i>Begin discussing this change in early 2013 after the Executive Council approves the plan. Complete the strategy by the end of 2014.</i></p> <p>Note: It is recommended that this process be detailed within the Code of Procedures. The additional information will supplement sections VII (A9) and VII (H).</p>	<p>b. <u>Executive Committee should develop and communicate a list of committee openings.</u> It should be made clear that a person can sit on more than one committee if desired.</p> <p>c. <u>Develop an election process for committee assignments at the district level.</u> If committee membership is not settled by the election process, then the Executive Committee should decide who sits on what committees. The district election process should be outlined in the Code of Procedures. (See election process details below.)</p> <p>d. <u>No more than two people per district can be nominated to sit on a particular committee.</u> If no one from a particular district is interested in sitting on the committee, then the Executive Committee should appoint people to that position. If more than two people are interested in sitting on the same committee within a given district, then who is brought forward as nominees must be decided at the district level. When appropriate, the Executive Committee can establish waiting lists.</p> <p>e. <u>Executive Council and the Executive Committee should decide each year how many members particular committees should have.</u> The top number should be based on what are the current most popular issues. In many cases, it is recommended that the number of committee members be no more than 24 in order to promote better management of committees.</p> <p>f. <u>Develop and distribute surveys that evaluate committee leadership performance.</u></p> <p>g. <u>Increase Executive Committee from three to five members.</u> Strategic Planning Committee</p>		<p><i>Is sitting on these committees helping to keep delegates interested in remaining with the WCC? (retention)</i></p> <p><i>How well do delegates feel changes in the committee membership selection process is working?</i></p> <p><i>What are some strengths and weaknesses of those changes?</i></p> <p><i>Has committee work become more efficient and effective as a result of the changes?</i></p> <p>Methods =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys of delegates • Delegate focus groups

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
	<p>members felt that this was a key step to ensuring greater internal accountability. The Executive Council should provide feedback to the entire delegation about who is being proposed to sit on the Executive Committee. The two at large positions should be elected based on that list of nominees. Those nominees need not be on the Executive Council. Strategic Planning Committee members agreed that all five members should have the right to vote at Executive Committee meetings. However, there was not determination as to whether the two at-large members should be able to vote at Council meetings. If they had that right, up to two districts would have more representation on the Council than any of the other districts. Note: This proposal was formally approved by the Strategic Planning Committee and will be moved through the WCC organizational review process. If approved, Sections V (A) and VII (D) will have to be changed in the Code of Procedures. At-large members' duties must be added to VII (D).</p> <p>h. <u>Create a clearer process of how delegates are chosen to sit on external committees such as DNR committees.</u> Possibly use an application process similar to the one developed to screen candidates for WCC committees.</p> <p>i. <u>Better communicate what external committee positions are available, when those committees meet, and what is on the meeting agendas.</u> Committee members need to report back to the Congress what happened at these meetings.</p>		

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
<p>2. Modify standing committee structure to create greater efficiencies, improve internal communications, and save money</p> <p><i>The Strategic Planning Committee emphasized that Strategy #1 above be done before or in conjunction with implementation of this strategy.</i></p> <p>Note: Modify section V (E3) of the Code of Procedures.</p>	<p>Note: The Strategic Planning Committee recommends that the following study committees not be modified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bear • Big Game (except perhaps to change the name to "Deer/Elk Committee") • Fur Harvest • Great Lakes • Legislative • Migratory • Mississippi River • Outdoor Heritage & Education • Rules & Resolutions • Trout • Warm Water • Wolf <p>a. <u>The current Outreach Committee should be expanded and renamed the "Outreach & Public Relations Committee."</u> This committee's chief task will be to implement the public relations initiatives described in the WCC Strategic Plan. The chair of the committee should have experience in public relations and possibly be one of the two at-large members of the five-member Executive Committee and/or Executive Council member. Qualifications for this position will be communicated to the entire delegation. Note: This expansion should be completed no later than July 1, 2013.</p> <p>b. <u>The Forestry, Parks & Recreation Study Committee should be merged with the Private & Public Land Access Committee.</u></p> <p>c. <u>Establish an Environmental Study Committee</u></p>	<p>Executive Council</p> <p>Executive Committee</p> <p>Study Committee Chairs</p> <p>Note: The Strategic Planning Committee recommends that the Council and Executive Committee set the number of members each committee should have, in most cases from 12 to 24 delegates. Committee sizes could change from year to year depending on the importance of the issues committees address.</p>	<p><i>Are there fewer committees?</i></p> <p><i>How have committee workloads been affected as a result of committee consolidation? (Are committees overworked?)</i></p> <p><i>With fewer committees, has it been easier to more proactively promote resolutions that make sense?</i></p> <p><i>Have the committees that were not altered become more effective and efficient?</i></p> <p><i>Has it been easier to track and keep people informed about what happens to resolutions?</i></p> <p><i>How much money has been saved as a result of committee consolidation?</i></p> <p>Methods =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee chair surveys • Committee chair focus groups

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
	<p>encompassing the following existing committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Air, Waste, & Water ▪ Wildlife Health & Invasive Species ▪ Habitat (resolutions that would have come to the Habitat Committee could also be forwarded to other appropriate species specific committees) ▪ Endangered Resources/Law Enforcement (resolutions that would have come to this committee could also be forwarded to other appropriate species specific committees. Issues/resolutions related to general laws can be referred to the Legislative Committee) <p>d. <u>Merge the Turkey and Upland Game Committee.</u> The new committee should be called Upland Game.</p> <p>e. <u>Eliminate the Hunting with Dog Study Committee.</u> Issues/resolutions that normally go to this committee can be referred to specie specific committees such as Bear.</p> <p>f. <u>Committees modify mission statements to reflect new scope of work.</u></p> <p>Note: All these recommendations were officially (motion and second) and unanimously approved by the Strategic Planning Committee.</p>		
3. Establish a recording stenographer position allowing the organization's Secretary to refrain from taking notes during important discussions	<p>a. <u>Develop budget.</u> Acquire dollars to support the position through the Friends initiative.</p> <p>b. <u>Develop a job description for the position.</u></p> <p>c. <u>Develop and initiate a hiring process.</u> Note: Considering the financial constraints the WCC is under, it may be possible to find a volunteer willing to fill the role during the annual Convention and Executive Council meetings.</p>		<i>Has the Secretary engaged in and helped to frame important organizational policy discussions as a result of not having to take meeting minutes?</i>

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
<p>Note: The committee unanimously approved a formal motion recommending that the position be created. It stated that it would like to see this be a paid position but acknowledged dollars for it cannot come from the state budget but could perhaps be found through the Friends Group. Individuals could also be asked to volunteer.</p>			<p><i>Timeliness and accuracy of minutes</i></p> <p><i>Does the stenographer do other things to help enhance internal organizational communication?</i></p> <p>Methods =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview the Secretary at least once a year to determine whether he/she is more involved in important organizational policy discussions • Determine the Secretary's impact on those discussions • Gauge the level of timeliness and accuracy of minutes by asking delegates for their feedback at the annual conference
<p>4. Improve information & communication flow related to all WCC activities</p>	<p>a. Create <u>statewide broadcasts</u> used by the media to inform public of WCC activities.</p> <p>b. <u>Designate person or small committee within the WCC to work on public relations.</u> Note: This is also listed as a strategy under Goal #2. Tasks under that strategy should also be completed</p>	<p>Outreach & Public Relations Committee</p>	<p><i>How effective do delegates/the public feel the new communication methods are accurately conveying what the WCC does?</i></p>

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
	<p>here. Add this new committee to the list found in the Code of Procedures V (E3).</p> <p>c. <u>Delegates increase their volunteer activity in order to better educate the public about the WCC.</u> Note: This is also a strategy listed under Goal #2. Tasks under that item should also be completed here.</p>		<p><i>Are delegates logging their volunteer hours? If so, is the number of hours increasing over time?</i></p> <p><i>How are delegates using their volunteer hours?</i></p> <p><i>What are the impacts on the people they are reaching?</i></p> <p>Methods =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of volunteer hours and tasks performed • Surveys of delegates • Focus groups of delegates
<p>5. Foster a more engaged and accountable organizational leadership and delegation</p> <p>Note: Committee members agreed that this particular strategy can if pursued help the organization make progress toward achieving its other goals.</p>	<p>a. <u>Change the times during the annual state convention when the Executive Council and the Executive Committee are elected.</u> Executive Council members should be elected Friday morning of the convention. Executive Committee members should be <u>elected by the council</u> (same process) the <u>Saturday morning</u> of the convention. Note: Modify VII (A) in the Code of Procedures. The change will allow council members to think more carefully about who should be elected to the Executive Committee.</p>	Rules & Resolutions Committee with the Executive Council	<p><i>Have relevant Code of Procedures changes been made?</i></p> <p><i>If Code of Procedures changes have been made, to what degree are delegates aware of the new definitions/policies?</i></p>

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
	<p>b. <u>Create and document clear rules on what is and is not an excused absence.</u> Unexcused absences affect delegates' ability to be appointed to the committees of their choosing. Note: Modify Code of Procedures VII (A8, B2, and H4). Also incorporate necessary changes to VII (A9) and VII (H).</p> <p>c. <u>Code of Procedures - VII (A2) - and/or other documents should list the consequences</u> when delegates take a public position opposite of the Conservation Congress' position on topics. Delegates need to make it clearer when they are stating their position versus the Congress' position.</p> <p>d. <u>Develop and distribute clearer delegate job descriptions.</u> Note: Modify Section VII of the Code of Procedures.</p> <p>e. <u>Develop and distribute a Wisconsin Conservation Congress Code of Ethics</u>, one that clearly identifies conflict of interest situations and defines what a legitimate vested interest is.</p>		<p><i>Has a Code of Ethics been developed?</i></p> <p><i>If a Code of Ethics was developed, are delegates aware of it? Have they received education about it?</i></p> <p><i>Are delegates following the Code of Ethics?</i></p> <p>Methods =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre and post surveys of delegates related to what is/is not ethical behavior • Focus groups of delegates
<p>6. Restructure the 12 districts (should be done based on geography or population)</p> <p>Note: Committee members agreed by a formal voice vote that this particular item should only be considered after reforms to the committee election process are completed. In essence, the strategy becomes a "Parking Lot" issue to be addressed later.</p>	<p>a. <u>Survey entire delegation at the annual convention</u> (this could be in the form of a referendum). Ask primarily if the delegation thinks there should be a restructuring and if so how that should be done (e.g. based on population, geography, etc.?)</p> <p>Note: If it is decided that this strategy should be pursued, additional tasks will be identified at that time. All changes will have to be documented in V (D) in the Code of Procedures.</p>	Rules & Resolutions Committee with the Executive Council	<i>To be determined</i>

Goal #2: How can delegates create greater awareness of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress?

Implementation of some aspects of this goal has already begun and will be ongoing throughout the life of the strategic plan.

Strategy #1 should be completed as soon as feasible because the Outreach & Public Relations Committee is charged with carrying out several strategic plan initiatives.

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
<p>1. Designate person and/or a committee (Outreach & Public Relations Committee) within the WCC to work on public relations</p> <p><i>Accomplish by July 1, 2013.</i></p> <p>Note: Modify section V (E3) of the Code of Procedures.</p>	<p>a. <u>Produce and distribute monthly press releases</u> centrally and/or develop template for others to use that is easily adaptable to local newspapers' formats. (Updates on WCC initiatives, etc.). Make it more known using various internal and external publications that the DNR frequently includes news about the WCC in its pamphlets and magazines.</p> <p>b. <u>Collection of data on how well WCC is known.</u> How is it perceived?</p> <p>c. <u>Organize and disseminate committee and county delegations annual report of accomplishments information.</u> Report should be written by delegates who sit on the respective committees.</p> <p>d. <u>Approach UW System, etc. to ask them to create a DVD about the WCC.</u></p> <p>e. <u>Create and maintain a dedicated WCC website.</u></p> <p>Note: This is primarily a "parking lot" task that should be addressed later in the planning timetable.</p>	<p>Outreach & Public Relations Committee</p> <p>Young Adult Outreach Ad Hoc Committee¹</p> <p>Note: It was suggested by a committee member that if the Executive Committee is to have two more members, one of them could become the public relations coordinator and be chair of the new Outreach & Public Relations Committee.</p>	<p><i>How effective have these methods been in making people more aware of the WCC and what it does?</i></p> <p>Methods = Surveys and Focus Groups</p> <p>Target Groups = Hunting organizations, non – consumptive users, etc.</p>
<p>2. Help create County Conservation Alliances where they are desired (WCC</p>	<p>a. <u>Work with the DNR to continuously update the contact list.</u> (DNR club contacts should be part of this list.)</p>	<p>Outdoor Heritage and Education Committee</p>	<p><i>How many of these entities have been created during the first year and so on?</i></p>

¹ The Strategic Planning Committee discussed but did not formally recommend the possibility of renaming this committee the "Technology Committee."

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
should partner with other groups interested in helping to develop these entities. WCC reports directly to these alliances facilitating better communication at the local level. This also could be a way to help get people to the annual convention)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. <u>Develop and show a standard WCC informational presentation.</u> c. <u>Develop and show presentations on hunter, boat, rifle, and pistol safety.</u> (Include in school curriculums.) d. Help the Alliances <u>find funding</u> to provide per diems, and mileage, meals and hotel room reimbursements. 	Young Adult Outreach Ad Hoc Committee	<p><i>How active have they become?</i></p> <p><i>What outcomes have they achieved?</i></p> <p>Method = Email survey of Alliance members</p>
3. Work on delegate retention and recruitment methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <u>Seek funds</u> to provide monetary incentives that help keep good delegates and to help cover expenses incurred while on WCC business. b. Develop and show to perspective delegates a <u>standard WCC informational presentation.</u> (This presentation should be used for other promotional purposes. Note: See also under Strategy #1. c. Develop a <u>standardized brief</u> outlining requirements about how to become a delegate and delegate responsibilities. 	Outreach & Public Relations Committee	<p><i>To what extent is the WCC more representative of age and gender as compared with the state's population?</i></p> <p>Method = Analysis of delegate age and gender characteristics each of the next five years, starting from implementation of new retention and recruitment efforts. After baseline is created, compare data.</p> <p>Target Groups = Hunting organizations, non-consumptive users, etc.</p>

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
			<p><i>How will they/did they use what they learned?</i></p> <p>Method = Survey delegates and their clients. Group interviews and focus groups of clients.</p>
<p>6. Track and communicate the outcomes of resolutions advanced through the WCC process</p> <p>Note: The work unit dealing with this strategy found it helpful to lay out the process of what currently takes place. Many of the items relate to the necessity of understanding and clearly communicating that process to delegates, the media, and interested public. After summarizing the process, the work unit identified specific tasks beginning with item e in the next column.</p> <p>Note: Modify X (E) in the Code of Procedures.</p>	<p>a. If this was a legislative issue: How does the author find out that is the situation?</p> <p>b. Chair of Rules & Resolutions notify author(s) of disposition of resolution.</p> <p>c. Once a resolution passes committee it goes to Executive Council then to questionnaire then to convention then to the Natural Resources Board then to the DNR. The resolution must pass each of these steps to proceed in the process. If it requires legislation then the department can send (it is not obligated to send) to the legislature as a packet to see if a legislator is interested in sponsoring with department favored items.</p> <p>d. <u>Rules & Resolutions Committee</u> should be charged with coordinating how the resolutions, etc. are tracked.</p> <p>e. <u>Inform delegates and other stakeholders through newsletters, etc. what happened to the resolutions.</u> (The aforementioned committee would be charged with this task.)</p>	<p>Rules & Resolutions Committee</p> <p>Note: It was suggested by a committee member that if the Executive Committee is to have two more members, one of them could become the person who is primarily responsible for performing this function and communicating outcomes.</p>	<p><i>Which ones passed the legislature?</i></p> <p><i>What was the WCC's role in the successful advancement of the legislation?</i></p> <p><i>If something did not advance, what was the reason?</i></p> <p>Method = Rules & Resolutions Committee and subsequent responsible parties will be able to answer these questions while carrying out evaluations.</p>

Goal #3: How can the Wisconsin Conservation Congress expand what it does?

With the exception of the first strategy, this goal should be pursued beginning in January 2014 and be completed by the end of the strategic planning period in mid-2018.

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
<p>1. Take advantage of new programs on a county level created as a result of the Kroll report</p> <p><i>Begin implementing this strategy immediately.</i></p>	<p>a. Play a significant role in the development and implementation of D-Map. Note: The organization established a committee to address this issue. This committee will determine how the WCC gets more involved in this.</p> <p>b. Become involved in helping to <u>determine county deer management strategies</u>. Take part in county deer management meetings.</p>	<p>Executive Committee</p> <p>Executive Council</p> <p>Big Game (Deer/Elk) Committee</p>	<p><i>How often has the WCC been involved with county partners in these matters? What roles have the WCC played? (level of impact)</i></p> <p><i>How has deer management practices improved as a result of the WCC's activity?</i></p> <p><i>What have been the results of the improved deer management practices?</i></p> <p>Method = Surveys of county partners; Testimonials of county partners</p>
<p>2. Working with partners, take an active role in coordination of citizen – based research</p>	<p>a. <u>Assign members of similar interests to key positions.</u></p> <p>b. <u>Seek out individuals and potential partner organizations within the DNR and the UW System</u></p>	<p>Executive Committee</p> <p>Executive Council</p>	<p><i>What new citizen-based research efforts has the WCC been instrumental in establishing?</i></p>

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
	<u>that have interest in expanding citizen based research.</u>		<p><i>What information is coming out of these studies?</i></p> <p><i>How is the new information being used?</i></p> <p><i>What new partnerships have been established due to these efforts?</i></p> <p><i>How are those partners assisting the WCC?</i></p> <p>Method = Interviews with partner organizations; Focus groups with stakeholders that use the citizen – based research</p>
3. Provide educational program and information to youth groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <u>Develop a list of partner organizations</u> that can help provide educational programming for youth. b. <u>Contact those potential partners</u> to arrange the educational programming. c. <u>Identify Conservation Congress members with educational/teaching backgrounds;</u> people who can help provide the education. d. <u>Create new ways to gather information that can be used in educational programming</u> and to recruit youth to attend programs (social networking) e. <u>Work with partners to develop and schedule</u> 	<p>Outdoor Heritage & Education Committee</p> <p>Young Adult Outreach Ad Hoc Committee</p>	<p><i>How many Congress delegates have participated in developing or teaching seminars?</i></p> <p><i>How is the WCC collaborating with the partners to provide this education?</i></p>

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
	<u>educational programming.</u>		<p><i>What new synergies are being created between the WCC and these partners that do not relate to providing educational programming?</i></p> <p>Methods = Surveys of partners and delegates participating in the development and delivery of educational programming</p>

Goal #4: What must be done to make the Spring Hearings more effective?

This goal should be pursued beginning in January 2014 and be completed by the end of the strategic planning period in mid-2018. Voting procedure modifications, however, should be completed as soon as possible after the January 2014 start time. Procedures for tracking and communicating what happens to resolutions advanced through the WCC should also begin as soon as possible.

Proposed Strategy	Proposed Task	Initial Responsible Parties	Potential Evaluation Questions & Methods
<p>1. Track and communicate the outcomes of resolutions advanced through the WCC process</p> <p>Note: Modify X (E) of the Code of Procedures.</p>	<p>a. <u>Rules & Resolutions Committee</u> charged with coordinating the tracking of resolutions.</p> <p>b. <u>Inform delegates and other stakeholders through newsletters, webpage, website, etc. what happened to the resolutions.</u> (The aforementioned committee would be charged with this task.)</p>	<p>Rules & Resolutions Committee</p> <p>Note: It was suggested by a committee member that if the Executive Committee is to have</p>	<p><i>Which ones passed the legislator?</i></p> <p><i>What was the WCC's role in the successful advancement of the legislation or rule?</i></p>

		two more members, one of them could become the person who is primarily responsible for performing this function and communicating outcomes.	<p><i>If something did not advance, what was the reason?</i></p> <p>Method = Central office responsibility (which may mean that an office will have to be established)</p>
<p>2. Modify voting procedures</p> <p>Note: Modify VIII (F) in the Code of Procedures.</p>	<p>a. <u>Develop online voting method.</u> Checks and balances will be needed to make certain that it is done appropriately. Notes: During the October 1, 2012 Strategic Planning Committee meeting, members unanimously passed a resolution to make this an option. The committee also suggested that this be done on a trial basis, meaning that the system can be removed if there are issues. The voting could be non-binding. They also emphasized that the only way this will work is for the system to be totally secure. Lastly, committee members stated that online voting could help get younger people more involved with the Congress. They acknowledged that a possible unintended consequence of online voting could be to reduce attendance at the hearings.</p> <p>b. <u>Establish an online polling system.</u> Initial polling should be used to generate discussion on a topic before and during the spring hearings. The polling system should include demographic questions. Delegates can use their customer ID to log in.</p>	<p>Rules & Resolutions Committee</p> <p>Young Adult Outreach Ad Hoc Committee)</p>	<p><i>Are the online voting and polling systems increasing participation in the hearings?</i></p> <p><i>Do the online voting and polling systems help increase the level of discussion on questions both prior to and during the hearings?</i></p> <p><i>Is participation in online voting and polling high across various age groups?</i></p> <p>Methods = Focus groups and group interviews (with delegates and the public who are using the new voting procedures)</p>
<p>3. Increase interest surrounding and participation in the hearings</p>	<p>a. <u>Use online polling to generate interest,</u> especially among younger stakeholders.</p> <p>b. <u>More clearly define the purpose of the hearings.</u> Communicate that statement.</p> <p>c. <u>Create incentives to attend.</u> (Non-monetary). Make the events more fun, offer food, etc.</p> <p>d. <u>Develop and maintain a blog/discussion board on key issues</u> coming before the WCC. This could be</p>	<p>Rules & Resolutions Committee</p> <p>Young Adult Outreach Ad Hoc Committee</p>	<p><i>Has attendance increased due to the measures taken?</i></p> <p><i>Do attendees have a more clear understanding of the hearings' purpose?</i></p>

	<p>another tool to generate discussion before and even during hearings.</p> <p>e. <u>Market the hearings more widely.</u> More statewide media coverage. Many of the tasks under Goal #2 can be utilized here.</p> <p>f. <u>Educate youth on how they can have more impact on the resolution process</u> (use technology to do this).</p>	Outreach & Public Relations Committee	<p><i>Do delegates understand the consequences of not attending the hearings?</i></p> <p><i>Has the increased interest resulted in greater discussion?</i></p> <p><i>Are more youth participating in the hearings? If so, what has been their impact on rules/resolutions development?</i></p> <p><i>Has the increased interest resulted in better potential rules/resolutions that could help improve how the state's natural resources are managed?</i></p> <p>Methods = Develop interview questions to be used at the Spring Hearings; provide opportunities to respond to evaluation questionnaires online</p>
4. Determine to what extent members can advocate for legislative changes (Can the WCC request sponsorship of a bill?)	<p>a. <u>Work with Natural Resources Board to determine parameters.</u></p> <p>b. <u>Define more clearly the parameters within the Code of Procedures and other documents meant to guide delegates' work.</u></p>	<p>Legislative Committee</p> <p>Executive Council</p> <p>Executive Committee</p>	<p><i>Evidence of coordination with the Natural Resources Board</i></p> <p><i>Completion of Code of Procedures changes</i></p>

<p>Note: Modify VII (A) in the Code of Procedures.</p> <p>Note: Following the September planning meeting, the committee chair sent an email to the WCC legal counsel asking whether delegates could “lobby” for rule changes/legislation as long as what they were advocating for is an official WCC position. The following response was provided by Tim Andryk.</p> <p><i>“The Congress role is that of official advisory body to the State Natural Resources Board. However, even though it is not the main role or responsibility of the Congress, the Congress can lobby legislators on official positions approved by the Executive Council and/or Executive Board in the manner as directed by the Executive Board and invoke their representation on behalf of the Congress in that capacity.”</i></p>			
<p>5. Provide attendees with short educational seminars/presentations on relevant topics</p>	<p>a. <u>Assign specific committees to examine most relevant topics of the day.</u></p> <p>b. <u>Committees work with knowledgeable resources</u> (DNR, UW-Extension, hunting/fishing groups, etc.) to locate or to develop seminars.</p> <p>c. <u>Designate presenters</u> from these groups or the WCC.</p>	<p>Outreach & Public Relations Committee</p> <p>Outdoor Heritage & Education Committee</p>	<p><i>What was learned by attendees?</i></p> <p><i>How do they intend to use what was learned?</i></p>

Note: The committee indicated that this should be done in place of the town hall model.	d. <u>Schedule seminars</u> during appropriate times during the hearings.		<p><i>How did they use what was learned?</i></p> <p>Methods = Questionnaires distributed to attendees to measure short, medium and long-term outcomes</p>
6. Foster more discussion during the hearings.	a. <u>Encourage more debate on questions</u> before they come to a vote. County Chairs should make special effort to do this. He/she could use the blog discussions, polling etc. on Spring Hearing questions as information to help prompt conversation.		<p><i>To what extent do attendees feel debate has increased?</i></p> <p><i>How effective do attendees believe the increased debate has led to a more thoughtful evaluation of the issues?</i></p> <p>Methods = Surveys</p>

Additional Suggestions

Strategic Planning Committee members also made general recommendations that could help address some of the issues being faced by the Congress that are not discussed in detail within this strategic plan. Those suggestions were:

- More aggressively enforce Code of Procedures provisions that call upon delegates to foster better working relationships in their counties with local Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources personnel. (This should be done face to face as much as possible.)

- When face to face meetings are not feasible with Department of Natural Resources personnel or for WCC committee meetings, encourage the use of teleconferences
- Educate delegates about what circumstances warrant top down decision making within the organization. **Note: The Strategic Planning Committee recognizes that within a more bottom-up, flat organization, something this plan seeks to help establish, some top-down decisions will still have to be made.**
- When top-down decisions are made, the Executive Committee and Executive Council make it more apparent through organizational press releases, meeting minutes, newsletters, etc. why that approach was used
- Strengthen methods of tracking official Congress positions with an aim of developing more active support amongst delegates for those positions. **Note: Strategic Planning Committee members felt a five-member Executive Committee will help with this.**
- Develop new committee mission statements that encompass broader purposes (include more than just hunting and fishing concerns, etc.)
- Use County Conservation Alliances (when established) as a vehicle to encourage counties to contribute more funds in support of WCC activities. (Develop a standardized way to ask with local delegates taking the lead.)
- Continue to develop and conduct annual convention evaluations completed by the delegates. Make changes to the convention as warranted based on evaluations

Conclusion

As is the case with many organizations, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress does not have the capacity to address many critical issues at once. Even four may be too many. There is considerable overlap, however, amongst the organization's prioritized goals. For example, adequately addressing the issue of establishing a more efficient, transparent organization should result in improved internal communications and help create a more nimble structure that will support the implementation of strategies mentioned in this plan. Throughout the five year implementation process, it is likely that organization leaders will discover new strategies that will help achieve goals and determine that at least a few of the strategies mentioned in this plan are impractical. No strategic plan should be followed without continuously assessing the practicality of its proposals. That constant assessment, the Strategic Planning Committee wisely recommends, should take place at the Executive Council level.

One of the greatest benefits of any properly done strategic planning process is that it helps stakeholders, including those closest to the organization's inner workings, begin serious conversations about what the organization should represent in the future. This particular planning exercise has already helped Conservation Congress leaders, delegates and other stakeholders such as the Department of Natural Resources deliberate how the Conservation Congress can remain viable. Even though the formal planning process for now is complete, there is no reason for these conversations to cease. Nor is there reason for planning not to continue, albeit on perhaps a more informal basis. Another formal planning process should be undertaken beginning in 2018 when most of the goals and strategies in this plan have presumably been completed. The official approval of this plan by the Executive Council and eventually the Congress' entire delegation will help ensure that these important conversations and plan modifications continue. Such approval will also create the necessary support throughout the organization for meaningful, positive change to occur.