SSBA STRATEGIC PLAN 2024 – 2027

ADOPTED 8/17/2024

REVISED 8/23/2025

PILLAR 1. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. Supplement our efforts to increase local children's awareness of and appreciation for birds.
    a. Partner with Capitol Land Trust and other organizations to provide one-off experiences at events that they have organized.
    b. Prepare in-class demonstrations that match the STEM requirements for different grade levels. Ensure that our availability to come into classrooms to give these demonstrations is well-advertised.
    c. Provide family-oriented bird walks at least twice/year. These would be appropriate for children and focus on easy to spot birds (e.g. ducks and geese).
2. ✓ (2024-2025) Invigorate what had been OYAS and incorporate its purpose into our larger goals.
    a. Re-organize OYAS to focus on fostering an interest in birds in children who are not especially experienced birders.
    b. Focus on working with pre-existing groups rather than having our own club. This will save time and effort and allow us to reach more children.
    c. Reconfigure the Youth website page to reflect the changes above.
3. Create additional audio/visual materials.
    a. Create three new videos that can be put on the state's resource page. The videos would match the STEM goals for particular grade-levels.
    b. ✓ (2025) Rework our Spanish-language bird book to be suitable for bilingual education classes. This will involve combining text in Spanish and English so that all students in a class could follow along.
    c. Write and produce a new Spanish-language bird book at the 6th-grade level. Also produce it in bilingual form.
    d. Since the Timberland Regional Library has children's collections in Vietnamese and Korean as well as Spanish, provide our Spanish-language books in these languages as well.
    e. Write grants to fund printing any written materials we have produced.
4. Enhance our adult education opportunities.
    a. ✓ (2024) Reinstate our high-level Birding 101 course.
    b. Aim to teach 2 or 3 classes each year.
    c. Give more talks and classes in Mason and Lewis counties.
    d. Partner with other organizations, such as libraries, which could provide the rooms, AV equipment and advertising for the classes and talks.
5. Work on promoting diversity.
    a. Target schools with diverse populations for our in-school presentations.

b. Conduct at least one family-friendly bird walk in Spanish each year.
c. Advertise our offerings to church and community groups with diverse populations.
d. ✓ (2024/25) Develop and promote Spanish-language bird books for public and school libraries.

6. Recruit a committed and expanded group of volunteers to provide the opportunities outlined above.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

1. Continue staffing tables at these five annual events:
   a. Nisqually Watershed Festival
   b. Prairie Appreciation Day
   c. Wolf Haven Prairie Celebration
   d. Olympia EcoFair
2. Increase the number of events to eight per year with one or more in Lewis and Mason counties
3. Continually assess new events that may bring us more exposure, especially with underserved populations
4. ✓(2025) Update our tabling materials as needed

EDIB COMMITTEE

1. ✓ (2024) Change name of committee to EDIB – Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging
2. ✓ (2025) Research the possibility and expense involved in having our website available in both English and Spanish
3. Research the possibilities and expense involved in creating Spanish language signs for a park in Mason County
4. Continue having committee members attend EDIB forums in our region to expand our understanding of this issue.
5. Continue to co-sponsor the annual LGBT Nisqually bird walk.
6. Recruit Spanish-speaking field trip leaders with the intent of offering Spanish-speaking field trips when the political climate improves. In the meantime, partnering with another organization that works with Latino immigrants to offer bird walks will be explored.
7. ✓ (2025) Extend the Native American Land Acknowledgement to field trips.
   a. In the Echo articles on field trips, include the name of the tribe associated with the field trip destination.
   b. If possible, include some item of interest about that tribe.
8. Evaluate, update and expand the list of accessible field trips listed on our website.
9. Explore the possibility of sponsoring a chapter at one of our local colleges.
   a. Research the resources on college chapters that National Audubon offers.
   b. Survey all existing college campuses in our area, their relevant clubs, and class offerings.
   c. Decide if project is feasible by 2025 with a start in 2026.

PILLAR 2. RECREATION AND ENRICHMENT

FIELD TRIPS (updated March 2025)

1. Continue to recruit new field trip leaders with an emphasis on younger volunteers.
2. Expand the range of our field trips to appeal to experienced as well as beginning birders.
3. Consider having field trips focus on specific bird families like gulls or owls.
4. Consider having a natural history co-leader for field trips, i.e. geologist, botanist, etc.
5. Experiment with combining birding events with environmental education, i.e. wastewater education at LOTT Hawk Prairie settling ponds, West Rocky Prairie with hydrologist Jim Mathieu, Black River WR with expert on Oregon Spotted Frogs, and beaver ponds with education around surface water issues.
6. ✓ (2025) Write and distribute Field Trip Leader's Guide to appropriate people.

HOSPITALITY

1. Recruit snacks for program meetings by having a "Snack Sign-up Sheet" at each program.
2. ✓(2024) Explore using a door prize to encourage attendance at program meetings
3. ✓(2024) Contact previous volunteers to confirm their continued involvement at program meetings.
4. Assist with annual dinner and annual picnic as needed.
5. Have a sign-up sheet at the program welcome table to get contact information for new people.

PROGRAMS

1. ✓ (2025) Recruit a new program chair by June 2025 for a two year term.
2. Continue hybrid format for speaker programs
3. ✓(2025) Explore way to smooth out the question period in hybrid speaker meetings
4. ✓(2024) Evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of renting space for speaker programs when the speaker is remote

PILLAR 3. PROTECTING OUR ECOSYSTEMS

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

1. Reduce risks from and costs associated with climate change by taking action to lower greenhouse gas emissions and implement adaptation strategies
    a. Advocate with state legislators to address climate change, particularly opposing Initiative I-2117 to roll back the Climate Commitment Act.
    b. Oppose I-2066 which would roll back programs that accelerate Puget Sound Energy's transition away from natural gas
    c. Advocate for conserving forests and prairies for their carbon sequestration and carbon storage capabilities
2. Protect the biological diversity and ecosystem services in SSBA area.
    a. Identify and prioritize types of local wildlife habitats such as prairie, wetland, forest, shoreline, and riparian as well as buffers and geographical regions of strategic importance such as watersheds.

b. Identify threats to priority habitats
c. Monitor updates/changes to local comprehensive land use plans, environmental regulations, and large scale developments
d. Increase resilience to climate change by working on habitat connectivity, the problems of flooding and storm water runoff, and the levels of surface water and ground water withdrawals.

3. Respond to plan and regulation changes, development threats, and conservation opportunities.
Ongoing efforts:

SEPA procedures
Thurston County and Bush Prairie Habitat Conservation Plans
Thurston County, Tumwater, and other jurisdictions' Comprehensive Plans
Hopkins Ditch (Oregon Spotted Frog (OSF) preservation)
West Rocky Prairie (OSF and other rare prairie species)
Proposed warehouse development
Skookumchuck Wind Energy Project
Proposed oyster and geoduck farms in South Salish Sea
Local Good Governance Coalition
Budd Inlet toxics cleanup
Wild Corridors (connectivity)

4. Partner with other environmental organizations to accomplish conservation priorities
Areas of interest:

✓(2024) Kennedy Creek Estuary with Audubon WA
Legacy Forest Coalition
Conservation NorthWest (and tribal partners)
Deschutes Estuary restoration with Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team (DERT)

5. Develop new member activists and expertise.
a. Use BHAS communication formats (Echo, website, Facebook, Instagram) to communicate when issues arise and public input would help.
b. Interact with attendees at BHAS events with avenues for them to affect public policy decisions.
c. Advertise for new volunteers. Mentor their efforts with small jobs and coaching.
d. Maintain a hydrologist for water monitoring
e. Maintain contact with environmental law firm for Habitat Conservation Plan reviews

6. Increase public awareness of environmental threats to local habitats. Be aware of environmental justice in determining our mission, policies, and work. Be mindful of issues affecting low-income people, tribal communities, communities of color, and urban habitats.
a. Continue to write and arrange for publication of articles on our conservation work in our newsletter, website, social media, and local news outlets.
b. Continue to publish Letters to the Editor.

PILLAR 4 ORGANIZATIONAL CONCERNS

FINANCE

1. Review our revenue streams and evaluate if they are sufficient to fund our projects.
    a. Make a yearly decision on whether the Annual Dinner will be a fundraising or social event.
    b. Publish the annual appeal letter with the legacy brochure included in odd number years.
2. Watch markets and interest rates that affect our investments and move funds as needed
3. Consider recognizing major donors with either a token gift or special outing.
4. ✓(2024) Evaluate our internal financial controls; create and execute procedures to minimize the potential for misuse of funds.

COMMUNICATION

1. ✓ (2024) Get Chair oriented to her new committee responsibilities
    a. Have her meet with website designer to go over intricacies of website
    b. Work with previous Chair as issues arise
2. Facebook – continue to increase our followers by providing up-to-date, relevant postings
3. ✓ (2025) Meetup – expand posts to include field trips not requiring pre-registration or carpools, program meetings, social events. Give Meetup Admin more direction on what to post
4. Instagram – do more to encourage members to submit their bird photos
5. Echo – have a new volunteer to handle publishing by 2026
6. Website – form small committee to review and suggest improvements to current website

MEMBERSHIP

1. By 2027, switch database from Libre to Excel
    a. BHAS will purchase Office Suite for Membership Chair
    b. Intent is to ease transition when new Chair is needed
    c. In anticipation of this change, reduce the size of the database by removing members who have not been active for 5 years.
2. When the chair becomes aware of the death of a member who has been substantially involved with the chapter, work with the appropriate committee chair to make sure an article is submitted to the Echo.
3. Work with the Board and Outreach Committee to run membership drive in 2025 or 2026.
4. Continue to work with the website manager to ensure that proper notifications of membership activity on the website are sent to the Membership Chair and that wording on membership form payments are appropriate.

VOLUNTEERS

1. Increase the number and diversity of our volunteers
    a. Host get-togethers for new recruits
    b. Focus on race, age, ethnicity, and location
2. Provide short, finite volunteer projects to engage new folks

3. Survey SSBA committee chairs to assess volunteer needs
4. Work on building a leadership pipeline

LEADERSHIP (Executive Committee)

1. Recruit Board member(s) from Lewis and Mason counties.

PILLAR 5 AVIAN SCIENCE

AVIAN SCIENCE COMMITTEE

1. ✓ (2025) Rewrite the job description for Avian Science Coordinator
2. ✓ (2025) Find a new coordinator by 2026.
3. Continue to provide Purple Martin boxes at Boston Harbor as needed
4. Continue to maintain the songbird nest boxes on Ralph Munro Trail
5. Support the two circles of the Christmas Bird Count as needed
6. Support the Bluebird Nest Box project in our southern prairies
7. ✓ (2024) Support the installation of a Motus tower on Hood Canal
8. Coordinate, as appropriate, requests for bird surveys on public and private lands
9. Continue to advertise in SSBA media platforms the opportunities for community science surveying
10. Consider installing a second Motus tower somewhere in our 3 county area or partner with a similar organization to install one in Central or South America

POSSIBLE FUTURE PROJECTS

1. ✓ (2025) Scholarship at local college
2. Co-sponsor Bird Day at Hands On Children's Museum (explore August Raptor Day)
3. **Cats Indoors campaign (chosen as secondary goal for 2025/26)
4. ***Membership Drive (chosen as primary goal for 2025/26)
5. Petition for bus service to Nisqually NWR on weekends
6. Sponsor a plirding event (picking up litter while birding)
7. *Backyard Habitat campaign (chosen as tertiary goal for 2025/26)
8. Bird Safe Windows campaign
9. Outreach staffer to reach underserved communities
10. Native Plant landscaping in public places and housing developments