States Organization for Boating Access 2015 Strategic Plan

April 2015
INTRODUCTION

Background

This Plan builds upon the work done by the SOBA Board in 2006 and 2010 and is intended to help guide the organization through 2018. The Board met in Chicago, Illinois on July 17, 2014 in a strategic planning exercise that resulted in this document.

The following Board members and staff participated and contributed to the development of this plan:

- Janine Belleque, President (Oregon)
- Ron Christofferson, Vice President (Arizona)
- Pat Harrell, Treasurer (Florida)
- James Adams, Past President (Virginia)
- Craig Walker (Utah)
- Larry Horan (Delaware)
- Kate Hughes Brown (Connecticut)
- Bernice McArdle, Executive Director (NMMA)
- Steve Miller (Wisconsin)

2010 Strategic Initiative Assessment

The initial step taken by the Board in the strategic planning process was to review and assess the status of the 2010 Plan. The Board determined that most of the Strategic planning initiatives identified in 2010 Plan had been successfully accomplished or substantially addressed by compatible actions subsequently taken by the Board. However, a number of tasks were not completed. Overall, the Board agrees that the emphasis of the 2010 Strategic Plan is still relevant and should be retained as a part of a renewed emphasis in the 2015 Plan.

Abbreviations cited within this plan:

- Association for Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA),
- National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA),
- States Organization for Boating Access (SOBA)
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS),
- United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE),
- Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (ANSTF),
- American Boat and Yacht Council (ABYC).
- Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG), and
- Clean Vessel Act (CVA),

VISION

As an organization devoted to the acquisition, development and administration of public recreational boating facilities nationwide, SOBA believes in providing a forum for the exchange of views, ideas,
concepts and experiences related to all aspects of recreational boating facilities. Additionally, as a voice supporting the need for recreational boating facilities nationwide, SOBA believes in striving to provide a medium for the exchange of views and experiences that will foster private, interstate, and federal-state cooperation and coordination in boating facility design, construction, and financing.

MISSION

To encourage, promote and support federal and state programs that provide safe, high-quality and environmentally sound public recreational boat access to the waterways of the United States and its territories.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, AND CURRENT STATUS

Past SOBA Strategic Initiatives and Work Plans focused on “SOBA’s core membership services, annual calendar, and strategic initiatives. . .crafted from an assessment of SOBA’s mission and goals.” This Plan carries forward the same focus and has identified three key goals along with associated objectives and strategies. These goals, objectives, and strategies are presented below with a status assessment for each objective.

Goal 1

Ensure SOBA continues to be recognized as a nationally-recognized voice in increasing and maintaining recreational boating access programs (e.g., Boating Access, CVA, and BIG)

Objective 1.1: Maintain and establish SOBA representation or involvement in key recreational boater access organizations through 2018

Strategies:

1.1.1. Maintain or establish representation on boards or in organizations involved in recreational boating access issues

1.1.2. Participate annually in multiple national conferences and meetings pertinent to recreational boating access issues

1.1.3. Develop MOUs with key recreational boating-related organizations

1.1.4. Develop and disseminate nationally-recognized publications related to recreational boating access

1.1.5. Maintain media outlets for dissemination of information related to recreational boating access issues

1.1.6. Maintain or establish cooperation and coordination with federal partners (e.g., USFWS and USACE)

1.1.7. Engage industry and professional partners at annual conferences
1.1.8. Identify key partners not already interacting with SOBA on recreational boating access issues

**Objective 1.2:** Expand SOBA partnership with private industry by 2017

**Strategies:**

1.2.1. Continue to increase opportunities for vendor participation at the SOBA Annual Conference

1.2.2. Continue to increase opportunities for vendor participation at the SOBA Annual Conference

1.2.3. Increase private industry representative participation at the SOBA Annual National Boating Access Conference and on SOBA task forces.

1.2.4. Engage vendors in the agenda at the SOBA Annual National Boating Access Conference as appropriate

**Objective 1.3:** Increase engagement of membership by 2017

**Strategies:**

1.3.1. Expand members-only resources available on SOBA website

1.3.2. Initiate a comprehensive review the SOBA By-Laws and involve the SOBA membership during the review

1.3.3. Conduct annual survey of SOBA members to gauge satisfaction and needs

1.3.4. Increase coordination and communication with multiple state agency directors through AFWA and other means to identify common goals and showcase state agency benefits derived from employee involvement in SOBA

1.3.5. Provide support related to state implementation of surveys prescribed in the 2014 Responsive Management National Boating Access Survey report

1.3.6. Increase member participation on SOBA task forces

**Goal 2**

Develop a sustainable funding model to ensure that SOBA is able to expand product and services offered to members and continues to positively affect boating access.

**Objective 2.1:** Identify at least five external revenue sources that can be pursued by 2017

**Strategies:**

2.1.1. Convene the SOBA Board to identify possible external revenue sources
2.1.2. Develop external funding task force for future pursuit of these revenue sources
2.1.3. Seek grant funding when working on issues that affect recreational boating access programs nationally (e.g., survey, design manual, manpowered access design manual)

**Objective 2.2:** Double industry sponsorship of SOBA activities and private industry membership by 2017

**Strategies:**

2.2.1. Develop materials that clearly outline benefits of private industry membership and sponsorship

2.2.2. Survey private industry sponsors and SOBA members to discern private industry benefit of SOBA participation (i.e., does private industry involvement in SOBA increase private industry revenue?)

2.2.3. Continue to provide media exposure opportunities for private industry businesses that have provided support to SOBA

**Objective 2.3:** Maintain existing and develop additional partnerships with organizations whose objective is to increase public recreational boating access programs (e.g., Boating Access, CVA, BIG)

**Strategies:**

2.3.1. See strategies 1.1.1 through 1.1.8

2.3.2 Continue to secure grants available through partner organizations (e.g., AFWA multi-state)

**Objective 2.4:** Increase membership and conference revenue 20% by 2017 to address rising operational costs.

**Strategies:**

2.4.1. See strategies 1.3.1 through 1.3.6 to increase SOBA membership

2.4.2. Evaluate annual membership dues and national conference registration fees in comparison with operational expenses annually or when necessary

2.4.3. Increase national conference participation among all prospective attendees (e.g., exhibitors, members, non-members)

**Objective 2.5:** Maintain existing partnerships and develop additional partnerships with organizations whose objective is to address recreational public boating related activities and issues

**Strategies:**

2.5.1. See strategies 1.1.1 through 1.1.8
2.5.2 Continue to work with USFWS to promote continued use of CVA funds to meet recreational boating needs for proper sewage waste disposal which ultimately protects water quality

2.5.3 Continue to work with ANSTF, ABYC, USFWS and others to protect recreational boating and boating access interests from the threat of aquatic invasive species

2.5.4 Encourage private, municipal, state and federal land use planners, coastal management professionals to participate in SOBA activities and partner with SOBA members to promote public access to navigable waters of the United States for use by recreational boaters and anglers

2.5.5 Continue to work with USFWS and other interested groups to promote nonmotorized boating access and opportunities

Goal 3

Promote the maintenance or enhancement of boater access opportunities

Objective 3.1: Develop and deliver desirable products and services to aid SOBA members and partners as they pursue maintenance and enhancement of boater access

Strategies:

3.1.1. Review and revise existing outreach materials as needed (e.g., media kit)

3.1.2. Review and revise SOBA Strategic Plan every four years to ensure the SOBA mission is being achieved through the accomplishment of planned objectives.

3.1.3. Maintain webpage and expand availability of members-only information

3.1.4. Coordinate with states to implement state-scale needs assessment tool developed as part of the National Boating Access Survey report

3.1.5 Review and revise the nationwide boat ramp inventory to ensure that information is current and that dynamic geospatial data features are incorporated

3.1.6 Develop in partnership with USFWS guidance documents to improve the quality, competitiveness and evaluation of competitive grant proposals for BIG and CVA funds