

Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) FY2020-2022 Strategic Plan

Purpose

This strategic plan is intended to set the future direction for the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) and identify key objectives and strategies to achieve its mission "to implement an informed, consensus-based national outreach strategy that will increase participation in recreational angling and boating and thereby increase public awareness and appreciation of the need for protecting, conserving, and restoring this nation's aquatic natural resources." The plan is built around four core objectives: Consumer Engagement, State Agency Engagement, Industry Engagement and Federal Agency Engagement. Each objective contains specific strategies to achieve measurable success. The Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council's (SFBPC) strategic plan developed in 1998 continues to be the framework from which we develop our strategy.

While designed to focus on long-term mission, vision and goals, the strategic plan will be reviewed annually and adjusted to meet the changing needs of RBFF's current environment. It will also establish the framework for annual budgets for the next three fiscal years.

Mission, Vision and Goals

RBFF MISSION

- To implement an informed, consensus-based national outreach strategy that will increase participation in recreational angling and boating and thereby increase public awareness and appreciation of the need to protect, conserve and restore this nation's aquatic natural resources.

RBFF VISION

- RBFF is committed to spreading the joy of fishing and boating to all ages, genders and cultures; we envision one nation united in our passion for fishing and boating. A nation committed to the pursuit of leisure activity on the water. A nation that embraces our fishing and boating heritage, and conserves, restores and protects the resources that sustain it.

RBFF GOALS

- Increased participation in recreational boating and fishing to achieve 60 million fishing participants by December 2021 (60 in 60).
- Increased public awareness of sound fishing, boating and conservation practices.

Assumptions:

1. United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) funding continues at current levels (average \$12 million per year) over the next three fiscal years.

Appendix:

1. SFBPC RBFF Recommended Performance Metrics
2. AFWA President's Taskforce on Angler R3, [available online](#)
3. 60 in 60 MOU, [available online](#)

Background

This strategic plan is the result of a six-month process that included RBFF staff, board members, state agency stakeholders, boating and fishing industry stakeholders, and USFWS and other Federal Agency personnel.

RBFF engaged Benefactor Group, a national consulting firm, in February 2018 to facilitate its strategic planning process. Benefactor Group reviewed numerous documents and websites, including the following:

- RBFF's FY 2017 - 2019 Strategic Plan
- RBFF's 2016 and 2017 *Special Report on Fishing*
- RBFF FY17 End of Year Metrics Report and FY18 Metrics To-Date
- Websites (www.TakeMeFishing.org and www.VamosAPescar.org)
- A variety of market research reports commissioned by RBFF

The Benefactor Group met with staff leaders and interviewed key stakeholders. RBFF surveyed 45 people from the RBFF staff and board, along with industry partners. A total of nine individual interviews were conducted either in person or by phone. Working closely with RBFF senior staff, Benefactor Group developed objectives for the strategic planning session, a preliminary list of pre-reading and pre-meeting homework for participants.

A strategic planning workgroup, composed of current board members and staff, was assembled to help guide the strategic planning process. The workgroup met by conference call nine times to affirm the current strategic direction, align key objectives, and discuss strategies to achieve goals to guide the development of the planning meeting agenda and outcomes.

Forty-three people including RBFF staff and board members, industry guests, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and other Federal Agency personnel, participated in the strategic planning meetings on June 20-21, 2018 in Charlotte, NC. Benefactor Group facilitated various exercises, and several small group discussions occurred. Through the information gathered at the strategic planning meetings and the discussions with the planning workgroup, RBFF staff and the Benefactor Group affirmed the current direction with the addition of some new strategies.

Objective #1: Consumer Engagement

Increase participation in recreational boating and fishing by recruiting new audiences to the sport.

STRATEGIES	DESCRIPTION
1.1 National marketing campaign (geared towards general market and growth segments such as Hispanics and women)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year-long integrated marketing and advertising campaign (Take Me Fishing™ & Vamos A Pescar™) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multi-channel content strategy ○ PR activities ○ Social media activities ○ Conservation PSAs ○ Research and results-based evolution of target audience, creative, and messaging platforms
1.2 Disney Strategic Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic marketing alliance with Disney media properties and <i>Walt Disney World</i> Resort to engage and influence target audiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strengthen advertising and marketing campaign ○ Expand branding at <i>Walt Disney World</i> Resort ○ Research and results-based evolution of media buy, creative and messaging
1.3 Non-endemic corporate partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships with non-endemic brands to grow awareness of, and participation in fishing and boating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue Boy Scouts of America Certified Angler Instructor (CAI) Program, updating and evolving curriculum as needed ○ Explore and engage in new partnerships
1.4 Marketing test programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and testing of marketing programs to grow awareness of, and participation in fishing and boating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evolve and improve First Catch Centers ○ Explore and develop new test programs (ex: state tourism agencies, school fishing programs, etc.)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Unless otherwise noted, goal is to achieve growth in all areas

- Annual fishing and boating participation levels
- Conservation awareness among target audiences
- Marketing campaign awareness and brand influence
- Digital asset traffic and conversions
- Establish 1 to 2 new non-endemic corporate partnerships over the next 3 years
 - Growth in BSA CAI trainers
- Develop and measure new marketing test programs

In addition to these KPIs, RBFF will work to achieve the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council (SFBPC) Recommended Performance Metrics established in 2016. See Appendix; Objective 1, Goals 1 & 3 and Objective 2, Goals 1 & 2.

Objective #2: State Agency Engagement

Grow the number of anglers and boaters by working in collaboration with state agencies to develop, implement and evaluate recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) programs and train key staff on R3 best practices.

STRATEGIES	DESCRIPTION
2.1 Develop, test and implement R3 programs to help state stakeholders recruit, retain and reactivate anglers and boaters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support states in R3 plan development • Evolve boat registration marketing program to reactivate lapsed boaters • Increase usage of lapsed angler and retention email toolkits • Expand State R3 Grants Program • Expand George H.W. Bush <i>Vamos A Pescar™</i> Education Fund • Communicate all results/learnings/case studies with states
2.2 Support state stakeholders' improvement of fishing license and boat registration sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive website visitors to state agency websites for fishing license and boat registration information • Explore/expand state partnerships to track visitors and conversions to license sales from RBFF digital assets to state sites • Share search engine marketing (SEM) best practices with states and coordinate with states already conducting license and registration SEM campaigns
2.3 Develop and implement R3 training for states	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow and evolve annual workshop to impart R3 knowledge to state agency directors and state marketing/communications personnel • Evolve and expand quarterly webinar series to give state agency employees tips/tools for implementing and evaluating R3 activities • Grow training program for state R3 practitioners at the USFWS National Conservation Training Center • Explore other opportunities for training (ex: regional workshops)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Unless otherwise noted, goal is to achieve growth in all areas

- State R3 Engagement
 - Number of state R3 plans
 - States following AFWA R3 Recommendations (*see Appendix*)
 - Number of state R3 coordinators
 - States using RBFF Toolkits
- Fishing license and boat registration referrals
- Overall state stakeholder satisfaction

In addition to these KPIs, RBFF will work to achieve the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council (SFBPC) Recommended Performance Metrics established in 2016. See Appendix; Objective 1, Goal 2.

Objective #3: Industry Engagement

Increase fishing and boating participation by partnering with industry stakeholders to develop and implement marketing projects that stimulate category growth and develop consumer insights, knowledge and case studies that industry can use to grow its individual brands.

STRATEGIES	DESCRIPTION
<p>3.1 Leverage industry partnerships to reach new markets and engage consumers in fishing and boating</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue and evolve established industry partnerships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discover Boating referral program to provide boat manufacturer leads from RBFF digital assets; sharing of Search Engine Marketing (SEM) keywords to maximize budget efficiencies ○ ASA 60 in 60 partnership, generating tools and info for fishing industry partners through 60 in 60 committee • Evolve and expand usage of tools for industry partners (Places to Fish & Boat Map widget and Fishing License/Boat Registration widget) • Explore new industry partnership opportunities
<p>3.2 Continue market/consumer research and insights to help industry stakeholders understand the demographics of the sport, new markets and customer trends</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolve research agenda to provide industry stakeholders with timely and actionable information they can implement in their own business (participation trends, consumer trends, new market insights i.e.: Hispanic participation, paddle sports, etc.) • Develop industry case studies to showcase success stories • Disseminate key learnings/insights through educational webinars, meetings, conferences and trade media

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Unless otherwise noted, goal is to achieve growth in all areas

- Establish new industry partnerships
- Discover Boating referrals
- Usage of RBFF programs
- Overall industry stakeholder satisfaction

In addition to these KPIs, RBFF will work to achieve the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council (SFBPC) Recommended Performance Metrics established in 2016. See Appendix; Objective 1, Goal 2.

Objective #4: Federal Agency Engagement

Recruit, retain and reactivate anglers and boaters by developing and expanding cooperation with Federal agency partners for planning and implementing mutually-beneficial projects and activities to promote recreational fishing and boating conducted on public lands and waterways.

STRATEGIES	DESCRIPTION
4.1 Activate 60 in 60 Memorandum of Understanding with Federal Agencies to recruit, retain and reactivate anglers and boaters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify contact to serve as liaison with Agencies • Share boating, fishing and conservation education materials • Adopt/modify R3 materials for use by Federal Agencies • Provide leadership, services and materials to promote responsible boating and fishing activities • Participation in Agency efforts to identify and promote suitable areas for boating and fishing activities • Work with Agencies at the local level to identify the need for improvement or maintenance of facilities for boating and fishing activities • Promote compliance with outdoor ethics and programs • Provide public messaging on the role and value of Agencies' fisheries and recreation programs <p><i>*See 60 in 60 MOU in Appendix for more detailed information.</i></p>

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Unless otherwise noted, goal is to achieve growth in all areas

- Increase Federal Agency usage of R3 programs
- Federal Agencies to amplify RBFF messaging (via its Take Me Fishing™ & Vamos A Pescar™ campaigns)
- Establish quarterly reporting for Federal Agency R3 activities and accomplishments

SFBPC/RBFF/AFWA/USFWS Performance Metrics Team
RBFF Recommended Performance Metrics

Objective 1: Increased participation in recreational angling and boating.

Goal 1: Communicate with anglers, boaters and the general public to increase awareness of: angling and boating opportunities, boating and fishing techniques, and the availability of and access to boating and fishing locations thereby reducing barriers to participation in angling and boating.

Proposed Reporting/Analysis Measures

1. Demonstrate an annual increase of new recruits to fishing (first time participants) from the 2015 baseline of 2.5 million as measured by the Outdoor Foundation's Special Report on Fishing.
2. Demonstrate an annual increase in youth participation in fishing from the 2015 baseline of 10.7 million as measured by the Outdoor Foundation's Special Report on Fishing.
3. Demonstrate an annual increase in Hispanic participation in fishing from the 2015 baseline of 3.4 million as measured by the Outdoor Foundation's Special Report on Fishing.
4. Demonstrate a trend of increased boating participation over 3 year periods as reported by the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) U.S. Recreational Boating Participation Survey using total participation as documented by the first NMMA study (expected in 2017) as the baseline.
5. Demonstrate a trend of increased fishing participation over 3 year period beginning in calendar year 2015, and in each successive 3 year period, as reported by the Outdoor Foundation's Special Report on Fishing.
6. Demonstrate a trend of increased fishing participation as reported in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associated Recreation.
7. Maintain a favorable variance in fishing and boating intentions among target audiences exposed vs those not exposed to RBFF campaigns, and who are not currently engaged in these activities, as measured by annual campaign effectiveness studies.
8. Maintain or grow awareness of RBFF campaigns among target audiences, as measured by annual campaign effectiveness studies.
9. Achieve an annual increase in aggregate organic traffic (i.e. non-paid traffic from search engines), as defined and measured by Google Analytics, to TakeMeFishing.org using

RBFF fiscal year 2017 as the baseline.

Goal 2: Collaborate and engage state agencies, industry and stakeholders in developing and implementing marketing and outreach strategies to recruit, retain and reactivate boaters and anglers as described in the National Outreach and Communication Plan.

Proposed Reporting/Analysis Measures

1. At least 25 states adopt a new or additional RBFF recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) model program over the 3-year period beginning in RBFF fiscal year (FY) 2017, and in each successive 3-year period.
2. Maintain a state agency satisfaction rate of at least 74% or greater of state agencies using 2 or more RBFF products or resources as measured annually by a consistent customer satisfaction survey conducted by an independent third party.
3. Maintain or achieve an industry (fishing and boating) satisfaction rate of 72% or greater as measured annually by a consistent industry satisfaction survey conducted by an independent third party.
4. For FY 2017, achieve an annual increase in referrals from Take Me Fishing (TMF) digital assets to state fishing license purchase pages from the FY 2016 baseline of 746,781. For FY 2018 and each successive year, achieve an annual increase over the prior fiscal year's actual results.
5. For FY 2017, achieve an annual increase in referrals from TMF digital assets to state boat registration pages from the FY 2016 baseline of 90,938. For FY 2018 and each successive year, achieve an annual increase over the prior fiscal year's actual results.
6. For FY 2017, achieve an annual increase in referrals from TMF digital assets to DiscoverBoating.com from the FY 2016 baseline of 119,570. For FY 2018 and each successive year, achieve an annual increase over the prior fiscal year's actual results.
7. For FY 2017, achieve an annual increase in total boat registrations sold through the RBFF Boat Registration Marketing Program from the FY 2016 baseline of 43,057. For FY 2018 and each successive year, achieve an annual increase over the prior fiscal year's actual results.

Goal 3: Develop and implement strategies to ensure that RBFF has sufficient funding to achieve its objectives.

Proposed Reporting/Analysis Measures

1. Annually raise non Federal Dollars and in-kind contributions (not including value added in purchased media buy) to equal 25% of federal dollars received.

Objective 2: Increased public awareness of sound fishing, boating and conservation practices.

Goal 1: Promote the conservation and responsible use of the Nation's aquatic resources by anglers, boaters and the general public and improve the public's understanding of the contribution of recreational angling and boating to the conservation of aquatic resources.

Proposed Reporting/Analysis Measures

1. Maintain awareness of the connection between licensing and local conservation by anglers and boaters, as established every 3 years by the Council to Advance Hunting and Shooting Sports (CAHSS) /RBFF Conservation Study using the 2015 study as the baseline awareness level (75%).
2. Achieve an annual increase in aggregate unique page views to the TakeMeFishing.org pages featuring prominent conservation messaging, using RBFF FY 2017 as the baseline. (Prominent conservation messaging pages include "Get a License" and "Register a Boat" and each state specific license and registration page.)

Goal 2: Promote safe fishing and boating practices.

Reporting/Analysis Measures

1. Achieve an annual increase in aggregate unique page views to the Fishing Safety and Boating Safety sections of TakeMeFishing.org using RBFF FY 2017 as the baseline.