

Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) FY2017-2019 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 three core objectives: Consumer Engagement, State Agency Engagement and Industry 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 baseline 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 boating and fishing.
- Increased public awareness of sound fishing, boating and conservation practices.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Mobile First
- Cross-Channel Engagement
- Multicultural Mindset
- Emphasis on Rich Content
- Proactive Communication
- Debunking Stereotypes

Assumptions:

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

Appendix:

1. SFBPC "Measures of Success"
2. RBFF Future Vision

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 personnel.

RBFF engaged Benefactor Group, a national consulting firm, in early spring 2015 to facilitate its strategic planning process. Benefactor Group reviewed numerous documents and websites, including the following:

- RBFF's FY 2014 - 2016 Strategic Plan
- RBFF's 2013 and 2014 *Special Report on Fishing*
- RBFF FY15 End of Year Metrics Report and FY16 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. A total of 12 individual interviews were conducted either in person or by phone. Working closely with RBFF senior staff, Benefactor Group developed objectives for the retreat and a preliminary list of pre-reading for retreat participants.

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

Sixteen board members, eight staff members, various stakeholder representatives and the USFWS participated in the strategic planning retreat on June 23-24, 2015 in Alexandria, VA. Benefactor Group facilitated various exercises, subject matter experts gave presentations, and several small group discussions occurred. Through the information gathered at the retreat 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 through a national marketing and communications campaign designed to increase awareness of fishing and boating and natural resource conservation, dispel negative stereotypes, and encourage consideration, trial and ultimately participation.

STRATEGIES	DESCRIPTION
1.1 Continue national marketing campaign (to drive awareness and engagement with general market and Hispanic growth segments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year-long integrated marketing and advertising campaign (Take Me Fishing™ & Vamos A Pescar™) • Evolution of creative/message platforms • Year-long PR activities • Year-long social media activities • Multi-channel content strategy • Conservation PSAs
1.2 Disney Strategic Alliance (to drive awareness of fishing and boating among target audiences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic marketing alliance to grow awareness of fishing and boating (focused on family and youth) through the use of Disney media properties (Disney XD, Disney Channel, ESPN & Disney.com) and Walt Disney World Resort branding • Evolve media buy and refresh creative
1.3 Continue Boy Scouts of America Certified Angler Instructor (CAI) Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership to train more CAI instructors • Update/evolve curriculum as needed
1.4 Develop Learning Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and test Learning Centers to serve as a place where kids and families can participate in hands-on opportunities and learn fishing and boating skills

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
- Retail value of PSA placements
- Double CAI trainers over next 3 years from 500 to 1,000

Objective #2: State Agency Engagement

Grow the number of anglers and boaters by working in collaboration with state agencies to develop, implement and evaluate innovative recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) activities. Share results and details of R3 efforts with all state agencies so that each individual agency can successfully implement these programs.

STRATEGIES	DESCRIPTION
2.1 Develop, implement and test R3 programs to help state stakeholders recruit, retain and reactivate anglers and boaters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolve fishing license and boat registration marketing programs to reactivate lapsed anglers and boaters • Expand retention pilot programs; grow to national • Expand innovative R3 grants program to support additional state agency programs • Establish state R3 guidelines through Aquatic Resources Education Association (AREA)/Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) partnership • Communicate pilot results/learnings with states
2.2 Establish task force to identify states' wants and needs related to R3 activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task force to examine better ways to collaborate with state agencies around R3 activities
2.3 Implement fishing license and boat registration referrals program	<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
2.4 Hold annual State Marketing Workshop and quarterly webinar series	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow and evolve annual workshop to impart marketing, communications, and customer service best practices (R3 activities) • Evolve and expand quarterly webinar series to give state agency employees tips/tools for implementing and evaluating R3 activities
2.5 Expand George H.W. Bush <i>Vamos A Pescar</i> TM Education Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement state-managed grant program to fund youth and family fishing education programs • Grow funding for program

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

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

- Fishing license and boat registration sales
- Retention rates
- Fishing license and boat registration referrals
- Conversion rates
- Funding for GHWB VAP Education Fund
- Overall state stakeholder satisfaction

Objective #3: Industry Engagement

Partner with industry manufacturers and retailers to develop and implement marketing projects designed to increase category growth, while simultaneously, through research; develop consumer insights, knowledge and tools that industry can use to grow its individual brands.

STRATEGIES	DESCRIPTION
<p>3.1 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 • Disseminate key learnings/insights through educational webinars, meetings, conferences and trade media
<p>3.2 Continue to leverage industry partnerships to reach new markets and engage consumers in fishing and boating</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue Discover Boating referral program to provide boat manufacturer leads from RBFF digital assets; continue the sharing of Search Engine Marketing (SEM) keywords to maximize budget efficiencies • Expand usage of TMF Places to Boat and Fish Map widget to additional industry websites; evolve map features and offerings • Work with industry to expand efforts to create a one-stop resource for beginning anglers/boaters in a retail environment (e.g., merchandise centers similar to SouthBend/Walmart end caps) • Create task force of industry stakeholder representatives to help develop industry priorities • Explore new industry partnership opportunities to grow category

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

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

- Overall industry stakeholder satisfaction
- Discover Boating referrals
- Increase industry partnerships

APPENDIX:

Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council

RBFF "Measures of Success" Team

FINAL SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES/GOALS/MEASURES (Updated July 20, 2012)

*NOTE – These measures were developed by the SFBPC in 2012, and are being re-evaluated in 2015 as a result of the Programmatic Assessment for RBFF's FY2010-2012. RBFF anticipates receiving new measures in FY2016-2017.

OBJECTIVE 1: Increased participation in recreational angling & boating

Suggested Measures

1. Increase fishing license sales as reported by the FWS in 2015 by 5% over 2010 levels and in 2020 by 10% over 2010 levels.
2. Increase boat registrations as reported by the USCG in 2020 by 5% over 2010 levels.

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.

Suggested Measures

1. Increase unique visitors and return visitors to TMF digital assets (i.e. web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 3,399,941 and 911,709, respectively.
2. Increase unique page views to the 'where to' pages of the TMF digital assets by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 1,442,105 and 'how to' pages of TMF digital assets by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 2,177,110.
3. Increase referrals from TMF digital assets (i.e. web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to state fishing license purchase pages by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 853,313.
4. Increase referrals from TMF digital assets (i.e. web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to state boat registration pages by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 2,861.
5. Increase referrals from TMF digital assets (i.e. web, mobile, apps and future digital assets) to DiscoverBoating.com by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 12,004.
6. RBFF will conduct an annual survey of people who have contact with Take Me Fishing consumer outreach efforts (e.g. Take Me Fishing advertising and marketing campaign) to determine if contact with these efforts influences a person's behavior to boat or fish.

Note: As states develop capability to track referrals to resultant sales and provide this data back to RBFF, the measure should change to measure sales as a result of referrals from TMF digital assets. RBFF and States should work aggressively toward this.

Goal 2: Collaborate with State agencies, industry and stakeholders in developing and implementing marketing and outreach strategies to recruit and retain boaters and anglers as described in the National Outreach & Communications Program.

Suggested Measures

1. Engage all 50 states in an annual marketing improvement enhancement effort produced by RBFF designed to upgrade the marketing skills and tools of state agencies responsible for fishing and boating.
2. Demonstrate improving stakeholder satisfaction annually through a consistent satisfaction survey of stakeholder groups that is executed by an independent third party.

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

Suggested 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.
2. The non-Federal dollars raised as part of #1 must be at least \$1.5 million in total for FY 2011 to FY 2013 combined.

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.

Suggested Measures

1. Increase total visitors to TMF Conservation Pages by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 32,058.
2. Increase conservation and responsible use message delivery in earned PR articles and impressions of delivered messages by 10% annually over the FY 2012 baseline.

Goal 2: Promote safe fishing and boating practices.

Suggested Measures

1. Increase page views to the boating and fishing safety pages by 10% annually from the FY 2011 baseline of 25,939.

Goal 3: RBFF's communications will improve the public's understanding of the contribution of recreational angling and boating to the conservation of aquatic resources.

Suggested Measures

1. Use of SFR logo on all RBFF printed and digital materials.

RBFF Future 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.

Continued focus on R3: Recruitment, Retention, Reactivation

1 RECRUITMENT

Increase participation by introducing new audiences to the sport through the development and implementation of an enhanced national marketing and communications campaign designed to increase awareness of fishing and boating, dispel negative stereotypes, encourage consideration, trial and ultimately participation.

With the goal of recruiting 5.0 million new participants annually by 2020.

2 RETENTION/REACTIVATION

Working in collaboration with AFWA, State Agencies and AREA develop, test and implement retention and reactivation programs designed to improve retention rates by providing regular and ongoing communications with existing participants.

With the goal of improving retention rates by 50%, roughly 2.5 million participants annually, by 2020.

New Ideas

3 LEARNING CENTERS

Working in collaboration with State, Federal Agencies, Industry and NGO's, develop and implement multiple Learning Centers in major metropolitan areas across the country. These centers will provide hands-on opportunities for new participants to learn fishing and boating skills along with a conservation ethic. Just as organized youth sports foster participation, these centers would create the "place" for newcomers to learn and develop their fishing and boating skills.

With the goal of implementing the concept in two locations by 2018.

4 STANDARDIZED LICENSE SYSTEM

Working in collaboration with AFWA, provide consumer insights and technical consulting into the development and implementation of a standardized 50 state license system that conforms to best retail practices, utilizes the latest Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tools and provides all participants with an improved customer buying experience.

With the goal of testing the new system in two states by 2020 and achieving a 25% increase in conversion rates from all traffic sources.

5 MERCHANDISE CENTERS

Working with industry retailers and manufactures develop and implement merchandise centers that provide introductory to novice equipment and simple instructions to improve the customer's on-the-water experience. Manufacturers and retailers would work together to provide customer service training to retail staff and work closely with state agencies to promote license sales.

Goal would be to test this concept at a retail location by 2017.