



NORTH CASCADES INSTITUTE

2013 – 2016 STRATEGIC PLAN

Revised and approved by the Board of Directors (9/19/14)

MISSION

→ Our mission is to conserve and restore Northwest environments through education!

WE BELIEVE

1. Powerful, place-based learning experiences inspire environmental and community stewardship.
2. Hands-on learning about the environment begins in childhood and continues throughout life.
3. Intimate, informed contact with the natural world helps people lead healthy, well-balanced lives.
4. Fun is an essential part of learning, engagement and health.

CORE THEMES

1. We teach at the convergence of natural and cultural history, science, humanities and the arts.
2. We value the importance of public lands for education, recreation and renewal.
3. We inspire and support broad participation in informed civic engagement.
4. We commit to quality education, effective community engagement, sound business practices and a clear sense of purpose.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Increase impact of Institute programs by reaching a larger and broader audience. Inspire participants to make changes in their lives that positively affect their environment and communities.

1. Identify program priorities, including maintenance, contraction or expansion of current programs and inauguration of new programs.
2. Set and meet enrollment goals in all programs.
3. Grow and diversify the graduate program to create a richer graduate experience, support program and partner services, and increase earned income.
4. Emphasize diversity as a cornerstone of the Institute's culture, work and partnering relationships.
5. Expand Citizen Science and Stewardship programs by reaching out to new partners and increasing the number of opportunities offered.
6. Use technology to expand the reach of Institute programs and encourage public participation.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Engage more young people in Institute programs that emphasize leadership and adventure. Mentor youth and help them find opportunities for further personal, professional and academic growth.

1. Expand programs that support the value of multiple experiences that lead to informed and engaged citizens, community leaders and environmental stewards.
2. Increase regional, multi-day programs for elementary, middle and high school youth on public lands.
3. Offer programs that provide credit for high school students needing to meet graduation requirements.

4. Provide workforce development (training, internships, apprenticeships, employment) opportunities for 16- to 24-year-olds at the Institute and partner organizations.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Develop measurable health and wellness goals for selected Institute programs. Increase participants' awareness of the health and wellness benefits and strengthen outdoor recreation and fitness components of Institute programs. Use health and wellness as a tool to attract and retain audiences.

1. Promote active, healthy, outdoor lifestyles in all Institute programs.
2. Encourage ongoing participation in outdoor recreation and adventure programs with partners such as school districts and youth organizations.
3. Grow and increase visibility of the Institute's Foodshed Program and emphasize the broad benefits of using local, sustainable, organic, and high quality foods.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: Strengthen the Institute's regional impact and visibility while growing its national reputation and influence. Share the Institute's programs and practices with other organizations within the region and around the country.

1. Share and promote the Institute's best practices and successful partnership model for working with partners at the regional and national level.
2. Contribute to conferences, collaborations and partnerships that bring attention to, and greater use of, the Institute's programs and practices.
3. Pursue and evaluate the benefits of national collaboration and consulting opportunities.

STRATEGIC GOAL 5: Strengthen organizational capacity. Secure the Institute's ability to respond to challenge and opportunity while achieving sustainable growth and stability in programs and operations. Assess future needs and Institute-wide systems.

1. **DEVELOPMENT** – Assure the Institute's ability to achieve its mission, maintain existing programs, and undertake strategic new programs. Identify and secure additional sources of revenue. Strengthen relationships with current donors and funders and increase board cultivation of major donors and corporations.
2. **ADMINISTRATION AND TECHNOLOGY** – Support the Institute's ability to achieve its mission through strong administrative practices, excellent customer service and staffing that meets our customers' expectations. Improve evaluation, fundraising and marketing capacity through improvements in database integration and website functionality.
3. **EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT** – Improve evaluation and assessment in order to track participant and donor trends and measure, synthesize and communicate program and organizational outcomes.
4. **HOUSING** – Develop and implement a plan to meet current and future housing needs for staff, graduate students and program participants to enable sustainable program growth and stability.