



New Mexico Rural Water Association Strategic Plan

Mission Statement

The mission of the New Mexico Rural Water Association is to provide the highest quality training and technical assistance to rural water and wastewater utilities throughout New Mexico, and to represent the legislative and regulatory interests of our members.

Vision Statement

The vision of the New Mexico Rural Water Association is to be the recognized leader of water and wastewater utilities with emphasis on rural and small systems in New Mexico.



Goals and Strategies with Tasks

The following goals and strategies were identified as of major importance to the continued growth and prosperity of New Mexico Rural Water Association, and its ability to better serve membership. No order of importance or priority should be inferred.

Goal: Leadership

Description: Improve executive board, full board, staff, membership, and other leadership across New Mexico.

Strategy: Orientation of new board members

- Hold an orientation class for new board members at the Annual Conference
- Develop a NMRWA Board Member manual
- Perform new board member training in-house
- Move this policy into the board policy manual

Strategy: Develop a board policy manual

- Begin compiling the manual by collecting existing policies in board minutes

Strategy: Review and revise personnel policies

- Ongoing effort by the Executive Director

Strategy: Recognize leadership achievement through certification or other means

- Recognize achievement through press releases and *Agua de Nuevo Mexico*
- Provide NMRWA certificates for completion of leadership / board training
- Establish criteria for number of hours and topics to receive certification

Strategy: Encourage New Mexico Rural Water Association Board of Directors to attend National Rural Water Association and other board training

- Continue to send directors to NRWA Annual Conference
- Compile this into board policy manual

Strategy: Involve staff in what is going on with rural water

- Board and staff need to work together on membership efforts
- Regular contact with board members in each region – keep 2-way communication
- Provide updates to staff through Executive Director – on what is going on with Board of Directors
- Ensure that there are well-developed positions on issues important to Rural Water

Strategy: Encourage NMRWA board members to participate in the activities of the organization

- Support regional meetings by the Board of Directors
- Better outreach and educational materials to Board of Directors
- Quarterly regional conference calls
- Provide regional board member contact information to prospective and new members & track contacts

Strategy: Develop system board certification processes and work toward legislative requirements for board member certification

- Provide NMRWA certificates for completion of leadership / board training
- Consider further action through the Legislative Committee
- Create regular column in newsletter – board corner

Goal: Financial Stability

Description: Attain financial growth, stability and accountability.

Strategy: Create a reserve fund to achieve a minimum of nine months of operational costs

- Set aside a certain percentage per year to grow the reserve fund
- Apply for operational expense grants (through 501(c)3?)
- Consider establishing several reserve funds: lag, capital expenditures

Strategy: Continue to generate funding to sustain the Association

- Executive Director should document these activities

Strategy: Develop a written financial policy

- Utilize NRWA and other State Association material to create and adopt a financial policy for the Association

Strategy: Maintain effective cost control, utilization and stability of resources

- Completed through financial policy, personnel policies, and internal management
- Maintain stability of resources through lobbying efforts and relationships with funding sources
- Place this strategy in Executive Director's job description & in board policy manual

Strategy: Develop new programs and find sponsors, write and obtain grants

- Ongoing efforts by Executive Director and Association staff

Strategy: Continue to support National Rural Water Association's efforts to obtain federal funding

- Continue to participate in the NRWA Fly-in and Water Rally
- Develop better promotional materials for Congressional visits
- Continue to develop relationships with Congress & staff
- Develop better communication and coordination among board and executive director in legislative efforts
- Host public meetings and events for legislators
- Continue to utilize the PAC in legislative efforts

Strategy: Nurture relationships with existing sponsors

- Provide Board Members with outreach materials and information about Association events
- Promote conference and other event sponsorship
- Recognize sponsors
- Provide associate member information on website

Strategy: Annually review Strategic Plan

- Review and update plan at the Mini-Conference
- Appoint a custodian for the Strategic Plan

Strategy: Implement fee-based programs

- Research and design specific fee-based services
- Budget for fee-based service staff
- Develop a culture where members pay for services
- Consider implementing certified operator services, facilitation, rate setting services, engineering RFP, construction inspection services, and contracted auditing services for projects
- Raise cost for non-member registration at annual conference

Strategy: Finalize 501(c) 3 or create for-profit subsidiary

- Consider appointing a committee responsible for obtaining the IRS determination letter

Goal: Membership

Description: Promote and develop the membership base of the Association.

Strategy: Provide and promote training materials and meetings

- Continue to utilize direct mailing, *Agua de Nuevo Mexico*, press releases and website

Strategy: Retain existing membership

- Produce a report on membership retention
- Promote benefits of Association membership
- Utilize staff to visit non-renewed memberships - within 60 days of non-renewal
- Nurture relationships with existing members
- Track changes of administration in systems and provide promotional information to newly appointed administrators – board of directors
- Ensure that program staff visit with managers and board members (not just operators) whenever possible

Strategy: Increase voting membership by 20% by 2005 summer board meeting

- Design and implement a membership campaign
- Offer membership to all eligible water systems

Strategy: Increase number of all paid memberships to 600 by 2005 summer board meeting

- Design and implement a membership campaign
- Offer membership to all eligible water systems

Strategy: Recognize associate members

- Continue to solicit feedback from associate members at the Annual Conference
- Promote associate member services on the website and in *Agua de Nuevo Mexico*

Strategy: Review membership dues annually

- Consider appointing a committee to establish a new dues structure with annual increases

Strategy: Develop a policy by 2004 annual conference on how the membership can present and process issues through New Mexico Rural Water Association

- Learn from Sanitary Projects Act facilitated meetings
- Work through the Legislative Committee to develop a policy

Strategy: Review bylaws regarding associate membership representation on the Board of Directors

- Work this strategy through the Bylaws Committee, if desired

Strategy: Increase attendance at annual conference; increase representation of voting delegates at annual meeting

- Increase promotion and outreach to membership regarding the importance of the membership meeting utilizing staff & Board
- Make the membership meeting friendly and welcoming to new delegates
- Utilize staff and Board to personally invite new systems via phone

Goal: Legislative

Description: Represent the legislative and regulatory interests of our members.

Strategy: Assist in scientific and technical implementation of drinking water regulations

- Provide educational materials to Board regarding regulatory issues
- Continue to establish relationships with NMED and EPA
- Provide written comments for new drinking water regulations
- Provide representation on taskforces and workgroups
- Seek funding and support for technical assistance and training programs for implementation of drinking water regulations

Strategy: Serve as ONE voice on rural water and wastewater issues

- Support Board member training and encourage Directors to abide by decisions of the organization

Strategy: Raise Political Action Committee funding at a rate of 10% annual increase

- Support fundraising through the Political Action Committee
- Implement fundraising events such as a PAC breakfast or lunch, golf tournament, and raffles
- Promote PAC contributions to State and Federal legislators

Strategy: Determine annual legislative and regulatory priorities and execute them; develop partnerships to achieve same

- Continue to involve membership through the legislative committee
- Set a goal to create and pass a piece of State legislation identified as “Rural Water”

Strategy: Build positive relationships with legislators

- Educate Board of Directors on effective ways to interact with their representatives
- Promote system projects and special events in coordination with local representatives
- Utilize the legislative committee and the PAC to develop relationships

Strategy: Get onto legislative calendar each year

- Continue to work through the Water and Natural Resources Interim Committee and the Legislative Finance Council

Strategy: Develop a method of lobbying to reflect a unified New Mexico Rural Water Association voice

- Continue to involve membership through the legislative committee
- Develop a weekly legislative report to be distributed to members through email

Strategy: Monitor and attend interim legislative committee meetings

- Continue to work through the Water and Natural Resources Interim Committee and other relevant committees

Goal: Communications and Teamwork

Description: Effective methodology to maintain staff, member, legislative, regulatory and community relationships.

Strategy: Continue to enhance available technology in communications

- Conduct Association meetings through teleconferencing where appropriate
- Promote increased communication through email and via the website, providing where appropriate

Strategy: Develop a procedure to improve interface between executive committee and full board in implementing and executing policy

- Increase involvement of full board and membership through regional meetings
- Increase communication to full board through monthly reports via email
- Continue to post meeting agendas and minutes on the website

Strategy: Develop quality assurance program

- Mail surveys to members receiving Association services with addressed stamped envelopes
- Maintain quality of member data through policy

Strategy: Strengthen relationships with regulatory agencies

- Continue to work with State and Federal agencies

Strategy: Create mechanism to measure progress on implementation of strategic plan

- Assign responsibility of measuring progress of Strategic Plan to appointed custodian
- Report on progress regularly at Association meetings

Strategy: Build teamwork

Goal: Public Relations and Marketing

Description: Create a positive image and name recognition.

Strategy: Develop a public relations plan utilizing available media sources for distribution

- Continue to promote the Association via *Agua de Nuevo Mexico*, press releases, and the website
- Develop a public relations plan for adoption by the Board of Directors

Strategy: Create vendor recognition

- Continue to create recognition through design

Strategy: Publicize Association and member achievements

- Continue to publicize achievements via *Agua de Nuevo Mexico*, press releases, and the website

Strategy: Develop new promotional brochures / materials

- Develop a new promotional brochure
- Develop a promotional CD for distribute to new/existing members

Strategy: Encourage staff to participate in and spearhead public events, school functions, water fairs and water education

- Continue to participate in public events

Strategy: Enhance communications at all levels of membership and Board to maximize the public's confidence in New Mexico Rural Water Association