



2020-2024
Strategic Plan

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Letter from the Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee

On behalf of the Executive Board of Tri-Moraine Audubon Society, it is my honor to introduce the strategic planning document that is enclosed in the following pages.

This plan is the culmination of many discussions among the board, members, and the Strategic Planning Committee. We started with an activity that engaged all attendees at the March 2020 program meeting of Tri-Moraine Audubon Society and guests. Attendees were asked to discuss Tri-Moraine's strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats in small groups. The ideas were collected, and discussed in the Strategic Planning Committee and meetings of the Executive Board.

The focus of the current strategic plan is to build upon our strengths, and to offer new opportunities by fostering the development of member-driven collaboration. In so doing, we hope to reduce the barriers to active participation, and to engage new members by providing tools and support in pursuit of their interests. Additionally, this plan describes a process to review internal procedures to ensure that Tri-Moraine is a good steward of the financial resources entrusted to us. Together, these initiatives preserve the prosperity of Tri-Moraine through financial and volunteer support. We believe that a strong Tri-Moraine Audubon Society will be able to help birds and the habitats they need through conservation and environmental education.

The strategic plan describes our mission and vision, strategies, and goals with detailed metrics necessary to gauge Tri-Moraine's success. Tri-Moraine Audubon Society hopes this plan is approved by the majority of members present electronically at the September 2020 meeting, and will govern activities to be completed by June 2024.

Thank you for your interest and support of Tri-Moraine Audubon Society.

Sincerely,

Jackie Augustine
Chair of Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee
Tri-Moraine Audubon Society

Mission, Vision, and Values

Vision

Be the leader in west-central Ohio in promoting conservation and environmental education.

Mission

The mission of Tri-Moraine Audubon Society is to promote the conservation and restoration of ecosystems, while focusing on the enjoyment of birds and the natural environment through fellowship, education, and stewardship for the benefit of our future generations.

Values

Tri-Moraine Audubon Society is the voice of wildlife and wildlands in west-central Ohio.

Tri-Moraine works to educate people about natural resources, and inspire them to take action to protect wild places.

Tri-Moraine believes conservation is not only good for the wildlife that inhabit them, but that wild lands are good for human well-being.

Slogan

Tri-Moraine connects people with nature

Organizational History and Profile

History

Tri-Moraine Audubon Society was organized as a chartered chapter of the National Audubon Society beginning in June 1977.

In 1984, Tri-Moraine Audubon Society starting offering an annual Environmental Education Weekend for adults and children.

In May 2014, Myeerah Nature Preserve in Logan County was dedicated.

Profile

Tri-Moraine Audubon Society is a chapter in good standing of the National Audubon Society and covers eight Ohio counties of Allen, Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Logan, Mercer, Shelby, and Van Wert. Tri-Moraine is comprised of a board of 10 trustees (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, serving 2-year terms; and 6 members at large serving on staggered 3-year terms).

Our mission is “to promote the conservation and restoration of ecosystems, while focusing on the enjoyment of birds and the natural environment through fellowship, education, and stewardship for future generations.” We fulfill the conservation mission through targeted efforts throughout our 8-county area. We have planted trees at Killdeer Plains and annually coordinate two counts for the National Audubon Society’s Christmas Bird Count. Tri-Moraine worked with The Trust for Public Land to obtain funding from the Ohio Public Work’s Commission’s Clean Ohio Fund to purchase the 443-acre Myeerah Nature Preserve and transfer the title to The City of Bellefontaine. The Society holds a conservation easement on the property. The Bellefontaine Joint Recreation District oversees daily operations. A special management group consisting of both Tri-Moraine members and representatives from Bellefontaine is responsible for long-range planning and oversight to protect habitat and resources of the property.

We fulfill our environmental education mission through programs, field trips, and student outreach. Field trips have ranged from Lawrence Woods State Nature Preserve and the Van Wert Recycling Center to the Wilds and Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area. The chapter has offered an annual Environmental Education Weekend for adults and children starting in 1984 has partnered with teachers and others to reach over 37,000 children using National Audubon’s Audubon Adventures program. Topics include

“Ohio Owls”, “Planting for Wildlife”, “River Otters & Peregrine Falcons”, “Camping and Birding in New Zealand”, and many others. Tri-Moraine ran a monthly recycling program in Lima for over a decade to encourage community recycling, and was instrumental in the formation of the West Central Ohio Land Conservancy.

Tri-Moraine has been successful in raising funds for these conservation and education projects. We have donated over \$6000 to create wetlands to filter runoff before it enters Grand Lake St. Marys. Funding for conservation projects is acquired through our annual appeal, bird seed and recycling fundraisers, and funded grants.

We invite you to keep updated about programs and activities via the chapter’s newsletter (available on the website), website (www.tri-moraineaudubon.org), Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/TriMoraine/>), and Twitter (@TriMoraine). Help us continue to carry out our mission of conservation and education by sending donations to Tri-Moraine Audubon Society, P.O. Box 5648, Lima, OH 45802

Overview of Core Strategies

This overview describes the reasoning and vision for Tri-Moraine's core strategies.

1. Support Environmental Education and Conservation Initiatives

- A. Tri-Moraine currently has many successful activities that focus on environmental education. For adults, we provide monthly programs from September through May. For children and families, we offer field trips to unique habitats, Audubon Adventures to classrooms and libraries, and our Environmental Education weekend and Family Fun Night which bring families together to learn about the environment. We want to make sure these activities have continued success and support.
- B. Environmental Education is at the core of Tri-Moraine's mission and vision. However, we could do more to bring nature appreciation to all ages throughout our entire region. We will gather together those leaders within Tri-Moraine that are organizing these environmental education efforts, and invite more people to get involved. Environmental education could include expanding our current initiatives, organizing a speakers bureau (list of presentations and speakers that can give presentations to nursing homes, schools, or other organizations), developing programming for scout groups or schools, or contributing to environmental education efforts of partner agencies. This group will brainstorm what additional environmental education opportunities are possible, identify resources and collaborators that could be utilized, and make a plan to accomplish their initiative. We call this group 'Tri-Moraine's Environmental Educators'. We believe that by forming a community of volunteers eager to contribute to environmental education, we will have a greater likelihood of success and make a bigger impact in our community than we would if we had just supported individual efforts.
- C. Along with environmental education, conservation is another priority of Tri-Moraine. By conservation, we mean anything that contributes to the health of ecosystems in our area. Conservation may include advocating for environmental issues, fund-raising for habitat conservation and restoration, or collaborating with outside groups to increase our conservation impact. Another group of volunteers will be gathered and undergo a similar process as the environmental educators: brainstorm what conservation opportunities are possible, identify resources and collaborators that could be utilized, and make a plan to accomplish their initiative. We call this group 'Conservation Warriors.' Again, the focus will be building a community of volunteers dedicated to

conservation, and let the group decide what projects would make the biggest impact and be the most rewarding.

2. **Extend our reach to new populations**

The Tri-Moraine Audubon Society believes that our values apply to all members of our community. Because we remain largely unknown in the counties we serve, we need to reach out to make our organization more visible. In order to reach a broad spectrum of community members, we will have to engage in a variety of advertising strategies. If people respond to our advertisements, we need to actively encourage those who participate to become members.

Additionally, we need to expand our accessibility to reach members throughout our broad geographic range, and to provide opportunities for engagement in spite of inclement weather, physical limitations, or other barriers.

3. **Review Tri-Moraine's operations and plan for the future**

Tri-Moraine Audubon is viewed as a long-established chapter that has committed and knowledgeable leadership. However, organizations cannot expect to grow in size or impact if they do not regularly evaluate their goals, align resources to meet those goals, and prepare for future needs. Tri-Moraine is taking a big step in creating this strategic plan, but other operational documents and strategies should be evaluated to assure that they are aligned with our mission and vision.

Succession planning is also needed to make sure Tri-Moraine continues to have leaders ready to meet future challenges. We already have good leadership, and we will utilize our advertising campaign to recruit new volunteers. These volunteers will not only be vital for enacting Tri-Moraine's environmental education and conservation initiatives, but also provide a pool of future leaders. However, leaders do not become leaders without mentorship and training, and current leaders can always learn new ways to do things. Tri-Moraine needs to support leadership development by leveraging National Audubon Society's resources to provide leadership training opportunities for future leaders.

Goals

These aspirational goals provide the standard to determine if Tri-Moraine is successful in enacting their 3-year strategic plan, but they are meant to be evaluated yearly to determine if Tri-Moraine is on-track.

1. Support Environmental Education and Conservation Initiatives

- a. Continuing and improving Tri-Moraine’s core Activities
 - i. Maintain program meeting/Family Fun Night success
 - ii. 5% increase in participation with Audubon Adventures
 - iii. 10% increase in participation with Environmental Education Weekend
 - iv. 10% increase in field trip attendance
 - v. Document number of attendees at events
- b. Environmental Education
 - i. Develop “Environmental Educators” committee consisting of at least 5 members
 - ii. Committee would meet at least every other month
 - iii. Committee would have accomplished at least two activities per year after the first year
 - iv. One larger event planned during the 3-year period
- c. Conservation Warriors
 - i. Develop “Conservation Warriors” committee consisting of at least 5 members
 - ii. Committee would meet at least every other month
 - iii. Committee would have accomplished at least two events per year after the first year
 - iv. One larger event planned during the 3-year period

2. Extend our reach to new populations

- a. Marketing
 - i. How
 1. Social Media
 - a. Recruit Social Media Manager
 - b. 5% more ‘likes’ on Facebook page
 - c. Establish ‘Group Me’ or other text-based communication
 2. Television
 - a. Run 30 second ad
 3. Recruit Publicity Person
 - a. Submit Press Releases to television/newspaper on a more regular basis
 - b. Submit free community calendar notices
 4. Radio
 - a. Run Public Radio announcement
 5. Newsletter

- 6. Tabling Events
 - ii. What
 - 1. Core strengths
 - 2. New Initiatives
 - 3. We can advertise the benefits of being part of our organization.
 - 4. Benefits to the local environment.
 - b. Accessibility
 - i. Incorporating online initiatives – live streaming programs & field trips
 - ii. Developing a speakers bureau to offer programs in other counties
 - c. Update materials
 - i. Review and revise our membership form and brochures
 - ii. New 'Tabling' displays
 - d. Connect with new members
 - i. Get emails/phone numbers from visitors to programs, field trips, and tabling events
- 3. **Review Tri-Moraine's operations and plan for the future**
 - a. Review and revise our constitution and bylaws
 - b. Align budget with mission
 - c. Evaluate the best way to invest the funds we have
 - d. Review our relationship with Bellefontaine/Myerah with regard to budget and oversight
 - e. Develop job descriptions to facilitate transitions and to provide realistic time commitment expectations for new volunteers
 - f. Send 2-3 people to regional meetings of Great Lakes Audubon
 - g. Send 1-2 people to national meetings of National Audubon
 - h. Have one informal leadership retreat or social each year