



NYSFOLA Strategic Plan Framework

Objective 1: Advocacy & Public Policy

NYSFOLA will strengthen its influence on state and local policies related to water quality, lake management, and environmental conservation. Immediate actions include reactivating the Advocacy Committee and developing a Science Advisory Committee. NYSFOLA will also engage with policymakers through strategic outreach and maintain a comprehensive database of relevant legislative initiatives. Over time, the organization will publish white papers and prepare for lobbying efforts when necessary.

Responsible Person/ Party: Executive Committee, Executive Director, Advisory Committee, Advocacy Committee, Advocacy Chair, Conference Committee, Regional Committee, CSLAP Coordinator, Members

Goals

1	Identify & Prioritize Key Advocacy Areas	2	Engage Policymakers & Community Leaders	3	Develop & Implement Public Policy Initiatives
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Action Items

1.	Reactivate the NYSFOLA Advocacy Committee	1.	Develop representative list of state and local representatives across watershed regions	1.	Publish White Papers/Letters of Support: Collaborate with the Science Advisory Committee to develop policy documents on key legislative actions, using CSLAP results to inform advocacy and action
2.	Form a Science Advisory Committee	2.	Review Legislative Committees: Analyze state and federal legislative committees for relevancy, targeting environmental committees		
3.	Communicate Legislative Updates and Publicize New Regulations			2.	Activate FOLA 501(c)4 Lobbying Arm
4.	Use CSLAP data to inform advocacy and action	3.	Engage Representatives		

Objective 2: Organizational Sustainability: Revenue, Finances & Administration

Financial sustainability is a key priority. The Finance Committee will guide the development of a sustainability plan focused on long-term financial health. NYSFOLA will diversify revenue streams through enhanced fundraising, increased member services, and additional grant opportunities. A comprehensive staffing plan will support these efforts while identifying cost-reduction strategies for operational efficiency.

Responsible Person/ Party: Board of Directors, Executive Director, Treasurer, Executive Committee, Finance Committee, Investment Committee, Fundraising & Membership Committee, Benefits & Compensation Committee, Conference Committee, CSLAP Coordinator

Goals

1	Ensure Long-Term Financial Health	2	Enhance Human Capital and Streamline Operations	3	Diversify Revenue Streams
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Action Items

1.	Develop Sustainability Plan	2.2.1	Develop Staffing Plan: Ensure that staffing needs are aligned with organizational goals	2.3.1	Enhance the Fundraising & Membership Committee: Expand the current committee with experienced members
2.	Create Annual Budget & Financial Policies	2.2.2	Align Programming with Goals: Ensure NYSFOLA programming aligns with organizational goals and priorities.	2.3.2	Create and Implement a Fundraising Plan: Develop a fundraising strategy to broaden donor scope and create new revenue streams
3.	Ensure Regular Financial Reporting	3.	Implement Operational Efficiencies: May include efficiencies for membership and donor recordkeeping, bookkeeping, emailing, newsletter enhancements, and other outreach needs	2.3.3	Maximize CSLAP Funding: Utilize CSLAP programming for staffing, outreach, education, and overhead support
4.	Secure Board Donations	4.	Implement Records Retention & Backup Plans: Establish comprehensive plans for records retention and computer backups		
5.	Pursue CSLAP Outreach Funding				
6.	Monitor the availability and eligibility of grant opportunities for NYSFOLA				
7.	Provide public transparency and accountability				

Objective 3: Membership Services

To attract and retain members, NYSFOLA will create a new value proposition, expanding membership categories to target younger populations and retirees. The organization will also focus on professional development through Continuing Education Credits and promoting participation in CSLAP. Support will be strengthened by reactivating the Grant Committee and considering hiring a grant-writing consultant. Future efforts include expanding online resources and offering webinars on key issues based on member feedback.

Responsible Person/ Party: Board of Directors, Executive Director, Executive Committee, Fundraising & Membership Committee, Conference Committee, Gift & Scholarship Committee, Grant Committee, Science Advisory Committee, Membership Services Committee, CSLAP Coordinator

Goals					
1	Develop New Value Proposition	2	Support NYSFOLA Members with Grant Opportunities	3	Provide Technical and Organizational Support to Members
Action Items					
3.1.1	Assess Membership Levels & Benefits: Develop new membership levels targeting younger generations and retirees. Increase awareness of membership benefits	3.2.1	Reestablish Grants Committee to evaluate opportunities	3.3.1	Develop Resource Database
3.1.2	Recruit Early-Career Professionals: Encourage early-career professionals to join by offering Continuing Education Credits and other career supports	3.2.2	Collect and disseminate list of available grants	3.3.2	Enhance Professional Development: Offer ongoing training for staff to improve their ability to respond to member inquiries
3.1.3	Foster CSLAP participation by making it more useful and accessible	3.2.3	Provide technical support for grant applications	3.3.3	Develop Indexed Online Resources: Provide scientific information on key lake issues in an easily accessible format
4	Create Online Resources	5	Increase Professional Memberships	6	Community Engagement to Enhance Support for Members in Their Communities
Action Items					
3.4.1	Offer Webinars: Host webinars on commonly requested items and emerging concerns	3.5.1	Collaborate with Affiliates: Work with affiliates to share activities and provide technical assistance	3.6.1	Increase Regional Presence: Participate in municipal and conservation group events across regions

Objective 4: Partnerships & Collaboration

NYSFOLA will build strategic partnerships with academic institutions and conservation groups. Collaborations with organizations such as the NYS Water Resources Institute and The Nature Conservancy will enhance research efforts and disseminate findings to members. NYSFOLA will also seek new partnerships both within and outside New York State, aiming for involvement with organizations like the North American Lake Management Society.

Responsible Person/ Party: Executive Director, Science Advisory Board, CSLAP Coordinator, CSLAP Committee

Goals

1	Collaborate with Academic, NGO Water Quality, and Conservation Groups Statewide to Address Lake Needs and Opportunities	2	Identify and Develop New Partnerships with Key Stakeholders, Locally, Regionally, and Possibly Outside the New York State Area
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Action Items

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify key partners 2. Assess lake needs 4.1.3 Develop Collaboration Strategies: Align NYSFOLA efforts with those of partner organizations to maximize impact and avoid duplication of work 4.1.4 Develop Information Sharing System: Create a system for sharing resources, best practices, and updates among partner organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.2.1 Engage with the North American Lake Management Society (NALMS): Identify ways to play a more active role in NALMS (e.g., membership, attending events) |
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Objective 5: Marketing & Branding

NYSFOLA will launch a rebranding initiative, including the creation of a new logo and updated mission, vision, and values statements. A marketing campaign will be implemented to promote the rebranding, supported by press conferences and digital materials. The organization will also enhance its digital presence through a digital marketing plan, website improvements, and expanded social media outreach to engage a broader audience.

Responsible Person/ Party: Executive Director, Strategic Planning Committee, Membership Services Committee

Goals

1

Undertake a Rebranding Initiative to Modernize NYSFOLA's Image and Improve Public Awareness of the Organization's Mission and Vision

Action Items

- 5.1.1 Conduct a Brand Audit: Assess the perception of NYSFOLA among stakeholders to understand the current brand image
- 5.1.2 Define Brand Identity: Clearly define the organization's brand identity and personality
- 5.1.3 Develop Digital Marketing Plan: Create a comprehensive plan for digital marketing that includes social media strategies and website updates
- 5.1.4 Enhance Online Presence: Update the website and increase activity on social media platforms
- 5.1.5 Launch Marketing Campaign: Initiate a marketing campaign aimed at increasing awareness, outreach, and fostering new collaborations



NYSFOLA Strategic Plan Report

This document outlines the strategic planning process and key priorities for the New York State Federation of Lake Associations (NYSFOLA). The following sections provide a comprehensive overview of the planning approach, key activities, and outcomes:

Table of Contents:

1. **Strategic Planning Process Overview:** An introduction to the strategic planning process, facilitated by LCP Consulting, and the collaboration between NYSFOLA's committee and consultants. The section below details the steps taken to develop the strategic plan, including initial discussions, mission review, research, SWOT analysis, stakeholder engagement, and survey development.
2. **Outcomes of the Strategic Planning Process:** Highlights the results of the process, including a highly engaged committee, enhanced communication, adaptability, and actionable initiatives.
3. **Mission, Vision, and Values:** Outlines NYSFOLA's revised mission, vision, and values, reflecting the organization's goals and commitment to lake preservation and advocacy.
4. **Key Priorities in the Strategic Plan:** Describes the main focus areas for the organization, including advocacy, financial sustainability, membership services, partnerships, and marketing efforts.
5. **Strategic Plan Outline:** Clearly outlines objectives, goals, and action items
6. **Strategic Plan Template with Action Items:** Defines the objectives, action items, and responsible party for each. This template will be used to track the success of the strategic initiatives and measure progress over time. It is also appropriate to share with audiences that require a mid-level summary of the plan. (Appendix I)
7. **Detailed Implementation Plan with KPIs:** Defines the objectives, action items, key performance indicators, responsible party, and timeframes that will be used to track the success of the strategic initiatives and measure detailed progress over time. (Appendix II)

Strategic Planning Process Overview

LCP Consulting, led by Kate Budlong and assisted by Karen Macier, guided NYSFOLA through a comprehensive and collaborative strategic planning process. The goal was to ensure that the NYSFOLA strategic planning committee played a leadership role in shaping the future of the organization while receiving expert guidance from the consultants. This dual approach leveraged the strengths of both the committee and the consultants, resulting in a robust and actionable strategic plan for the upcoming years.

Key Components of the Process

1. **Initial Discussions and Alignment:** The planning process began with a discussion on desired outcomes, timeframes, and key dates, which helped set a shared understanding of goals and expectations for the plan's development.
2. **Review and Development of Updated Mission and Vision:** A review of the organization's mission and vision was conducted, leading to proposed new mission, vision, and values statements to better reflect the evolving needs of the organization and its members.
3. **Research and Analysis:**
A key initial step was to research sector trends and review strategies and strategic plans of similar organizations. This research helped identify best practices and emerging trends in lake conservation and advocacy, providing valuable context for NYSFOLA's future direction. Additionally, the strategic planning committee reviewed data and survey results from past conference surveys to assess current challenges and opportunities.
4. **SWOT Analysis:**
SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analyses of NYSFOLA were developed and reviewed to assist in the identification of internal capabilities and external factors affecting the organization. This analysis helped clarify the organization's current positioning and highlighted areas for improvement and growth.
5. **Collaborative Process and Committee Engagement:** The strategic planning committee played an active role in the process, providing feedback and additional information when necessary, helping to refine goals and ensure the process stayed on track.
6. **Development of the Strategic Planning Survey:** A planning survey was distributed to a broad range of stakeholders, including NYSFOLA members, board members, volunteers, and partners. The survey provided key insights into the major themes and priority areas for the strategic plan.
7. **Development of the Strategic Plan:** The strategic planning committee and consultants met to develop the strategic plan collectively and separately. After the last meeting of all members, the consultants developed a draft narrative plan

for review by the committee before developing the strategic plan template. An additional detailed implementation plan was developed to clearly guide implementation.

Outcomes of the Strategic Planning Process

- **Engaged Committee:** The process resulted in a highly engaged strategic planning committee that played a central role in shaping the organization's future direction.
- **Enhanced Communication:** The collaborative nature of the process ensured enhanced communication among the consultants, committee, and stakeholders.
- **Adaptability:** The process was adaptable, incorporating ongoing feedback to adjust and refine goals and initiatives.
- **Actionable Initiatives:** The resulting strategic plan includes actionable initiatives directly reflecting stakeholder input and aligned with NYSFOLA's mission and vision.

Conclusion:

This strategic planning process has produced a well-defined roadmap for the organization, setting the stage for continued success. The work done in collaboration with LCP Consulting has laid the foundation for the boards and the broader membership's buy-in, ensuring a clear and actionable path forward for NYSFOLA's growth and impact.

Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

NYFSOLA is dedicated to partnering with stakeholders to preserve, protect, and enhance the lakes and watersheds of New York State.

Vision

NYFSOLA strives to be the leading organization in New York State, committed to fostering healthy, vibrant, and sustainably managed lakes, ponds, and reservoirs through collaboration, outreach, partnerships, and advocacy.

We achieve this by:

- Acting as a trusted liaison between lake associations and state government, providing timely updates on regulatory changes and new initiatives.
- Advocating for the needs and priorities of lakes at the state level.
- Sharing knowledge on a wide range of topics, from scientific research to practical advice for lake enthusiasts.
- Creating opportunities for meaningful citizen science activities.

Values

- **Insightful:** We build expertise grounded in science and practical application.
- **Informative:** We share insights and knowledge in clear, responsive ways.
- **Impactful:** Our actions drive measurable, positive outcomes.
- **Inclusive:** We ensure that our work benefits a diverse range of members and communities, fostering a welcoming environment for all.

Strategic Plan Summary: Key Priorities for NYSFOLA

The New York State Federation of Lake Associations (NYSFOLA) is committed to preserving and protecting the state's lakes, advocating for environmental stewardship, and promoting sustainable policies and practices. This strategic plan outlines the organization's priorities and action steps for the coming years.

Key Areas of Focus:

1. Advocacy & Public Policy

NYSFOLA will strengthen its influence on state and local policies related to water quality, lake management, and environmental conservation. Immediate actions include reactivating the Advocacy Committee and developing a Science Advisory Committee. NYSFOLA will also engage with policymakers through strategic outreach and maintain a comprehensive database of relevant legislative initiatives. Over time, the organization will publish white papers and prepare for lobbying efforts when necessary.

2. Revenue, Finances, Administration, and Organizational Sustainability

Financial sustainability is a key priority. The Finance Committee will guide the development of a sustainability plan focused on long-term financial health. NYSFOLA will diversify revenue streams through enhanced fundraising, increased member services, and additional grant opportunities. A comprehensive staffing plan will support these efforts while identifying cost-reduction strategies for operational efficiency.

3. Membership Services

To attract and retain members, NYSFOLA will create a new value proposition, expanding membership categories to target younger populations and retirees. The organization will also focus on professional development through Continuing Education Credits and promoting participation in CSLAP. Support will be strengthened by reactivating the Grant Committee and considering hiring a grant-writing consultant. Future efforts include expanding online resources and offering webinars on key issues based on member feedback.

4. Partnerships & Collaboration

NYSFOLA will build strategic partnerships with academic institutions and conservation groups. Collaborations with organizations such as the NYS Water Resources Institute and The Nature Conservancy will enhance research efforts and disseminate findings to members. NYSFOLA will also seek new partnerships both within and outside New York State, aiming for involvement with organizations like the North American Lake Management Society.

5. Marketing & Branding

NYSFOLA will launch a rebranding initiative, including the creation of a new logo and updated mission, vision, and values statements. A marketing campaign will be implemented to promote the rebranding, supported by press conferences and digital materials. The organization will also enhance its digital presence through a digital marketing, website improvements, and expanded social media outreach to engage a broader audience.

Format:

The strategic plan encompasses the five objectives outlined above. For each objective, one or more goals were established, with corresponding action items designed to achieve those goals. Each action item is associated with specific key performance indicators (KPIs), and includes the designation of responsible parties and timelines for completion. The plan is structured with two levels of detail: a high-level document that provides an overview suitable for select audiences, and a more detailed plan intended to guide the implementation process.

Strategic Plan Outline: Objectives, Goals, & Action Items

Objective 1: Advocacy & Public Policy

Goal 1: Identify & Prioritize Key Advocacy Areas

Action Items:

- Reactivate the NYSFOLA Advocacy Committee
 - Form a Science Advisory Committee
 - Communicate Legislative Updates and Publicize New Regulations
 - Use CSLAP data to inform advocacy and action
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Goal 2: Engage Policymakers & Community Leaders

Action Items:

- Develop a representative list of state and local representatives across watershed regions
- Review Legislative Committees – Analyze state and federal committees for relevancy, targeting environmental committees
- Engage Representatives

Goal 3: Develop & Implement Public Policy Initiatives

Action Items:

- Publish White Papers/Letters of Support – Collaborate with the Science Advisory Committee to develop policy documents using CSLAP results
 - Activate FOLA 501(c)4 Lobbying Arm
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Objective 2: Organizational Sustainability: Revenue, Finances & Administration

Goal 1: Ensure Long-Term Financial Health

Action Items:

- Develop Sustainability Plan
 - Create Annual Budget & Financial Policies
 - Ensure Regular Financial Reporting
 - Secure Board Donations
 - Pursue CSLAP Outreach Funding
 - Monitor the availability and eligibility of grant opportunities for NYSFOLA
 - Provide public transparency and accountability
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Goal 2: Enhance Human Capital and Streamline Operations

Action Items:

- Develop Staffing Plan – Ensure staffing needs are aligned with organizational goals
 - Align Programming with Goals – Ensure NYSFOLA programming aligns with priorities
 - Implement Operational Efficiencies – Streamline membership and donor recordkeeping, bookkeeping, emailing, newsletter, etc.
 - Implement Records Retention & Backup Plans
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Goal 3: Diversify Revenue Streams

Action Items:

- Enhance Fundraising & Membership Committee – Expand committee with experienced members
 - Create and Implement a Fundraising Plan – Develop strategy to broaden donor scope and create new revenue streams
 - Maximize CSLAP Funding – Use CSLAP programming for staffing, outreach, education, and overhead support
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Objective 3: Membership Services

Goal 1: Develop New Value Proposition

Action Items:

- Assess Membership Levels & Benefits – Develop new membership levels targeting younger generations and retirees
 - Recruit Early-Career Professionals – Encourage early-career professionals to join, offer Continuing Education Credits
 - Foster CSLAP participation – Make CSLAP more useful and accessible
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Goal 2: Support NYSFOLA Members with Grant Opportunities

Action Items:

- Reestablish Grants Committee – Evaluate opportunities for grants
 - Collect and disseminate list of available grants
 - Provide technical support for grant applications
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Goal 3: Provide Technical and Organizational Support to Members

Action Items:

- Develop Resource Database – Provide scientific info on lake issues in an accessible format
 - Enhance Professional Development – Offer ongoing training for staff to improve responses to member inquiries
 - Develop Indexed Online Resources
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Objective 4: Partnerships & Collaboration

Goal 1: Collaborate with Academic, NGO Water Quality, and Conservation Groups Statewide to Address Lake Needs and Opportunities

Action Items:

- Identify key partners
 - Assess lake needs
 - Develop Collaboration Strategies – Align NYSFOLA efforts with those of partner organizations
 - Develop Information Sharing System – Share resources, best practices, and updates among partner organizations
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Goal 2: Identify and Develop New Partnerships with Key Stakeholders Locally, Regionally, and Outside New York State

Action Item:

- Engage with the North American Lake Management Society (NALMS) – Identify ways to play a more active role in NALMS
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Objective 5: Marketing & Branding

Goal 1: Undertake a Rebranding Initiative to Modernize NYSFOLA’s Image and Improve Public Awareness of the Organization’s Mission and Vision

Action Items:

- Conduct a Brand Audit – Assess the current perception of NYSFOLA among stakeholders
- Define Brand Identity – Clearly define NYSFOLA’s brand personality
- Develop Digital Marketing Plan – Create a comprehensive digital marketing plan
- Enhance Online Presence – Update the website and increase social media activity
- Launch Marketing Campaign – Increase awareness, outreach, and foster new collaborations

Conclusion:

This strategic plan provides a clear framework for NYSFOLA to strengthen advocacy, ensure financial sustainability, enhance membership services, build valuable partnerships, and modernize marketing efforts. By focusing on these priorities and executing the outlined initiatives, NYSFOLA will be well-positioned to achieve its mission of protecting New York’s lakes and advocating for sustainable water management policies. Please refer to the strategic plan template and detailed implementation plan referenced above for additional detail.