



# 2020 Strategic Plan

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## Letter from the President

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Council of Ohio Audubon Chapters (COAC), it is my honor to introduce the strategic planning document that is enclosed in the following pages.

This plan is the culmination of a year of discussions. We started with an activity that engaged all attendees at the March 2019 gathering of Ohio Audubon chapters and affiliates. Attendees were asked to discuss COAC's strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats in small groups. The ideas were collected, and discussed at monthly COAC membership and board calls.

The focus of the current strategic plan is to foster collaboration among COAC, chapters, National Audubon, and affiliates; and in so doing, ensure the prosperity of COAC through financial and volunteer support. We believe that a strong COAC will be able to help struggling chapters develop, and help strong chapters extend the reach or impact of their programming.

The strategic plan describes our mission and vision, strategies, and goals with detailed metrics necessary to measure COAC's success. COAC hopes this plan is approved by the majority of chapters represented in person or electronically at the April 2020 meeting, and will govern activities to be completed by March 2021.

Thank you for your interest and support of COAC.

Sincerely,

Jackie Augustine  
COAC Board President (2019-2020)

# Mission, Vision, and Values

## Vision

**Be the leader in Ohio in uniting organizations and individuals together to value and protect wildlife.**

## Mission

The mission of the Council of Ohio Audubon Chapters (COAC) is to aid chapter development in strength, growth, and leadership through dialogue and networking between the Chapters, affiliates, individuals, and the National Audubon Society; and to provide an independent, collective voice of Ohio chapters and affiliates in all Audubon affairs.

1. The COAC will accomplish this mission by providing at least two interchapter forums per year.
2. The purpose of the forums would be:
  - a. 1. To share and exchange successful programs and ideas with other chapter members;
  - b. 2. To conduct workshops on chapter leadership, fund raising, and financial development, membership building, and increasing membership participation;
  - c. 3. To provide an opportunity to discuss and take action on problems arising in a chapter's districts;
  - d. 4. To provide support for other programs the chapters choose to participate in; and
  - e. To provide a means by which National Audubon and chapter leaders can communicate on issues and concerns efficiently and economically.

## Values

Chapters are the voice of wildlife and wildlands in their local communities and in the state of Ohio.

Chapters are an important component of the Council of Ohio Audubon Chapters and National Audubon Society.

The Council of Ohio Audubon Chapters aids local chapters by sharing ideas, resources and expertise of other chapters.

Chapters and COAC work to educate people about natural resources, and inspire them to get involved.

## Slogan

“Connecting Ohio Audubon Chapters”

# Organizational History and Profile

## History

1969 – The Ohio Audubon Council (OAC) was formed.

1982 – OAC establish the Adopt-a-Refuge Program and adopted the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. This program allowed chapters to contribute to a fund to make direct purchases of items the refuge needed but could not purchase from its restricted budget.

1987 – OAC began a Audubon Camp Scholarship Grant Program to help chapters sponsor people to attend Audubon Ecology Camps.

1988 – OAC began a joint venture between Ohio State University and Ohio Division of Wildlife to sponsor two-year fellowships for graduate students.

2002 – Thirteen of 19 chapters voted to change the name of OAC the Council of Ohio Audubon Chapters (COAC), as well as change its mission. The trustees wrote new bylaws that gave Audubon chapters in Ohio an independent, collective voice.

2005-2006 – COAC held a retreat with delegates of 12 of the 19 Audubon chapters in Ohio in attendance. A professional facilitator offering pro bono services guided delegates through visioning exercises resulting in action plans in seven key areas. The process resulted in COAC Board of Trustees developing COAC's first strategic plan. COAC held several gatherings throughout the state, but became inactive again in the late 2000s.

2017-2018 – With the leadership of Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society, chapter gatherings resumed. With a vote of 7 chapters for the initiative and 2 opposing in March 2018, a consultant was hired to foster networking and communication, and perform other administrative duties.

2019 – A Board of Trustees was elected and work on a new strategic plan was initiated. The Board and volunteers took over the duties of the consultant.

## Profile

COAC is comprised of a board of six trustees, each serving staggered, three-year terms. The council consists of Audubon chapters in Ohio. Membership can also include individuals and affiliated organizations, but they do not have voting privileges.

## Overview of Core Strategies

1. **Unite and Support Chapters throughout Ohio.** Central to COAC's mission and vision is the idea that the sharing of information will make chapters stronger. We will provide multiple opportunities for discussion and collaboration among Audubon chapters in Ohio. COAC believes effective communication and transparency are essential to unite chapters and to provide confidence in the leadership of COAC. COAC also recognizes that communication and participation is a two-way interaction; so just as chapters attend COAC gatherings and phone conversations, COAC trustees will also visit chapters annually. COAC seeks to provide help when chapters request it, but to also use that as a learning experience to provide resources for all chapters. Additionally, COAC also wants to recognize chapters that have successful programs. Effective communication will help COAC identify chapter needs and strengths.
2. **Develop a COAC Initiative to bring together chapters around a common goal.** COAC will create programming that could be utilized by chapters throughout Ohio. The goal of developing these projects is to provide resources to chapters and a network of participants to share ideas. In essence, we want to create a community comprised of members of different chapters that are doing similar things. By sharing ideas and strategies, each chapter's project can make a larger impact.
3. **Organize COAC so it is sustainable long-term by establishing volunteer and chapter support and financial stability.** COAC recognizes that the organization will only persist in the long-term if it has support from chapters, if there are individuals that believe in COAC's mission, and if it can financially support itself. Success in this area is a measure of support for COAC, and indicates that we are accomplishing the other two core strategies.



# Strategies and Goals

## 1. Uniting and Supporting Chapters throughout Ohio

- a. Hold gatherings twice a year
- b. Hold monthly membership phone calls
- c. Hold monthly board phone calls that are open to all members to increase transparency
- d. Have a board member visit each chapter once a year
- e. Email communication twice a month
- f. Facebook and website updated at least once a month
- g. Develop database that provides resources for chapters
- h. Establish an award to recognize chapter successes

## 2. Develop a COAC Initiative to bring together chapters around a common goal

- a. Brainstorm, discuss, and obtain support for a COAC initiative that creates programming that could be utilized by chapters throughout Ohio
- b. 40% of chapters involved in planning and implementation of initiative (about 6 of 15 chapters)

## 3. Organize COAC so it is sustainable long-term by establishing volunteer and chapter support and financial stability

- a. Have 10 people taking on volunteer roles within COAC
- b. Have multiple candidates for open positions on Board of Trustees
- c. 50% of chapters represented at gatherings (7-8 of 15 chapters)
- d. 60% of chapters participate in monthly phone call, gathering, or other event (9 of 15 chapters)
- e. 1 affiliate at every gathering
- f. 1 representative from National Audubon at every gathering
- g. 40% of chapters become members (about 6 of 15 chapters)
- h. 20% of chapters become sustaining members (about 3 of 15 chapters)
- i. One other fund-raising event conducted
- j. One other fund-raising event planned
- k. Budget approved by majority of chapters