Strategic Plan
WASHINGTON CONSERVATION VOTERS
2017–2020

VISION

All people in Washington state have a healthy environment and a strong, sustainable economy.

MISSION

WCV achieves strong environmental protections by electing and supporting officials and holding them accountable.
BE INNOVATIVE AND DATA-DRIVEN
Our goal: WCV leads by experimenting in creative ways and changing with the political and community landscape.

- Invest in experimentation to stay cutting edge and effective with today’s voter.
- Let data and facts guide our work while rapidly evolving our communications.
- Create systems and tools that generate and reward new ideas.
- Evaluate our efforts regularly and change course as needed.

BE BOLD AND CREDIBLE
Our goal: All elected officials and political parties believe that WCV will hold them publicly accountable for their actions.

- Use political power to build political power.
- Work with all political parties and their leadership.
- Operate with integrity and view relationships as long-term assets.
- Take deliberate political risks.

PURSUE RACIAL EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
Our goal: We are a trusted ally for tribal nations and communities of color.

- Integrate a racial justice lens across our work. Engage with impacted communities in creating and implementing solutions.
- Expand our membership and voter engagement efforts to match Washington state’s shifting demographics.
- Support pro-environment tribal candidates and candidates of color to reflect the communities they serve.
- Engage our membership in a dialogue about racial equity and environmental justice.
BE FLEXIBLE AND OPPORTUNISTIC

Our goal: Selective engagement in local, state, and federal environmental issues across the state builds our effectiveness.

- Maximize and channel new grassroots activism in response to the federal administration for long-term positive change.
- Pursue strategic electoral or issue opportunities at the local or federal levels.
- Work with partners to demonstrate that a healthy environment is good for the economy and that voters from all socioeconomic levels, races, and geographies care about clean air, water, and healthy lands.
- Foster political partnerships with advocacy groups, labor, and businesses to achieve common electoral and campaign goals.
- Listen to and engage communities on what they see as important environmental issues. From rural communities to urban centers, we recognize that environmental challenges affect Washingtonians in different ways. Leadership often means not being “in front.”

PARTNER WITH WEC

Our goal: Our work with Washington Environmental Council maximizes power for environmental results.

- Bring our combined power to strategic coalitions and to our work at all levels of government.
- Build environmental leaders that advance environmental protections across a range of issues.
- Work together at the local, state, and federal levels to cultivate capacity through the Voter Education Program.
- Further align our grassroots organization and voter outreach to capitalize on local environmental issues to build political power and win elections.
- Explore Board restructuring with both the WCV and WEC Boards to better align with organizational and staff operations.
- Work with WEC to explore the alignment of the WCV and WEC brands.
ELECT ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERS

Our goal: We achieve a strong environmental majority in the state legislature, and elect environmental leaders to key statewide, local, and congressional office positions.

- Play a decisive role in statewide races that have a significant environmental impact including Washington Governor, Commissioner of Public Lands, and Attorney General.
- Defeat out-of-step incumbents and elect environmental leaders at the local, legislative, and state level.
- Maintain a robust and innovative endorsement process.
- Develop a candidate recruitment program to create a bench of environmental leaders for local and state office who reflect the communities they serve. Support and help train candidates and elected officials throughout their public careers.
- Develop and capitalize on multi-year public education campaigns at the local level that support the organization’s priority electoral campaigns.
- Partner with the League of Conservation Voters when there are strategic opportunities to elect congressional candidates who support a clean air and water platform.

BUILD ENVIRONMENTAL CHAMPIONS

Our goal: Environmental champions have a continuum of support throughout their careers in public service allowing them to be better advocates for the environment.

- Work with current environmental champions to determine what support elected officials need.
- Develop a training program for elected officials to gain policy expertise and leadership skills that allow them to be better environmental advocates.
- Support a “freshman legislator cohort” to help new legislators learn about and support environmental issues.
HOLD PUBLIC/ELECTED OFFICIALS ACCOUNTABLE

Our goal: All elected officials know that they are held accountable for their actions and votes.

- Create a culture of proactive accountability by establishing a high expectation of performance for the legislature and other bodies of government.
- Utilize new technology to improve our existing accountability tactics, including giving voters real-time feedback about legislative action.
- Publish a Legislative Scorecard as a record of environmental progress and a tool to hold officials accountable.
- Use the ultimate accountability measure: target incumbents who are out-of-step with their constituencies and recruit candidates to challenge them.
- Build political power for the environment by working with partner organizations to highlight the intersectionality of environmental issues with the economy, equity, voting access, and workers’ rights.
- Partner with the League of Conservation Voters to hold Congressional Members and the White House accountable for their actions that directly affect Washingtonians.

INCREASE VOTER PARTICIPATION

Our goal: More people vote and participate in democracy every election cycle, leading to stronger environmental protections for all Washingtonians.

- Develop a narrative that is accessible to all Washingtonians and inspires them to participate in the democratic process.
- Develop in-house expertise on policies that increase participation in democracy and integrate research into decisions about where to implement resources.
- Endorse and support legislative proposals and ballot measures that advance voting rights, respecting the existing expertise and experience of equity and justice partners.
- Endorse and support pro-voting rights candidates for Secretary of State.
- Conduct research and experiments to determine the best Get-Out-The-Vote methods and ways to increase voter participation with an emphasis on the New American Majority (i.e. single women, people of color, and young people).
ORGANIZE THE GRASSROOTS AND ENGAGE VOTERS
Our goal: WCV deploys people power to elect environmental candidates to office and achieves significant policy wins for the environment.

- Identify key political districts. Engage with constituents in those districts to determine the local issues that will mobilize a community and lead to political wins.
- Implement a transformational organizing model that results in a web of connected grassroots activists in key areas across Washington, with a focus on younger activists.
- Integrate activist and voter identification and tracking into all of our grassroots outreach to build and mobilize our base.
- Seek out opportunities to align our work with the broader progressive movement including coordinated grassroots organizing and connecting federal rollbacks to local actions voters can take.
- Build and invest in professional pathways into the environmental movement. Future leaders should reflect Washington’s changing demographics.

INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT DECISIONS
Our goal: We use science, policy expertise, and constituent pressure to drive smart decisions by elected officials at the local, state, and federal levels.

- Evolve the Environmental Priorities Coalition to be more powerful in the political landscape and seek new partnerships with traditional and nontraditional allies.
- Integrate local, state, and federal lobbying and electoral strategies to advance proactive environmental policies.
- Ensure elected leaders are investing public dollars in proven and effective programs that protect and restore the environment and that enhance bipartisan collaboration.
- Deepen relationships with local elected officials whose communities benefit and are impacted by WCV’s electoral program.
STRIVING FOR ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Our goal: WCV has a talented staff and board in order to achieve our goals.

• Provide the tools, processes, and culture to attract, inspire, and retain a diverse and talented team to move our work forward.
• Invest consistently in technology solutions, optimizing for highest mission impact.
• Ensure WCV is known for competitive and livable salaries and benefits, reflecting the changing cost of living in Washington.
• Develop and implement plans for staff career development and ongoing training and professional development.
• Develop effective succession plans for senior staff.
• Evolve hiring practices to include a social justice lens, diversifying staff and the management team with regard to race and gender.
• Align and optimize staff capacity to ensure success of this Strategic Plan.
• Create a new board development plan that empowers WCV to achieve this Strategic Plan, including working with a broad set of partners and increasing the racial, geographic, and age diversity of the Board.

STRENGTHENING OUR FINANCIAL HEALTH

Our goal: WCV is well-resourced in order to achieve our goals.

• Through collaboration and partnerships with new and existing donors, other organizations, and businesses, expand our base of financial support so we can achieve this plan’s vision.
• Grow our c4 budget approximately 25% over the course of this plan to reach a total of $925,000. Ensure annual fundraising for the Action Fund meets the needs of the election cycle.
• Create and implement a multi-year fundraising narrative for the c4.
• Pursue “start-up funding” to support new voter participation and candidate recruitment efforts.
• Pursue fundraising events and house parties in targeted districts that align with organizing activities.
• Strategically pursue joint fundraising with LCV to connect local, state, and federal advocacy programs with donors and leverage the network of national donors who might support innovative work in Washington state.
• Expand our donor base to reflect the changing demographics of Washington, focusing on age, race, and capacity, to ensure our long-term success.
• Use new and existing technology to connect with and cultivate new and existing donors.
• Grow the WCV culture of philanthropy so that program staff and the board are empowered to build relationships and deepen organizational connections that result in innovative partnerships and more revenue.
Here at Washington Conservation Voters, we think full circle.

WCV is there at every turn to ensure Washington’s decision makers keep our environment protected, healthy, and vibrant. Over the last 35 years, we have elected environmental champions, held our elected leaders to the highest standard, and built statewide momentum for environmental campaigns through innovative voter outreach efforts and community organizing.

To all those who have volunteered, supported our work, ran for office, and everything in between – thank you!