



FOC Strategic Plan 2025-2028

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Annette Bridges and Patrick Forster of Coaching Consulting Works, LLC (CCW) conducted 3 sessions on January 29, February 1, and March 13, 2025, with the Friends of the Clearwater Board and staff to discuss current opportunities and challenges for the organization in its ongoing work to protect Wild Clearwater Country. The sessions were utilized to discuss the immediate organization actions needed, to clarify the mission, vision and values statements, and lastly to strategize about new work or potential campaigns going forward. Given that FOC has been without an executive director type leader for some time, much of the discussions detailed how to organize the efforts of the FOC Board into working pods for more efficient communication and accountability towards necessary tasks and to provide a unified voice in leading the organization. In addition to a strategic statement, we articulated an annual plan to guide us in our work. We discussed a big-picture strategic campaign for large-scale protection of the Wild Clearwater Country with further discussions to be planned by board and staff to create a solid executable plan.

MISSION

Preserving, protecting and defending the largest remaining biologically intact wilderness and wildland complex in the lower 48 States - the Emerald of the Rocky Mountains.

IDENTITY STATEMENT

We are a science-based wildlands defense organization protecting the Clearwater and Salmon River Basins in North Central Idaho since 1987. This region includes four existing wilderness areas, 1.5 million acres of unprotected roadless and a diverse landscape that is home to seven endangered species.

VISION

We envision lasting protection of Idaho's vast, intact Wild Clearwater Country to preserve the region's unique, wild ecology and its flora and fauna, and to contribute to climate stability.

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

Love of the natural world: We adhere to a strong environmental ethic; we are guided by reverence for and a sense of wonder about the entire Wild Clearwater Country ecosystem.

Community: We seek connection among all people and the natural world. We express this value by acting with humility, communicating respectfully, engaging in educational and community-building efforts, and focusing on the common good of all species.



Unwavering commitment: We are consistently focused on our vision. We are feisty and persistent.

Integrity and truthfulness: We communicate in a transparent fashion and are guided by facts, the best available science, and rational thinking.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Friends of the Clearwater is currently in an exciting time of revitalization after several difficult years precipitated largely by the departure of key staff members and loss of momentum during the COVID pandemic. In 2025, FOC will strengthen its position in the community and region by focusing on a successful leadership transition and renewal of its organizational and operational infrastructure and systems. In response to a dramatic change in the political and legal landscape, FOC will reprioritize which of its many tools (litigation, monitoring, publications, public comments, and objections) are best suited to achieve lasting protection of Idaho's Wild Clearwater Country. In addition, FOC plans to expand its outreach activities to build public understanding of and support for wildlands protection in north-central Idaho over the next decade. FOC will thereby be well-positioned for coordinated and cooperative advocacy for our vision.

CONTEXT

Friends of the Clearwater has been an effective environmental watchdog organization for almost four decades. The group recognizes that currently, adequate staffing (executive director) and revenue need to be prioritized before FOC kicks off new campaigns. Therefore, board members have been stepping up and will need to continue/intensify their involvement in operational activities until a new director is identified.

FOC's board members share a remarkable commitment to the organization's mission. They recognize that current political and cultural realities affecting federal agencies and the court system may limit the effectiveness of FOC litigation and public comment tactics over the next few years. The board expresses a strong desire for FOC's continued health and growth and recognizes that increased networking and partnership development will help prepare FOC to carry out future initiatives.

STRATEGY STATEMENT

Within the next four years, a campaign will be launched to designate Wild Clearwater Country as a specifically protected wildland ecosystem. The board and staff will refine this proposal, determining whether the designation will be as a species recovery area, national park or monument, or some other kind of preserve. In preparation for this campaign, the following priorities will guide FOC's operations over the next three years:



- 1) Hire an Executive Director to lead FOC in selecting its advocacy and/or litigation projects, increasing financial capacity, building additional relationships with partners, funders, and donors, and assessing changing organizational priorities, based in part on shifting cultural and political circumstances.
- 2) Maintain and expand partnerships with allied groups and develop new ones, both for the ultimate goal of protecting Clearwater Country as a preserve and for campaigns around specific species or watershed areas. This includes continuing to partner with groups like Wilderness Watch, the Nez Perce tribal government, contacts within federal agencies, university-affiliated researchers, and activist groups. It also includes participating in community events and continuing to build relationships with foundations, local businesses, and media outlets.
- 3) Focus on expanding the FOC membership database, both by motivating lapsed donors and by reaching out to new members on the Palouse and in other regional population centers.
- 4) The goals of species recovery, connectivity, and protection of habitat, old growth forests, and watersheds will continue to serve as the guiding principles for all of FOC's programmatic, outreach and community-building work.

As in the preceding decades, FOC's focus remains on protecting roadless areas in national forests from development and extraction, using legal avenues to hold federal agencies accountable, and promoting citizen (volunteer) input, documentation, and monitoring activities. FOC's past emphasis on more technical, "internal" forest watch and policy work (monitoring, analyzing, commenting) may need to shift to increased citizen engagement and witnessing in order to more broadly publicize threats from privatization and commodification of national forests and other public lands.



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Mission

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Vision

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Organizational Values

Love of the natural world – Community - Unwavering commitment - Integrity and truthfulness.

Theory of Change

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Strategic Priorities (pods)

1. Relationship Cultivation
2. Organizational Leadership
3. Outreach and Public Image
4. Policy and Forest Watch

Voted/passed by FOC BOD- 5/12/2026



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