

Ipswich River Watershed Association Strategic/ Business Plan



Photo by Eric Roth



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Ipswich River Watershed Association Strategic/ Business Plan

Mission and Vision:

Mission:

The Ipswich River Watershed Association (IRWA) serves as the voice of the Ipswich River and the ecosystems it supports by working for the protection, conservation, and sustainable management of the vibrant, vital natural resources within the river's watershed. We work to ensure adequate stream flows, clean water, healthy natural habitats, necessary drinking water, and recreational opportunities for future generations. As the river's advocate, the Association is dedicated to using sound science and management tools to work with a variety of stakeholders to achieve a careful balance of human uses of the river with the needs of healthy terrestrial and aquatic habitat, so that the riverine system is able to function as naturally as possible.

Through funding from our members, private and public grants, and programs and events, our staff works with volunteers, researchers, municipal officials, state and federal agencies, businesses, concerned citizens, and other environmental organizations to define and solve problems facing the river. Where the river has been compromised, IRWA seeks to restore it; where it remains pristine, IRWA seeks to protect it.

Vision:

The Ipswich River is healthy, beautiful and productive. Clean water flows year-round, and the river system abounds with native fish and other creatures. Ponds and lakes are clean and healthy. There is a network of open space and protected land that provides habitat, recreational opportunities and scenic beauty. There is a balance of small village, suburban and urban development that provides for people's needs while protecting the environment. The sustainable regional economy is closely tied to protecting its natural resources. Community governments, businesses, environmental organizations and regulatory agencies work cooperatively to manage natural resources effectively.

Goals

1. Restore the flow of the Ipswich River
2. Protect and restore the biological integrity of the Ipswich River
3. Protect and restore the water quality of the Ipswich River
4. Promote sustainable growth management in the Ipswich River Watershed
5. Nurture a watershed protection ethic
6. Build a sustainable and effective Ipswich River Watershed Association

Recent Efforts and Current Focus

Over the past decade, IRWA has devoted its efforts to assessing and publicizing the condition of the Ipswich River. The organization has focused efforts on low-flow problems, and has enlisted highly credible research organizations to conduct studies identifying the causes of low-flows and

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their effects on aquatic habitat. While several key questions remain, much of the investigatory work has been successfully completed, marking the need for IRWA to shift its focus toward restoration of the Ipswich River.

In 1996, IRWA formed the Ipswich River Task Force, which has spearheaded key studies of the Ipswich River. The first of these studies, by the United States Geological Survey (USGS), investigated the causes of low-flow episodes of the Ipswich River.¹ The USGS hydrological study found that municipal water withdrawals and other alterations of the watershed result in significant loss of flow. Indeed flows would be up to 10 times higher, were it not for the pumping of municipal wells, along with loss of replenishment of groundwater due to development.

A companion study by USGS, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, investigated the stream habitat and fish communities of the Ipswich River, documented relations between flow quantity and habitat, and determined adequate streamflow requirements to maintain quality aquatic habitat in the Ipswich River.² This study documented the loss of key river fish species, such as brook trout and fallfish, from the river ecosystem. Frequent low-flow and no-flow episodes have caused the loss of these fish species and diminishment of the river's biodiversity. The aquatic habitat study identifies key management measures needed to restore the Ipswich River fisheries to health.

Other research and monitoring of the Ipswich River have documented additional issues of concern. IRWA's RiverWatch monitoring program documented frequent periods of extremely low dissolved oxygen, especially in the Upper Ipswich River and tributaries. Further analysis of water quality data, along with investigations by the University of New Hampshire, are investigating the factors which are having the greatest effect on dissolved oxygen levels. Other research organizations are investigating nutrient loading and transport within the watershed, mercury levels in water and soil, and other water quality issues.

IRWA's recent work has also focused on the need to improve water conservation and efficiency in the Ipswich basin, and on public education about the amount of water lost from the river system due to water withdrawals, sewers and other hydrological alteration. IRWA also plays an important advocacy role, commenting on project proposals as well as permitting decisions affecting the Ipswich River.

The Next Five Years:

IRWA will continue to conduct and/or broker scientific investigations to add to understanding of the Ipswich River. In particular, further investigation will focus on low dissolved oxygen; the effects of dams on flow and water quality; the role of seasonal variation in flows on habitat; and biological indicators of the health of the river ecosystem.

At the same time, the focus of IRWA's work will shift toward restoration of the Ipswich River to health. Using a targeted approach to use organizational resources most effectively, IRWA will continue to lead regional efforts to identify, select and implement management measures to improve flows, water quality and aquatic habitat in the Ipswich River and its tributaries. IRWA will provide education and technical assistance to municipal officials and other key constituencies to improve

¹ Zarriello, P.J., and Ries, K.G.III, A precipitation-runoff model for the effects of water withdrawals on streamflow, Ipswich River basin, Mass: US Geological Survey Water-Resources Investigation Report 00-4029, 2000, 99 pages.

² Armstrong, D.S., Richards, T.A. and Parker, G.W., Assessment of Habitat, Fish Communities and Streamflow Requirements for Habitat Protection, Ipswich River, Massachusetts, 1998-99, Water-Resources Investigation Report 01-4161, 2001, page 3 (72 pages).

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water efficiency and watershed management. Building a stronger constituency for river protection and restoration will be key to the success of these efforts over the next 5 years. IRWA will advocate for the river's interests at the local, state and federal level.

A key component of this focus will be the establishment of the Ipswich River Restoration Partnership. This program is intended to provide a positive message to engage a broad constituency in the goals and objectives of river restoration. An advisory committee will be established representing the federal, state, local and non-profit organizations, as well as businesses, which have a stake in a healthy Ipswich River. Projects aimed at river restoration, including flow augmentation, dam removals, wetland restoration, pollution remediation and water efficiency, will be conducted under the "umbrella" of the Restoration Partnership.

Targeted advocacy work, including legal action, may be warranted to address deficiencies in the regulatory process and the protection afforded to the Ipswich River under the law. Should such action be needed, IRWA will work to engage other organizations as parties to the action where appropriate.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats: Summary

Strengths: The basis of IRWA's success is its knowledgeable, highly motivated and extremely productive staff, as well as a cadre of dedicated and capable volunteers. In particular, the stability of IRWA's staffing during the 1990's proved to be a very important factor in the organization's ability to deliver high-quality programs on a very limited budget – and to grow from a tiny organization to one which has achieved recognition regionally and state-wide. The staff has been adept at obtaining funding for projects and is improving its unrestricted fundraising.

IRWA's volunteer involvement has also been critical to its success. The RiverWatch volunteer monitoring program has regularly maintained 60 or more trained volunteers, who take measurements of water quality monthly. This network has proven to be a major asset not only for IRWA, but for organizations such as MBL and UNH, which have used IRWA's monitors to collect additional water quality samples. The macroinvertebrate sampling program and stream team program also recruit and train volunteers, who have proven to be some of the most active and well-informed citizens working for river protection. The Board of Directors is also a very important resource to the organization, providing guidance on policy and financial matters, and overseeing the organization's annual and long-term planning.

IRWA's reputation is another strength. The organization has a high record of credibility, proving itself to be a well-informed, accurate and reliable source of information. The organization has built a positive history of seeking collaborations and win-win approaches to solve problems.

Weaknesses: IRWA is a small organization with a very big job to do. Having adequate resources to do this job remains a constant challenge, and it is easy to become stretched thin in the process. The *status quo* is very entrenched, particularly in regard to the management of water withdrawals and wastewater. There is a need to enhance IRWA's political clout to succeed in addressing the problems affecting the Ipswich River. Success depends in part on changing people's behavior and attitudes – always a daunting challenge. Basic knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting the river remains limited, even among key decision-makers and managers.

IRWA suffers from the lack of a permanent headquarters, which has resulted in having to move frequently, at significant financial cost as well as increased difficulty projecting a sense of stability for the organization. In the past, IRWA suffered due to lack of depth in its human (and financial) resources, and remains overly dependent on a few key people. The staff situation remains

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vulnerable to turnover and is dependent on the ability of workers to maintain extremely high levels of productivity.

Opportunities: There has never been a time when so much was known about the problems of the Ipswich River and how to solve them. There are real opportunities to make progress toward the restoration of the river, by ensuring that current planning efforts incorporate the measures needed to improve flows in the Ipswich River. The momentum has swung in favor of recognition that the problem exists and must be solved – it is time to capitalize on this opportunity. IRWA also has such capable staff and the most positive and widespread recognition it has yet achieved, spelling an opportunity to put those resources to best effect. There are external opportunities, such as fisheries restoration grants, upcoming permitting decisions and the like, which may allow new approaches. Public interest in environmental protection is a key factor.

Threats: The biggest threats to IRWA's success are ignorance, the *status quo*, sprawl and the lack of effective planning to ensure that future growth and development does not further compromise the Ipswich River. Achieving the political will to make hard decisions will be a big challenge. The measures needed to restore the Ipswich River are costly, and the lack of good information about the loss of value of damaged natural resources may lead to poor economic decisions. While in recent years there has been strong support for watershed protection, any erosion of that support may undermine the good work which has been done to date. The organization's weak financial base remains a threat, as IRWA remains very dependent on short-term funding sources to maintain the quality of its staff and operations.

Future Directions: Short-term priority actions (1-3 years)

Conduct/ broker targeted investigations to aid in understanding the state of the Ipswich River

- Focus on analysis and interpretation of existing data and known problem areas
- Collaborate with other research organizations to conduct further investigations
 - Effects of dams
 - Low dissolved oxygen
 - Biological indicators (fisheries, macroinvertebrates, invasive species)
 - Water quality impairment (toxins)

Establish Ipswich River Restoration Partnership

- Identify clear and explicit restoration goals
 - Short-term achievable goals/ measures of success
 - Longer-term goals
- Enlist support from traditional and non-traditional partners
- Convey a positive message about the Ipswich River
- Highlight, publicize positive actions to restore the river
- Broaden political support for river restoration

Provide technical assistance to municipalities to improve watershed protection and management

- Help communities improve water conservation and efficiency
- Educate officials about how to balancing the water budget

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Provide technical assistance on water supply protection

Build a stronger constituency and effective advocacy campaign for watershed protection

Improve stream team program/ local action

Recruit new members and retain existing members

Implement a corporate campaign

Provide a regular, effective advocacy campaign

Take legal action where necessary to ensure that the river's interests are protected

Improve education, outreach and communication about Ipswich River and IRWA

Employ technology, message development, media strategy to communicate widely and effectively

Target key constituencies, such as municipal officials

Collaborate with other organizations, such as Audubon, on educational efforts

Continue to improve organizational capacity

Attract and maintain a highly qualified, professional staff

Use supervised interns, graduate students to conduct work most cost-effectively

Improve office infrastructure to support productive, efficient operations

Increase unrestricted funding support

Future Directions: Longer-term actions (3+ years)

Continue leadership on protecting instream flow, water quality and aquatic habitat

Publicize successes as restoration efforts improve the state of the river

Take a more active role in land/ habitat protection

Establish Headquarters/ Center for Protection of the Ipswich River/Watershed

Establish permanent headquarters

Provide physical recognition of organization and sense of permanence

Ideal site would allow public use for enjoyment of property and river

Be the recognized experts on the Ipswich River and repository of data

Continue to attract/ retain qualified professional staff in conjunction with strong volunteer effort

Develop programs to address additional issues of concern (such as invasive species)

Develop recreational programs to highlight the river as a recreational asset

Develop an endowment to help assure organization's sustainability

Ensure that all watershed communities are active participants in watershed protection

Address disparity in geographical representation and interest in watershed issues

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GOAL 1: RESTORE THE FLOW OF THE IPSWICH RIVER

IRWA's goal is to restore the Ipswich River's flows so that the river can support a range of uses, including water supply, healthy native fisheries and aquatic habitat, recreation, and pollution assimilation.

During the last five years, we have made tremendous progress in understanding what the River's natural water cycle and flows should look like and how human water and wastewater management practices impact the natural water cycle and flows in the river. Based on IRWA's work and the results of the United States Geological Service (USGS) flow model and aquatic habitat study, we have established a set of flow restoration objectives.

Key flow restoration objectives include:

- Maintain flow over the riffles (the shallow, swift, rocky areas of the streambed)
- Maintain water to the stream channel margins
- Maintain seasonal variation in flow which mimics natural flow patterns

IRWA will work to achieve these objectives through the following actions:

Advocacy

- Provide statewide leadership for instream flow protection, through participation on key committees.
- Advocate to support our position and achieve the goal of flow restoration, via comment letters, participation on committees, and media coverage
- Engage in strategic legal actions as necessary to improve watershed management
- Support efforts to keep more water in the basin (e.g., investment in water efficient technologies, in-basin wastewater treatment, water reuse, etc.).
- Oppose efforts to remove more water from the basin (e.g., expansion of sewers that export Ipswich River water to other watersheds).

Science

- Define "adequate flow" needed to support fishery restoration, in collaboration and consultation with experts in fisheries and hydrology.
- Investigate impacts of dams on streamflow.

Education

- Continue to educate municipal officials and the public about losses of water from the basin and about how to save water.
- Collaborate with water suppliers to provide water conservation education programs.

Management

- Complete the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan and work towards its adoption, helping ensure that appropriate flow restoration goals are included in the plan.
- Play a leadership role on the Watershed Management Council, to ensure that Council priorities are compatible with IRWA, including our goals for flow restoration.
- Promote and use the USGS flow model as a planning and evaluation tool for new water supply and wastewater projects.
- Establish the Ipswich River Restoration Partnership, as a means of inviting participation of a full range of partners in the positive task of restoring the Ipswich River to health.

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GOAL 2: PROTECT AND RESTORE THE BIOLOGICAL INTEGRITY OF THE IPSWICH RIVER

IRWA's goal is to restore the health of the Ipswich River ecosystem, focusing on healthy fish communities, other important aquatic organisms, and the terrestrial areas that have a strong influence on the river system.

Key biological restoration objectives:

- Identify and protect critical habitats, including aquatic, riparian and upland habitats
- Support (but not lead) efforts to establish a regional bioserve
- Identify target fish community and related restoration needs, including flow regime, impediments to fish movement, water quality and habitat restoration issues
- Establish ecological restoration objectives, focusing on flow, water quality, habitat and target species
- Begin consideration of invasive species and impact on biological integrity.

Our strategy is to establish and build support for restoration objectives that are based on sound science and that will protect and restore the biological integrity of the Ipswich River. IRWA's strategy will include the following components:

Advocacy

- Work with local, state and federal agencies to adopt protective biological indices of river health and ensure that the biological integrity of the river is restored.

Science

- Work with fisheries experts to recommend a target fish community (to restore native fisheries and support existing native river species).
- Work with experts to define "adequate flow" needed to support fishery restoration.
- Investigate other causes of impairment including low dissolved oxygen and dams.
- Help document biological indicators of river health, such as macroinvertebrate populations.
- Initiate modest program of invasive species monitoring.

Education

- Through the *Restoration Partnership*, IRWA will educate the public about the value of restoring fisheries and protecting other Ipswich River plants and animals.

Management

- Work with other responsible groups to complete the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan and work towards its adoption. We will work to ensure that appropriate biological restoration goals are included in the plan.
- Play a leadership role on the Watershed Management Council to ensure that Council priorities are compatible with IRWA, including our goals for fisheries restoration.
- Develop an ecological restoration plan that identifies impediments, sets clear and measurable objectives, and includes an action and implementation component.

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GOAL 3: PROTECT AND RESTORE THE WATER QUALITY OF THE IPSWICH RIVER

Our goal is to protect and restore the water quality of the Ipswich River, its tributaries and its water supplies. Following are our highest priority objectives:

- Attain water quality standards (swimmable and fishable) for all segments of the river, all of the time
- Protect sustainable drinking water sources of high quality
- Attain/maintain water quality sufficient to support shellfish harvesting

Our strategy will include the following components:

Advocacy

- Comment on potential threats to water quality.
- Work with stream teams to ensure that hazardous waste sites and other contamination sources are remediated.

Science

- Continue IRWA's RiverWatch water quality testing program, focusing on analysis of data and focused investigation of problem areas.
- Begin stormwater sampling to evaluate water quality impacts of stormwater runoff.
- Continue collaboration with Marine Biological Labs and the University of New Hampshire on water quality issues.

Education

- Provide education to municipal officials on Phase II Stormwater issues.
- Communicate water quality results to the public on a regular basis.
- Work with Stream Teams to provide local education and outreach.

Management

- Work with other responsible groups to complete the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan and work towards its adoption. Work to develop and include an Action Plan for Water Quality Improvement.
- Play a leadership role on the Watershed Management Council to ensure that Council priorities are compatible with IRWA goals, including our water quality goals.
- Develop water supply protection plans for public water suppliers.

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GOAL 4: PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH MANAGEMENT IN THE IPSWICH RIVER WATERSHED

Recognizing that the health of the Ipswich River is directly dependent on land use and human activities, IRWA will work with other groups to assist with growth management and land use planning efforts in the watershed.

Our growth management objectives include the following:

- Ensure that growth decisions are made in a manner that protects water quality, flow and the biological integrity of the watershed.
- Ensure that planning decisions are based upon “good science”
- Help communities plan for growth and watershed protection in an integrated way, addressing the values of the Ipswich River to their community and how decisions about water supply, wastewater and stormwater management, and land use affect the Ipswich River ecosystem
- Help achieve an open space network, including wildlife and riparian corridors, to form the basis of a regional bioserve

IRWA’s strategy will include the following components:

Advocacy

- Work to ensure that appropriate sustainable growth management goals and tools are included in the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan, subregional and local plans.
- Promote land use policies and regulations that are protective of watershed interests.
- Promote improved analysis of the effects of growth on water quantity, including projections of water demand and how such projections are used in permitting decisions.
- Provide project impact comments.

Science and Technical Assistance

- Provide planning and analysis services to communities, such as water supply protection plan components, assistance in prioritizing open space acquisitions, evaluating water demand, etc.

Education

- Educate the public on the connection between land use and watershed protection, and the direct and indirect impacts of growth on the natural resources of the region.
- Focus on “balancing the water budget” and improving water efficiency.

Management

- Work with other responsible groups to complete the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan and work towards its adoption. IRWA will play a leadership role on the Watershed Management Council to ensure that Council priorities are compatible with IRWA, including goals for a sustainable future.

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GOAL 5: NURTURE A WATERSHED PROTECTION ETHIC

IRWA's goal is to inspire behaviors and attitudes that protect the watershed.

Major objectives are as follows:

- Focus on the ways in which the Ipswich River supports and enhances the region's quality of life
- Emphasize restoration goals and how individuals, municipalities and businesses can help achieve them
- Educate municipal officials about watershed protection issues, focusing on balancing the water budget, keeping water local, and improving water efficiency.
- Continue and expand school and adult education programs, targeted for most effective use of IRWA's resources.
- Continue work on water efficiency/environmentally-friendly landscaping

IRWA's educational efforts will target municipal officials as the primary constituency. IRWA's work will include limited programs focusing on the public-at-large and schools. Our strategy will include the following components:

Advocacy

- Provide a strong voice for the interests of the Ipswich River, and how proposed activities can threaten (or enhance) its values
- Issue media releases, public relation materials, letters to the editor and op ed pieces in connection with advocacy efforts, to inform the public about the reasons for IRWA's actions to protect the Ipswich River
- Focus on primary themes of balancing the water budget, keeping water local, and conserving water.
- Build a stronger constituency to achieve a greater influence on decision-making, locally and at the state level.

Science and Technical Assistance

- Convey findings of monitoring and research effectively to key constituencies and the public at large
- Translate complex concepts into terms the lay public can understand, including information about how their individual or collective actions can make a difference in protecting the Ipswich River
- Base educational programs on good science
- Integrate IRWA's educational work with efforts to improve science education in schools

Education

- Focus on education about balancing the water budget, and how water supply, wastewater, stormwater and land use decisions all combine to affect the Ipswich River
- Develop and implement a regional campaign to reduce water use, indoors and out, for municipalities, businesses and homeowners (with special focus on reducing lawn watering)
- Provide training and support for Stream Teams to improve watershed education/stewardship locally
- Seek coverage in news media, cable TV, and other mass media to bring IRWA's message to a wider audience
- Improve the use of electronic media to communicate effectively and link constituents to the information they need, and to build a stronger watershed protection network
- Highlight the positive attributes of the Ipswich River, the benefits it provides
- Focus on restoration
- Develop and strengthen educational partnerships

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GOAL 6: BUILD A SUSTAINABLE AND EFFECTIVE IRWA

IRWA's goal is to be an effective organization with the resources needed to protect the Ipswich River and the values it provides. To achieve this goal, our primary objectives are:

- Improve organizational capacity in staffing, funding and infrastructure
- Create and engage a stronger constituency for watershed protection in this region

Our strategy focuses on the following elements:

Establish an identity as center of data and information on Ipswich River/Center for Watershed Protection

Continue to develop a strong monitoring/ environmental science function

Partnerships with organizations such as Marine Biological Lab, University of New Hampshire

Broker services of USGS and other credible scientific organizations for research studies, modeling

Ensure high quality of IRWA monitoring and research

Provide science-based educational programs to municipalities, schools and the public

Provide expertise in water conservation and efficiency

Build a larger, broader, and more involved constituency

Increase memberships and corporate support

Provide increased member benefits including programs, volunteer opportunities

Improve Annual Meeting format, with speakers, recognition and awards

Enlist member assistance to improve watershed protection locally and region-wide

Attract and maintain a high quality staff with the skill set IRWA needs to fulfill its mission and goals

Seek employees who have expertise in several areas to help limit staff size and coordination needs

Provide/support training for employees to improve job skills

Continue to improve salaries and benefits for employees, especially those working >20 hours per week

Utilize interns, graduate students and other sources to provide high quality work at modest cost

Improve staff management and communications

Establish a permanent headquarters with improved office infrastructure

Facility will support functions of organization, including staff offices, meetings and programs

Location should be central to watershed and/or in close proximity to river

Consider specific needs of Upper Ipswich Basin

Acquire and maintain up-to-date equipment, technology, office infrastructure to support performance

Consider role of telecommuting and/or other flexible workplace options

Improve unrestricted funding support – at least 50% of budget should be unrestricted funding

Increase member recruitment and retention

Develop and implement a corporate membership strategy and campaign

Develop and implement a large donor campaign and a planned giving program

Continue to organize successful fundraising events

Ensure that other events are self-supporting financially

Begin an endowment / operating reserve campaign by the end of the 5 years – set goal

Enhance the effectiveness and involvement of the Board of Directors

Establish a working Nominating Committee with clear criteria, guidelines, expectations, process

Professional skills, geographic criteria, support for organizational goals

Clarify annual board goals, objectives and specific activities

Encourage board development in fundraising and other important board functions

Improve board committees and board involvement

Improve organizational management and administration

Seek expertise to oversee financial management and administration, including budgeting

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Human Resources

The basis of IRWA's success has been its knowledgeable, highly motivated and extremely productive staff, as well as a cadre of dedicated and capable volunteers. In particular, the stability of IRWA's staffing and volunteers during the 1990's proved to be a very important factor in the organization's ability to deliver high-quality programs on a very limited budget – and to grow from a tiny organization to one which has achieved recognition throughout New England.

Over the past decade, the organization's success has been built by people working part-time for modest wages, doing more than anyone can reasonably expect from an employee. IRWA has been fortunate to attract employees who have excellent skills and work out of personal commitment more than for financial or professional rewards. This type of commitment will continue to be the cornerstone of IRWA's ability to deliver outstanding work on a tight budget.

The ability of IRWA's staff to handle a range of tasks, and shift regularly among programs and duties, is another factor that has allowed for extremely efficient use of the organization's limited resources. This arrangement allows for tremendous productivity with low management costs.

IRWA will continue to try to attract and keep these highly capable and dedicated staff, and to improve compensation and benefits. However, IRWA's current stage of organizational development requires considerably more resources dedicated to staffing and management. The organization needs skilled program managers, and must seek a balance between professionals with specialized skills and those who are generalists and able to wear many hats. IRWA's ability to attract and keep qualified staff has proven more challenging in recent years, due to modest pay scale and limited benefits, as well as the difficulty of attracting top workers to part-time positions. IRWA has taken steps to raise the pay scale and provide basic benefits, even for part-time workers. These challenges are expected to continue in the future.

The need for more programmatic management and cross-program communication is also expected to continue, and may require more managerial expertise than the organization has had in the past. In particular, program planning and budgeting, as well as maintaining effective communication among staff, are expected to require more of the organization's resources.

Staffing Strategy: Optimal staffing will require strategic allocation of staff resources:

- Program Managers will be responsible for multiple program areas and tasks, requiring a strong knowledge of watershed issues, as well as the ability to multi-task and manage their own time to meet all program area obligations
- Program Managers will be required to seek funding to support their program areas and responsibilities, within the context of the strategic plan and annual workplans
- IRWA will use interns/ junior staff for routine tasks to help keep staffing costs at modest levels, and to provide a training ground for people skilled in watershed protection work
- IRWA will seek to provide wages/ salaries and benefits sufficient to attract and keep capable workers, including incentives to keep highly motivated and productive workers
- The Executive Director and Program Managers must improve communication measures to ensure most effective and productive use of resources
- A strong volunteer effort will continue to be part of IRWA's strategy to most effectively employ human resources

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In the future, IRWA's work will be organized into the following areas with estimated staffing level (it is anticipated that the Executive Director and Programs Director will be actively engaged in direct program work as well as management):

1. Executive Director (.75 FTE):
 - a. Spokesperson for organization; chief advocate
 - b. Policy, program and project development
 - c. Fundraising
2. Assistant Director (1 FTE)
 - a. Financial management and administration, including budgeting
 - b. Organizational management and administration
 - c. Fundraising
 - d. Administrative support staff (.5 FTE): professional bookkeeping, office management
3. Development Director (.75-1 FTE):
 - a. Unrestricted fundraising and major events
 - b. Membership recruitment and retention
 - c. Large donor, corporate, endowment, planned giving initiatives/ campaigns
 - d. Marketing
4. Programs Director (1 FTE): Manage all specific program areas, including planning, staffing, supervision and fundraising
 - a. Science/Monitoring Coordinator (.5 FTE): volunteer monitoring program coordination, data management, GIS?
 - b. Watershed Management/ Technical Assistance (.5-1 FTE): technical assistance on watershed management issues, primarily for municipalities
 - c. Education and Outreach (.75 FTE): school/ public education program, stream teams, coordination of local outreach efforts, organizing public forums, media

Strategic Alliances

IRWA will build upon existing and potential strategic alliances to achieve its goals and objectives.

- Scientific collaborations: IRWA will seek to continue partnership approaches to scientific investigations in the Ipswich River Watershed, including collaborations with the Ecosystem Center of the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole (MBL); the United States Geological Survey (USGS); the University of New Hampshire (UNH); the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); Massachusetts Audubon Society (Audubon); and other organizations.
- Opportunities for collaborations on watershed management, education and outreach, water conservation and technical assistance will be sought, including work with Audubon, The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR), Essex County Greenbelt Association (Greenbelt); the National Wildlife Federation; the Environmental League of Massachusetts; other watershed organizations; the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA); municipalities; business and civic organizations; sportsmen/women associations; schools; etc.
- Advocacy work will also seek partnerships with organizations and/or individuals whose interests are affected by proposed actions or regulatory decisions.
- The Ipswich River Restoration Partnership is the umbrella initiative governing the next five years of IRWA's work, providing a positive focus and inviting collaborations with organizations which support the overarching goal of river restoration.
- IRWA will seek partnerships for funding opportunities, including applications for state and federal grant programs.

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Funding strategy:

- 1) IRWA programs staff should receive training to become skilled in writing grant proposals and other short-term funding to support program/ workplan objectives; time will be allocated to allow staff to seek such funding
- 2) IRWA will seek long-term (multi-year) project support through one or more large grant proposals, supplemented by smaller proposals for complementary projects.
- 3) IRWA should seek project partnerships to help meet organizational objectives and to help achieve budgetary goals
- 4) IRWA's administrative and overhead costs will be accurately reflected in future project budgets and billing.
- 5) IRWA will seek corporate sponsors for programs, projects and events
- 6) Unrestricted sources of funding should supply 50% of IRWA's budget by 2005
 - a. Develop and implement marketing strategy and campaign
 - i. Seek professional consultation for message development
 - ii. Ensure close communication between development and outreach functions
 - iii. Employ Restoration Partnership and "Living Waters" themes
 - b. Membership: 1,000 dues paying individual/ family memberships
 - i. Coordinate with outreach campaign to improve IRWA name recognition
 - ii. Membership retention campaign
 - c. \$25-\$35,000 business support per year from corporate sources (not in-kind)
 - i. marketing packet
 - ii. sponsorship of programs, projects, events
 - iii. joint cosponsorship of events with North Shore Chamber of Commerce
 - iv. business members of Board, Restoration Partnership
 - d. develop large donor campaign to provide \$15,000-\$25,000/year
 - e. seek event(s) revenue (after expenses) of ~\$50,000/year
 - i. River Party
 - ii. Other events (art auctions, fundraiser for Annual Meeting)
 - f. plan and implement an endowment campaign
 - i. Enlist professional expertise in development of this campaign