



Presque Isle
Audubon

2021-2022 Strategic Plan

Purpose

The intention of this plan is to set a roadmap for continuing Presque Isle Audubon's long history of doing work which benefits birds, the environment, and the people in our community. While the plan is not meant to be exclusive and limiting the group to only what is contained within, it is meant to help steer decisions through a common and shared vision for a period of two years. Generally done to encompass a five year period, this update is for only two years due to the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the heart of the strategies and goals found within this report is the mission statement of Presque Isle Audubon

“To conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the enjoyment and benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity in northwestern Pennsylvania.”

This mission, which was developed by the 2013-2014 Strategic Planning Committee and then adopted by the Executive Board, reflects the essence of the organization and its historical commitment to birds, ecosystems, and the people of the Erie region.

Our Strategies

There are many ways to achieve goals, however it is valuable to make specific choices in the strategies employed so that the organization can focus efforts and resources. To that end, we have elected to focus our efforts in three strategies:

A. Saving Important Bird Areas and Significant Habitats

The Important Bird Areas within the Presque Isle Audubon area (Erie and Crawford Counties) are magnets for birds and people alike. They are designated to protect nesting and migratory bird species that rely on the unique habitats provided. The IBAs in the PIA region are all state recognized:

- Roderick Wildlife Preserve - SGL 314
- Presque Isle Bay Martin Roost
- Presque Isle State Park
- Hemlock Hill Research Area (Private land)
- Cussewago Bottoms
- Pymatuning, Hartstown Complex

Conneaut Marsh - Geneva Marsh Erie National Wildlife Refuge

These IBAs, and other significant habitats such as Erie Bluffs State Park, the three PIA Sanctuaries, as well as the Erie county shoreline, have much diversity. Unfortunately, human activity and development has caused habitat loss, disruption and fragmentation, placing birds that rely on these habitats at risk. There is still much to protect or improve.

Through active advocacy for stewardship, and developing ways for more people to become educated about these unique habitats and the species they harbor, PIA can develop a growing army of volunteer caretakers of nesting habitat and stopover sites for migrating birds. PIA can contribute to the preservation of these habitats by

- 1) encouraging participation in programs like Weed Warriors at PISP
- 2) offering educational programs that highlight the species found within these habitats
- 3) publicly support policies and practices that will reduce threats to these environments.

B. Creating Bird Friendly Communities

The Erie region is made up of many diverse locales, from urban to rural, and people can play a critical role in fostering healthy wildlife populations and communities. As the leading voice for birds in the Erie region, PIA can inspire the one in five adults who watch birds to make daily lifestyle choices that add up to real conservation impact. We can also foster bird-friendly communities by developing a membership that can actively participate in PIA activities, education, and citizen science projects.

C. PIA Organizational Development

Formed in 1957 and becoming affiliated as a chapter of National Audubon in 1961, Presque Isle Audubon has a long and successful history of advocacy, education and community involvement. To build upon the foundation crafted by our early members, PIA continues to look for ways to improve the strength of the organization, grow membership and evolve our practices and procedures to ensure the success of the organization now and in the future.

Two Year Goals

Our goals are set to provide specific measurable objectives that can be accomplished between 2021 and 2022. These goals do not represent every activity, event, or need to which we will devote energy and resources, but instead serve as a list of understandable, measurable, and achievable priorities which should be addressed by the organization. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, and its effect on social gatherings, we realize that over the next few years PIA will need to adhere to CDC guidelines as to what activities are safe to participate in. We may be able to transition back to the normal state of affairs by the end of 2022, depending on public health circumstances. The core goals we believe we can make progress on within these two years remain the same as in the previous strategic plan:

- A SAVING IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS & SIGNIFICANT HABITAT
- B CREATING BIRD-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES
- C PIA ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A SAVING IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS & SIGNIFICANT HABITAT

1. Conserve or assist in the conservation of important habitats such as Gull Point, especially through increased contact and communication with legislators and policy makers at the local, state and federal levels.
2. Continue to improve our existing Sanctuaries in terms of how they may be best utilized by birds, and work towards improving those properties.
3. Continue participation in removing invasive plant species at Presque Isle State Park.

B CREATING BIRD-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

1. Improve communication via social media.
2. Inform and educate our community regarding birds, birding, habitats, and conservation.
3. Promote activities for people from urban environments who have limited exposure to nature.
4. Increase participation in educational and outreach events as much as safely possible during the COVID-19 pandemic.
5. Increase participation in citizen science projects sponsored by PIA.
6. Increase programming for children as much as safely possible during the COVID-19 pandemic.
7. Increase the number of field trips while maintaining safety precautions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

8. Continue to collaborate with like-minded organizations such as the Erie Bird Observatory, Foundation for Sustainable Forests.
9. Use the PIA Sanctuaries to inform and educate our community.
10. Create and publicize a PIA speakers' bureau.

C) PIA ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Increase participation in governance, membership, and committees.
2. Revamp monthly programs and better publicize them to increase attendance and/or reach new audiences.
3. Improve the marketing of PIA.
4. Increase diversity of membership.
5. Evaluate and adapt existing events to better suit member interests.
6. Increase communication of organizational information (e.g., finances, Board decisions and activities) to the membership.
7. Conduct on-going membership surveys.
8. Create a process for developing and mentoring new leaders.
9. Create a comprehensive transition process for organizational leadership.
10. Conduct a yearly review, and if needed, revision of the bylaws.
11. Clarify the organizational structure, responsibilities, and involvement to the membership and community.

Continuing Forward

A plan requires those in leadership to choose to enact it and stay the course. Much work needs to be done to bring resolution to the many objectives, and it is the responsibility of the PIA leadership and membership to work together to save important bird areas and habitats, create bird friendly communities, and improve the organization for future generations. At least once per year the Executive Board, through the leadership of the officers, should release a report which outlines the work being done towards the goals in this plan.

The following members, friends, and leaders of Presque Isle Audubon have assisted in the development of this plan:

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Janet Price
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