



WESTERN APICULTURAL SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

2025–2030 Strategic Plan

Between January 18, 2025 and March 16, 2025 The Board of Directors of the Western Apicultural Society met four times for the purpose of developing a new strategic direction for the Society.

The 3 planning sessions were facilitated by Tom Jacobson, himself a beekeeper and the Founder and Principal of High Country Strategies (P.O. Box 325, Cascade, MT, 59421).

The outcome of these strategy sessions was the adoption of Mission, Vision, and Core Value statements for the organization and establishment of the following five priorities for further development and implementation (in alphabetical order): 1) Board Development, 2) Education, 3) Membership, 4) Research, and 5) Resource Development.

Goals, objectives, and strategies for each of the five priorities were identified and a phased work plan was developed.

During the implementation phase, the President or his designee will lead the development of a work-plan and provide regular updates to the Board on the specific, measurable steps taken towards achieving the stated goals.

Mission

The mission of the Western Apicultural Society is to support and inform beekeepers through education in the art and science of beekeeping.

Vision

The Western Apicultural Society envisions a region where beekeepers are better informed and confident in creating a healthy environment for honey bees and other pollinators to thrive.

Core Values

- Inclusivity, engagement, and participation
- Evidenced-based and data-driven information
- Vetted and ethical practices
- Peer reviewed research
- Shared experiences
- Respect for alternative and responsible beekeeping practices
- Innovation
- Stewardship of beekeepers and honey bees

Strategic Priorities

Below are the five strategic priorities for the Western Apicultural Society.

1. **Board Development Goal:** Strengthen Board Effectiveness and Governance

- A. **Objective:** Enhance the board's structure, engagement, and decision-making to support the organization's long-term success.

• **Key Activities & Strategies**

- 1) **Board Composition & Diversity** – Recruit and retain members with diverse skills, backgrounds, and expertise aligned with organizational needs.
- 2) **Training & Development** – Implement ongoing governance training, leadership development, and best practice sharing for board members.
- 3) **Performance & Accountability** – Establish clear expectations and accountability measures for board effectiveness.
- 4) **Engagement & Communication** – Improve collaboration between the board, executive leadership, and stakeholders through structured meetings and transparent communication.

- 5) **Succession Planning** – Develop a structured plan to ensure leadership continuity and board renewal.

B. Work Plan

- Develop a job description for board members
- Conduct annual board self-assessments
- Create onboarding process for new board members
- Offer regular board development/training sessions

2. Education Goal: Increase and improve beekeeping knowledge

A. Objective 1: Create a reliable information repository

• **Key Activities & Strategies**

- 1) Maintain an organized and intuitive website and a social media platform utilized by the Society
- 2) Establish a membership only paywall

B. Objective 2: Create educational opportunities

• **Key Activities & Strategies**

- 1) Organize and deliver educational mini-conferences to members covering honey bee related topics via a video conferencing tool
- 2) Organize and deliver recurring in-person conferences to bring beekeepers together with researchers, industry leaders and beekeeping suppliers
- 3) Make current research projects and their results available to members through conferences, website posts and social media platforms
- 4) Utilize social media to ensure educational and research information is available to all members
- 5) Disseminate a periodic Newsletter

- 6) Create and maintain an online forum to bring beekeeping experts together with beekeepers seeking a place to ask questions, connecting with other beekeepers and sharing of information
- 7) Make educational content available to member honey bee clubs so that it can be shared with their membership

D. **Objective 3:** Mentor the mentors

- **Key Activities & Strategies:** Provide beekeeping instructors with the necessary materials to help them with educating others in the field of beekeeping

E. **Work Plan**

- Develop regional webinars on sustainable practices
- Create beginner-to-advanced curriculum resources
- Partner with bee clubs to co-host events

3. **Membership Goal:** Increase membership in WAS

A. **Objective 1:** Provide value for members

- **Key Activities & Strategies**

- 1) Develop member only opportunities
 - a) Website exclusive member content
 - b) Mini conferences
 - c) Online forums
 - d) Discounted in-person conference attendance
- 2) Engage members to determine training topics
- 3) Discounted equipment and supplies

B. **Objective 2:** Increase awareness of WAS among beekeepers

- **Key Activities & Strategies**

- 1) Increase social media presence
- 2) Increase print journal advertising presence
- 3) Develop advertising materials to promote WAS
- 4) Engage board members in outreach to beekeepers

C. **Objective 3:** Engage state and local bee clubs

- **Key Activities & Strategies**

- 1) Provide resources for club members to share at local events
- 2) Provide incentives for local club members to join
- 3) Offer an organizational membership level

D. **Objective 4:** Engage beekeeping educators and researchers

- **Key Activities & Strategies:** Incentivize membership for educators, researchers

E. **Objective 5:** Assure membership dues structure remains sufficient to cover operational costs and provide adequate operational reserves

F. **Work Plan**

- Launch outreach campaign to hobbyists and students
- Provide membership incentives (e.g., discounts, access to events)
- Develop mentorship opportunities

4. Research Goal: Support research on honey bee health

A. **Objective 1:** Seek resources to support the research

- **Key Activities & Strategies**

- 1) Elicit donations

- 2) Utilize existing research funds to generate additional donations
- 3) Create awareness of the need for additional research
- 4) Promote the research fund to elicit additional donations
- 5) Reestablish the committee to oversee and grow donations

B. **Objective 2:** Establish Criteria for the disbursement of research funds

- **Key Activities & Strategies:** Research committee develops criteria

C. **Work Plan**

- Identify relevant research needs in the region
- Collaborate with universities/researchers
- Publish findings on WAS platform

5. **Resource Development Goal:** Generate adequate and sustainable resources for achieving goals

A. **Objective 1:** Refine the existing income structure to ensure the operating costs of the organization are met and an adequate reserve is maintained

- **Key Activities & Strategies**

- 1) Membership dues structure
- 2) Adequate to cover administrative costs and maintain reserve
- 3) Require membership to attend in-person and mini conferences

B. **Objective 2:** Ensure adequate revenue to cover the costs of research, education and membership

- **Key Activities & Strategies**

- 1) Develop a sponsorship program for mini conferences
- 2) Cover in-person conference expenses and add to reserves

- 3) Sponsorships
- 4) Donations
- 5) Attendance Fees
- 6) Scholarship fund
- 7) Establish a process to administer the endowment fund for honey bee research
- 8) *Create swag and develop a merchandise trading area to achieve sustainability*

C. Work Plan

- Create donor and sponsor packages
- Apply for grants to fund programs
- Host fundraising events (e.g., auctions, honey tastings)