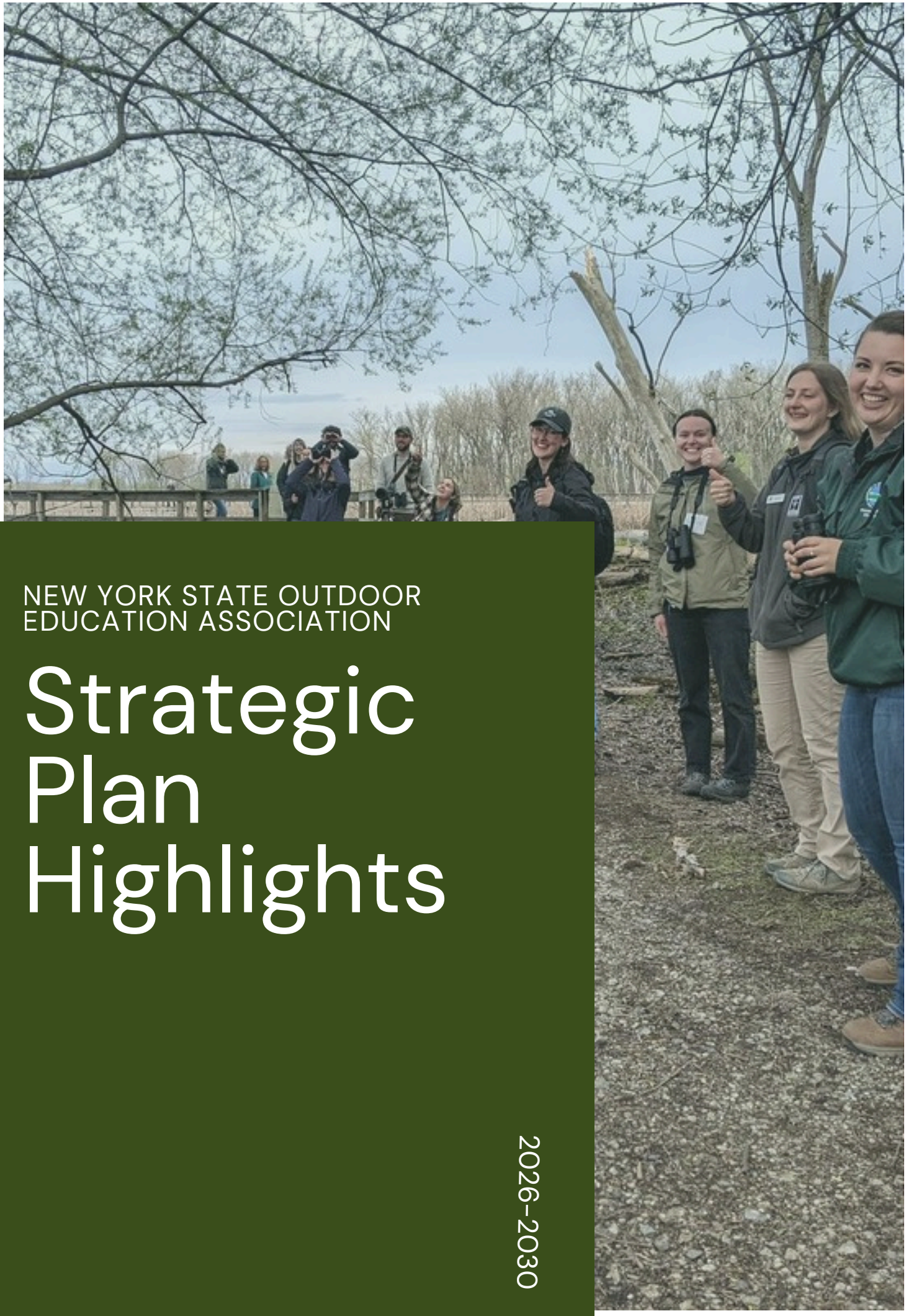

NEW YORK STATE OUTDOOR EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Strategic Plan Highlights

2026–2030

Introduction

The New York State Outdoor Education Association (NYSOEA) is a membership-supported, volunteer-run nonprofit dedicated to outdoor and environmental education.

A treasured professional organization for environmental and outdoor educators, the New York State Outdoor Education Association (NYSOEA) supports life-long learning about the natural world.

Established in 1968, NYSOEA members make up a broad network of students and professionals working and learning together. Members include staff at public agencies, classroom teachers, college professors, naturalists, interpreters, students, youth leaders, parents, and outdoor recreation specialists.

NYSEOA connects people in the education and environmental fields, provides interdisciplinary educational opportunities, and inspires appreciation and stewardship of the natural world.

In the winter, spring, and fall of 2025, NYSOEA developed a new five-year strategic plan with the support of co-see consulting group. The 2026-2030 Strategic Plan includes an updated vision, purpose, and mission statement.

NYSOEA's new Strategic Plan provides a roadmap to strengthen organizational health and enhance capacity for NYSOEA's mission, programs, events, and field building efforts.

NYSOEA's board and volunteers will use the plan to guide priorities and decisions. The plan focuses on four key areas:

- Organizational Health
- Education
- External Affairs
- Field Building

The organizational health area includes board and staff development, equity, access, and inclusion work (EAI), HR, operations, and administrative work.

Education includes NYSOEA's events, programs, and PATHWAYS publication.

External Affairs includes communications, marketing, fundraising, and partnerships.

Field building includes membership and teacher engagement.

Purpose

The New York State Outdoor Education Association (NYSOEA) is a professional organization that supports life-long learning about the natural world.

Mission

NYSOEA connects people in the education and environmental fields, provides interdisciplinary educational opportunities, and inspires appreciation and stewardship of the natural world.

Vision

A vibrant network of connected educators that inspire people to be lifelong students and stewards of the natural world.

Organizational Health

NYSOEA is a membership-supported, volunteer-run nonprofit. A central aim of the 2026-2030 Strategic Plan is to enhance the capacity of the organization.

Key priorities include:

5-YEAR GOALS

- Restructure and reinvigorate equity, access, and inclusion (EAI) committee and efforts
- Create sustainable systems and processes with clear roles and responsibilities
- Create clear organizational vision

5-YEAR IMPACTS

- Members are meaningfully engaged in EAI activities
- Member management is easy for board and volunteers
- Board and volunteers are proud ambassadors of NYSOEA and fee confident sharing NYSOEA's purpose, mission, and vision

Education

Based on the 2025 community survey, NYSOEA's educational programs and events are highly valued. The 2026-2030 Strategic Plan aims to continue providing excellent educational opportunities, such as the Annual Conference and Winter Weekend, and to expand and enhance local programming.

Key priorities include:

5-YEAR GOALS

- Continue to host Annual Conference and Winter Weekend
- Continue, expand, and reimagine regional programs and events
- Continue and offer more scholarships and grants

5-YEAR IMPACTS

- The community continues to value NYSOEA programs and events.
- Annual events continue to be well-attended and highly regarded.
- Regional events grow in interest and variety.
- Access to NYSOEA's programs and events is increased.

External Affairs

Communications and fundraising strategies are key to expanding the organization's influence and sustaining its mission. A key aim of the 2026-2030 Strategic Plan is to update NYSOEA's brand and build stronger relationships with key audiences.

Key priorities include:

5-YEAR GOALS

- Develop robust communications strategy to engage key audiences
- Create financial plan to increase and diversify revenue streams
- Cultivate and sustain relationships with volunteers, members, sponsors, donors, and foundations

5-YEAR IMPACTS

- NYSOEA is well-known and valued among environmental educators, classroom teachers, university faculty and students, peer institutions, sponsors, and foundations
- Revenue streams are diversified and stabilized
- Funding for scholarships, free memberships, etc. grows

Field Building

NYSOEA seeks to strengthen and further integrate the fields of outdoor education and environmental education. A key aim of the 2026-2030 Strategic Plan is to reduce barriers to access and strengthen engagement with key audiences.

Key priorities include:

5-YEAR GOALS

- Develop meaningful membership program
- Create/share member directory and affiliate map and directory
- Build relationships with classroom teachers, develop programming that suits their needs, and strengthen connections with teacher groups

5-YEAR IMPACTS

- Membership program is meaningful for enrollees and manageable to administer
- Members are more connected to one another and NYSOEA
- Classroom teachers participate in planning, recruitment, and events
- Barriers to participation are reduced (e.g. timing of events, transportation)

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