Clean Water for All
Clean Water for All Coalition
SAC A

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Clean Water for All Steering Committee:
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
American Rivers
American Sustainable Business Council
BlueGreen Alliance
Children’s Environmental Health Network
Clean Water Action
Clean Water Network/Environment America
Earthjustice
GreenLatinos
League of Conservation Voters
National Latino Farmers and Ranchers
National Parks Conservation Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
National Wildlife Federation
River Network
Rural Coalition
Sierra Club
Trout Unlimited
Introduction

We all need clean, safe water — for drinking and to live healthy lives; for our rivers, bays, lakes, and streams that are vital to healthy communities and the environment; to support swimming, fishing, boating, and other recreational activities that create a strong economy. We know that many communities, particularly Black, Indigenous, People of Color and low-wealth communities have not had the same access to safe, clean water, whether for drinking or recreation.

Clean Water for All is a national coalition that brings together diverse organizations to build and use their collective power to advance equitable policies that promote and increase clean water protections, access, and affordability across the nation.

In action and commitment to our values, mission, and members, the Clean Water for All Coalition invested time and resources to develop its first-ever three-year strategic plan in an effort to better understand what role does Clean Water for All currently play for its members, and within the larger water movement, and how could that role be expanded?

Throughout this process, we learned that our members and partners see Clean Water for All's programs, staff, and membership network as critical movement infrastructure that supports collaborative strategy. The Coalition's work group spaces, information sharing, communication resources, policy expertise, and relationship building, and collective action opportunities provide critical capacity to the clean water movement and helps in the capacity building of its member organizations, in particular those who have been historically under-resourced and under-represented.

This plan is our guide for how we will structure ourselves and work together with our members and the broader movement, and therefore does not include specific policy priorities. Instead, it outlines programs to: support our membership, collectively identify our policy priorities going forward, and build capacity across the broader clean water movement.

Clean Water for All, across our programs, leadership, and membership, will work to deepen trust and transparency, invest in community joy and care, and cultivate a culture that is open to transformation as we continue our journey towards being more equitable, inclusive, and responsive to our membership and building the power to achieve our mission.
2023-2025 Coalition Strategic Plan

Throughout 2022, the Clean Water for All Coalition invested time and resources to undergo our first-ever strategic planning process. We sought to listen to and engage with our members and partners, working together to develop a three-year strategic plan for the Coalition. Throughout this effort, we asked: **What role does Clean Water for All currently play for its members and within the larger water movement? How could that role be expanded?**

Loya Strategies, the firm brought in to create the strategic plan, created a process for answering the above questions through various methods of engagement with the Coalition and broader water movement, including:

- Conducting an internal audit of existing Coalition documents and activities, such as work group and leadership calls.
- Sending out a Coalition-wide survey, which was filled out by 42 individuals.
- Conducting 15 one-on-one interviews with active members and partners.
- Holding three 1.5 hour-long feedback meetings of a Strategic Planning cohort made up of Coalition members, staff, and leadership from Steering Committee and Co-Chairs.

Overall, through these outreach methods, approximately 70% of Coalition member organizations were reached and involved in the strategic planning process. The Coalition’s Steering Committee then completed an extensive review of the components of the plan and voted on ratifying the plan with an overall average of 95% support, showing confidence in the direction of the programs and needs outlined throughout this report.

Core Organizational Elements Guiding Our Work

*These core organizational elements, which were last reviewed in 2019, have been updated to better reflect where the Coalition has gone and what we continue to strive for.*

OUR VISION

We envision every community has safe and affordable clean water that supports thriving communities, healthy ecosystems, cultural resources, and wildlife.

OUR MISSION

Clean Water for All is a national coalition that brings together organizations to build and utilize collective power to advance equitable policies that increase access, affordability, and strong protections of clean water across the nation.

OUR VALUES

The Coalition commits to these shared values, which are central to our collective work as we build partnerships, collaboration, and support for strong clean water protections.

- We value **inclusion**, **racial justice** and **equity** (dismantling systems of oppression, self-determination, etc.) as well as the dynamic and complex relationship between them.
- We value **collaboration**, focusing on **trust building** and **elevating those most impacted by water pollution and lack of federal investments**, including Black, Indigenous, People of Color and low-wealth communities.
• We value care, passion, creativity, positive impact, the boldness of risk-taking and courage, and innovation in our actions.

• We value transparency and open dialogue, especially the ability and commitment to working with and through tension.

• We respect the land, water, and its original stewards, each other, and our greater collective commitment.

**Serving Our Members & The Movement**

Clean Water for All was founded in recognition of the need for a single, comprehensive coalition that advocates for national clean water protections, which in turn benefit watersheds across the country. Since our founding in 2016, the Coalition has quadrupled in size to serve over 80 member organizations. In that time, Clean Water for All has played a pivotal role fostering connections between the need for strong water policy (and other threats facing our environment and communities) and helping to ensure the environmental movement is elevating a diverse range of voices to prioritize the expansion of clean water protections for communities that have historically been excluded from or under-represented in federal decision-making, yet who bear the greatest burdens brought on by water pollution and other clean water threats.

As we have grown, our members and partners have seen Clean Water for All become particularly successful at:

• Convening diverse sets of expertise and perspectives passionate about advancing clean water protections across the United States.

• Providing leadership, policy support, and intel for organizations interested in and committed to advancing clean water issues at the federal level.

• Developing and sharing resources with the intention of building capacity in the water policy arena, specifically for those who have been historically under-resourced and under-represented, including those serving rural, low income, and communities of color.

Looking ahead, Clean Water for All members recommended the Coalition strive to:

- Establish relationships rooted in trust allowing on-the-ground information to be incorporated into federal advocacy strategies

- Grow the coalition in an intentional, equitable manner particular emphasis on engaging and serving underserved communities

- Provide a policy platform for movement building across diverse communities towards collective federal water goals that benefit all communities

- Be an inclusive coalition where people who are working for clean, safe, accessible water in communities across the United States work together as a collective movement to build power for Congress and Federal agencies

- Become a resource/movement building hub that is intentionally educating, supporting, and creating leadership pathways for community organizations
Our Renewed Purpose

Our members and partners see Clean Water for All’s programs, staff, and membership network as critical movement infrastructure that supports collaborative strategy development, collective action, information sharing, and relationship building across the movement.

The Clean Water for All Coalition therefore is outlining our intention to work towards the following goals:

Cultivate a Diverse Membership & Build Trust-Based Connections

- Build a strong and inclusive Coalition, where our organizational membership and leadership is reflective of the rich diversity of organizations doing work on federal clean water policy.

- Disrupt historic inequities by directly supporting diverse members and partners with subgrants and other resources, remaining open to self-transformation, and expanding and diversifying our leadership and membership.

- Cultivate inclusive virtual and in-person spaces that are focused on collaboration and relationship and trust building that cares for the individual/organization and not just their work.

Build an Ambitious and Inclusive Policy Agenda & Associated Campaigns

- Convene diverse membership with a variety of expertise, perspectives, and experiences, who are all passionate about advancing clean water protections across the United States.

- Build a shared understanding of, elevate, and take action on clean water issues, in particular issues impacting historically underrepresented communities such as Black, Indigenous and People of Color and low-wealth communities.

- Collaborate and share information within the Coalition and among trusted partners, in order to build and utilize our collective power to influence policy, programs, and key decision-makers to advance clean water protections at the federal level.

Focus on Movement Building and Supporting Membership: Capacity Building & Convening Movement-Wide Relationships

- Develop resources, such as messaging guides, research & data, and policy reports, with the intention of building capacity among our members and within the broader clean water arena.

- Contribute to the building of an impactful and equitable clean water movement by working in collaboration, solidarity, and reciprocity with other clean water movement participants.

- Use our collective power to advocate and influence policy, programs, and key decision-makers to advance clean water protections.
Organizing Our Work: Five Core Programmatic Areas

With our ambitious clean water policy goals and a re-centering of our mission, vision, and values, the Coalition is being organized into five new programmatic areas that will allow us to cultivate a diverse membership and build trust-based connections; build an ambitious and inclusive Policy Agenda; and focus on movement building and supporting our membership and the broader community.

1 Invest in Member Coordination and Connections

OVERVIEW:
This program area is a formalization of existing membership initiatives. Formalizing these activities as an independent program area will allow Coalition leadership and staff to invest time and resources on creating an inclusive and welcoming membership experience for all.

OVERALL GOAL:
- Build a strong and inclusive Coalition, where our organizational membership and leadership is reflective of the rich diversity of communities across our nation including diversity in race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, and more.
- Coalition membership is well-informed, actively engaged, and built on trusting and transformative relationships.

PROGRAMMATIC FUNCTIONS:
- Facilitate and encourage member-to-member sharing and partnership efforts.
- Establish and maintain recurring opportunities for members to connect, for networking and relationship-building.
- Cultivate and maintain practices of appreciation, vulnerability, and community care.
- Consistently solicit and aggregate feedback from membership and work to improve Coalition processes so that member’s needs are met.

2 Build an Ambitious, Inclusive, Long Term Policy Agenda & Associated Campaigns

3 Reimagine Issue-Focused Work Groups

4 Support Our Membership: Resource Hub & Capacity Building

5 Focus on Movement Building as a Convener of Movement-Wide Relationships
Program Area #2: Build an Ambitious, Inclusive, Long Term Policy Agenda & Associated Campaigns

OVERVIEW:
Building upon the existing annual work plan development process, the Coalition will work toward the creation of a cyclical Policy Agenda every four years. The results of the Policy Agenda will inform the issue work groups and associated campaigns of the Coalition for the years following its release.

OVERALL GOAL:
Develop a community-created, movement-aligned, ambitious, and inclusive Policy Agenda that informs the Coalition's programs and campaigns.

PROGRAMMATIC FUNCTIONS:
- The Policy Agenda is meant to include short, medium, and long-term goals.
- The Policy Agenda will be updated every 4 years in alignment with Presidential Election cycles, with interim annual work plans adapting and responding to meet the moment of shorter-term policy needs and opportunities (i.e. rulemakings, legislation, etc.).

Program Area #3: Reimagine Issue-Focused Work Groups

OVERVIEW:
Issue-Focused Work Groups will continue to be a focal program area for the Coalition and serve as the primary area where collective activities are developed and implemented. A new focus of these work groups will be expanding education and understanding of issues across the membership. The issues these groups cover will reflect the results of the Long-term Policy Agenda, as well as any special projects.

OVERALL GOAL:
Create Coalition spaces that encourage dialogue, information sharing, and education about identified issues. Issue Work Groups are the primary spaces where strategies, activities, and advocacy actions are developed and implemented.

PROGRAMMATIC FUNCTIONS:
- Issue-Focused Work Groups will have three primary focuses for members:
  - Creating collaborative policy and advocacy strategy on both time-sensitive policy and regulatory actions and longer-term campaigns established under the Long-Term Policy Agenda;
  - Promoting educational opportunities and expanded understanding of issues across membership; and
  - Convening inclusive spaces for discussion and intel sharing to promote strategic coordination.

Program Area #4: Support Our Membership: Resource Hub & Capacity Building

OVERVIEW:
This program area is a formalization of existing capacity building initiatives. Formalizing these activities as an independent program area will allow Coalition leadership and staff to invest time and resources on expanding and curating capacity-building resources to better support member activities and engagement.
OVERALL GOAL:
The Coalition serves as support infrastructure to its members and is committed to providing resources, including communication toolkits, policy expertise, and financial resources to support their leadership and engagement in Coalition activities and with the broader clean water movement.

PROGRAMMATIC FUNCTIONS:
• Establish and maintain consistent and clear internal infrastructure focused on information sharing about activities and opportunities among members.
• Develop resources that support the education and capacity building of members. These materials should be tailored to various “audiences” as best as possible.

Program Area #5: Focus on Movement Building as a Convener of Movement-Wide Relationships

OVERVIEW:
This program area, although new to the Coalition, is a natural next step from our work as a convener within the clean water movement. The Coalition currently works closely with, and is seen as, a trusted partner to many other clean water coalition players and organizations across the movement. In alignment with our mission, vision, and values, it is important for the Coalition to help build movement-wide relationships.

OVERALL GOAL:
The Coalition is a critical part of the broader clean water movement. The Coalition works to break down silos and build collective power with other various parts of the movement.

PROGRAMMATIC FUNCTIONS:
• Develop deep relationships of trust, respect, and reciprocity with values-aligned movement partners and other networks and coalitions in order to share information, formulate opportunities for collaboration, and more.
• Identify and increase the number of Coalition activities that are open to movement partners and their members as an extension of the Coalition’s education and leadership-building values.
• Establish an internal framework and process for solidary action requests (for involvement in issues outside of our policy priorities).
**Structures for Achieving Our Goals**

The new program areas outlined above will now be incorporated into an expanded and revised Coalition structure that includes four main pillars: Internal Operations, Membership, Work Groups, and Movement Building. Each of the program’s primarily functions are then represented under each of those pillars in the chart below.

![Coalition Organization Flow Chart](chart)

The Coalition offers many opportunities for organizational members to get involved in our work and with this plan are aiming to be more intentional and transparent about the different ways that groups can get involved.

![Membership Opportunity Chart](chart)
Beyond better engaging our membership, to do the work outlined in this plan, the Coalition will be relying heavily on our Leadership to accomplish these goals. The Leadership of the Coalition includes:

- **Co-Chairs:** There are five organizations that serve as co-chairs, with their organizations meant to represent the breadth of the Coalition and be reflective of our membership, with 1-2 specific individuals serving in the role per organization. Co-Chairs are responsible for overseeing Coalition staff, providing strategic guidance on the Coalition's direction and DEI efforts, and working with Coalition staff on fundraising and funder relations for the Coalition. Each Co-Chair serves two year-terms, except for the Fiscal Sponsor Organization, which is an active/ongoing role. The **Lead Co-Chair** is a funded position that works more closely with staff to provide strategic direction to the Coalition.

- **Steering Committee:** The Steering Committee is made up of organizations who are interested in serving as an oversight body for the Coalition. The Steering Committee is the main voting body of the Coalition and acts as the Coalition's "think tank" for implementing the Strategic Plan, Long-Term Policy Agenda, and yearly Work Plans, as well as creating the Coalition's annual budget. There is no limit to the number of organizations that can join the Steering Committee.

- **Work Group Leads:** Each Work Group will have 2-3 Work Group Leads who are responsible for hosting calls, overseeing their listervs (with support from Coalition staff), and ensuring policy/advocacy campaigns and strategies, education, and membership engagement goals of the work group are met and that all members and work group participants feel included in the work of the Coalition.

And finally, the Coalition has been supported by one full-time staff person and consultants/part-time staff for the past few years. In order to better meet the goals outlined in this plan and reduce the responsibilities put on our Coalition Leadership, most of whom are volunteers, the Coalition is outlining **new, ambitious near-term staffing goals to increase our capacity. By 2025, we aim to have not just a full-time Director, but also two additional full-time staff members** to support our members and build-up resources that will benefit the broader clean water movement, oversee the creation of the Long-Term Policy Agenda and other Coalition structures outlined in this Plan, and manage the Coalition’s internal operations.
CONCLUSION

As a Coalition, we are only as strong as our members. That is why we have built this Plan, based on member feedback, to address the core functions they see Clean Water for All as being poised to fill: to cultivate a diverse membership and build trust-based connections; build an ambitious and inclusive Policy Agenda; and focus on movement building and supporting our membership and the broader community.

We do this work to push towards our vision of seeing every community having access to safe and affordable clean water that supports thriving communities, healthy ecosystems, cultural resources, and wildlife.

We are excited to work with you to achieve these ambitious goals and work together to protect clean water! If you are not yet a member of the Clean Water for All Coalition, please visit https://bit.ly/Member-Agreement

To learn more about the Clean Water for All Coalition and our work, please visit our website at http://protectcleanwater.org/

And feel free to reach out to our staff or Co-Chairs to discuss supporting, joining, and/or engaging with the Coalition:

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    Gary Belan, Co-Chair, gbelan@americanrivers.org
    Glenn Watkins, Co-Chair, watkinsg@nwf.org
    Mariana Del Valle Prieto Cervantes, Co-Chair, marianadelvalle@greenlatinos.org
    Steve Moyer, Co-Chair, steve.moyer@tu.org
APPENDIX

COALITION MEMBER PRACTICES

The following Coalition Member Practices will be shared with all new and existing members of the Coalition to ensure we have a shared understanding of how we work together on the Coalition’s list servs, calls, and meetings.

- GOOD FAITH: Act in good faith in all aspects of group deliberations with the intent to promote joint problem solving, collaboration, and collective, common-ground solutions.
- OWNERSHIP: Take ownership in the outcomes and the success of the Coalition.
- OPENNESS: Be honest and open in sharing your perspectives; be open to other points of view and to the outcome of discussions.
- FOCUS: Maintain focus on the mission and goals of the Coalition as well meeting objectives; honor agendas. Members should not use the Coalition listservs for commercial purposes.
- LISTENING: Listen to each speaker rather than preparing your response. Do not interrupt. Refrain from use of smart phones and other technologies.
- PARTICIPATION: Participate actively, speak briefly, and agree succinctly. Be mindful and respectful of the presence of multiple backgrounds and areas of expertise and avoid the use of acronyms that not all members may know.
- RESPECT: Disagree judiciously and without being disagreeable; do not engage in personal attacks. In all contexts, refrain from behavior that denigrates other participants or is disruptive to the work of the group. Go tough on the issues, and easy on one another.
- CONFIDENTIALITY: Comments made during meeting discussions are off the record and not for attribution. No member should quote another member or characterize their views without their express permission. Members should not attempt to speak on behalf of the Coalition unless authorized by the full group.
- PREPAREDNESS AND COMMITMENT: Prepare for and attend each session; get up to speed if you missed a meeting.
- FACILITATION: Let the Facilitators facilitate; allow them to enforce the ground rules and engage them with any concerns.

DARCcI – Decision Making Model

As part of the Strategic Planning process, the Coalition was briefed on the DARCcI Decision Making Model from Partners for Collaborative Change, which is described below, and plans to incorporate its use in order to provide more transparency and accountability in decision-making and implementation of the Strategic Plan.

OVERVIEW:

DARCcI is a tool that can go far in establishing more democracy, transparency and equity in an organization or project. It’s really just a guideline to have a conversation, with a convenient acronym to remember each part of the conversation that needs to be had, and roles that need to be established. This clarity can prevent all kinds of common mishaps in organizations and groups.
**DARCcI Definitions:**
For each task or project, we will identify the role(s) of each person involved:

- **DECIDER:** The person or people making the decision. The D might be an individual leader, or it could be a group. If someone disagrees with the decision of the D(s), they must use the Decision Redress Process*

- **ACCOUNTABLE:** The single person fully accountable for making the project or function happen. It is possible for a D to also be the A. They also serve the role of reminding people of upcoming due dates and responsibilities as described by DARCcI. There should never be more than one A. This is an invitation to lack of clear accountability. If no one is willing to be the A, do not proceed.

- **RESPONSIBLE:** Those responsible for doing the work on the project. There may be a number of Rs. Rs are responsible for dealing with roadblocks, raising questions, and completing the project, task or function on time.

- **CONSULTED:** Those from whom input will be solicited within a previously agreed upon timeline, allowing thoughtful input AND if the D makes a decision that contradicts the input provided by a C, a meeting is arranged to discuss the reasoning behind it.

- **cCONSULTED:** Those from whom input will be solicited

- **INFORMED or INCLUDED:** Those to be kept apprised of relevant developments. This is a reminder for transparency and to consider who outside your immediate group may benefit from knowing these details.

**DARCcI Decision Redress Process**

When a decision is made and someone, regardless of positional power in the organization, disagrees with the decision, that person may request a meeting to attempt to redress the decision if at least one of the following conditions are met.

Conditions for redress:

1. The decision made may risk funding
2. The decision made may cause mission drift
3. The decision made may risk relationships or partnerships with others
4. The decision made significantly impedes someone’s ability to do their job or complete their work plan
5. The decision made is unrealistic (it won’t achieve the goals it purports to achieve, there is not staff capacity to implement the decision)
6. The decision-maker did not follow the DARCcI
7. It’s un-strategic, or there are other more strategic priorities that change the original decision
8. There is something that has priority over this, and this would take time away from that
The role of the D during a redress process
1. They embrace the information shared with them about the conditions that may require redress.
2. They seek understanding about the impact of their original decision and make an effort to remove that impact.
3. They maintain their responsibility and role as the D.

Quick Decision Redress Meeting guidelines (often the first step)
1. The person who would like to redress the decision (the “redresser”) reviews the conditions and ensures that at least one is being met.
2. The redresser then communicates directly to the decider about these conditions and requests that they make a new decision that resolves the problem/no longer triggers that condition.

If that doesn’t work, or is not appropriate to the redress needed:

Longer Decision Redress Meeting guidelines:
1. All those who are directly impacted by the decision attends, a neutral facilitator is appointed to facilitate.
2. The person calling for the meeting is responsible for:
   a. Scheduling the meeting
   b. Explaining the reason(s) they want to redress the decision
   c. Developing a counter-proposal ahead of time
   d. Giving people time to consider that proposal, prior to the meeting
3. Everyone works together to arrive at a new decision that:
   a. Removes the risk or concern
   b. Maintains and honors the core thinking behind the original decision
   c. Ideally has broad support
   d. Is strategic

If no consensus can be reached, the original decision is upheld.