



Pend Oreille Pedalers
5-year Strategic Plan 2023-2028

Our *Mission, Vision,* *and Core Values*



With the simple charter to “build, ride, and maintain” guiding our mission for most of the club’s history, the POP board convened in the spring of 2020 to formulate a more complete mission and vision statement. What came of that retreat was a clearer vision statement, a more robust statement of our mission, and an articulation of the underlying core values that form the foundation of our work in the community.

Vision:

An interconnected system of cycling routes and bike trails for riders of varying ability levels for the benefit of Sandpoint and surrounding areas.

Mission: “Building community through trails”

Maintain & Protect
existing mountain
bike trails & cycling
routes

Expand opportuni-
ties for mountain
biking & cycling

Advocate for the
interests of cyclists
with all stakeholders

Build & Ride trails
with others who
share a passion for
riding bikes

Core values:

Health

Quality of
Life

Social &
Economic
Development

Community
Connections

Conservation



About Pend Oreille Pedalers 20 years of Trail Stewardship

Formed as a loose group of cycling enthusiasts in the early 2000s and incorporated as a 501(c)3 non-profit in 2008, POP's focus in the early years was on offering local cyclists opportunities for social rides on the rugged trails of the Idaho Panhandle and the beautiful roads of the Selle Valley. In 2007, the club's focus began to turn to developing new mountain bike trails closer to Sandpoint, starting in Sherwood Forest, a private conservation property in the Syringa Heights neighborhood west of Sandpoint. Between the mid-2000's and 2018, POP built roughly six miles of trails in Sherwood Forest.

Meanwhile, the club had entered into agreements with both the Forest Service and the City of Sandpoint to maintain and protect trails popular with cyclists at Gold Hill, Mineral Point, and in the Lower Basin of the Little Sand Creek Watershed (on property owned by the City).

By 2012, the POP board of directors and elected officials in City government began discussing plans for an epic, high country trail that would put Sandpoint on the map as a world class mountain biking destination. A vision of a Watershed Crest Trail, encircling

the 7,700-acre Little Sand Creek Watershed, began to unfold, and in the late 2010's POP began building the trail south along the crest from Schweitzer. The Lower Basin, along Schweitzer Mountain Road, also saw new trails being developed starting in 2015.

In 2019 the local land conservancy, Kaniksu Land Trust, acquired 180 acres of land adjacent to Sherwood Forest, known as Pine Street Woods. In 2020 another friend of the club purchased the 100 acres south of Pine Street Woods, giving the property the name Velo Tout Terrain (VTT, which is French for "mountain bike"). With the addition of 280 acres of property to the Syringa System, the doors swung open for new trail development, and, with the hiring of its first executive director in 2020, POP was ready to assume the lead in planning, designing, and building out what is today the vastly expanded Syringa Trail System. In just three years Sandpoint's local trail network grew from 120 acres and six miles of trail to 400 acres with 16 miles of trails.

POP's experience developing new trail on private properties in the Syringa System empowered the organization to continue its advocacy work on public

lands, leading to a renewed partnership with the City of Sandpoint in 2022. In spring of 2023 the City, with POP support, is expected to adopt a Trail Master Plan for the greater Watershed, which envisions miles of new trails on City, Forest Service, BLM, State of Idaho, and Schweitzer property, and includes a concept for the long dreamed of Watershed Crest Trail. In the years to come, the buildout of the Little Sand Creek Watershed Trail Network will undoubtedly be a key strategic priority for Pend Oreille Pedalers.

Also, since 2020, POP has broadened its mission in the community beyond trail advocacy and social

rides, launching youth after-school and summer programs. New opportunities for both social and competitive rides have been offered, and the role of volunteers in trail development and maintenance has been bolstered, with the club leading over 30 trail work parties each year since 2020. Moving forward, programming for all ages, competitive cycling events, social rides, and other community-building activities will certainly play a role in POP's strategic plan. Increasing equity and access to the lifelong sport of mountain biking will also be a focus for the organization, as well as continuing to advocate for improved access to places to ride bikes safely close to where people live.



The Purpose of this Strategic Plan

POP's 20-year legacy of trail advocacy and building the cycling community of Sandpoint will carry on in the next five years and beyond. Sandpoint's growing population and the increasing popularity of cycling and mountain biking have fueled the club's growth in recent years, and is expected to continue to do so moving forward. The business community's recent support for POP's mission, demonstrated through our growing sponsorship program, reflects the appreciation for the role trail advocacy and development plays in economic development. Partnerships with the local land conservancy, local government, and federal partners such as the Forest Service and

the BLM reflect our values of conservation, health, and quality of life.

The purpose of this strategic plan is to put into writing the goals and objectives Pend Oreille Pedalers wishes to pursue over the next five years, and outline the strategies we will implement to achieve them. Furthermore, we wish to address the risks and challenges we will face, outline our financial needs, and prepare a succession plan to assure organizational sustainability as the club experiences board and staffing turnover in years to come.



Chapter 1:

Goals, Strategies, and Objectives

Goal #1

Advocate for and provide new places for people to ride bikes

Trails have long been a part of POP's mission. POP will continue to create a variety of trails that are accessible and enjoyable for mountain bikers and cyclists of all skill levels, types, and backgrounds.

Key Objectives

- Complete design and construction of a substantial amount of the trails in the Lower Basin focus area of the Little Sand Creek Watershed Trail Plan.
- Develop and adopt a detailed design and build plan for the Watershed Crest Trail.
- Develop new places for people to ride bikes within City limits.
- Connect people from where they live to where they want to ride their bikes.
- Explore opportunities for new trail network development and connectivity on private and public lands near Sandpoint.

Goal #2

Maintain existing trails to assure safety and sustainability

With a growing network of POP-built trails, ongoing maintenance must play a role in order to assure rider safety and environmental sustainability.

Key Objectives

- Adopt annual maintenance plans for area trail systems in which POP plays a maintenance role.
- Coordinate volunteer and POP staff effort to complete required maintenance as laid out in maintenance plans.
- Develop and adopt MOUs with all private and public land owners (who are willing) on whose land we maintain trails.

Goal #3

Build community around trails and cycling

The core of what POP does is build community around a love of cycling and trails-based recreation.

Key Objectives

- Provide as many opportunities for volunteer involvement in trail projects as possible.
- Lead weekly group mountain bike rides from May through September.
- Support group road and gravel bike rides.
- Host or support at least three competitive cycling events / races each year.
- Host at least two-member appreciation parties each year.



Goal #4

Promote skill and safety development through robust programming for riders of all ages

POP consistently hears from our community that more opportunities for skills development and coaching are desired.

Key Objectives

- Offer three sessions of youth programming each year.
- Increase equity and access to cycling for traditionally underserved groups through youth bike grants and scholarships.
- Partner with school district to provide bicycle safety training through annual bike rodeos.
- Provide opportunities for adults to develop mountain bike skills through clinics and camps.
- Incorporate POP programming into MOUs with landowners.





Strategy #1

Maintain open communication channels with club members and community

Our members are the reason POP exists. Their financial support allows us to operate, and their values and desires drive our mission in the community.

Key Objectives

- Maintain a database of current and past members.
- Grow membership base.
- Maintain open communication channels with members and prospective members through newsletters and social media.
- Provide regular in-person member meet-ups and club meetings.
- Produce an annual report .

Strategy #2

Develop and foster strong relationships with local business community

Individual memberships and business sponsorships provide the financial resources that support the club's operations. Continued development of close relationship with area businesses is key to our financial sustainability.

Key Objectives

- Maintain at least 30 local business sponsors each year.
- Recognize business sponsors publicly to thank them for their support.
- Communicate regularly with sponsors as a group, and to the extent possible, individually.

Strategy #3

Attract and retain highly qualified staff for key paid positions

At present, POP has only one paid staff person: the executive director. As the organization grows and broadens its mission in the community, the need to retain qualified club leadership and recruit and hire other staff members may arise.

Key Objectives

- Offer competitive salary to retain executive director, or recruit and hire new director when such a time comes.
- Hire seasonal trail crew leader / "trail boss".
- Recruit and train qualified mountain bike coaches into our MTB programs.
- POP program administrator; consider hiring seasonal program administrator in future.
- Assure POP staff are provided with ongoing professional development and training.

Strategy #4

Establish organization's fiscal and fundraising needs annually

As we have grown as an organization, our operational costs have increased correspondingly. More projects have led to greater fundraising needs, including grant writing and community fundraisers.

Key Objectives

- Sustain club's operational financial requirements through annual membership and sponsorship programs.
- POP programs are to be self-sufficient, with revenues covering all costs of running programs plus costs of administrative labor allocated towards programs.
- Continue to fund trail planning, design, and construction through grant-writing and community fundraising campaigns.
- Host races and events with specific fundraising targets to support programs and projects.
- Revisit and improve cost-share agreements with USFS and City of Sandpoint to better reflect POP's contributions towards trail maintenance on their properties.
- Maintain and build reserves to support POP's growing work in community, possibly establishing an endowment fund to support future trail development and club operations.

Strategy #5

Assure strong board governance and leadership

Strong board leadership assures that members of the Board of Directors will not be involved in the day-to-day operations of the organization, but will provide necessary guidance and establish policy that allows the Executive Director to fulfill this strategic plan on their behalf.

Key Objectives

- Review and update organization's bylaws and governance policies to assure stable leadership at the board level.
- Conduct biennial board training sessions to review board responsibilities and roles.

Strategy #6

Adopt committees to support specific goals in the strategic plan

Committees provide a way to involve board and club members in the development and delivery of services, represent member opinion in decision-making, and help serve member needs through interaction. They also offer the opportunity for group problem-solving and can be a forum for presenting multiple points of view.

Key Objectives

- Form committees to support specific goals and objectives from the strategic plan.



Chapter 2: Risks and strategies for addressing them

A plan must consider and establish contingencies for expected and unexpected risks and challenges the organization may face in the pursuit of its goals and objectives. In this chapter we will touch on some of these factors looking into the next five years and beyond.

Climate risk

Hotter, dryer, summers have already presented challenges for completing trail projects in their projected timeframes. Extreme drought and wild-fire risk have halted trail work, and dry soils make construction in July and August challenging.

Strategy

Evaluate likely trail work conditions early in the season based on snowpack and long-term weather forecasts. Plan to begin trail work as early as possible each season, and plan dirt work around driest months, allocating resources towards planning and design efforts during these months instead.

Economic risk

While the club's recent growth and forward momentum has been fueled by a growing economy, strong business support, rising home values and new residents bringing new income and enthusiasm, the "boom times" will not last forever. Lower rates of membership and sponsorship renewals are possible, which could threaten POP's operational revenues in the future.

Strategy

Build up reserves large enough to sustain a significant portion of the club's operating costs over one or two "slim" years. Income from a future endowment fund could be used to support operations if or when membership and sponsorship revenues decrease.

Liability risk

Idaho's recreational use statutes go far to protect POP and our private and public partners from lawsuits arising from injury on a club-maintained or built trail. However, we do hold a "duty of care" to assure, to the extent possible, trails are maintained for user safety. Gross negligence exposes POP to risk of liability from injury or death.

Strategy

Establish trail maintenance plans that prioritize user safety. Establish and implement signage plans that warn users of potential risks and provide wayfinding. Ensure all volunteers involved in POP organized events and trail work parties sign liability waivers. Maintain adequate liability insurance to cover POP staff, coaches, volunteers, and program participants. Maintain board insurance to protect the board from potential liability claims.

Regulatory risk

POP's ability to build and maintain trails on public lands is contingent upon various government agencies and bodies allowing us to continue our work on their lands. If a future City, State, or Federal administration or private landowner adopts regulatory or ordinance changes that threaten trails, POP must be ready to adapt and re-engage partners in advocacy work.

Strategy

Remain vigilant, engaging regularly with local, state, and federal officials and private landowners on the topic of trails access and outdoor recreation, specifically cycling and mountain biking. Maintain open channels of communication with all levels of government and relevant agencies.

Chapter 3: Assessment, evaluation, and plan relevance

While this plan outlines POP's goals and objectives for the next five years, it is ultimately representative of the aspirations of our club at this particular moment in time. To remain relevant, it is pertinent that both our progress towards our goals and the plan itself is assessed and evaluated on a regular basis.

Measurement

Determining whether we are achieving our goals requires us to measure success. The following metrics could be analyzed annually in order to assess progress towards our goals:

- Membership retention, growth, and revenue generated.
- Sponsorship retention and revenue generated.
- Program participation (number of clinic and camp enrollees).
- Participation in member meetings, group rides, volunteer trail work parties, etc.
- Grants applied for vs. grants awarded.
- Staff and coach recruitment and retention.
- Miles of trail built & miles of trail flagged in a season.

Data collection and analysis

Making good organizational decisions means having good data. Both qualitative and quantitative data should be collected and analyzed on a regular basis to assess progress towards goals and evaluate results. Data sources might include:

- Annual member surveys assessing demands for trails, programs, activities, etc.
- Community reach metrics and engagement, including social media follower counts (Instagram and Facebook).
- Trail use data, harvested from apps such as Strava, or via trail counters or game cameras.
- Qualitative feedback gathered via outreach to club members, both individually and through in-person gatherings, email, and conversations on social media.

Stakeholder engagement

POP's stakeholders include member supporters, business sponsors, POP staff, board members, volunteers, non-member trail users (of all modalities, both locals and visitors), public and private landowner partners, local governments, parents of youth program participants, and others. Continuous engagement with as many stakeholder groups as possible is key in the assessment and evaluation process.

- Maintain open channels of communication with all stakeholder groups, through personal relationships, email and phone communications, website and social media outreach, and regular club meetings and events.
- Seek feedback from all stakeholder groups on POP's mission and vision, our strategic priorities, and the organization's progress towards its stated goals and objectives.

Continuous improvement

With regular measurement and assessment of feedback and data collected from various stakeholders, the POP board and executive director can update this strategic plan as necessary to ensure the organization remains relevant and effective in the community.

- Complete a strategic planning survey in December or January of each year to solicit feedback on POP's progress towards and the continued relevance of its strategic plan.
- Schedule an annual strategic planning review meeting for the BoD in January or February of each year.
- Amend strategic plan annually as needed to reflect any updates or changes in project, programs, events, and activities that may have occurred in the year prior or are expected to occur in the years ahead.

Chapter 4: Succession plan

The succession plan outlines the steps POP will take to ensure that key leadership positions are filled with qualified individuals in a timely and effective manner. It is a critical component of this strategic plan and will help ensure continued success and sustainability of the organization.

Leadership identification

- POP will review its bylaws outlining the process for identifying and grooming future board members to ensure that they have the skills and experience needed to help the organization succeed.
- Ensure that terms overlap so that there are never more than two or three board openings each year.
- Identify and recruit club members with skills and traits that would make them suited for a BoD position, open dialogue with them early on to assess interest.

Role definitions and responsibilities

Each member of the executive team on the board and the executive director must have clear understandings of their roles and responsibilities.

- Review and clarify, then incorporate into board orientations, the definitions, roles, and responsibilities of key board positions, including president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
- Ensure that executive positions on the board are filled by individuals who possess the skills and traits required to fulfill them to a standard necessary for the organization to succeed.
- Adopt a clear job description for the executive director. Conduct annual reviews and assessment of the ED's performance, and adjust job description as necessary to reflect changing priorities and objective of the organization.

Leadership training and development

Current and potential future board members must have opportunities for occasional training and development to ensure that they have the skills and experience needed to succeed.

- Conduct bi-annual board leadership workshops to review roles and responsibilities and board governance.
- Invite members who might be interested in joining the BoD in the future to participate in board trainings.

Transition planning

Inevitably there will be a change in POP leadership, both at the board and the ED level. A detailed plan for managing leadership transitions, including guidelines for communication and coordination with stakeholders, as well as strategies for maintaining continuity of operations, will minimize disruption and ensure the goals and objectives of this strategic plan remain at the forefront of POP's focus.

- Develop and adopt a plan for transitions on the board or at the staff level.
- Ensure that no more than three board members will transition out of the organization at any given time.
- Identify potential hires for the ED position early on and be prepared to employ departing and incoming EDs simultaneously to allow for on-the-job training and a complete handover of key organizational assets to new ED.



“Building Community through Trails”

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