

The Rocky Mountain Horse Association
Five-Year Strategic Plan
2025-2030



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1. Introduction – Mission and Core Values

As the Rocky Mountain Horse Association (RMHA) nears the end of the 2018-2023(24) Strategic Plan, the Board committed to the creation of a new 5-year plan to be implemented 2025-2030. The RMHA is dedicated to the ongoing development and prosperity of our beloved breed and in creating vision and plan to ensure a successful future. As we embark on this next phase of our strategic planning process, we recognize the importance of continuously refining our goals and strategies to ensure the sustainability and growth of our organization. This process is crucial for addressing the evolving needs of our members, enhancing the breed's recognition, and promoting responsible stewardship. By engaging in thoughtful and forward-looking planning, the RMHA aims to uphold its mission, strengthen the community, and secure a vibrant future for the Rocky Mountain Horse.

Section 2 of this plan will outline the process undertaken by our Board and members resulting in the 2030 Organizational Vision. The priority issues identified as necessary to achieve our vision are found in Section 3. Section 4 discusses how we will implement, manage, and monitor the plan. Resources needed to be successful are outlined in Section 5.

Mission/Purpose

To aid and encourage the preservation, promotion, breeding, and development of the Rocky Mountain Horse.

2. Strategic Planning Process and Future Vision

The strategic planning process was led by the RMHA and facilitated by Kathryn Matchett & Associates. The process was designed with a participatory approach and the goal of engaging as many key stakeholders as possible. This involved numerous steps, including board and member surveys, interviews with the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis, and a 2-day retreat to review the data and assemble the main tenants of the plan. As stated above, the core values developed by the RMHA in 2008 and again in 2018 were used in the discussions and development

Core Values

ACCOUNTABILITY – *We value accountability by practicing effective communication and providing benefits to our members. We are willing to take responsibility for our actions and we keep our commitments.*

CAMARADERIE – *We value camaraderie by trying to create a family atmosphere in all our activities. Our board and members will work together for the common goal.*

DEDICATION TO THE HORSE – *We value our dedication to the horse by our commitment to help preserve and promote the breed.*

FAIRNESS – *We value fairness by being respectful of each other and our opinions and by displaying good sportsmanship in all activities. We make decisions that are free from discrimination and bias and apply the rules consistently for all.*

TRANSPARENCY – *We value transparency by our display of honesty and integrity in our words and actions. We conduct our activities with complete openness.*

of our 2030 vision and plan. Details on the process are outlined in Appendix A. The SWOT and a summary of the results of the board and member surveys are presented in Appendices B and C, respectively. A detailed chart showing the goals, objectives, actions, and success indicators are included as Appendix D.

Our 2030 Organizational Vision

In 2030, RMHA is recognized as a model breed organization thanks to...

- *Increased demand for the Rocky Mountain Horse*
- *Growth in the breed population and a diversified gene pool*
- *Increased youth and young adult participation*
- *Diversified funding, including significant revenue from outside sources*
- *Increased engagement and satisfaction of members globally*
- *Effective data management that positively impacts all areas of RMHA's work*
- *A professional board that attracts an abundance of qualified, committed volunteers*

3. Priority Issues, Goals and Objectives

To achieve our 2023 Vision, the RMHA Board and our membership identified priority issues that we need to achieve for the success of the association and, most importantly, for the horse to be successful. The four main issues identified are: **1 – Increasing and diversifying funding, 2 – Preserving the breed, 3 – Creating demand for the Rocky Mountain Horse, 4 – Membership growth and engagement, 5 – Strengthening the organization.**

These priority issues and the goals developed to ensure we achieve them are summarized below. Appendix D provides a detailed list of each goal, objective and actions which will be required to meet them. Also listed are the success indicators for each.

An operational plan to guide the implementation of the strategic plan in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 will be in place by October 2024. This plan will also be used to create committee goals and objectives, and any budget required to achieve those.

Likewise, each FY, a new annual plan and committee plans will be created to continue implementation of the overall 5-year plan.

Priority Issue #1: Increasing and Diversifying Funding

Goals:

- A.** To secure revenue from outside sources.
- B.** To increase revenue from internal sources.
- C.** Raise awareness about the importance of external funding

Priority Issue #2: Preserving the Breed

Goals:

- A. To increase the foaling rate.
- B. To increase registrations.
- C. To improve data collection from stallion reports.
- D. To develop and implement a breed preservation plan.

Priority Issue #3: Creating Demand for the Rocky Mountain Horse

Goals:

- A. To create a professional marketing plan to promote/raise awareness of our horse.
- B. To increase youth involvement.
- C. To promote versatility of the Rocky Mountain Horse.
- D. To strengthen our affiliate club program to help promote the Rocky Mountain Horse.

Priority Issue #4: Membership Growth and Engagement

Goals:

- A. To keep members informed.
- B. To educate members and the general public.
- C. To be inclusive of people in all areas.
- D. To increase youth membership.

Priority Issue #5: Strengthening our Organization

Goals:

- A. To model professionalism and a culture that supports the RMH.
- B. To strengthen and support RMHA committees.
- C. To improve continuity of leadership.
- D. To evaluate the current certification program.
- E. To evaluate the current judging program.
- F. To annually review and revise rules and procedures document.
- G. To evaluate and implement an effective database.

4. Managing and Monitoring the Plan

Timeline

A 5-year timeline for addressing priority issues is shown in Figure 1.

Annual Operating Plan

An Annual Operational Plan (Annual Plan) corresponding to the fiscal year will guide implementation of the strategic plan for each of the next 5 years.

For each objective in the plan, the annual operational plan will outline:

- One-year objectives;
- Strategic actions;
- Target dates;
- Persons/committees responsible for the activities; and
- Financial/cost requirements.

Once the Annual Plan is developed, any committees with strategic goals/objectives will meet with the SPC and create annual committee goals and objectives and any associated budget required to meet them.

The SPC will remain active for the life of the plan and work with the RMHA President, Office Manager and committee chairs to ensure the success of the plan.

An organizational chart showing the SPC assigned to champion each priority issue, the committees with involvement in each priority issue is shown in Figure 2. The SPC chair will make regular reports to the Board on progress being made on the Annual Plan. Adjustments will be made as necessary.

Annual Strategic Plan Review

The Strategic Plan is a living document to be consulted regularly as a guide in realizing the RMHA's vision. An annual review of the strategic plan will be conducted toward the end of each fiscal year to assess progress toward the objectives and revise the plan, as needed. As discussed above, the Board will then adopt a new Annual Plan for the upcoming fiscal year.

5. Resource Implications

Human Resources

Accomplishing the goals and objectives outlined in this Strategic Plan will require the commitment of existing and future Board, staff and committee members, and a continual recruitment of new volunteers. As discussed above, committees will be required to incorporate the plan's goals, objectives and strategic actions into their committee work each year. In some cases, new ad-hoc committees may need to be created to accomplish objectives not currently within the existing committee structure.

Other Resources – (financial, capital, expertise, etc.)

Additional resources needed to accomplish the strategic plan objectives will be identified during the creation of the A Plan and the annual budget and through the assessment of current projects and needs during the development of the new projects.

Appendix A: About the Strategic Planning Process

The strategic planning process was led by the RMHA, who worked with consultant, Kathryn Matchett, to facilitate the process. Kathryn facilitated the RMHA's 2018 strategic planning process and uses a participatory approach with the goal of engaging as many key stakeholders as possible. The workshop (described below) itself, along with pre- and post-workshop opportunities to provide input, were designed with this in mind. Engagement of the entire RMHA membership, Board, staff, and key stakeholders resulted in a plan that is "owned" by the members and based on a realistic assessment of the current status of the association and a shared future vision.

The phases of the process included the following activities:

Phase 1: Preparation and Information Gathering

- A. Facilitator, Strategic Planning Committee, and Office Manager met to develop logistical preparation for the planning process, informational gathering, and 2-day workshop.
- B. Electronic survey – 304 individuals completed an anonymous electronic Google Forms survey. Respondents included members, owners, breeders, trainers, Board members, volunteers, donors, judges, examiners, former committee members and a small handful of non-members. Of these responses, over 2500 comments were made providing input on ideas, criticisms, suggestions, celebrations, and evaluative comments related to the strengths, weaknesses, future vision, and programmatic and operational status of the RMHA.
- C. Facilitator conducted interviews with several RMHA Board members for the purpose of gaining better understanding of issues. Several interviews were also conducted with external experts in the field of breed genetics and conservancy.

Phase 2: Information Analysis & Document Preparation

- A. With 304 respondents and each respondent being invited to give multiple responses to each open-ended question, the survey produced nearly eighty pages of opinions/recommendations. Four documents were created from the survey results:
 - i. SWOT Analysis (Appendix B)
 - ii. Core Values Assessment
 - iii. Keyways the RMHA can help move the RMH off the Threatened List
 - iv. Ideas for RMHA in 2030

- B. In preparation for the 2-day planning workshop, the documents listed above were provided to Strategic Planning workshop participants as well as those Board and committee chairs unable to attend.

Phase 3: Workshop

- A. Thirteen team members participated in the March 2-3, 2024 workshop. This included 8 (47%) Board members, 4 committee chairs and the RMHA Office Manager.
- B. During the workshop, consultant Matchett facilitated numerous exercises and activities designed to evaluate and reaffirm the current mission and core values of the association, to agree on key elements of a 2030 RMHA vision, identify priority issues for reaching shared vision for RMHA, draft goals and objectives, and outline important steps for successful implementation and monitoring of the eventual plan.
- C. The workshop resulted in the drafting of 5 Priority Issues agreed upon with which to build the plan. Participants began developing corresponding goals and objectives relative to each priority issue. Also created, and shown below, by the workshop participants was the 2030 Organizational Vision depicting RMHA being recognized as a model breed organization in 2030.
- *Increased demand for the Rocky Mountain Horse*
 - *Growth in the breed population and a diversified gene pool*
 - *Increased youth and young adult participation*
 - *Diversified funding, including significant revenue from outside sources*
 - *Increased engagement and satisfaction of members globally*
 - *Effective data management that positively impacts all areas of RMHA's work*
 - *A professional board that attracts an abundance of qualified, committed volunteers*

Phase 4: Drafting and Approval of the RMHA 2025-2030 Strategic Plan

- A. Based on the above steps, the SPC further developed the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies that were identified during the SP Workshop (Appendix D)
- B. The plan was distributed to the entire Board on 8/13/2024 and approved on 8/13/2024.
- C. Once the 5-Year plan is approved, the SPC, with committees having strategic goals/objective responsibilities, will develop an Annual Plan for each consecutive year.

Appendix B: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

Drafted by Strategic Planning Committee based on stakeholder surveys & interviews.

| <u>Internal Strengths</u> | <u>Internal Weaknesses/Areas for Improvement</u> |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compelling mission to preserve a fabulous breed: great temperament, versatility; relatively affordable 2. Natural breed, no pads, chains, weighted shoes 3. Passionate lovers of RMH (members, owners, breeders, trainers) 4. Diverse programs, affiliations (International Show, trail, youth, awards banquet, etc.) 5. Preservation of breed (breed standards, certification, registration) 6. Communication (magazine, website, social media, town hall, etc.) 7. Committed, talented, volunteers 8. Promotion of the breed 9. Helpful, accessible, knowledgeable, friendly office staff 10. Pedigree database 11. Organization with history & staying power 12. Increasing regional representation 13. System of committee reporting on action items 14. Track record of strategic & operational planning 15. Plan being developed to improve judging system 16. Surveying of members for input | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Horse first" in all actions; create plan for breed preservation 2. Grow membership; engage & retain members; increase benefits 3. Expand geographical presence 4. Professional marketing strategy (social media; podcast; videos) 5. Clear, timely communication with members 6. Evaluate/improve certification & registration processes/fees 7. Educate on importance & benefits of certification/registration 8. Be more inclusive of non-KY members, including international 9. Unify various factions (Old Style vs. Show Style Rocky; Oldtimers vs. newcomers; KY vs. non-KY; big barn vs. small barn.) 10. Act professional; eliminate drama; model code of ethics 11. Recruit, support, respect, retain volunteers; involve new blood 12. Upgrade technology, including databases 13. Document policies and procedures 14. Actively correct/clarify misinformation/misperceptions 15. Model transparency & fairness; eliminate conflicts of interest 16. Improve board-member relations; eliminate cliques 17. Provide a variety of educational opportunities re. RMH 18. Evaluate org structure/roles (staff, board, committees) 19. Unite around achievable, measurable plan to grow RMHA/RMH 20. Improve family atmosphere 21. Develop a fundraising plan that will diversify funding sources |

| <u>External Opportunities</u> | <u>External Threats</u> |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore ways to expand genetic pool (open books to qualified horses; appendix registry for qualified horses, such as Mountain Pleasure; track kinship - isolated pockets of breed that are unrelated; target for tissue collection & mating, esp. older mares) 2. Preserve foundation bloodlines; cryopreservation 3. Seek scientific support for genetics (U of KY) 4. Explore technology to save breed 5. Technical support from The Livestock Conservancy 6. Establish relationships with advocacy groups 7. External funding opportunities (corporations, foundations interested in conservation) 8. Form partnerships to help promote breed 9. Engage younger demographics, including youth (Create Junior RMH Club; outreach to 4H; etc.) 10. Breeder growth/support/incentives program 11. Diverse opportunities beyond KY 12. Diverse opportunities to showcase versatility 13. Learn best practices from successful breed orgs 14. Campaign that rallies people to save the RMH 15. Support non-RMHA exposure events (i.e. expos) 16. RMH breed ambassadors & clubs around world 17. Change culture around registering foals 18. Opportunities to increase value/classiness of RMH | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economy, inflation and cost of owning, breeding, raising a Rocky 2. Decline in horse ownership, in general 3. Aging breeders, owners, members 4. Failure to engage youth (declining interest in horses & in gaited horses; cost of RMH; competition from electronics; etc.) 5. Small population; declining gene pool; geographic isolation; inbreeding; health issues 6. Few certified mares under 10 years of age 7. Promotion/rewarding of extreme or exaggerated traits 8. Breeding for homozygous silver horses. 9. Competition from other breed organizations 10. Public fighting and negativity on non-RMHA social media 11. Lack of diversified and external sources of funding 12. Individuals trying to undermine others; not putting horse first 13. Owners not registering & certifying; belief that not needed 14. Apathy and lack of awareness about RMH as endangered breed 15. Perception of RMHA leadership as cliquish, unwelcoming, rude 16. Drought that reduces feed supplies 17. Legislation that could be detrimental 18. Limited opportunities outside KY 19. Insufficient demand for Rockies 20. Disregarding RMH welfare (trainers inflicting harm; RMH pushed into inverted frame; perception we sore horses; animal activists) 21. Volunteer burnout |

Appendix C: Key Findings from Surveys and Interviews

Overview of Key Findings

Current Status

Members have a compelling commitment to preserve the Rocky Mountain Horse. Survey responses They value the diversity of the breed, the committed, talented volunteers within the organization, the growth of diverse programs and regional affiliations, and ongoing efforts to explore the genetic future of the breed.

Core Values

Members were asked to rate how RMHA is upholding each of our 5 core values (1-10 scale) Accountability, Camaraderie, Dedication to the Horse, Fairness and Transparency. 91% of respondents rated each core value at 6.9 or higher.

Those members who rated these areas below 7 on the scale provided comments related to their rating.

Of the most common suggestions for achieving better ***Accountability***, members asked for more frequent, timely and transparent communication with members. They want all members held accountable for violating rules. Several comments requested improvement to the show judging system and more consistent upholding of breed standards.

To achieve more ***Camaraderie***, members asked for RMHA to be more inclusive and engaging of members outside of the KY area. They asked that all members be more professional and respectful, and that we strive to put the horse first before self-interests.

Comments specific to ***Dedication to the Horse*** included promotion of our horse's natural gait, putting the horse ahead of personal interests, increasing registration and education of the importance of registration for ALL RMHs, improving the certification process and prioritizing the preservation of the breed.

To increase the ***Fairness***, members commented about the need to model professional behavior and hold all accountable for poor behavior and violation of rules, be more inclusive with less personal bias and politics, while valuing the opinions of all members. Many comments asked for the development of a show judging program that is fair and hold all participants equally accountable.

To achieve more ***Transparency***, comments suggested improved communication with membership, honesty and integrity in governance, and a better understanding of how the Board meeting a conducted.

Strengths

Members have a compelling commitment to preserve the Rocky Mountain Horse. They have a shared passion for the value and diversity of the breed, and a desire to improve the breed for generations to come. The majority of survey responses expressed satisfaction with the association, their strategic goals and found the administrative staff to be knowledgeable and helpful.

RMHA has a large contingency of committed and productive volunteers who devote their time and talent to the breed.

Areas for Improvement

Membership growth and retention was identified as a major priority to a large number of survey respondents. Growth of the breed and membership will rely on enhanced efforts to promote the horse and increase the demand.

Increase presence and communication across the entire country, including support and development of relationships with regional RMH clubs and promotion of diverse programs and affiliations for members.

Overall funding and resources need to be significantly increased to ensure the financial success of the organization.

There is a current culture of mistrust and disrespect within areas of the association which diminishes association integrity, productivity, membership growth and commitment.

Opportunities

Increase exposure to the breed through participation in programs, enhanced marketing, advertising, and use of social media. Promoting and showcasing the breed outside of the current RMH community will lead to membership growth, increase in the herd size, geographic expansion, breeder development and success and fund development opportunities.

Development of a more efficient and reliable database that can provide enhanced breed management as well as user qualities to assist members in all aspects of breeding, program participation and member benefits.

Increased promotion and engagement with our youth and younger demographic, who are the future of this breed.

External Threats

Member responses indicate that *Affordability, Economy, and Cost of owning Rocky Mountain Horses* pose the most significant threat to the breed. Organizational sustainability relies on awareness of external threats. RMHA needs to continue strategic efforts to combat many potential threats that will continue to challenge this breed. The economy and rising cost of ownership and breeding are challenging to all aspects of the equine industry.

| | Goals | Objectives | Possible Strategies/ Strategic Actions | Indicators for Measuring Achievement | Responsible Committee(s) |
|---|---|--|---|--|--|
| A. Increasing and Diversifying Funding | A1. Secure revenue from outside sources. | <p>A1a: Establish a fund-raising committee with defined to create and implement a Fundraising Plan.</p> <p>A1b: Fundraising committee to explore getting professional fundraising assistance for help with grants, corporate sponsorships, etc. by August 2025</p> <p>A1c: Implement Fundraising program</p> <p>A1d: Raise awareness internally about the need for outside funding</p> | <p>A1a1: Create the Fundraising Committee to focus on outside funding sources.</p> <p>A1a2: Create Fundraising Plan to identify and procure outside sources of revenue throughout the Strategic Planning period.</p> <p>A1b: Develop a cost analysis for contracting with professional fundraisers to identify potential sources OF WHAT and the process for engaging them, if viable.</p> <p>A1c: Create yearly fundraising targets and objectives.</p> <p>A1d: Create an Educational/Awareness Plan to raise awareness for the Fundraising Plan</p> | <p>Identify chair and seat volunteers for Fundraising Committee by December 2024.</p> <p>Plan done by June 2025</p> <p>Cost analysis and recommendations done and presented to Board in June 2024 meeting along with Fundraising Plan.</p> <p>Increase our Topline Revenue by \$25,000 per year</p> <p>Plan done and implemented by July 2025.</p> | SPC and Fundraising |
| | A2. Increase revenue from new internal sources | <p>A2a. Document our current sponsorship and donor programs.</p> <p>A2b. Increase revenue from sponsorships and donations</p> | <p>A2a1: Create an umbrella graphic showing all current sponsor/donor programs.</p> <p>A2a2: Evaluate 2024 Budget to determine areas for potential increased revenue.</p> <p>A2b: Draft a Sponsorship/Donation Improvement Plan</p> | <p>Complete March 2025</p> <p>Complete Jan 2025</p> <p>Complete June 2025</p> <p>All result in 10% increase in sponsorships & donations, as appropriate</p> | <p>SPC Lead with input from Trail, ISC, Versatility</p> <p>Finance</p> <p>SPC Lead with input from Trail, ISC, Versatility</p> |

B. Preserving The Breed

| | Goals | Objectives | Possible Strategies/ Strategic Actions | Indicators for Success | Responsible Committee(s) |
|--|--|---|---|--|-----------------------------|
| | B1. Increase Foaling Rate | B1a. Develop an incentive program for breeding horses B1b. Determine actual foaling rate | B1a. Promote threatened status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage Owners to breed qualified horses to grow our herd size | Roll out incentive program by January 2026 and increase foaling rate by 10% per year | Genetics/RAC |
| | B2. Increase Registrations | B2a. Educate breeders about importance of registration B2b: Develop an incentive program for registering horses (i.e., breeder merit program, cost incentives) | B2a. Create an Awareness program to promote threatened status and status of current herd health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invitation to join effort to save RMH Explanation of what Threatened Status is. Registration records are vital to the preservation and advancement of purebred RMH Increase awareness and ownership of responsibility to RMH preservation B2b. Promote sound breeding practices via recognition of breeders through merit program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breeder Census Adherence to breed standard Offer discounts for registrations periodically to encourage timely registrations/paperwork submissions. Promote Certification Improve herd health and kinship Provides protection to the valuable genetic diversity for the RMH and facilitate genetic improvement | Implement Awareness Plan in 2025 and achieve 10% increase in registrations per year. Implement program in 2025 and achieve an increase in herd health (via decreased COIs and Kinship parameters) and 10% increase in registrations and certifications per year | Genetics/Marketing |
| | B3. Procure new Database to allow for better herd management | B3a: Select new database B3b: Upgrade stallion reports and make mandatory | B3a. New breed database will contain many features that breeders and owners can access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breeders will be able to submit stallion and breeding reports via the new database. Breeders will be able to utilize new database features to do trial matings that will show how closely related a pairing would be. B3b. Use stallion reports to determine foaling baseline. | Database selected and implemented by June 2025 Stallion report mandatory in 2026; projected foaling rates calculated in | Genetics/Data base |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| | | <p>B3c. Use new database and stallion reports used to determine baseline foaling rate</p> <p>B3d. Other database parameters will be used to develop Breed Preservation Plan (Goal B4)</p> | <p>B3c. Use stallion reports and foaling data from new database to set 2025 foaling rate goal.</p> <p>B4d. See Goal B4 below</p> | <p>January 2026 and yearly thereafter</p> <p>Baseline foaling rate determined in January 2026 and yearly projection created thereafter; efforts result in 10% increase in foaling rates.</p> | |
| B4. Develop and Implement a breed preservation plan | <p>B4a: Engage subject matter experts (UK; The Livestock Conservancy)</p> <p>B4b: Determine current herd size</p> <p>B4c: Understand the genetic diversity</p> <p>B4d: Evaluate bringing in qualified Mountain Pleasure horses</p> <p>B4e: Appendix program</p> <p>B4f: Evaluate a grade mare program</p> <p>B4g: Create breeding best practices to educate on appropriate breeding</p> | <p>B4a. Participate in Livestock Conservancy training modules (Cultivating Leadership) and establish relationship with key TLC experts.</p> <p>B4b. Conduct Herd study</p> <p>B4c. Kinship study to determine herd health</p> <p>B4d. Promote Genetic Diversity by bringing in MPH – Livestock Conservancy considers MPH to be closely related to RMH.</p> <p>B4e. Ask MPH what was learned when they tried Appendix program</p> <p>B4f. Promote Genetic Diversity by bringing in new horses that meet RMH breed standards</p> <p>B4g. Educate about kinship and inbreeding coefficients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote breeding goals for Inbreeding coefficient (COI); Ex. Old blood maintain 3% or less COI; New blood (9 generations removed from Tobe) maintain 1.5% or less COI | <p>Required studies conducted resulting in the drafting of our Breed Preservation Plan January 2026</p> <p>Evaluations regarding MPH initiative, Appendix program and grade mare program done and presented to the Board by August 2025</p> <p>Best Practices Program created and implemented by January 2026 and result in improvements in COI.</p> | Genetics | |

| | Goals | Objectives | Possible Strategies/ Strategic Actions | Indicators for Success | Responsible Committee(s) |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|----------------------------------|
| C. Creating Demand for the RMH | C1. Create a professional marketing plan | <p>C1a: Explore outside professional marketing assistance</p> <p>C1b. Develop a campaign to rally everyone around saving the horse (Heart Horse Campaign)</p> <p>C1d. Establish a RMH Hall of Fame</p> | <p>C1a Evaluate scope and cost of hiring outside marketing assistance</p> <p>C1b: Create a National RMH Day including support through Office of the Governor-KY.</p> <p>C1.d: Create criteria for Stallions, Geldings, & Mares Create a nomination form and implement program.</p> | <p>Marketing Plan created and implemented by June 2025; recommendation for outside professional included in Marketing Plan as well as Objectives C1b and C1c. Plan increases demand for the horse by 10% per year as determined by increase sales and breedings.</p> <p>Create and implement HOF program by January 2027; Hall of Fame horses added to Website by 2028</p> | Marketing and Membership |
| | C2. Increase Youth Involvement | <p>C2a: Encourage members to establish lessons programs</p> <p>C2b: Form alliances with youth organizations such as 4H</p> <p>C2c. Continue increasing youth participation in RMHA programs</p> <p>C2d. Expand youth scholarship program for college alternatives like equine dental, farrier, equine massage, etc.</p> <p>C2e. Bi-annual “Youth Night” sponsored by RMHA & hosted by affiliate clubs.</p> | <p>C2a. Define purpose and goals to establish criteria and consistency.</p> <p>Ask Trainers to conduct “Future Trainers” workshop</p> <p>C2b. Establish partnerships with 4H, girl and boy scouts, etc in key areas</p> <p>C2c: Collaborate with Trail, Show and Versatility Committees to develop a plan to increase participation in those programs</p> <p>C2d: Develop funding plan for scholarships</p> <p>C2e: Identify 2 Affiliate Clubs to pilot this concept and if successful, increase scale</p> | <p>Purpose and Goals Plan developed and approved by March 2025 resulting in growth in youth participation across all programs</p> <p>Partnership developed with youth organizations in all time zones by January 2027</p> <p>Action items for Trail, Versatility and Show Committees by Jan 2026</p> <p>Oct 2026</p> <p>Pilots complete by 2027</p> | Youth Membership MALS |
| | C3. Promote Versatility of the Breed | C3a. Create partnerships | C3a. Partner with RMHA Affiliate clubs to hold annual Trail and Obstacle | First event completed by June 2027 | MALS Marketing Versatility |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|----------------------------------|
| | | <p>C3b: Increase advertising</p> <p>C3c. Breed demos/Expos</p> | <p>challenges. Small fee to participate, Youth free when they bring a friend.</p> <p>C3b. Ask local horse clubs and Facebook groups to partner with RMHA for free social media advertising on their pages.</p> <p>C3c.Partner with Affiliate Clubs to attend expo events on behalf of RMHA. Develop list of all major horse expos and seek commitments for attendance.</p> <p>Promote Rocky class in Virtual Trail Obstacle program</p> | <p>Find 2 clubs and create partnership by Jan 2027</p> <p>Develop Expo Plan by Jan 2025</p> <p>Done by Jan 2027</p> <p>All actions result in increased demand for the breed and increase in RMHA Memberships</p> | |
| | <p>C4. Encourage Affiliate clubs to promote the RMH</p> | <p>C4a: Develop regular roundtable meetings (MAL, Membership committee, affiliate clubs)</p> <p>C4b: Develop a Club-of-the-year award</p> | <p>C4a Schedule regular meetings with Chairs, MALs and club leaders. Provide visual presentation.</p> <p>C4b. Possible criteria: Events attended, Versatile events held, Fundraising for RMHA, Hours volunteered</p> | <p>Meetings scheduled by Jan 2025</p> <p>Developed and first award given at Awards Banquet 2026</p> <p>Actions result in growth of affiliate clubs and RMHA Membership growth.</p> | <p>MALs Membership Marketing</p> |

| | Goals | Objectives | Possible Strategies/ Strategic Actions | Indicators for Measuring Achievement | Responsible Committee(s) |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| D. Membership Growth & Engagement | D1: Keep members informed | <p>D1a: Develop and implement communication and education plan</p> <p>D1b. Establish a new database as resource to provide member access to horse and member data</p> <p>D1c. Improve and maintain a user-friendly website</p> | <p>D1a.Create yearly communication and education plan including content.</p> <p>D1b.Contract and implementation of new database for membership, pedigree, and programs.</p> <p>D1c. Gather data surrounding current website traffic. Examples and bids</p> | <p>Plan developed and implemented by March 2025</p> <p>June 2025</p> <p>Website updates completed yearly</p> <p>All actions result in increased member satisfaction and 10% yearly growth in membership.</p> | <p>Marketing Membership Admin All Comm.</p> <p>Database Office</p> <p>Office All Committees</p> |
| | D2: Educate members and the public | D2a: Develop and implement a communication and education plan (See D1a above) | D2a. Create yearly communication and education plan objective including content | <p>Plan developed and implemented by March 2025</p> <p>All actions result in increased member satisfaction and 10% yearly growth in membership.</p> | Marketing Membership All Comms. |
| | D3: Be inclusive of people in all areas of the country | <p>D3a. Strengthen the Affiliate Club program</p> <p>D3b: Roundtable meetings as in C4a above</p> | <p>D3a. Evaluate what we need the Affiliate clubs to be and how to make it a better win-win. Inform communities of regional club program Identify leaders to create new clubs. Create video with instructional steps for applying for RMHA approval.</p> <p>Recognize current club achievements on website, Facebook, Instagram</p> <p>D3b: See C4a Above</p> | <p>Plan to improve done by Jan 2026</p> <p>Clubs experience membership growth</p> <p>RMHA Membership 10% Growth</p> <p>Meetings scheduled by Jan 2027</p> <p>Actions result in growth of affiliate clubs and RMHA membership growth of 10% per year.</p> | MALs Membership Marketing |

| | Goals | Objectives | Possible Strategies/ Strategic Actions | Indicators for Measuring Achievement | Responsible Committee(s) |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| | D4. Increase youth membership | D4a: See C2 Membership Goal above | D4a: Create Youth videos Monthly Youth Spotlight Define Scholarship Opportunities and application requirements and process Educational Opportunities – Conduct “Future Trainers” workshops Youth Camps when more kids can attend (ie: June) and expand to include other geographies via volunteers or Affiliate Clubs. | Plan developed to increase youth participation by Jan 2026 Youth participation grows 10% a year. | Youth Marketing Membership Trail Versatility |
| | | | | | |
| E. Strengthening Our Organization | E1: Model professional behavior and a culture that supports the RMH | E1a: Continue using ground rules for meeting behavior E1b. Incorporate ground rules into onboarding of new Board and committee members | E1a. Discuss and obtain agreement from Board members at start of each Board year. E1b. Create an onboarding document for new Board and committee members. Hold onboarding Zoom meeting prior to first Board and Committee meetings each year. | Presented and agreed upon at October meeting yearly Created and implemented by September each year Held in September each year | President Office Manager, Officers New Board and Committees |
| | E2 Strengthen and support committees | E2a. Establish routine check-in with committee chairs E2b. Onboarding program E2c. Provide clear guidelines & procedures for committee chairs (what able to do/not do) E2d. Integrate committees into annual planning and budgeting | E2a. Quarterly meeting with all Committee Chairs, Office Manager, President, and Board officers as relative to specific committee. E2b. Conduct mandatory onboarding meeting with committee chairs at start of each Board year. E2c. New Procedures addendum to contain committee structure, guidelines, and procedures specific to each committee. E2d. Each committee will provide input and develop action plans for their specific committee each year, including strategic plan action items, budget | Create Annual Schedule by October each year Held in September each year Rules and Procedure Document given to Committees each year as part on onboarding Develop annual plan and budget template for committee use by Oct each year | Board Officers/Office Manager Office Manager President SPC Committee Chairs Office Manager President Committee Chairs/SPC Treasurer |

| | Goals | Objectives | Possible Strategies/ Strategic Actions | Indicators for Measuring Achievement | Responsible Committee(s) |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| E. Strengthen Our Organization, Cont. | | | requests for their activities, and timelines. | | |
| | E3: Improve continuity of leadership | E3a. Explore bylaws and rule changes that affect continuity of leadership (including committee chairs) E3b. Establish succession planning for committees | E3a. Evaluate and define appropriate length of time for Board members to become knowledgeable and able to contribute meaningfully E3c. Propose Bylaws/rule changes to revise (increase) term lengths for committee members. | Propose Bylaw/Rules changes to revise (increase) term lengths for Board positions, as appropriate by June 2025 Propose Bylaw/Rules changes to revise (increase) term lengths for Board positions, as appropriate by June 2025 | Rules/Board |
| | E4. Evaluate current certification program | E4a: DOEs to evaluate the certification program E4b. Educate members about certification program | E4a Complete DOE program audit E4b. Provide all revision information to membership via website, e-blasts, Townhalls, Social media. Conduct annual Examiner training | Implement DOE Program Audit recommendations in 2025 Others TBD based on DOE Audit results TBD based on DOE Audit results Yearly by September | DOEs Office Manager DOEs |
| | E5. Evaluate current judging program | E5a. Develop a continuing education platform E5b. Develop a rating system E5c. Develop a program to grow the pool of judges | E5a. Develop training topic videos E5b. Collect member survey/questionnaires from attendees at RMHA 'A' shows and/or via email surveys to obtain evaluation data to create rating system. E5c. Invite outside qualified judges to join our program, possibly judge some shows. Develop marketing information to seek additional judge candidates E5d. Research other quality judging programs and identify common traits | Developing and Implement a Judging Program Improvement Plan by August 2025 | Marketing SJC Marketing/PR SJC |

| | Goals | Objectives | Possible Strategies/ Strategic Actions | Indicators for Measuring Achievement | Responsible Committee(s) |
|--|--|---|--|--|-----------------------------|
| E. Strengthen Our Organization, Cont. | | E5d. Benchmark best practices of other organizations E5e. Evaluate current rules (compare/combine show judging rules with show rules; address high stepping issue) | and operating procedures. Talk with long time, knowledgeable members and gather knowledge / history of what has worked and what has not. E5e. Review both current show judging and show rules documents to identify inconsistencies, redundant language and/necessary new material. Combine into one document | | SJC/Rules |
| | E6. Keep rules and procedures document update to date | E6a. Complete rules and procedure documents review annually. | E6a. Conduct annual Rules and Procedures addendum review with Committee and then Board | Conducted by March annually | Rules |
| | E7. Evaluate and implement effective database | E7a. Select and purchase new database. E7b. Provide education of database use and benefits to members | E7a. Database committee will collect demos and bids from 2-4 vendors and present to Board for approval and to pending donor for approval. E7b. Create instructional demos on Townhalls and Zoom meetings to educate members on new database use and capabilities | Database selected and implemented by June 2025 | Database Board |

Figure 1. RMHA Priority Issues Timeline

| 2025 Objectives | | 2026 Objectives | | 2027 Objectives | | 2028 Objectives | | 2029 Objectives | |
|---------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Objectives | Fundraising Committee Established and Plan Created; Sponsor/Donor Program Re-evaluated | | | | | | | | |
| | Registration Plan | Stallion Reports Mandatory (Jan 31) | | | | | | | |
| | Breeder of Merit Program Rolled Out | Draft Breed Preservation Plan Completed | | | | | | | |
| | New Database Selected | Best Breeding Practices Plan Developed | | | | | | | |
| | Breed Preservations Studies Conducted | | | | | | | | |
| | Develop & Implement Marketing Plan | Breeding Incentive Plan | Bi-annual Youth Night | | | | | | |
| | Youth Program Improvement Plan | Yearly Horse Sale Program | Affiliate Club/RMHA, Trail & Obstacle Challenges | | | | | | |
| | Expo Participation Plan | Youth Scholarship Program Expanded | Rocky Classes for Virtual Trail Obstacle Program | | | | | | |
| | Regular Roundtables meetings w. MALs, Membership Committee & Affiliate Clubs | | | | | | | | |
| | Communication & Education Plan | Plan for Affiliate Clubs | | | | | | | |
| | | Yearly Communication & Education Plan | Yearly Communication & Education Plan | Yearly Communication & Education Plan | Yearly Communication & Education Plan | Yearly Communication & Education Plan | Yearly Communication & Education Plan | Yearly Communication & Education Plan | Yearly Communication & Education Plan |
| | Onboarding Program | | | | | | | | |
| | Yearly Committee Action Plans and Budget Completed Yearly | | | | | | | | |
| | Committees Strengthened | | | | | | | | |
| | ByLaw Changes Relating to tenure for Board members and committees evaluated | | | | | | | | |
| | Judging Program Improvement Plan | | | | | | | | |
| | Certification Program Reevaluated | | | | | | | | |
| | Rules & Procedures Document Evaluated and Updated | | | | | | | | |
| 2025 Success Indicators | | 2026 Success Indicators | | 2027 Success Indicators | | 2028 Success Indicators | | 2029 Success Indicators | |
| Success Indicators | All Plans Completed and Programs Developed | | | | | | | | |
| | | Increase Topline Revenue from outside sources by \$25,000/year & 10% increase in sponsorships & Donations | Increase Topline Revenue from outside sources by \$25,000/year | Increase Topline Revenue from outside sources by \$50,000/year; 10% increase in sponsorships & Donations | Increase Topline Revenue from outside sources by \$50,000/year | | | | |
| | | 10% Increase in Registrations & Certifications | 10% Increase in Registrations 10% Increase In Foaling Rate | 10% Increase in Registrations 10% Increase In Foaling Rate | 10% Increase in Registrations 10% Increase In Foaling Rate | | | | |
| | | Estimated Foaling Rate Calculated | Improvement in herd health via decreased CDIs and Kinship parameters | | Change in TLC status for RMH | | | | |
| | MAL/Membership/Affiliate Club Roundtable Meetings Held Quarterly | Demand for RMHs increases as documented by increased sales and breedings | | | | | | | |
| | | Youth Program participation and membership growth by 10% | Youth Program participation and membership growth | Youth Program participation and membership growth | Youth Program participation and membership growth | | | | |
| | | Affiliate Clubs and Members participate in 5 expos | Affiliate Clubs and Members participate in 5 expos | | Affiliate Clubs and Members participate in 10 expos | | | | |
| | | Club of the Year Award Implemented | | | | | | | |
| | Increased satisfaction by Membership due to better communication | Affiliate Clubs growing as well as RMHA Membership and Satisfaction | | | | | | | |
| | | 10% Growth in RMHA Membership | 10% Growth in RMHA Membership | 20% Growth in RMHA Membership | 10% Growth in RMHA Membership | | | | |
| | Onboarding in Place and transition to new Board successful | Onboarding in Place and transition to new Board successful | Onboarding in Place and transition to new Board successful | Onboarding in Place and transition to new Board successful | Onboarding in Place and transition to new Board successful | | | | |
| | Committee Plan and Budget Submitted Routinely | Committee Plan and Budget Submitted Routinely | Committee Plan and Budget Submitted Routinely | Committee Plan and Budget Submitted Routinely | Committee Plan and Budget Submitted Routinely | | | | |
| | Committee Meetings Held Quarterly and Committees Routine Meet Goals | Committee Meetings Held Quarterly and Committees Routine Meet Goals | Committee Meetings Held Quarterly and Committees Routine Meet Goals | Committee Meetings Held Quarterly and Committees Routine Meet Goals | Committee Meetings Held Quarterly and Committees Routine Meet Goals | | | | |
| | By Law changes for Committee/Board tenure approved | | | | | | | | |
| | Show Judging Changes Implemented | Increased Satisfaction in Show program | | | | | | | |
| | Certification Program Changes Implemented | Yearly Examiner Training Implemented | | | | | | | |
| | Rules & Procedures updated yearly as appropriate | Rules and Procedures easier to use and create more harmony | | | | | | | |
| | <p>* Assumes the following are accomplished in 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of Strategic Plan Approval of 2025 Annual Plan <p>Date of Approval by Board:</p> | | | | | | <p>Increasing and Diversifying Funding</p> <p>Preserving the Breed</p> <p>Creating Demand for the RMH Membership Growth and Engagement</p> <p>Strengthen Our Organization</p> | | |

Figure 2: Organizational Structure to Achieve Strategic Vision

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| <p>Priority Area 1: Increase & Diversify Outside Funding</p> <p>SPC Champion: Fundraising Chair TBD</p> <p><u>Committee/Board Involvement:</u></p> <p>Marketing, Finance, Fundraising committee (new)</p> | <p>Priority Area 2: Preserve the Breed</p> <p>SPC Champion: Chrissy Knight</p> <p><u>Committee/Board Involvement:</u></p> <p>Genetics, Marketing, RAC, Breed Standards committees, DOEs</p> | <p>Priority Area 3: Create Demand for the RMH</p> <p>SPC Champion: Erika Mitchell</p> <p><u>Committee/Board Involvement:</u></p> <p>Marketing, Membership, Youth, Versatility committees, DOEs</p> | <p>Priority Area 4: Membership Growth & Engagement</p> <p>SPC Champion: Membership Chair - TBD</p> <p><u>Committee/Board Involvement:</u></p> <p>Trail, Versatility, ISC, Youth, Membership committees, MALs</p> | <p>Priority Area 5: Strengthen Our Organization</p> <p>SPC Champion: Julie Tucker</p> <p><u>Committee/Board Involvement:</u></p> <p>Rules and Nominating Committees, President, Registrar, MALs, Office staff</p> |
|--|--|---|---|--|