



Grey Sauble
CONSERVATION

GREY SAUBLE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

2025 - 2035 Strategic Plan





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all the partners, stakeholders, rights holders, and community members who contributed their insights, perspectives, and support throughout the development of GSCA's Strategic Plan. Your engagement has been invaluable in shaping a vision and direction that truly reflects the collective priorities of our watershed community. A big thank you goes to GSCA Staff and Board for their time, dedication, and thoughtful input during every stage of the process.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA), I am pleased to present our 2025–2035 Strategic Plan. This document represents a decade-long commitment to advancing conservation, protecting our communities, and fostering a vibrant and resilient watershed. It is the result of thoughtful collaboration, extensive engagement, and a shared vision for the future of our region.

This Strategic Plan reflects the voices of our staff, partners, stakeholders, rights holders, and community members. Their insights and contributions have been instrumental in shaping a plan that is both ambitious and grounded in the realities of our watershed. The goals and strategic directions outlined herein will guide our decisions, inform our priorities, and ensure that GSCA continues to deliver meaningful and effective programs and services.

As Chair, I am proud of the dedication and leadership demonstrated by our Board and staff throughout this process. Together, we have built a framework that not only supports environmental stewardship and hazard management but also strengthens education, communication, and organizational excellence. This plan is a testament to our shared commitment to the land, the water, and the people we serve.

We invite you to explore this Strategic Plan and join us on our journey toward a healthier, safer, and more prosperous watershed. Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Sincerely,

Robert Uhrig
Chair, Board of Directors
Grey Sauble Conservation Authority



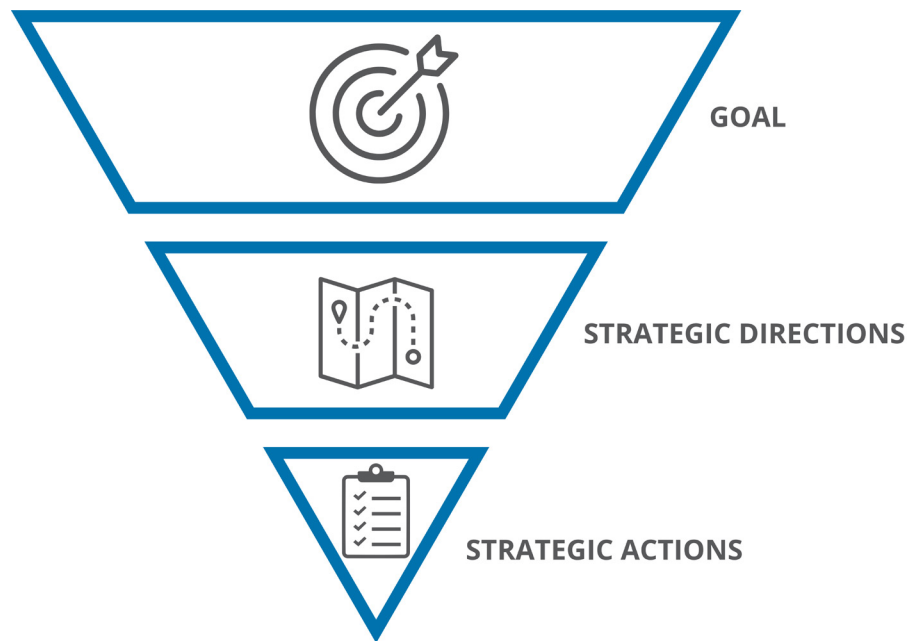
LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge with respect, the history, spirituality, and culture of the Anishinabek: The People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomi Nation, who have inhabited this land from time immemorial. And further give thanks to the Chippewas of Saugeen, and the Chippewas of Nawash, now known as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, as the traditional keepers of this land. We also recognize, the Metis whose ancestors shared this land and these waters. May we all, as Treaty People, live with respect on this land, and live-in peace and friendship with all its diverse peoples.

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Introduction

Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) has created this new Strategic Plan for the 10-year period from 2025-2035. This Plan includes Strategic Directions, which will be supported by Strategic Actions as specific deliverables in annual workplans. This Plan will be used to set these annual workplans, define performance targets, and allocate the organization's resources. The Plan, with the Vision and Mission of GSCA, will guide GSCA's decision-making processes. While the Plan is designed for a 10-year period, it is intended that GSCA will continue to assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of the goals and directions and to make course corrections when necessary.



The specific outcomes of the Plan will:



Better align staff and the Board of Directors on the future direction of GSCA.



Provide clarity on the role of the organization within the community.



Create a framework for decision making on allocating the resources of GSCA.



Build and maintain a positive culture of excellence within and around GSCA.

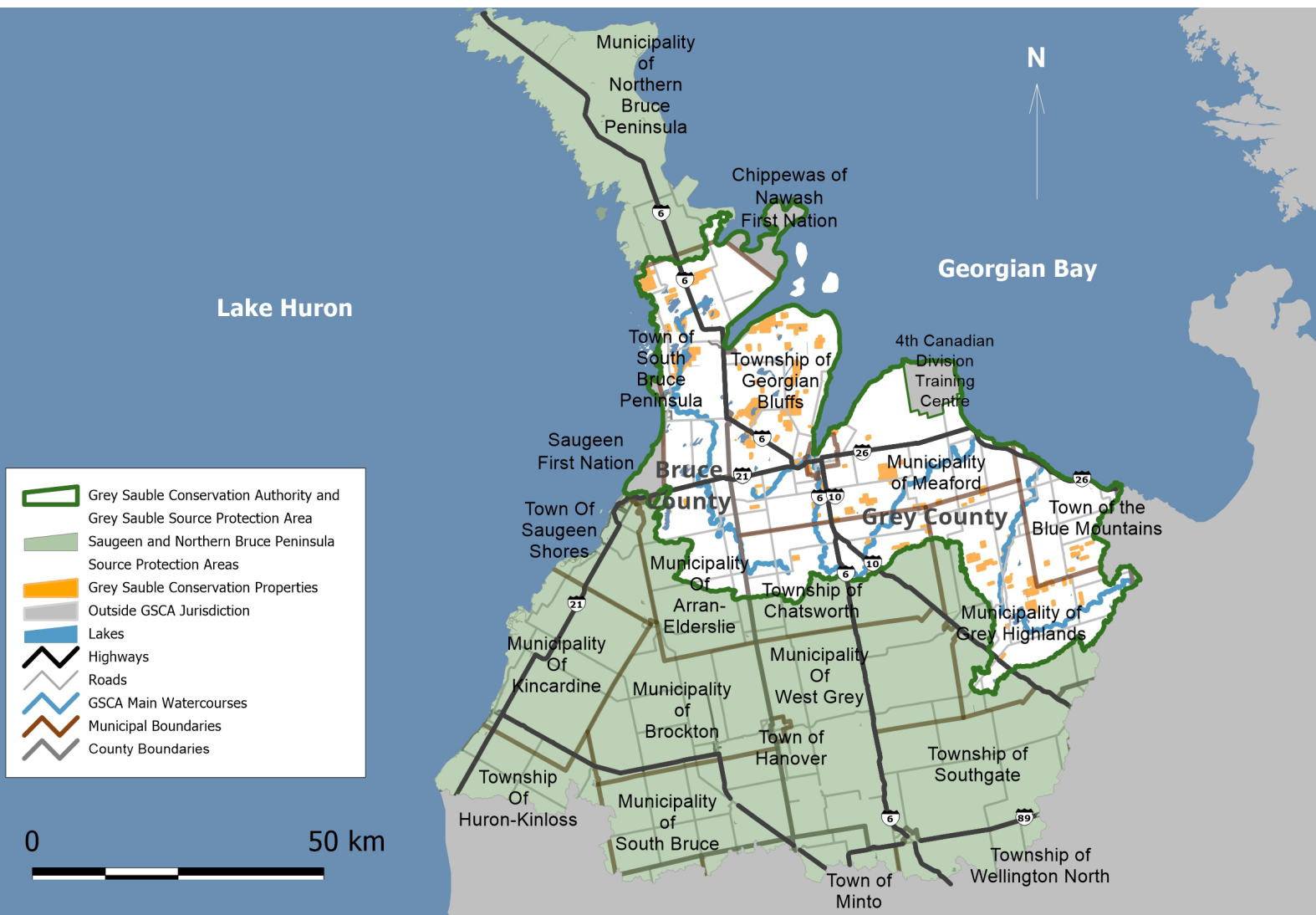
Background

Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) conserves and nurtures the natural environment, protects people and property from natural hazards, and inspires stewardship and environmental awareness within local communities. With a team of over 30 full-time, part-time, contract, and seasonal staff, GSCA delivers vital conservation work across the region through essential programs and services that protect and enhance a healthy watershed.

The Grey Sauble watershed is complex and includes five major rivers and numerous smaller tributaries, spanning all or part of eight local municipalities. Delivering services with an integrated approach across the entire watershed is crucial to upholding clean water, safe communities, access to environmental education and recreation opportunities, and healthy ecosystems for all to enjoy.

Within this expansive area, GSCA owns and manages over 11,735 hectares (29,000 acres) of some of the most scenic and environmentally sensitive lands in Ontario and delivers programs and services throughout its 3,200 square kilometre watershed boundary. The employees championing these programs and services uphold GSCA's mandate and support the vision and mission of the organization.

GSCA's value to this entire watershed community will be maintained and enhanced through the execution of this Plan.





VISION

A vibrant watershed, supported by GSCA, where ecosystems thrive, and communities are healthy, safe and prosperous.



MISSION

To champion a healthy and safe watershed through innovative conservation efforts, sound planning and inspiring education initiatives, now and in the future.





STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Introduction

Strategic planning is essential for aligning organizational goals with stakeholder expectations and operational realities. The engagement process for the 2025-2035 Strategic Plan was designed to be transparent, data-driven, and participatory. This document details the methodologies, key findings, and outcomes of the process.

Engagement Process Overview

A structured engagement process was followed to gather insights, assess the current strategic plan, and define new goals and directions.

Initial Review and Staff Engagement

- A review of the 2018 Strategic Plan process was conducted with staff.
- Four staff surveys assessed knowledge, engagement, process tools, and awareness of the current plan.
- An internal “What We Heard” document was prepared, summarizing qualitative and quantitative insights.
- The success of the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan was reported to the board.

Vision and Mission Development

- Staff and board assessed the existing mission and vision statements.
- Four draft mission and vision statements were created and refined to two each.
- Public, partners, and stakeholders were consulted for feedback and voting.
- Final consultation with staff and the board was completed to define the final mission and vision statements.

Goal Definition and SWOT Analysis

- Staff groups provided feedback and SWOT analysis on five proposed strategic goals.
- All existing programs and services were reviewed, categorized, and rated on a 1-5 scale for relevance and delivery standard.

Strategic Planning Sessions

- Four public and municipal partner sessions were hosted at the Bayshore Community Centre and Meaford Hall.
- Surveys were distributed through multiple channels, including community events, websites, social media, newsletters, direct emails, and placement in local municipal offices and libraries.
- Specific surveys targeted different stakeholder groups, including staff, board members, partners, volunteers, municipal councils and staff, and the public.

Program and Service Evaluation

- Staff rated mandatory programs under the Conservation Authorities Act (CAA).
- Service standard ratings were assigned to each program and refined through focused staff meetings.
- Challenges, barriers, and actionable solutions were identified.
- Feasibility assessments were conducted to determine necessary resources and implementation timelines.

Action Item Development

- Survey and meeting data were organized into two tables: mandatory and non-mandatory actions.
- Mandatory actions were tied to CAA requirements and used to shape the Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy.
- The mandatory and non-mandatory actions were summarized into four Strategic Directions for each Goal and a series of 91 potential actions which were reviewed by GSCA Staff and the Board of Directors to assess alignment with GSCA's needs and to prioritize action timelines.
- The interconnectivity of strategic goals was recognized, ensuring a holistic approach to implementation.
- Annual workplans will outline specific actions to achieve these strategic directions.

Conclusion

The engagement process for the 2025-2035 Strategic Plan was extensive, ensuring alignment with organizational needs and stakeholder expectations. The participatory approach strengthened the plan's credibility and feasibility, paving the way for effective implementation and long-term success. Moving forward, continuous engagement and assessment will be key to adapting to emerging challenges and opportunities.



STRATEGIC GOALS

GSCA'S Strategic Plan prioritizes five key goals:



Goal 1: Achieve Organizational Excellence

GSCA will strive to achieve organizational excellence in performance, innovation, customer satisfaction, employee engagement, and ethical practices. It requires a holistic approach to organizational development, striving for continuous improvement and adaptability to changing natural, social and political environments. Achieving organizational excellence involves enhancing service quality, fostering a positive and inclusive organizational culture, embracing innovation, and maintaining strong ethical standards.



Goal 2: Effectively Monitor and Manage the Risk of Natural Hazards

Effectively monitoring and managing the risk of natural hazards by implementing new and existing strategies to identify, assess, and mitigate the impact of natural hazards on our communities associated with flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches and unstable soils or bedrock.



Goal 3: Enhance GSCA Land Management

Enhancing GSCA land management through the implementation of sustainable land management practices, conservation efforts, and community involvement as key components of achieving this objective. This may include initiatives to improve environmental sustainability, biodiversity conservation, and community engagement. This objective is intended to ensure that land is managed efficiently and responsibly, considering factors such as ecological health, economic viability, and social well-being.



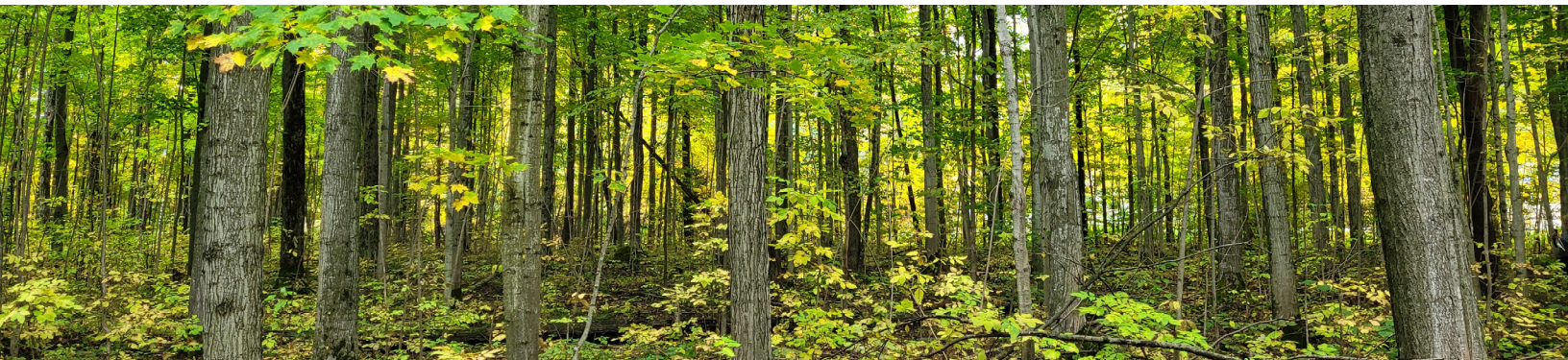
Goal 4: Improve Watershed Health

Improving watershed health by enhancing the overall well-being of the watershed through monitoring water resources, promoting conservation, and engaging communities in stewardship for sustainable water resources.



Goal 5: Strengthen Environmental Education and Communication

Strengthening environmental education and communication by enhancing awareness and understanding of environmental issues and fostering proactive environmental stewardship. This will include improving how we communicate GSCA's role, impact, and expertise within the watershed.





SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS BY GOAL

The strategic goals are organized around five main outcome areas, with specific actions and directions created through public consultation and ranked jointly by staff and board members. These goals are designed to guide the GSCA through 2025–2035.

Our strategic directions and actions are intentionally designed to support multiple goals rather than align with just one. This reflects the interconnected nature of GSCA's work, where actions like improving internal communication or enhancing land management contribute to both organizational excellence and broader environmental outcomes. This integrated approach ensures that Board decisions and oversight are aligned with a cohesive, organization-wide strategy that maximizes impact and implementation across all priority areas.



ACHIEVE ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

SUMMARY OF DIRECTIONS

- Enhance employee experience and retention.
- Support effective Board governance.
- Improve client/partner/stakeholder experience and satisfaction.
- Ensure successful and sustainable corporate operations.

Current Initiatives

- Informed Board engagement
- Volunteerism and partnerships
- Operational planning
- Modernizing policies
- Prioritizing workplace culture
- Enhancing client services



EFFECTIVELY MONITOR AND MANAGE THE RISK OF NATURAL HAZARDS

SUMMARY OF DIRECTIONS

- Update natural hazard technical studies and tools.
- Monitor and communicate risk of natural hazards.
- Manage risks associated with natural hazards.
- Maintain comprehensive policies, procedures and tools for natural hazards management.

Current Initiatives

- Flood forecasting and warning
- Managing flood and erosion control infrastructure
- Guiding development away from natural hazards
- Leveraging GIS for natural hazard mapping



ENHANCE GSCA LAND MANAGEMENT

SUMMARY OF DIRECTIONS

- Enhance visitor experience and compliance.
- Effectively monitor and manage ecology/biodiversity.
- Properly manage conservation land assets.
- Engage the community to enhance GSCA's land management capacity.

Current Initiatives

- Conservation land management
- Public access and recreation
- Collaborative conservation efforts
- Ecosystem threat mitigation
- Strategic property management planning
- Sustainable forest management



IMPROVE WATERSHED HEALTH

SUMMARY OF DIRECTIONS

- Ensure ongoing understanding of watershed health conditions.
- Provide services to enhance watershed health.
- Engage the community to support watershed health initiatives.
- Understand and communicate the impact of GSCA's actions on watershed health.

Current Initiatives

Drinking Water Source Protection
Watershed health reporting
Surface water quality monitoring
Stewardship funding and support



STRENGTHEN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

SUMMARY OF DIRECTIONS

- Create inclusive, accessible educational programming.
- Leverage volunteers to support outreach, education and community engagement.
- Launch public engagement campaigns.
- Enhance awareness of GSCA's role and impact while creating feedback loops to guide continuous improvement.

Current Initiatives

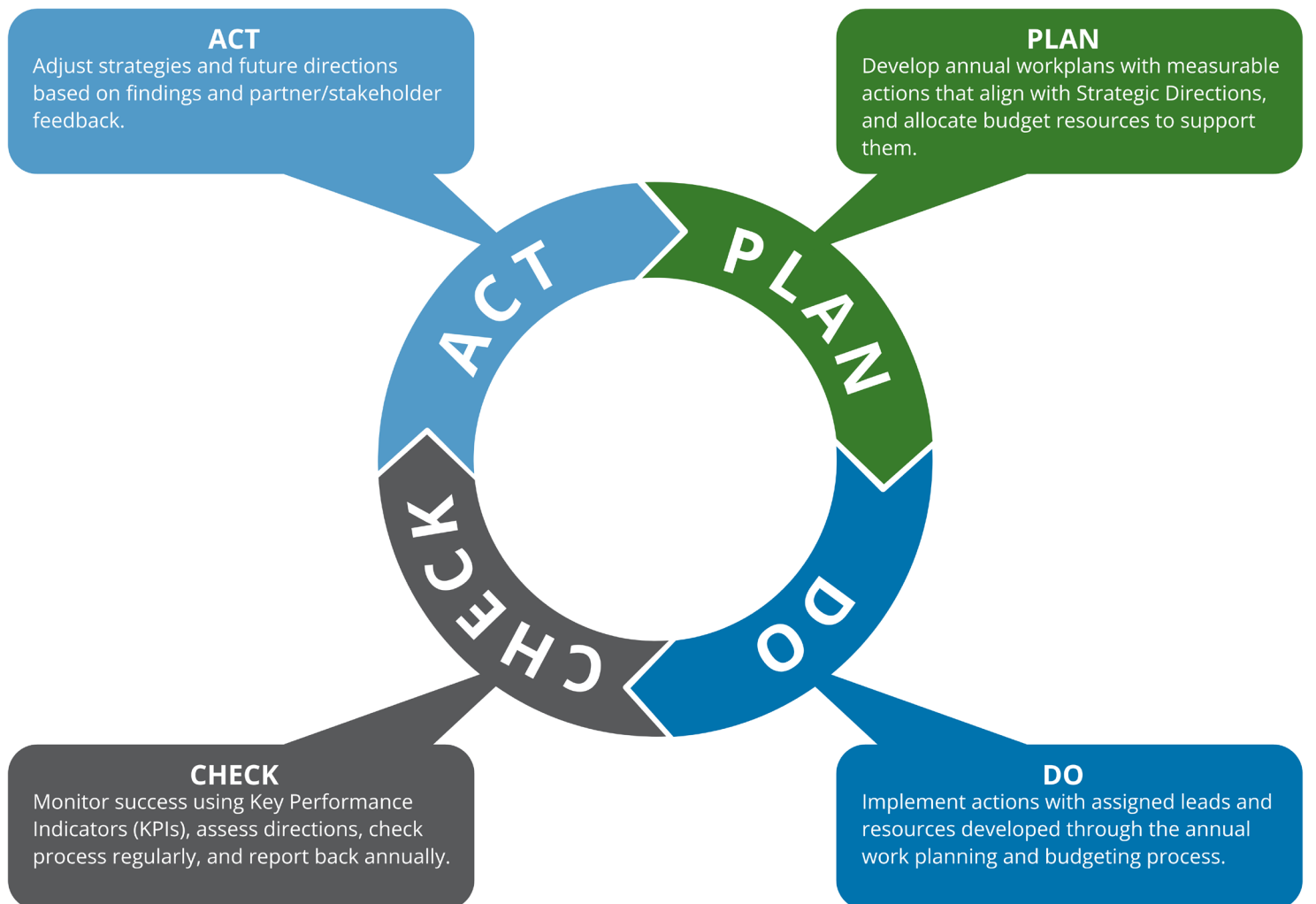
Environmental education strategy and delivery

Community engagement and outreach

Strategic communications



IMPLEMENTATION & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT CYCLE





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