

According to AERC's Bylaws, the purpose of the AERC is to promote and encourage:

- (a) The sport of Endurance Riding.
- (b) The care of endurance horses and prevention of cruelty to animals.
- (c) Equine owner and rider education through convention seminars, published articles, and other means as approved by the Board.

AERC encourages the riding of historic trails and shall encourage the establishment, preservation and maintenance of all trails on both public and private lands so they may be accessible to equine riding.

In support of the organization, the following strategies are supportive of the Bylaws, and specifically the purpose of the organization. These strategies were derived from evaluation of where the organization is today and what its needs are.

All of them are interrelated and AERC's long term survival and growth depends on achieving the goals for each one

over the next five years. Tracking will be done on at least a quarterly basis.

Strategic Concerns

1. Membership

2. Financial Stability

3. Trails Preservation

4. Education and Equine Welfare

5. Governance

Strategic Concern 1: Membership

A sizable membership allows the organization to be financially stable enough to do more for its members, more for our equine partners regarding welfare, education and research, and trails preservation.

Goal 1: Retain existing members and increase the number of new members

- a) Target number for membership is 7,500 over the next 5 years.
- b) Enter into a contract with a marketing professional.
- c) Use our website as advertising since it's how most new members find us. Improve and optimize it for various types of users.
- d) Continue grass roots efforts with Introductory Rides
- e) Continue educational clinics across all regions, both to add new members and to improve retention of existing members.
- f) Create a program to develop new ride managers.
- g) Support a program to increase the number of AERC sanctioned rides to provide more opportunities for AERC members to participate in the sport.

Goal 2: Joint Efforts

a) Research partnerships with organizations that have similar interests: Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), trail preservation and access, co-hosting events, joint marketing, joint lobbying, joint use of assets, drug rules, and rule development.

Strategic Concern 2: Financial Stability

Having a five-year financial plan directs the operations of the organization by prioritizing where we spend our money and creates long term stability in the event of economic down turns.

Goal 1: Increase financial resources to effectively spend more money on professional staff.

Goal 2: Effective and efficient administration of day-to-day finances.

Goal 3: Develop short term and long-term investment strategy with professional assistance.

Goal 4: Ensure contingency plans are in place, which includes natural disasters affecting the office and financial or membership growth.

Goal 5: Establish and fund a Supporting Organization for endowments/bequests.

Strategic Concern 3: Trails Preservation

Without trails, our organization will cease to exist. Many federal, state and private lands are being closed to trail riders or being developed. Continual lobbying for equine access on federal and state lands and development of access to private lands is critical to AERC's survival.

Goal 1: Develop a national approach for rides held on public lands.

Goal 2: Develop a prioritized plan for use of money donated specifically for trails.

Goal 3: Market success stories from trail projects and AERC grants.

Strategic Concern 4: Education and Equine Welfare

AERC must be seen as the pioneer in equine welfare and continuing education of its members while exemplifying the motto of "To Finish Is To Win" and the primary criterion of "Fit To Continue".

Goal 1: Continuing our leadership in the protection of the welfare of our equines.

Goal 2: Identify and support needed areas in endurance horse research.

Goal 3: Develop a plan for more complete, professional investigation of horse fatalities.

Goal 4: Improve endurance ride practices, including vet checks, to more effectively identify horses that may have metabolic issues and to reduce horse fatalities and injuries.

Goal 5: Educate membership on best practices of equine management and educate the public of our commitment to those practices.

Goal 6: Create a program to recruit and train new ride veterinarians.

Strategic Concern 5: Governance

Board members must provide strategic leadership with a focus on financial sustainability.

Goal 1: Identify clear allocation of responsibilities between staff, Executive Director, President, and Board members.

Goal 2: Improve effectiveness of Board meetings and encourage full participation by Board members.

Goal 3: Require effective use of committees to allow the Board to focus on strategic items.

Goal 4: Encourage clear communication with the Executive Director.

Goal 5: Increase regional director responsibilities.

Goal 6: Ensure continuity of understanding with new Board members.

Goal 7: Improve communication between Board members and the members of the AERC.

Goal 8: Engage in joint efforts with other organizations in the US and in other countries for endurance riding and other disciplines to support equestrian sports.