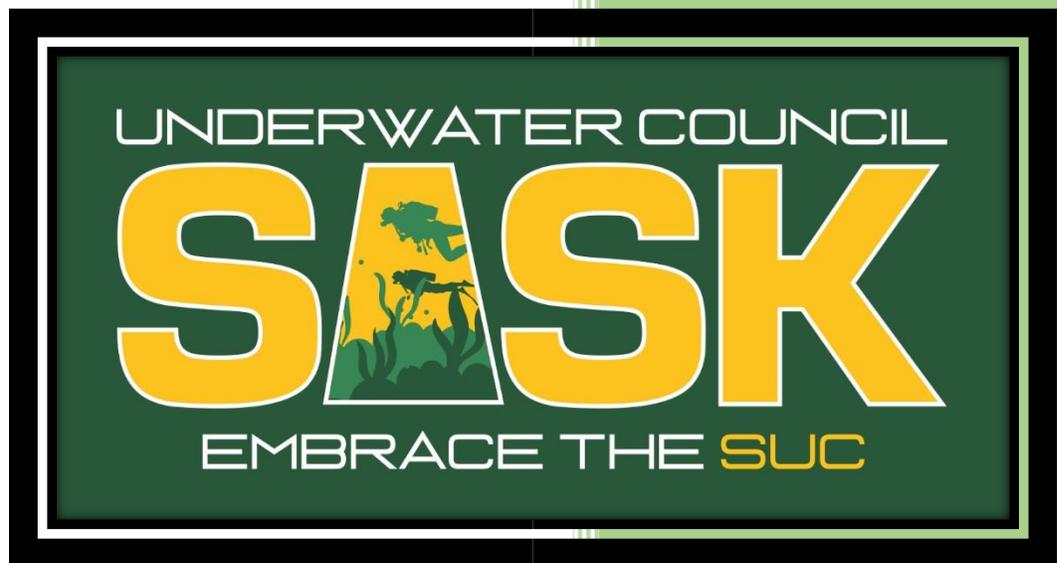


2020

# Three Year Strategic Plan



Saskatchewan Underwater Council

8/25/2020

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## Background

The Saskatchewan Underwater Council (SUC) is a non-profit organization that was established with a mission to foster, promote, and create opportunities for residents of Saskatchewan to engage in underwater activities through both participation and awareness. As part of this mission, the SUC is committed to making all efforts to support and promote organized clubs and associations in Saskatchewan that are dedicated to underwater activities. The SUC also acts as an activist for underwater activity club development and aims to assist in projects, research and activities that promote conservation and utilization of Saskatchewan's parks, protected spaces, lakes and rivers.

To accomplish this mission, the SUC aims to eliminate barriers – both actual and perceived – that prevent residents of Saskatchewan from taking part in underwater activities. In Saskatchewan, there is an overall lack of awareness of the underwater activities that take place. The SUC is dedicated to raising public awareness about these underwater activities and the need for conservation efforts to protect our environment and natural resources.

An informal SWOT analysis showed that over the last few years, the SUC has seen a decline in the number of active clubs in the province, membership levels have not increased (although the number of potential members has increased) and there is a reliance on Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation as its primary source of funding (described in M. Herback auditor's report 31March2020). This strategic plan was developed to revitalize the SUC as an organization that is:

1. Committed to continuing to raise awareness of underwater activities and the need for conservation in Saskatchewan;
2. Engaged in the promotion of underwater activities and conservation in Saskatchewan; and
3. Actively participating in underwater activities and conservation in Saskatchewan.

## Strategic Plan

By the year 2023, the future Saskatchewan Underwater Council (SUC) will aim to meet the following 6 objectives:

1. Improve governance of the SUC, review and update by-laws/policies;
2. Increase the SUC membership base and benefits of membership;
3. Diversify sources of funding through SUC events and fundraisers;
4. Grow Partnerships within Saskatchewan;
5. Increase visibility of the SUC within the province to include both the public and those who are engaged in underwater activities; and
6. Improve opportunities for more inclusive underwater activities in Saskatchewan.

### Objective 1: Improve governance of the SUC, review and update by-laws/policies

- i. The SUC policies will be reviewed and rewritten in a standardized format such that they are relevant to the day-to-day operations of the SUC. (Years 1 and 2)
- ii. The SUC By-Laws will be reviewed. The proposed updates will be prepared and submitted in writing to be considered for adoption at the Annual General Meeting.
- iii. (Year 1)
- iv. Governance processes for non-profit organizations will be reviewed with all board members to ensure that actions being taken by the board have gone through the proper processes. (Years 1, 2 and 3)
- v. Minutes of the board meetings will capture all pertinent information, including key points of discussions that take place. This will ensure transparency of operations. This will also ensure that new or absent board members are able to review all pertinent information. (Years 1, 2 and 3)
- vi. Board members will have the opportunity to complete professional development courses related to board governance, leadership and/or mentorship should the opportunity arise. (Years 1, 2 and 3)

### Objective 2: Increase the SUC membership base and benefits of membership

- i. Distribute surveys to current members, past members and those people who are members of the SUC Facebook page. These surveys will indicate if there are any barriers to becoming or retaining SUC membership, reasons that people chose to (or chose not to) become members, what people would like to receive as benefits of their membership and what activities people would like to see the SUC engaged in. (Year 1)

- ii. Analysis of these surveys will help to inform the strategic plan for Years 2 and 3.(Year 1)
- iii. To encourage membership, the SUC will offer events that have a reduced registration fee for paid SUC members. (Years 1, 2 and 3)
- iv. The SUC has introduced the annual Scott Beck Memorial Saskatchewan Scuba Diver of the Year award. To qualify for the award, divers must be a paid member of the SUC. (Years 1, 2 and 3)

### Objective 3: Diversify sources of funding through SUC events and fundraisers

- i. The SUC will critically evaluate its operating budget to determine where, or if, the budget can be optimized. (Years 1, 2 and 3)
- ii. Merchandise (t-shirts, stickers, etc) with the new SUC logo will be made up and will be available for sale. (Years 1, 2 and 3)
- iii. The SUC will host a small number of events independent of associated clubs where a registration fee will be charged. (Years 1, 2 and 3)
- iv. In conjunction with Objective 2, increased SUC membership will also increase overall funding. (Years 1, 2 and 3)
- v. Board members and the paid executive assistant will actively pursue additional sources of funding provincially, nationally and internationally. (Years 1, 2 and 3)

### Objective 4: Grow partnerships within Saskatchewan

- i. Reach out to relevant Provincial Recreation Associations (PRAs) to improve ties. (Years 1, 2 and 3)
- ii. Continue to develop partnerships with provincial Conservation Officers and Parks Staff to promote awareness and conservation. This relationship may also evolve into additional media coverage. (Years 1, 2 and 3)
- iii. Explore partnerships with schools, cities, towns, first nation communities and other recreation associations/pool facilities where the SUC could reach a broad audience to speak about underwater activities and conservation. (Years 2 and 3)
- iv. Explore partnerships with the various media within the major communities and throughout the province. Cultivate these relationships to involve media personalities as active participants in some of the special events put on by the SUC and member clubs. Coverage of these events and the SUC may benefit from the media's excitement, photos, videos and bulletins concerning those events. (Years 2 and 3).

Objective 5: Increase visibility of the SUC within the province to include both the public and those who are engaged in underwater activities

- i. The SUC will continue with the initiative of dive site enhancement , including the placement of “Diver Down” signage. (Year 1, possibly Years 2 and 3)
- ii. Dive shops throughout the province will be provided with SUC brochures for distribution. (Years 1, 2 and 3)
- iii. The SUC will deliver a diver first aid course (possibly in the form of Diver Alert Network’s Diver Emergency Management Provider (DEMP) each November. (Years 1, 2 and 3)
- iv. The SUC will deliver a one day seminar series on various underwater activities around the second week of January. (Years 2 and 3)
- v. The SUC will deliver an in-water skills refresher program around the second week of March. (Years 1, 2 and 3)
- vi. The SUC will purchase a display booth at both the SPRA Conference and the Sports and Leisure Show. The booth will be tended to by SUC board members and representatives of the local clubs/dive shops, if applicable. (Years 1, 2 and 3)
- vii. Media releases will be prepared and distributed for SUC sponsored events. In some cases, a full article will be prepared for distribution to media outlets. Media outlets will include television stations and print news media. When appropriate, radio outlets will also be included. Follow-up releases will be distributed so that the whole story is presented. (Years 1, 2 and 3)
- viii. The SUC will continue its social media presence on Facebook and will expand to Twitter and Instagram. (Years 2 and 3)
- ix. Website traffic will be tracked and the website will be updated on a quarterly basis

Objective 6: Improve opportunities for more inclusive underwater activities in Saskatchewan

- i. Implement a competitive scholarship program for a resident of Saskatchewan who is between the ages of 16 and 20. This scholarship, designed to help cover the costs of Open Water Scuba Certification and gear, will help to increase visibility of both the SUC and scuba diving in Saskatchewan and provide an opportunity to someone who would not otherwise be able to take part. (Year 2 or 3)
- ii. Skin diving, free diving and underwater foraging are underwater activities that require minimal equipment and do not have a significant expense associated with them as scuba diving does. Implementation of skin diving, free diving and underwater foraging courses would be a significant move towards the “recreation for all” approach. (Year 2 and/or 3)

## Conclusion

This document outlines a 3-year strategic plan for SUC success but making it a reality will require substantial support and buy-in from the Board of Directors.