



STRATEGIC PLAN

THREE-YEAR OUTLOOK FOR ONGOING IMPACTS
AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2024

ADOPTED
05.23.2024

OUR LEADERSHIP

Coastal Connections, Inc (CCinc) was incorporated in 2017 and in 2023 celebrated its 6-year anniversary. Since the last review of this Strategic Plan, the Board of Directors has grown by one Americorp expert and is looking to recruit additional members before the end of 2024 to help with program growth and strategic planning. Our executive leaders now oversee 2FT Employees, 4PT Contractors, and 1 Americorp VISTA. The organization continues to grow and is in a new life stage with an office, gift shop, and new sea turtle rescue vehicle. The Board will look for continued growth opportunities while preparing for the future.



PLAN REVIEW OBJECTIVE - YEAR 2

The plan within serves as the long-term roadmap for CCinc leadership, staff, and volunteers for 1-3 years from the plan's adoption. In 2023/24 the BOD conducted its 2nd review to assess the successes of this plan. It was decided during these assessments that the BOD would schedule a full strategic planning retreat in 2024 to re-evaluate the organization's purpose, vision, goals, and a new roadmap. The following Plan continues to prepare the organization for growth and identifies the goals we must reach to meet our mission and vision to help sea turtles survive and recover.

It is so exciting to see how quickly we were able to meet and exceed our strategic plan goals - Kendra Bergman, Executive Director



WHO IS COASTAL CONNECTIONS?

Mission

Protect coastal habitats for sea turtle survival by educating and connecting people to the environment.

Vision

Be a driving force for the recovery of sea turtles.

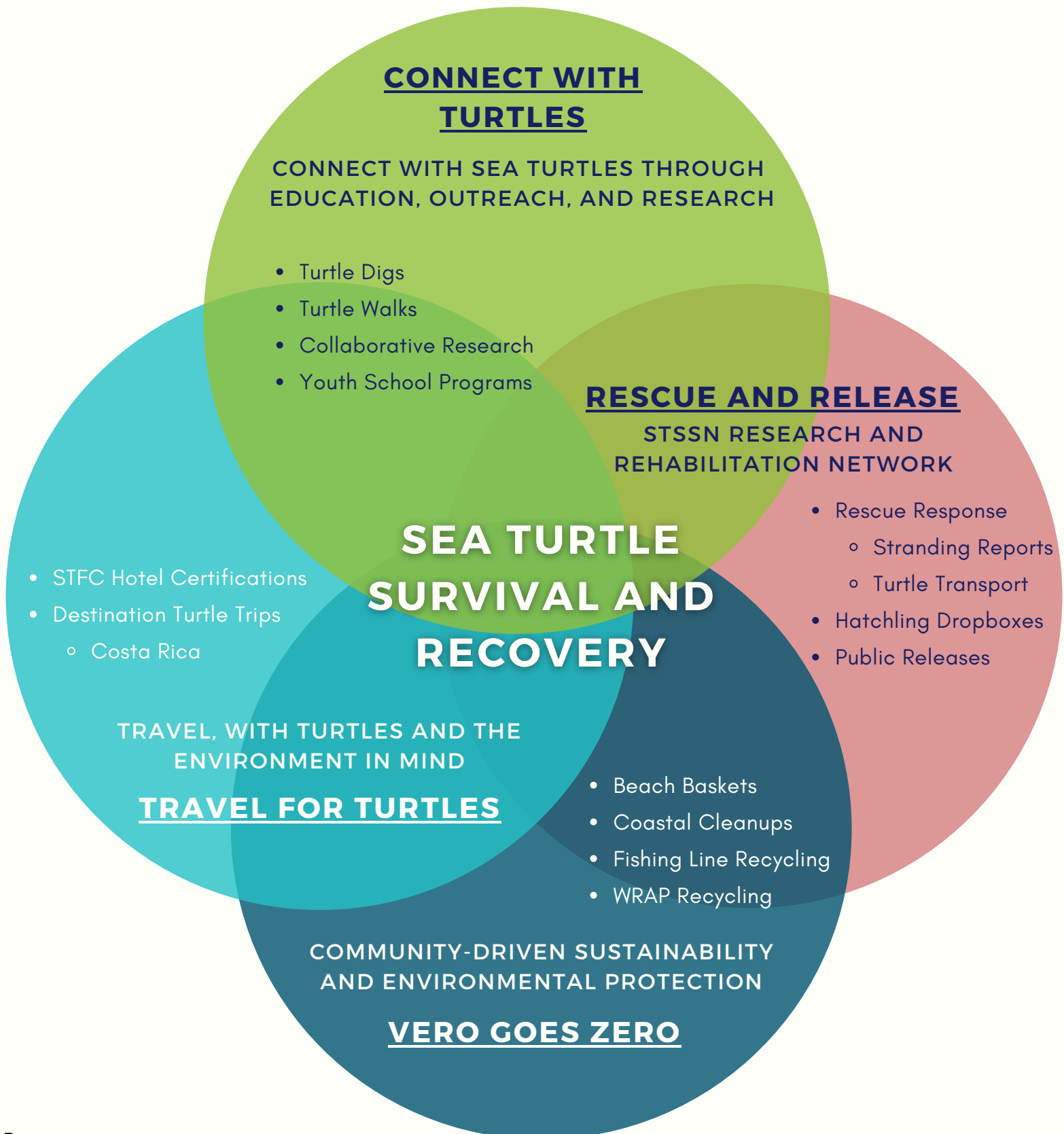
Values

- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Data-Driven
- Passion
- Inclusivity



OUR INITIATIVES

CCinc separates programs into four initiatives to meet its mission and vision of helping sea turtles survive and recover. While each initiative has different goals and metrics, all work synergistically for one purpose.



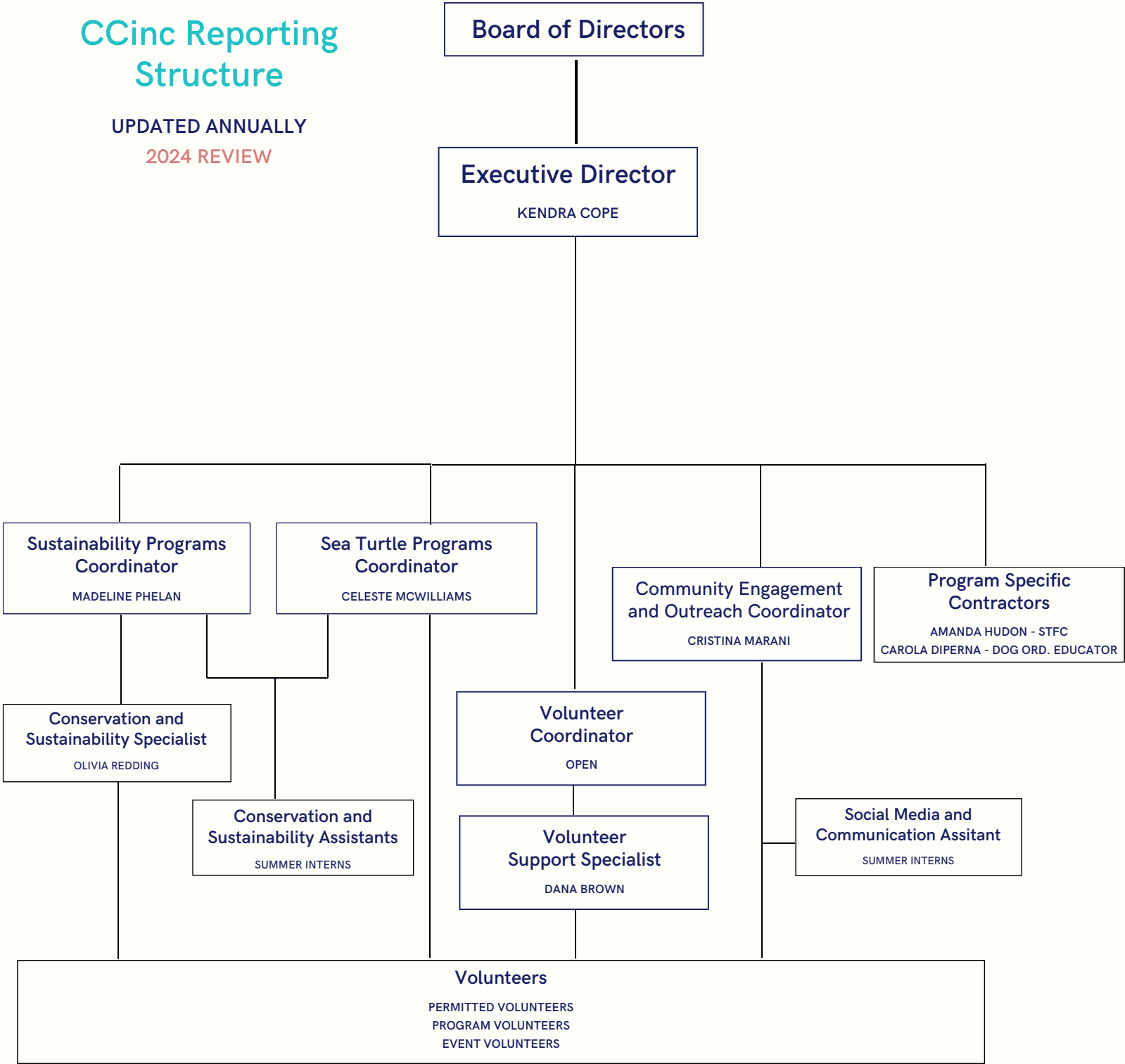
OPERATIONAL CHART



LEADERSHIP ORG CHART

CCinc Reporting Structure

UPDATED ANNUALLY
2024 REVIEW



INITIATIVE GOALS

01

LEARN FROM AND BUILD NEW SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS

Leadership will attend and present at professional workshops, seminars, and symposia. Newly published work will be incorporated into public messaging and conservation programs. We will also identify scientific partners to engage in sea turtle research along Florida's East Coast to learn more about sea turtle and human behaviors.

02

DIVERSIFY PROGRAM AUDIENCES AND OUR IMPACTS

We will build partnerships with other organizations or service groups to develop opportunities that bring our message to new networks both locally and across the SE region of the United States. Annually, program demographics will be evaluated and the results will guide resource attention to ensure we include all people in the conservation story of sea turtles.

03

BUILD A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PASSION FOR CONSERVATION

Staff and volunteer team members will attend community outreach events annually and will serve as guest speakers at community group meetings and functions. Volunteers will be recruited semi-annually to engage and assist in programs and events. Through volunteer appreciation and team trips, we will continue to build passion, trust and friendships throughout our team.

TURTLE CONNECTIONS

Initiative programs aim to physically, emotionally, and virtually connect all people with sea turtles through experiences and education to build a desire that drives personal and social behavior changes to protect sea turtles.

PROGRAMS

Turtle Digs
Turtle Walks
Turtle Rescue and Release
Turtle Research
Community Outreach



TURTLE CONNECTIONS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

GOALS

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ACHIVEMENTS

2022

- 01. We have fostered a research relationship with FSU's Dr. Mariana Fuentes to support novel Kemp's Ridley research in Florida. Staff will also be presenting at the 2023 SERSTM meeting about STFC successes
- 02. We opened up access to Turtle Digs to those who need wheelchairs. We are also working with tourism partners to reach new audiences like hotel guests.
- 03. Volunteer recruitment occurred 4 times in 2022. The number of trained and scheduled volunteers has increased to over 100.

2023

- 01. KempCam footage collected from the FSU collaboration was noted in a publication. We started a relationship with UCF's Dr. Kate Mansfield with plans to do similar work in the IRL to study turtle behaviors and interactions. This research collaboration will start in 2024.
- 02. We obtained funding from the Indian River Tourism Development Council to create virtual Turtle Walk and Turtle Dig videos to better reach and attract online audiences. Videos will be recorded and edited in 2024.
- 03. We expanded our staff to include a volunteer support specialist. This new team member researched and troubleshooted a new volunteer management system to better help volunteers manage their calendars and log their volunteer time. We also scheduled monthly appreciation activities to engage the team all year in programming and friendship.

INITIATIVE GOALS

01

MITIGATE IMPACTS FROM COASTAL DEVELOPMENT

We will work with State and Local partners within permitting, enforcement, and tourism development to synergize strategies that increase eco-minded travel and decrease negative environmental impacts to coastal habitats. Lastly, we will build an integrated marketing and communication strategy to encourage and incentivize sea turtle-friendly development.

02

BRING AWARENESS TO THE CONNECTIVITY OF OUR ACTIONS

We will incorporate up-to-date information and data about ocean connectivity and marine debris into our program messages. **It is critical that we use real data to inspire and teach** the importance for all travelers to return home from their trips with an understanding that they have the power to make a difference to protect and enhance our environment.

03

DEVELOP ECO-FRIENDLY TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES

We will use passion and networking to grow our relationships with regional and global partners that can further our knowledge of eco-minded travel. Together we will build opportunities for people to partake in volunteering or eco-minded travel that protects and supports sea turtle conservation.

TURTLE TRAVELS

Initiative programs focus on the eco traveler and their short-term experiences and choice of lodging during their trips. People can feel good knowing that when they stay at Certified hotels or engage as volunteers, they are giving back to the communities, businesses, and organizations supporting sea turtle recovery.

PROGRAMS

Sea Turtle Friendly Certified
Turtle Trips



TURTLE TRAVELS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

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ACHIVEMENTS

2022

01. Goal one was not explored deeply in 2022.

However, recommendations for living shorelines and dark beaches have been continuously suggested. We also have a partnership with LED Capstone to provide expert recommendations for wildlife lighting.

02. We hosted our first Turtle Trips program in Costa Rica. In future years we will set up 3-month followup emails to stay engaged with travelers and learn about changes in behaviors

03. With the successes of Turtle Trips, we will work to develop a Florida trip to launch 2024

2023

01. We have continued our relationship with LED Capstone, a local lighting distributor, to offer free onsite recommendations for properties looking to upgrade their lighting to benefit both wildlife and guests.

02. Presentations made by our Turtle Trip partners in Costa Rica were updated to reflect new research and new concerns. In 2024 we will begin making post-trip interviews to learn how guests have incorporated their new knowledge into their daily behaviors to save sea turtles no matter where they live.

03. Expanding the Turtle Trips program to include a Florida trip will be a 2025 project. A TDC grant application will be submitted in 2024 to work with local Indian River partners to build a 1-week environmental getaway vacation that supports sea turtles.

INITIATIVE GOALS

01

MINIMIZE SINGLE-USE PLASTIC AVAILABILITY

We will annually evaluate and update a report about the availability of single-use plastic alternative materials. Results will guide our work with businesses and organizations to offer non-plastic reusable bags, straws, and other products. Businesses will also be promoted as a Vero Goes Zero business when they no longer offer single-use plastic product options.

02

INCREASE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF RECYCLING

We will work with local governments and organizations to offer more streamlined recycling options and regularly evaluate recycling efficacies at CCinc managed recycling locations. Information will be provided to decision-makers.

03

CREATE CLEANER AND HEALTHIER BEACHES

We will regularly conduct coastal cleanup events, expand our beach basket program to communities outside of Indian River County, and provide regular public informational updates to decision-makers on the successes and impacts of our coastal cleanup efforts.

VERO GOES ZERO

Initiative programs are centered around community-based sustainability. Programs involve individuals, businesses, religious groups, governments, and other organizations to pave a path for cleaner and healthier oceans, estuaries, and beaches for all who use them now and in the future.

PROGRAMS

Coastal Cleanups
Beach Baskets
Farmer's Market Recycling
WRAP Recycling
Plastic Alternatives



VERO GOES ZERO ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

GOALS

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ACHIVEMENTS

2022

01. We have 5 Vero Goes Zero restaurants and 2 STFC-certified hotels all working to eliminate single-use plastics. We will work to increase this number every year.

02. over 22 businesses are now a part of CCinc's WRAP recycling program, recycling over 1 TON of material. These data are provided to the County for annual reports.

03. We hosted over 30 cleanups in 2022 including ICC! over 4,000 lbs of debris was cleaned. We also expanded Beach Baskets with 2 new partners and are writing a grant to work with the State Park System.

2023

01. We continue to increase the number of STFC hotels who are all reducing and eliminating single-use plastic. We have also been acknowledged by Indian River County as a recycling partner. We are also educating our volunteers about recycling and single-use waste so they can be stewards of our work.

02. Over 38 businesses are now a part of CCinc's WRAP recycling program, recycling over 3 TONS of material in 2023 alone. These data are provided to the County for annual reports and because of our effort, the County has entered into a contract with TREX to directly recycle WRAP material.

03. We hosted over 30 cleanups in 2023 removing over 6,000 lbs of debris. Data has been logged into the TIDES database. We also expanded Beach Baskets to Florida State Parks.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

01

Board Growth

We will conduct skills assessments with all Board Members to identify areas of strength and need. We will recruit new members based on the needs of the organization and the skill makeup of the Board.

02

Fundraising

We will host up to three major events annually and will develop influential Annual Drive messages to fund program expansions. We will ask our donors for advice, extend special invitations, and provide thank you opportunities.

03

Nurture The Team

We will provide quality pay and benefits to staff, and appreciation to volunteers, who make our impacts possible. Leadership will work with staff and volunteers to ensure our team is provided proper guidance and is empowered by passion.

04

Build Exposure

Remote work is beneficial for our team and encouraged to increase throughout the local and scientific community. However, we will strive to identify a location to build permanent community exposure by the end of the 3-year plan period.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2023 ASSESSMENT

01

Board Growth

Before becoming an Americorp host site, we recruited an expert in the Americorp VISTA program in 2023 to help outline how to best incorporate Americorp into CCinc's operations. The Board continues to recruit skilled individuals ready to support HR needs, Strategy, Accounting, and Legal guidance. Expanding the Board will be done intentionally to build a new but familiar board culture after every new member is onboarded.

02

Fundraising

CCinc continues to host several major events each year, raising the number of donors supporting our organization. International Coastal Cleanup Day has become a huge "friend-raising" event. In 2023, we began "Thank You Thursdays", inviting major donors onto the beach to observe nesting surveys. We were also awarded the beneficiary role at an Intl Tennis Tournament where major donors were invited to enjoy the event for free to foster our philanthropic relationship.

03

Nurture The Team

The new Volunteer Support Specialist has planned monthly gatherings and appreciation events for volunteers to build stronger relationships with the team in 2024. We have also been building staff culture in the office to retain high-quality talent. Staff's hybrid work schedule serves as a benefit to staff making it easier to balance life and work. We will continue to explore additional benefits in the future.

04

Build Exposure

At the end of 2023, we executed a lease for a 500 sq ft office and gift shop. It is located on the island in a popular and well-known area serving as permanent exposure and availability to the community and our own team. In addition, a van was purchased for sea turtle rescues in 2023. We plan to continue building relationships using the new exposure the rescue van provides while building new education programs to serve students across Indian River.

COASTAL CONNECTIONS

Involving all people in the conservation
success story of sea turtles.

GET CONNECTED



@coastalconnectionsinc



3321 Bridge Plaza Drive
Vero Beach, FL 32963



@coastalconnections_inc



772-266-0133



<https://coastal-connections.org>



Info@coastal-connections.org

