



# Loxahatchee River Environmental Control District 2023 Environmental Education Strategic Plan



October 19, 2023



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# The Loxahatchee River Environmental Control District

The Loxahatchee River Environmental Control District (LRD) is an independent, multi-county special district of the State of Florida created by the Florida Legislature in 1971. We are governed by a five-member, publicly elected Governing Board, with day-to-day management led by an Executive Director. The Legislature created LRD based on a groundswell of local concern for public health, safety, and welfare, and provided LRD with clear objectives of preventing, minimizing, and reversing degradation of environmental conditions and natural resources within the Loxahatchee River watershed.

The Loxahatchee River is present on the oldest maps of Florida, and it forms the nexus of local communities, including Jupiter, Tequesta, Jupiter Inlet Colony, and Juno Beach. Historic photographs provide an intriguing glimpse into life in this area, and often show locals relying on the waterway for transport and associated natural resources for sustenance. Even today locals and visitors demonstrate a clear affinity for the Loxahatchee River, with many spending quality time recreating on or in its waters. This sense of local pride in, and concern for, the Loxahatchee River led to it receiving the national Wild & Scenic River designation and state designations as an Outstanding Florida Water, Aquatic Preserve, and Manatee Protection Area.

The LRD's primary function is implementing innovative wastewater solutions to safeguard public health and protect environmental conditions within our watershed. The LRD operates an award-winning wastewater collection, treatment, and recycling facility. Day in and day out we collect wastewater from the community, transmit it via underground pipes and pumps to our regional wastewater reclamation facility, where raw sewage is transformed, through effective treatment, to IQ Water (aka reclaimed water). Our IQ Water is distributed to meet landscape irrigation needs at 13 local golf courses and throughout the Abacoa community, including Roger Dean Stadium. This water recycling effort has preserved billions of gallons of native groundwater for the environment – offsetting saltwater intrusion and the associated environmental degradation.

The LRD is the leading authority on environmental monitoring efforts within the watershed. LRD actively monitors water quality, including fecal indicator bacteria, seagrasses, and oysters, makes these data freely available to agencies (e.g., EPA, DEP, SFWMD, US ACOE) and the public, and summarizes findings in peer-reviewed scientific literature, e.g., see <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.162232>.

Environmental education of the public is a critical element of any successful effort to preserve and protect natural resources; therefore, LRD takes pride in offering quality environmental education programming within the watershed. Our enabling act provides LRD with clear authority to “conduct environmental education as necessary and appropriate to minimize damage to the area’s resources and environment, to prevent additional environmental problems from being created, and to provide education regarding solutions to existing problems.” Under this authority, we actively work to engage the public with relevant and compelling environmental education programming at the River Center, our in-house environmental education facility, and throughout the watershed.

## Introduction

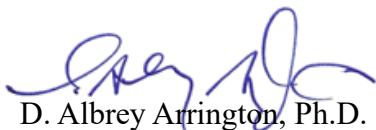
In the words of Marjory Stoneman Douglas, “*Environmental education is the last best hope for the future.*” I assume Ms. Douglas espoused this belief because she understood the world is facing a plethora of threats that impact the diversity and functionality of our natural systems, and she recognized that environmental education is a cost-effective means of changing behaviors, which can improve existing environmental problems and preventing new environmental problems.

At the LRD, we recognize that conducting effective environmental education is instrumental to achieving our mission and vision, i.e., inspiring and achieving a healthy environment. The primary purpose of our environmental education efforts is to develop a sense of environmental stewardship among our participants, so that these individuals responsibly use and protect the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices.

LRD’s environmental education programming began in earnest in 1992 with the development of the Jupiter Marine Science Center, which was housed at the old lighthouse museum (adjacent to northeast base of US1 bridge). In 1998 LRD welcomed Busch Wildlife Sanctuary onto our wastewater treatment facility campus. This fledgling partnership expanded the reach of our environmental education efforts and allowed participants to interact face to face with native wildlife that had been impacted by human activities. In 2005 LRD partnered with The Nature Conservancy’s Blowing Rocks Preserve to host our summer camp. Then, in 2008 LRD opened the River Center inside Palm Beach County’s Burt Reynolds Park. The River Center was an expansion and formalization of facilities and programs that took their roots in the old Marine Science Center.

Throughout this timeline, the LRD has worked to engage residents, young and old, to explore, experience, and connect with the diverse species and habitats within our watershed. Our targeted environmental education programs are designed to help participants explore the watershed and connect with nature, and as they do so, desired outcomes are for participants to have an increased knowledge concerning our local environment and environmental problems, increased awareness of potential solutions to such problems, and increased motivation to work towards practical solutions for such problems.

We are living in exciting times. Challenges and opportunities abound. The ever-increasing human population and urbanization mean we must be intentional if we are to minimize human impacts. Fortunately, there are numerous opportunities for LRD to continue to improve and expand our environmental education programming as we help others understand the beauty and value of nature and the significant and consequences of their actions.



D. Albrey Arrington, Ph.D.  
Executive Director,

Loxahatchee River Environmental Control District

# Existing Conditions & Opportunities

To map a successful course to our intended destination, it is important to understand where we are. Currently, LRD's environmental education efforts are achieved with the following personnel and facility resources, respectively.

## A. Personnel:

1. **Full-time environmental education staff:**
  - i. Env. Ed. Manager (Jocelyn – 17 years)
  - ii. Env. Ed. Coordinator (Sara – 7 years)
  - iii. Nature Educator & Animal Care (Sam – 3 years)
2. **Part-time environmental education staff:**
  - i. Env. Educator (Jess – 1 year)
  - ii. Volunteer Coordinator (Rebecca – 6 months)
3. **Extern:**
  - i. PBC school teacher working a 1-month summer appointment at the River Center
4. **Interns:**
  - i. Three (3) summer interns working directly with summer camp.
  - ii. One (1) school year (fall and spring) intern to facilitate various program activities.
5. **Volunteers:**
  - i. while not technically staff, the River Center has a host of volunteers that work diligently to help the facility and/or a specific event run smoothly.

## B. Facilities:

1. **River Center:** this approximately 5,000 square foot building is the primary location of our environmental education efforts. It is located within Burt Reynolds Park off of US1 in eastern Jupiter. Our existing lease with Palm Beach County Parks Department is set to expire March 12, 2027. Palm Beach County's site plan for Burt Reynolds Park does not include the River Center as a long-term feature.
2. **2500 Jupiter Park Drive:** this is the site of the LRD's wastewater treatment facility and is also home to Busch Wildlife Sanctuary (BWS). BWS is relocating to their new property in Jupiter Farms and will vacate 2500 Jupiter Park Drive by February 29, 2024.
3. **BLM - Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area:** In 2020, the LRD executed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for the expansion of our environmental education programming to the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area. This key strategic opportunity facilitates partnering with the BLM, the Loxahatchee River Historical Society, and the Nature Conservancy as we expand our environmental education programming to the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area, an area of notable historic and environmental significance. Also, BLM has awarded LRD a Special Recreation Permit Application and Plan of Operation authorizing LRD to conduct environmental education programs, in conformity to the LRD Environmental

Education Policy, based out of the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area. In addition, BLM has awarded LRD the opportunity to renovate and beneficially use, in the course of our environmental education efforts, two USCG homes. LRD developed a plan to renovate the two homes and the surrounding site, but rejected the bids to do the work because the bids were deemed not cost effective. Nonetheless, the LRD is conducting environmental education programs at the BLM site without the benefit of the two USCG houses.

4. **20 Acres:** LRD owns 20 acres of undeveloped land west of I-95 (abutting Sierra Square shopping center to the north, Riverbend Park to the east, and Cypress Creek South Natural Area to the west). LRD has developed a conceptual site plan for the property that includes remediation of existing utility impacts and potential development as an environmental education campus. LRD’s current plans include moving forward with conducting the remediation work at the site. Also, LRD has been awarded grant funds from the state Legislature through the LRPI to improve passive outdoor recreation at the 20 Acres with funds specifically designated for construction of temporary parking facilities, a chickee hut, and nature trails that will integrate into the existing natural trail network.
- C. **Programs:** LRD’s environmental education programs briefly summarized here are discussed and assessed elsewhere in this strategic plan document.

Program Name: # Educators | Class Size | # Days/Year | Target Age | Brief Description

1. Aquatic Day Camp: 2 | 16 | 40 | 6-18 | Intense, immersive summer camp experience.
2. Archery: 2 | 16 | 4 | 10+ | Introduction to outdoor archery.
3. Atala Butterfly Festival: 7 | 200 | 1 | Families | Day-long event focused on conservation and preservation of Atala butterflies and the importance of planting native host plants in our yards.
4. AustinBlu Fishing Tournament: 7 | 175 | 1 | Families | Family-focused tournament designed to increase family time spent together on the water exploring our local habitats and fisheries.
5. Birthday Party: 1 | 40 | 3 | 3-10 | Child birthday party hosted in the River Center classroom and includes a guided tour of the facility and touch tank exploration.
6. Blooming in the Garden: 2 | 30 | 12 | 3-6 | Guided, hands-on exploration of backyard habitats and species.
7. Boat Tour: 2 | 16 | 4 | Families | Guided, hands-on tour of the estuary and sandbars
8. Boating Safely Class: 1 | 30 | 13 | 12+ | Hosted by the River Center, funded by AustinBlu Foundation, and taught by the USCG Auxiliary, this program is designed to provide key safety-related knowledge to young boaters in our community.
9. Campfire: 4 | 150 | 3 | Families | A themed campfire event complete with s’mores, crafts, and discovery activities designed to introduce families to the River Center.
10. Clean Up: 2 | 50 | 4 | Families | Collaborations with Keep PBC Beautiful and PBC Parks and Recreation, this event facilitates litter removal by participants.
11. Craftapalooza: 2 | 50 | 3 | Families | Held during school vacations, multiple craft stations are set up in the classroom with crafts engaging an environmental theme.

12. Documentary Night: 2 | 50 | 4 | Adults | Raise awareness of relevant environmental topics and threats through quality documentary films enjoyed in a group setting.
13. Fishing Clinic: 2 | 20 | 5 | 5-12 | Learn how to fish and all the relevant skills needed.
14. Girl Scout Program: 4 | 60 | 4 | 5-18 | Hands-on, badge-earning workshops designed to teach specific environmental knowledge and skills.
15. Girl Scout Way: 7 | 200 | 1 | 5-18 | A campfire event where women professionals in STEM fields communicate their passion and expertise to the next generation.
16. Halloween Party: 7 | 400 | 1 | Families | Themed Halloween campfire event is designed to introduce families to the River Center in a lighthearted, fun manner.
17. Homeschool Field Trip: 2 | 35 | 15 | 7-10 | School group field trip offered to homeschool students.
18. Homeschool Workshop: 2 | 30 | 15 | 7-16 | Hands-on experiential learning modules (eg, water quality testing, reptiles of the watershed) offered to homeschool students.
19. Jr. Angler Fishing Tournament: 7 | 125 | 30 | 5-17 | A month-long catch-and-release fishing tournament designed to promote exploration of the entire watershed.
20. Kayak Program: 2 | 14 | 15 | Adults | Guided kayak tours along local waterways
21. Lecture: 4 | 75 | 10 | Adults | Speakers share their knowledge about important environmental topics and issues
22. Nature Walk: | 2 | 50 | 10 | Adults | Guided nature hikes within local natural areas
23. Outreach: 1 | 300 | 4 | All ages | Staff attend various festivals marketing the RC.
24. Public Fish Feeding: 1 | 20 | 50 | All ages | Guided tour of our exhibits while wildlife (mostly fish) are being fed by trained staff.
25. Room Rental: 1 | 75 | 15 | Adults | Rent the River Center classroom by the hour.
26. School Group Field Trip: 2 | 55 | 45 | 5-18 | Educational field trips tailored to address Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.
27. Science Day: 5 | 50 | 4 | 5-11 | Actively perform supervised scientific experiments.
28. Science with Sam: 2 | 15 | 26 | 6-12 | Themed activities focused on exciting and fun environmental topics, eg, wildlife encounters, nature exploration, pollution.
29. Seine and Dip: 2 | 30 | 5 | Families | Naturalist guided, hands-on estuary exploration.
30. Story Time: 1 | 40 | 50 | 0-6 | 30 minute program centered around reading a story book and an animal encounter.
31. Virtual Field Trip: 1 | 50 | 2 | 5-18 | Virtual (online) version of an education program or school field trip program.
32. Visiting Camp Group: 2 | 55 | 35 | 5-12 | Hosted field trip for summer camp groups from other centers and facilities where participants engage in a selected environmental education program, eg, seine and dip, crab hunt.
33. Volunteer Appreciation: 8 | 30 | 1 | 14+ | A fun, social, engaging annual event designed to show our volunteers that they are genuinely appreciated.

D. **Finances:** LRD's total operating budget for FY2023 is \$16,787,580 and includes \$554,510 for environmental education programs, which represents 3.3% of the total operating budget. Since 2009, the first full year of River Center operations, LRD's annual operating expenses for environmental education have consistently equaled approximately 3% of operating expenses.

# LRD Strategic Planning Process

Our strategic planning process began with staff reviewing key organizational documents, including the organizational mission and vision statements, the environmental education mission and vision statements, and the environmental education policy. Next, staff compiled a comprehensive list of environmental education programs and relevant, program-specific metrics (e.g., program capacity, average class size, average program participation rate, average number of times the program is offered per year, total staff time required to conduct the program). Staff also reviewed and assessed each program against the following criteria:

- **Focus** (explore the watershed, provide context about impacts, and identify solutions) + **Outcome** (increase knowledge, increase awareness, and increase motivation). Taken together this score was a proxy for how closely aligned a program is to the specific “focus” and “outcome” elements articulated in LRD’s environmental education policy.
- **Environmental Stewardship** (participant & nature). This metric shows the alignment of a program to the “primary purpose” of our environmental education programs as defined in our policy.
- **Community Building** (among participants). This metric addresses the need to find and collaborate with likeminded people when trying to achieve a goal for the common good.

These staff assessments provided for a quantitative evaluation and ranking of all existing environmental education programs. These scores were then used to visualize the quality of each existing environmental education program in achieving the stated purpose, focus, and desired outcome articulated in LRD’s Environmental Education Policy. These quantitative assessments can be viewed in Appendix B:

- ✓ **Appendix B1:** Effectiveness rating based on Focus and Outcomes as delineated by the LRD Environmental Education Policy, which is shown in Appendix A
- ✓ **Appendix B2:** Effectiveness of existing environmental education programs as a function of Environmental Stewardship and Community Building.
- ✓ **Appendix B3:** Efficiency rating of environmental education programs as a function of Environmental Stewardship and average program capacity (i.e., how well attended was each program when compared to maximum class size).
- ✓ **Appendix B4:** Efficiency rating is shown using the relationship between Environmental Stewardship and labor hours expended by staff per program participant.
- ✓ **Appendix B5:** Efficiency rating of environmental education programs as a function of Community Building and average program capacity (i.e., how well attended was each program when compared to maximum class size).
- ✓ **Appendix B6:** Efficiency rating is shown using the relationship between Community Building and labor hours expended by staff per program participant.

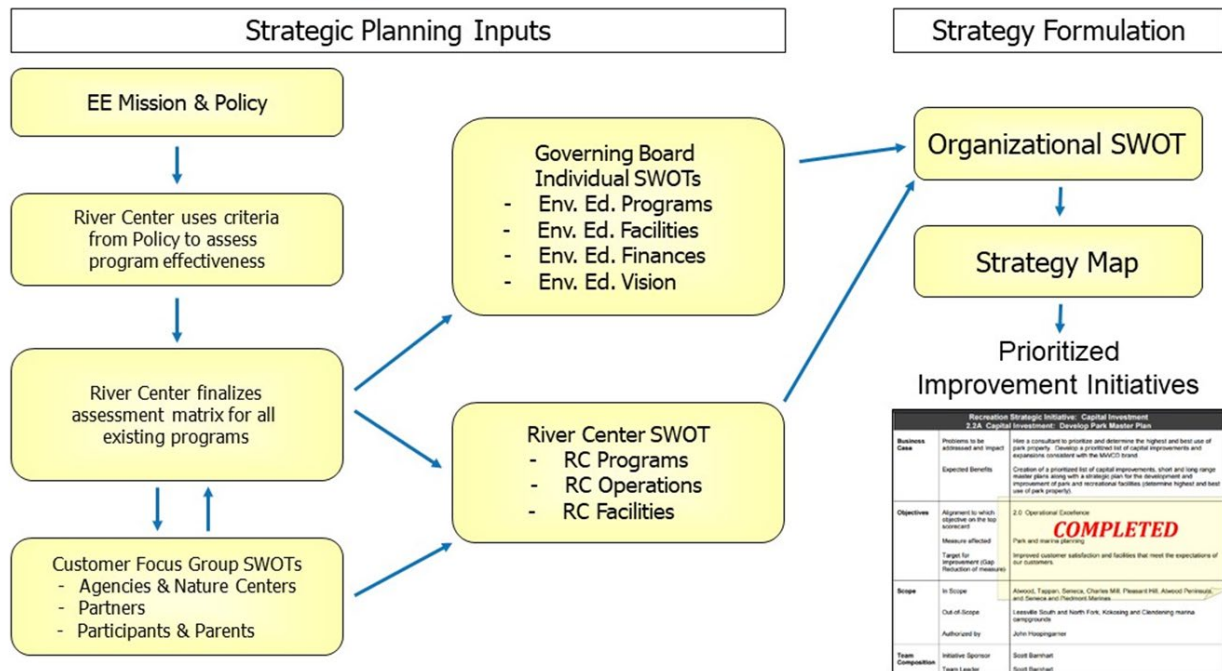


Environmental education staff, the Executive Director, and Jack Steele, our terrific consultant, then conducted focus group meetings with five groups of people:

1. Agencies & Nature Centers: Busch Wildlife Sanctuary; Jonathan Dickinson State Park; Jupiter Outdoor Center; Loggerhead Marinelife Center; Palm Beach County Parks; South Florida Water Management District;
2. Partners: AustinBlu Foundation; Bureau of Land Management; Coast Guard; Jupiter High Environmental Academy; Loxahatchee River Historical Society; MANG; Nature Conservancy; PBC Environmental Resource Management; WPB Fishing Club;
3. Participants and Parents: anonymous for privacy;
4. River Center staff; and
5. LRD Governing Board Members were addressed in individual meetings.

Lively and engaging discussions were had with each group. Also, in each session, participants were given the opportunity to comment on the quantitative evaluation and ranking of existing environmental education programs. Feedback from each session was documented and incorporated into our Program Assessment, and key elements were documented in the SWOTs (Appendix E through G). This input forms the basis of the strategy map and prioritized improvement initiatives (future action items).

# Strategic Planning Process



Note: SWOT Analysis is Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threat

# LRD Mission, Vision, Environmental Education Mission and Policy Statements

**LRD Mission:** “We are dedicated to protecting public health and preserving the Loxahatchee River watershed and its natural habitats through innovative wastewater solutions, research, and environmental stewardship.”

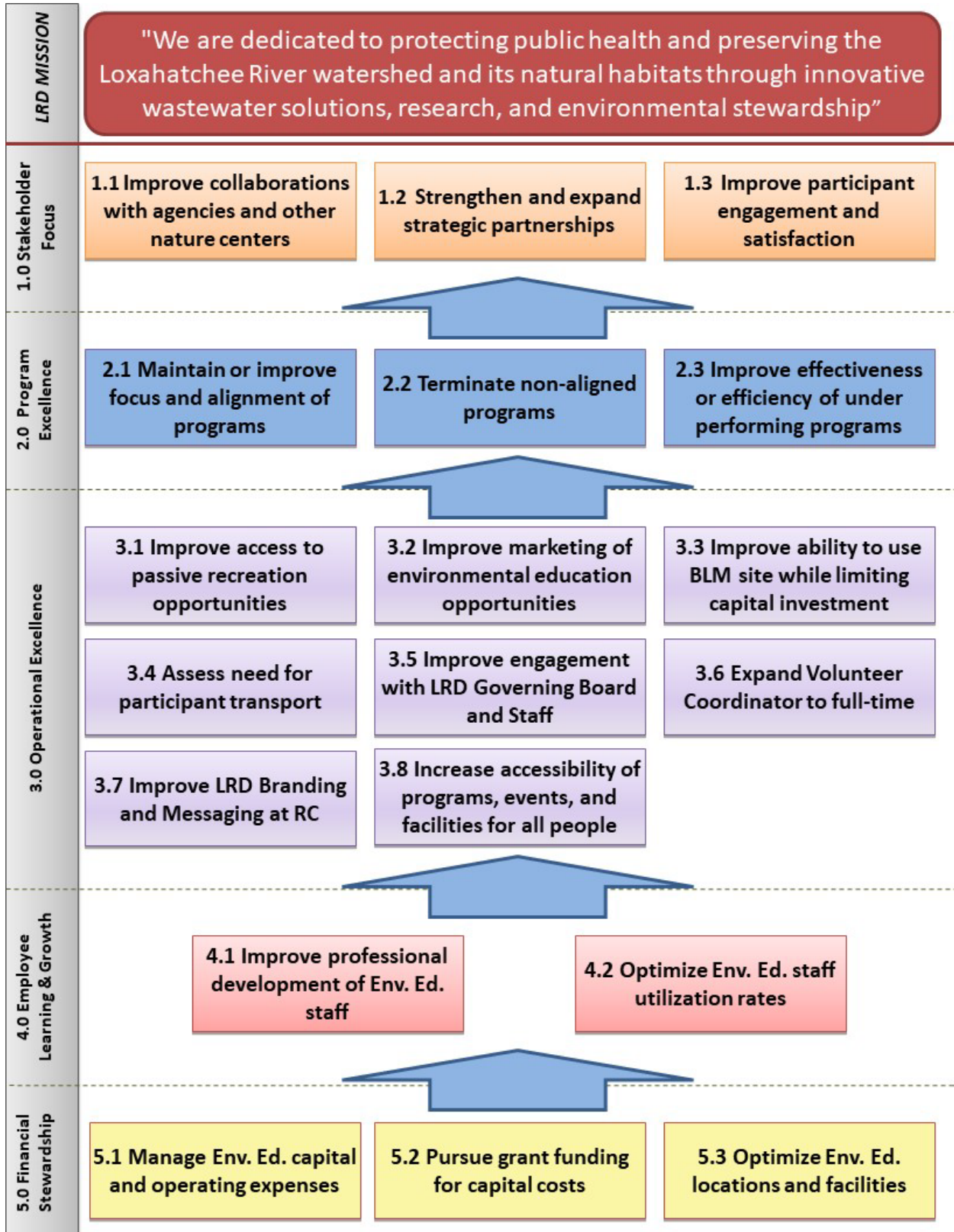
**LRD Vision:** “Inspiring and achieving a healthy environment”



**LRD Environmental Education Mission:** “To foster a sense of environmental stewardship for the Loxahatchee River’s diverse watershed with quality education programs, exhibits and meaningful events.

**LRD Environmental Education Policy:** See Appendix A.

# 2023 LRD Environmental Education Strategy Map



The **2023 LRD Environmental Education Strategy Map**, shown on the prior page, is a pictorial depiction of the Environmental Education Strategic Objectives (1.1 through 5.3) segmented by the five Strategic Areas of:

- 1.0 Stakeholder Focus,
- 2.0 Program Excellence,
- 3.0 Operational Excellence,
- 4.0 Employee Learning and Growth, and
- 5.0 Financial Stewardship.

The Strategy Map shows Strategic Areas and Objectives in a cause-and-effect relationship from bottom to top. For example, improving Financial Stewardship through obtaining grant funding to pay for construction of capital facilities represents a foundational effort to improve facilities at the BLM site while limiting LRD's capital investment. Then, those improved facilities will provide improved access to passive recreation opportunities and contribute to improved effectiveness of underperforming programs, which will satisfy the needs of our stakeholders.

## 2023 LRD Environmental Education Balanced Scorecard

The Balanced Scorecard below is aligned to the Strategy Map previously shown. The list of strategic initiatives was prioritized by the participants as the most important through the strategic planning process. Strategic initiatives are nested under strategic objectives and strategic areas and are prioritized such that P1 is the highest priority and P3 is the lowest priority. The status field will be maintained and updated by staff and reported to the Board at least annually. Strategic initiatives with a P1 priority score are intended to be complete within fiscal year 2024, i.e., by September 30, 2024.

#	Strategic Area	#	Strategic Objectives	#	Strategic Initiatives	Priority	Status
1	Stakeholder Focus	1.1	Improve collaborations with agencies and other nature centers	1.1a	Develop and host free, reciprocal volunteer field trips among key partners, e.g., BWS, LHRS, LMC, PBC-ERM, RC, TNC	P1	
				1.1b	Develop collaborative, joint programs with partners (e.g., TNC, Lighthouse) with intent of maximizing reach and efficiency	P2	
		1.2	Strengthen and expand strategic partnerships	1.2a	Develop signage for TNC lift station, then replicate signage at other locations with similar wastewater facilities (e.g., Busch Wildlife Sanctuary, Lighthouse, Sawfish Bay Park)	P1	
				1.2b	Host networking events for groups with aligned interests, e.g., Palm Beach North Chamber; National Association of Environmental Professionals; Florida Trail Association	P1	
				1.2c	Become a Visit Florida partner or affiliate	P2	
				1.2d	Expand strategic partnerships, e.g., Leadership PBC; Real estate brokers; Environmental professionals; Chamber of Commerce	P3	
		1.3	Improve participant engagement and satisfaction	1.3a	Expand programmatic offerings to better serve: Tweens; Young Adults; Senior Citizens	P3	
2	Program Excellence	2.1	Maintain or improve focus and alignment of programs	2.1a	<b>Improve Focus + Outcomes scores:</b> Archery, Campfire; Fish Feeding; Fishing Clinic; Girl Scout Way; Halloween; Story Time	P1	

#	Strategic Area	#	Strategic Objectives	#	Strategic Initiatives	Priority	Status
				2.1b	<b>Implement New Programs:</b> Adult Camp Day; Fishing Adventure; Swamp Tromp; Tots on Trails; Wilderness Skills	P1	
				2.1c	<b>Develop New Programs:</b> Env. Careers; Evening Lectures; RC classroom as open workspace; Saturday Camps	P2	
		2.2	Terminate non-aligned programs	2.2a	<b>Terminate Programs:</b> Craftapalooza; Virtual Field Trips	P1	
				2.2b	<b>De-emphasize Programs:</b> Visiting Camp Groups	P1	
				2.2c	<b>Relabel as "RC Functions":</b> Outreach Events; Room Rentals; Volunteer Appreciation Events	P1	
		2.3	Improve effectiveness or efficiency of underperforming programs	2.3a	<b>Improve attendance:</b> Blooming in the garden; Boat tours; Kayak Tours; Nature hikes	P1	
				2.3a	<b>Decrease staff time invested per participant:</b> Archery; AustinBlu Tournament; Blooming in the garden; Summer Camp; Girl Scout Program; Jr. Angler Tournament; Kayak Tours; Science with Sam	P2	
		3	Operational Excellence	3.1	Improve access to passive recreation opportunities	3.1a	Develop a cost-effective, functional presence at BLM and 20 Acres
3.2	Improve marketing of environmental education opportunities			3.2a	Invest in improved marketing efforts for environmental education programs	P1	
				3.2b	Test marketing messages via LRD sewer bill	P2	
				3.2c	Actively promote environmental education programs via community newsletters and activity calendars.	P2	
				3.2d	Collaborate with local cultural heritage, nature tourism, and education groups to seek a Visit Florida marketing grant.	P3	

#	Strategic Area	#	Strategic Objectives	#	Strategic Initiatives	Priority	Status		
		3.3	Improve ability to use BLM site while limiting capital investment	3.3a	Improve storage space at BLM	P1			
				3.3b	Develop a phased, cost-effective plan to renovate two BLM houses	P2			
		3.4	Assess need for participant transport	3.4a	Assess impact of lack of transportation on underserved community members visiting River Center and offsite programs.	P2			
					Conduct cost benefit assessment of transport needs and options, e.g., hire, lease, purchase, rent.	P3			
		3.5	Improve engagement with LRD Governing Board and Staff	3.5a	River Center staff present annual watershed status report to the Governing Board highlighting notable successes of prior year and anticipating key efforts of the upcoming year.	P1			
				3.5b	Conduct quarterly environmental education programming for LRD staff to help them explore the watershed they work to protect.	P1			
		3.6	Expand Volunteer Coordinator to full-time	3.6a	Conduct cost/benefit analysis of full-time volunteer coordinator	P1			
				3.6b	Improve volunteer solicitation, engagement, training, and coordination	P2			
		3.7	Improve LRD Branding and Messaging at River Center and in Programs	3.7a	Improve branding and messaging so program participants realize programs are provided by LRD	P1			
				3.7b	Ensure adequate schedule of programs addressing LRD's key roles in the watershed and local water cycle	P2			
		3.8	Increase accessibility of programs, events, and facilities for all people	3.8a	Be intentional in identifying and overcoming ability-based barriers	P1			
				3.8b	Provide equipment to improve access for mobility impaired participants	P2			
		4	Employee Learning & Growth	4.1	Improve professional development of River Center staff	4.1a	Each full-time RC staff member to participate in one professional meeting per year	P1	
						4.1b	RC Manager participate in Leadership Palm Beach County	P2	

#	Strategic Area	#	Strategic Objectives	#	Strategic Initiatives	Priority	Status
		4.2	Optimize environmental education staff utilization rates	4.2a	Improve time management skills among staff	P1	
		4.2b		Expand the role of volunteers at the River Center	P2		
		4.2c		Expand role of partners in supporting and administering programs, e.g., USCG teaching boating safely	P2		
5	Financial Stewardship	5.1	Manage Env. Ed. capital and operating expenses	5.1a	Draft activity-based budget to improve impact and effectiveness of our environmental education efforts	P1	
		5.2	Pursue grant funding for capital costs	5.2a	Seek grant funding to offset capital costs of renovation of facilities at BLM and construction of facilities at 20 Acres	P1	
		5.3	Optimize Env. Ed. locations and facilities	5.3a	Develop, for Board approval, a plan for improved facilities that leverage the best combination of the various opportunities (i.e., BLM; 20 Acres; 2500 Jupiter Park Dr.; phasing of renovation and construction)	P2	



## **Successful Execution of the Strategic Plan**

In implementing the Strategic Plan, LRD uses a tool called a dashboard (shown below). The dashboard provides a high-level view of the key performance indicators (KPIs) so that, at a glance, progress toward measurable targets can be easily discerned. The strategic initiatives shown on pages 12-15 in this report are linked to the KPIs and will drive improvement in those KPIs as they are completed. Those initiatives are prioritized as P1, P2, and P3 based on their importance in driving improved KPIs as well as practical constraints on staff availability. The P1s will be completed first, with a goal of completing all P1s before September 30, 2024, because these strategic initiatives are the most important in driving improved KPI performance.


The dashboard KPIs and the status of each initiative will be reviewed and updated monthly by staff to ensure that the KPIs stay within performance standards and the initiatives stay on schedule, on budget, and within the defined scope.

# 2023 LRD Environmental Education Dashboard

The existing dashboard (below) shows performance across key metrics. It is color coded (red, yellow and green) to show where performance is on target (green) or where improvement is required (yellow or red). The dashboard metrics should align to the strategy via the objectives on the Strategy Map and Balanced Scorecard shown earlier.

We are proposing to modify the dashboard in the following ways (1) modify “Total Visitors”, “1<sup>st</sup> Time Visitors”, and “Volunteer Engagement” to report actual number of people or hours rather than percentages, though color coding will still be based on percentages (due to seasonality); and (2) add two new metrics “Cost per Person” and “Staff Time per Person”. These new metrics are targeted at understanding and improving efficiency. Effectively implementing priority initiatives shown in the Balanced Scorecard will drive improved performance in the dashboard metrics.


## LRD'S ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP DASHBOARD

		Total Visitors <small>(incl. Visitors, Field Trips, Onsite Programs)</small>	Average Program Participation <small>[Actual participants/Capacity of Program]</small>	Volunteer Engagement	1st Time Visitors	Visitor Satisfaction	Staff Overall Program Assessment	Expenses	Program Revenue
Benchmark / Customer Expectation	% of Target	% of Capacity	% of Target	% of Target	Rating Average <small>[Max Rating is 5]</small>	Rating Average <small>[Max Rating is 9]</small>	% within budget	% of Target	
<b>Green Level</b>	≥ 90%	≥ 85%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 4	≥ 7	≥ 85% but ≤ 105%	≥ 90%	
<b>Yellow</b>	≥ 75%	≥ 70%	≥ 75%	≥ 75%	≥ 3	≥ 5	≥ 80%	≥ 75%	
<b>Red</b>	<75%	<70%	<75%	<75%	<3	<5	< 80% or > 105%	<75%	
2020 Baseline	35%	50%	70%	65%	4.6	7.8	81%	103%	
2021 Baseline	113%	83%	102%	275%	4.7	7.8	92%	85%	
2022 Baseline	81%	120%	75%	163%	4.6	7.9	91%	94%	
2022	June	86%	92%	105%	107%	4.8	8.0	100%	122%
	July	95%	84%	134%	164%	4.5	7.9	101%	123%
	Aug	88%	100%	147%	184%	3.8	8.0	91%	129%
	Sept	77%	86%	76%	178%	4.6	7.8	89%	120%
	Oct	79%	100%	118%	100%	4.9	7.4	55%	82%
	Nov	53%	104%	82%	111%	4.4	8.0	63%	88%
	Dec	94%	124%	50%	286%	4.6	7.9	96%	85%
2023	Jan	69%	76%	63%	338%	4.6	7.9	85%	92%
	Feb	79%	88%	82%	102%	4.7	7.8	85%	104%
	Mar	94%	91%	98%	304%	4.4	8.1	73%	87%
	Apr	116%	105%	91%	220%	4.7	7.5	79%	78%
	May	84%	83%	129%	170%	4.6	7.8	88%	104%
	June	104%	112%	93%	115%	4.7	7.8	87%	123%
Consecutive Months at Green		1	1	4	13	10	13	2	2
Metric Owner		O'Neill	Duggan/Warwick	Patterson	O'Neill	O'Neill	O'Neill	O'Neill	O'Neill

# List of Appendices

- **Appendix A**, LRD Environmental Education Policy
- **Appendix B**, Environmental Education Program Assessments
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  - **B4**: EE Programs rated by Environmental Stewardship and Labor Hours Expended by staff per Participant
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  - **B6**: EE Programs rated by Community Building and Labor Hours Expended per Participant
- **Appendix C**, Number of People Participating in Environmental Education Programs at the River Center and the Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Participation Rates
- **Appendix D**, Annual Operating Expenses for LRD's Environmental Education Program
- **Appendix E**, Board SWOT Analysis
- **Appendix F**: Agency & Nature Center SWOT Analysis
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# Appendix A. LRD Environmental Education Policy

	<b>LOXAHATCHEE RIVER DISTRICT</b>	Doc No:	LRD-POL-EXE-07.00
		Effective Date:	05/20/2022
		Revision History:	07/17/2020 v1
<b>Author: Albrey Arrington, Jocelyn O’Neill</b>		Revision No.:	1
		Review Date:	09/18/2025
Issuing Department: Executive		Page:	Page 20 of 37

## Purpose

The District recognizes that conducting effective environmental education is instrumental to achieving our mission and vision, i.e., inspiring and achieving a healthy environment. This policy was developed to set forth the purpose, intended focus, and expected outcomes for LRD’s environmental education efforts.

## Policy

It is the policy of the Loxahatchee River Environmental Control District (LRD) to conduct environmental education for the general population within the Loxahatchee River watershed and specifically including students and personnel working with students. The primary purpose of these environmental education efforts is to foster a sense of environmental stewardship for the Loxahatchee River’s diverse watershed through quality education programs, exhibits, and meaningful events. The primary focus of these environmental education efforts is to explore healthy aspects of the Loxahatchee River watershed, provide context about environmental impacts to our watershed, and identify solutions to achieve a healthy community and river. The desired outcome from these environmental education programs are citizens with:

1. increased knowledge concerning our local environment and environmental problems;
2. increased awareness of potential solutions to such problems; and
3. increased motivation to work towards practical solutions for such problems.

Successful programs will result in participants exploring, experiencing, and connecting with the Loxahatchee River ecosystem. Provision of environmental education programming should be concordant with this policy (e.g., the stated purpose, intended focus, and desired outcome). Bridge Programs may be used to engage new participants with the LRD’s environmental education programs but must not exceed 5% of environmental education effort.

## Authority

The authority for this policy is derived from the LRD Enabling Act, which states:

*“Section 6. (28) Conduct environmental education as necessary and appropriate to minimize damage to the area’s resources and environment, to prevent additional environmental problems from being created, and to provide education regarding solutions to existing problems.”*

## Definitions

List definitions necessary to understand the policy statement (section above).

- A. Bridge Program: any environmental education program not directly related to the environmental context, impacts, and solutions related to the Loxahatchee River watershed. These programs are typically designed to attract first-time visitors.
- B. Ecosystem: an ecological unit in which the biological, physical, and chemical components of the environment interact.
- C. Environment: the surroundings of an organism, including the plants, animals, and microbes with which it interacts.
- D. Environmental Education: the process by which individuals develop a deeper knowledge of the environment, awareness of effective solutions, and increased motivation to implement solutions.
- E. Environmental Stewardship: means the responsible use and protection of the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices.
- F. Watershed: the area drained by a given waterbody.

## Relevant Procedures

The following procedures guide staff in the appropriate implementation of this policy:

- A. Reporting;
- B. Scheduling Field Trips;
- C. Summer Camp Administration; and
- D. Summer Camp Counselor Training.

## Relevant Policies

The following policies may relate to this policy:

- A. Environmental Education COVID-19 Policy;
- B. Social Media Policy; and
- C. Volunteer Policy.

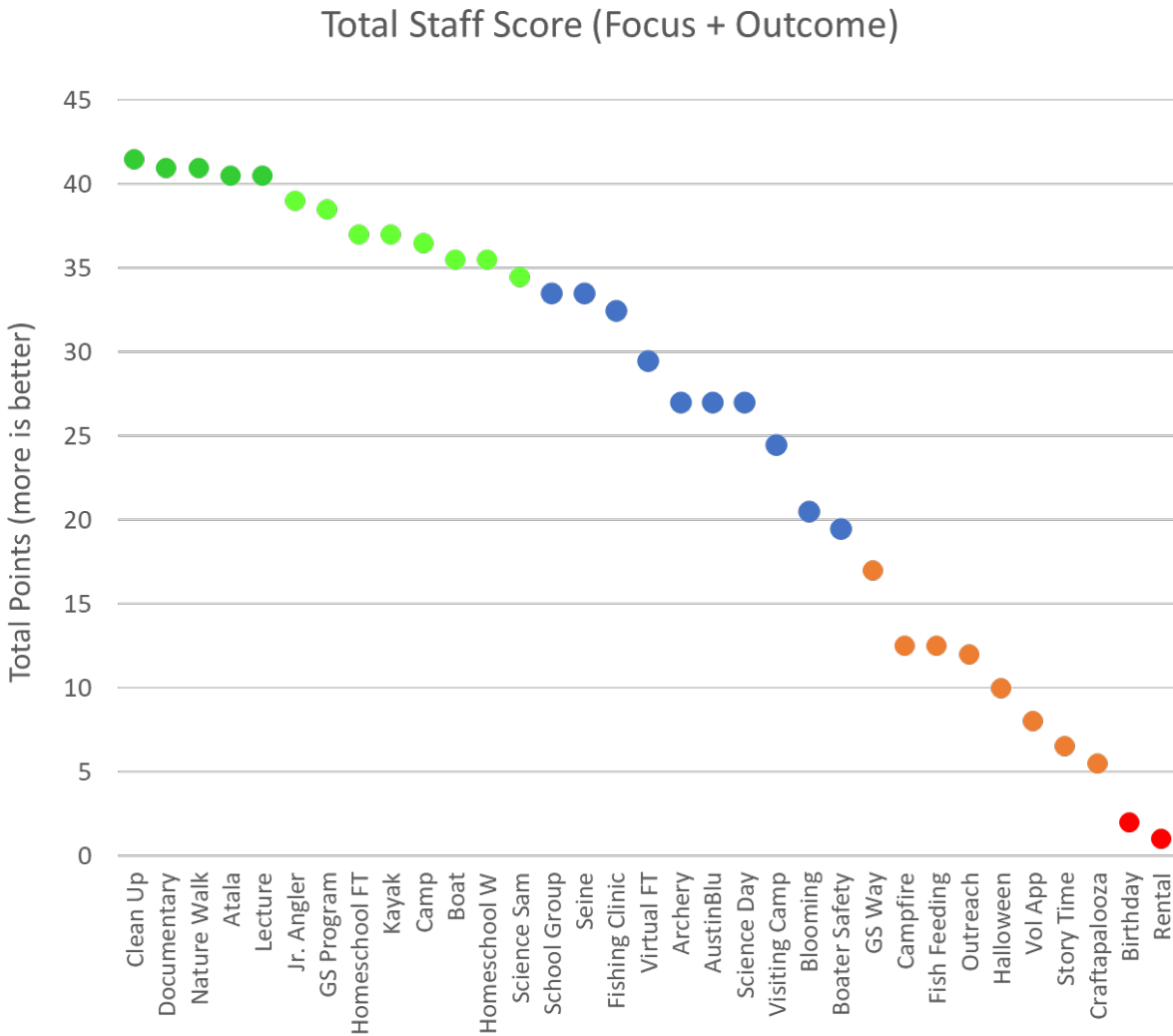
## Policy Questions

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the author(s) listed above.

# Appendix B. Environmental Education Program Assessments (B1-B6)

## B1: Programs rated by Focus and Outcomes

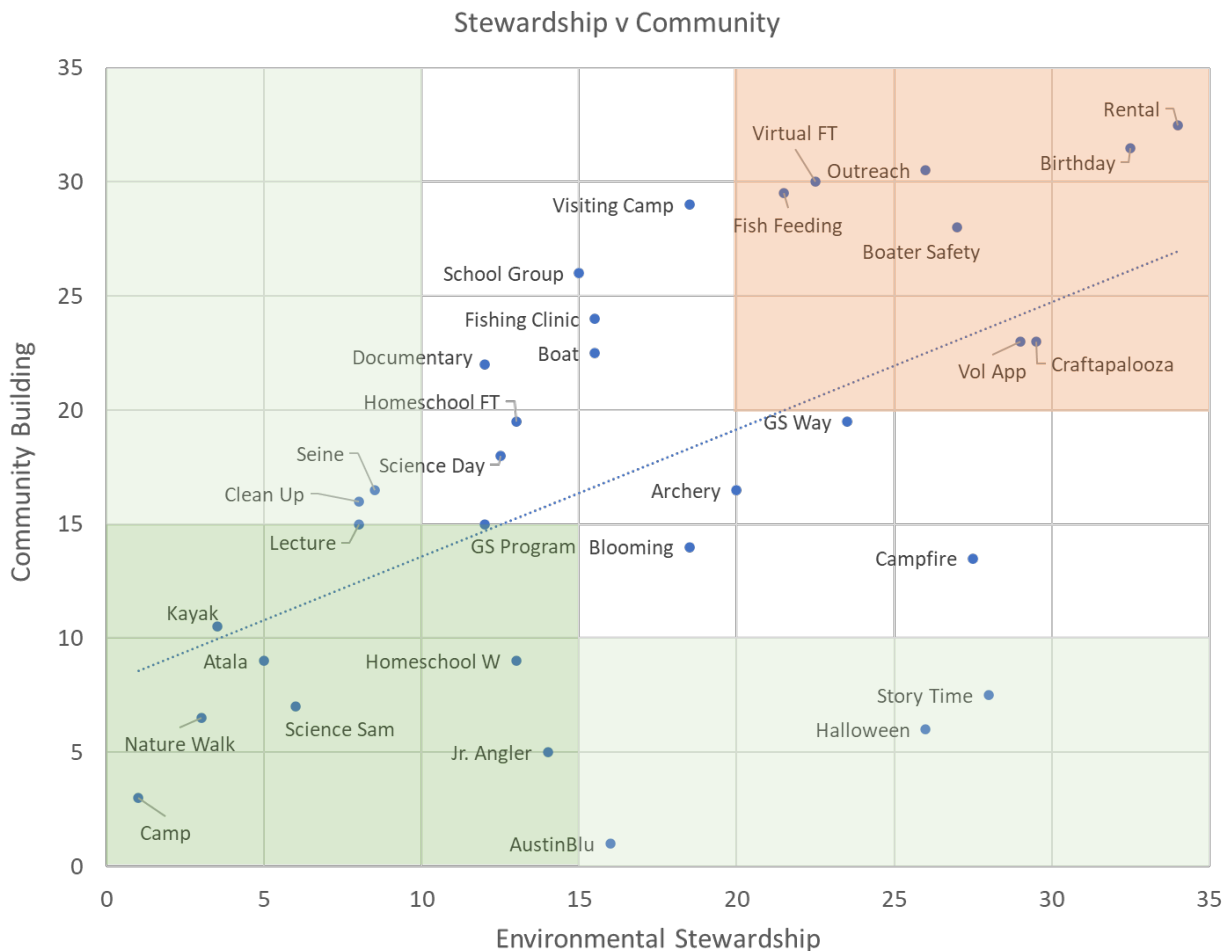
The LRD Environmental Education Policy stipulates our purpose, 3 focus areas and 3 desired outcomes. LRD Staff ranked our environmental education programs against the three focus areas and three outcomes. Ranks were 0 to 9, where a score of 0 indicates the program provides zero value towards the metric and a score of 9 indicates the program fully achieves the desired metric. Below, you can see summary scores for each program. Programs have been sorted from best to worst. We assigned a letter grade (think of a report card) to each program based on these scores. Our grading scale is old school, and assumes a “A” is awesome (green), “C” is average and acceptable (blue), “F” is failing (red).



## B2: EE Programs rated by Environmental Stewardship and Community Building

LRD staff also ranked our environmental education programs according to how well they develop environmental stewardship and build a sense of community amongst participants. These scores are ranked, and rank 1 was identified as the best or most effective program while rank 33 was deemed the poorest performing program. It is interesting, but not surprising, to see that our programs that most successfully engender environmental stewardship also increase our sense of community. The programs in the darker green box (bottom left quadrant of figure) are the highest performing programs. These programs both develop a sense of environmental stewardship within participants and a sense of community building among participants. Programs in the orange box (top right quadrant) are the poorest performing programs.

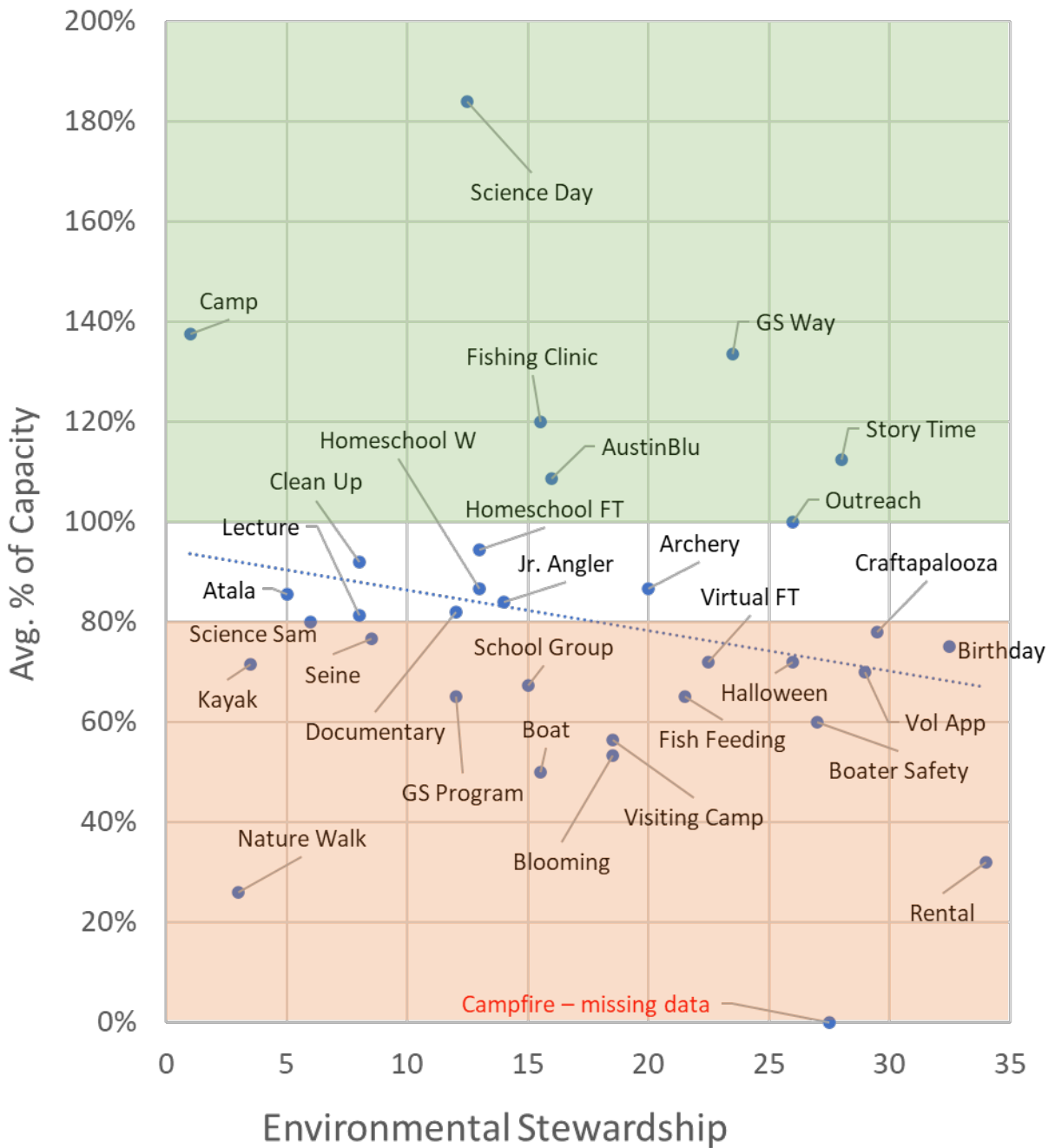
It should be noted that some “programs” were determined to be activities but not actual programs. For example, Outreach and Birthday could be viewed more accurately as marketing efforts. Vol App are our efforts to recognize and reward our terrific volunteers. These non-program activities were largely ignored during strategy discussions.



### B3: EE Programs rated by Environmental Stewardship and Average Attendance compared to Capacity

As one measure of program efficiency, the chart below shows the general correlation between the quality of environmental education programs (lower Environmental Stewardship score signifies higher quality program) and the average fullness of a program. In general, higher quality programs are more likely to be at or near capacity (e.g., Camp, Clean up, Atala). There is a pressing need to understand and remedy the low participation rate among some high-quality programs (e.g., Kayak, Nature Walk, Seine).

**Stewardship v Avg % Full**

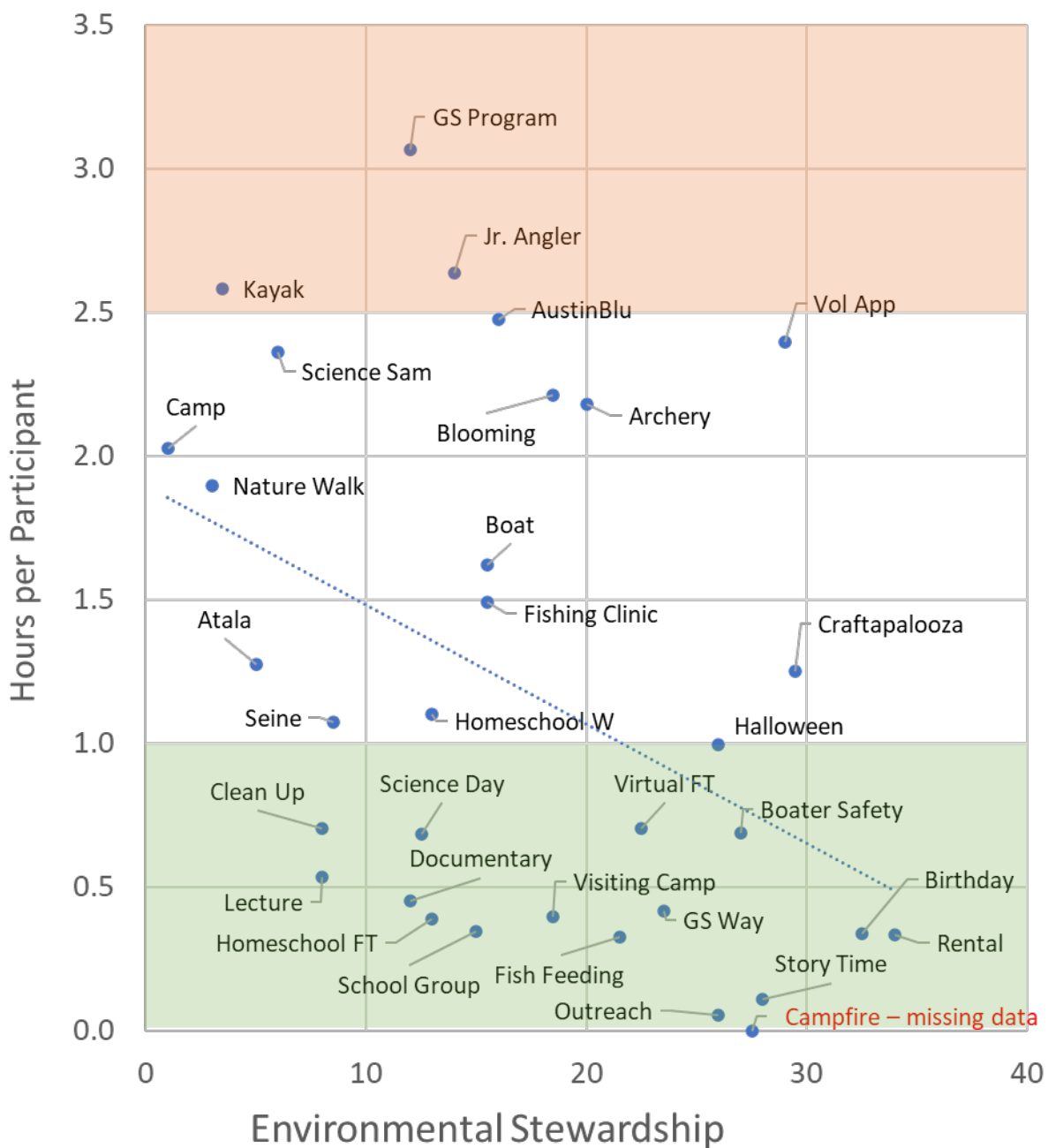




## B4: EE Programs rated by Environmental Stewardship and Labor Hours Expended by staff per Participant

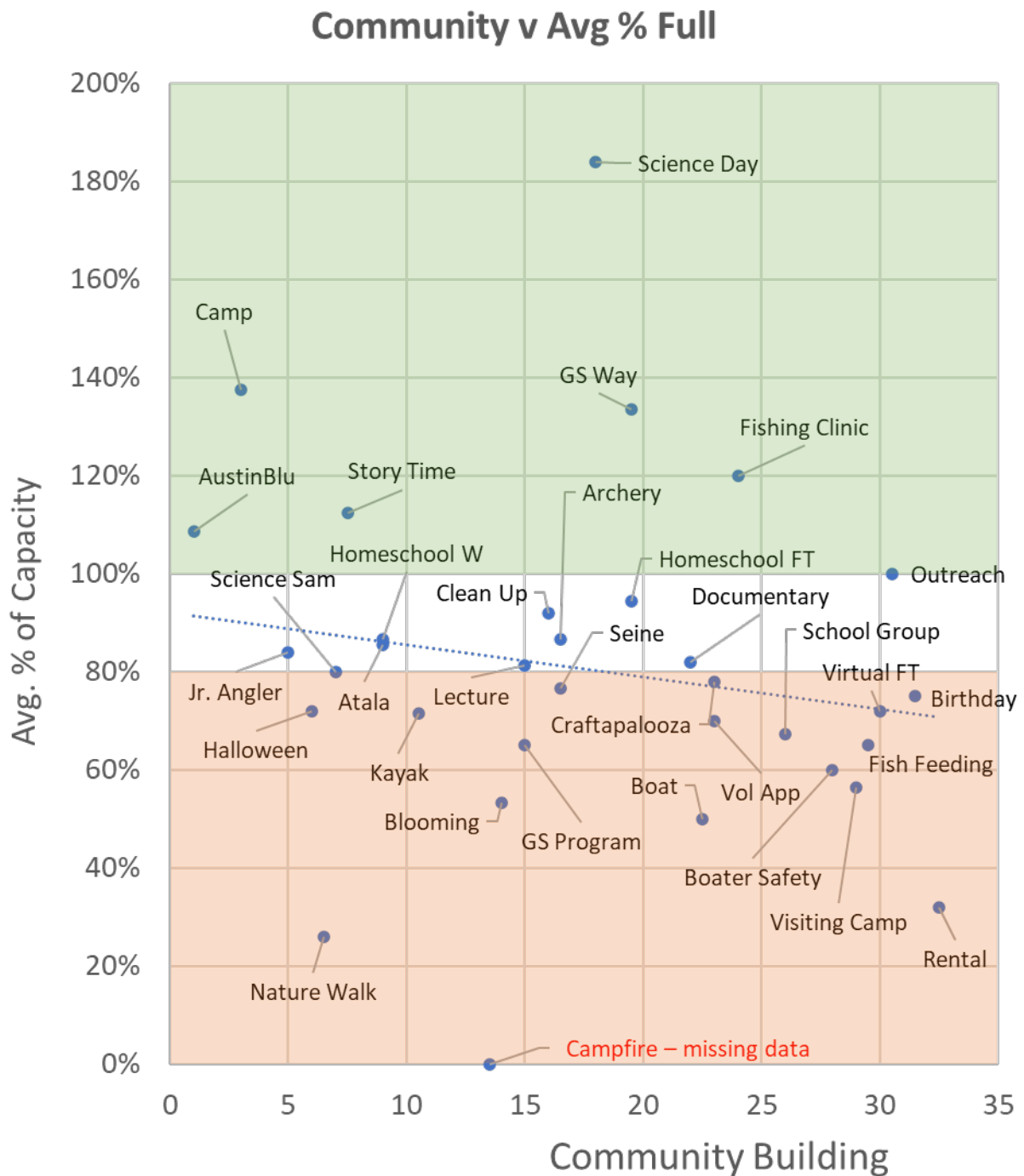
As a second measure of program efficiency, the chart below shows the general correlation between the quality of environmental education programs (lower Environmental Stewardship score signifies higher quality program) and the amount of staff time expended per program participant. In general, higher quality programs require more staff time per participant (e.g., kayak, Jr. Angler), though there are exceptions (e.g., Lectures, Clean up, Science Day).

### Stewardship v Hours/Participant



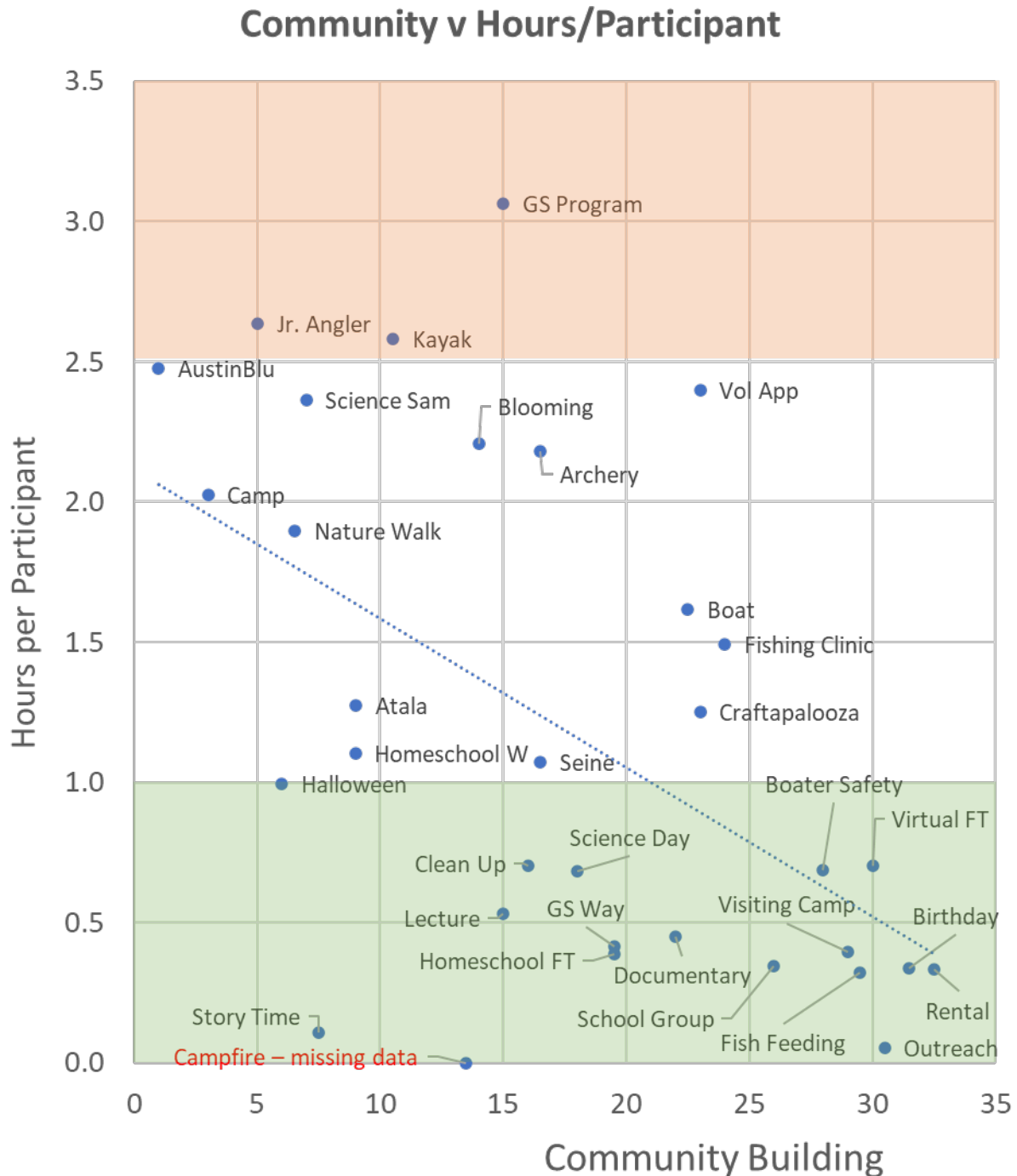
## B5: EE Programs rated by Community Building and Average Attendance versus Capacity

The chart below shows the correlation between the quality of education programs at building a sense of community (lower Community Building score signifies higher quality program) and the average fullness of the program. In general, higher quality programs are more likely to be at or near capacity (e.g., AustinBlu, Camp, Story Time). We need to understand and remedy the low participation rate among some high-quality programs (e.g., Nature Walk, Blooming).



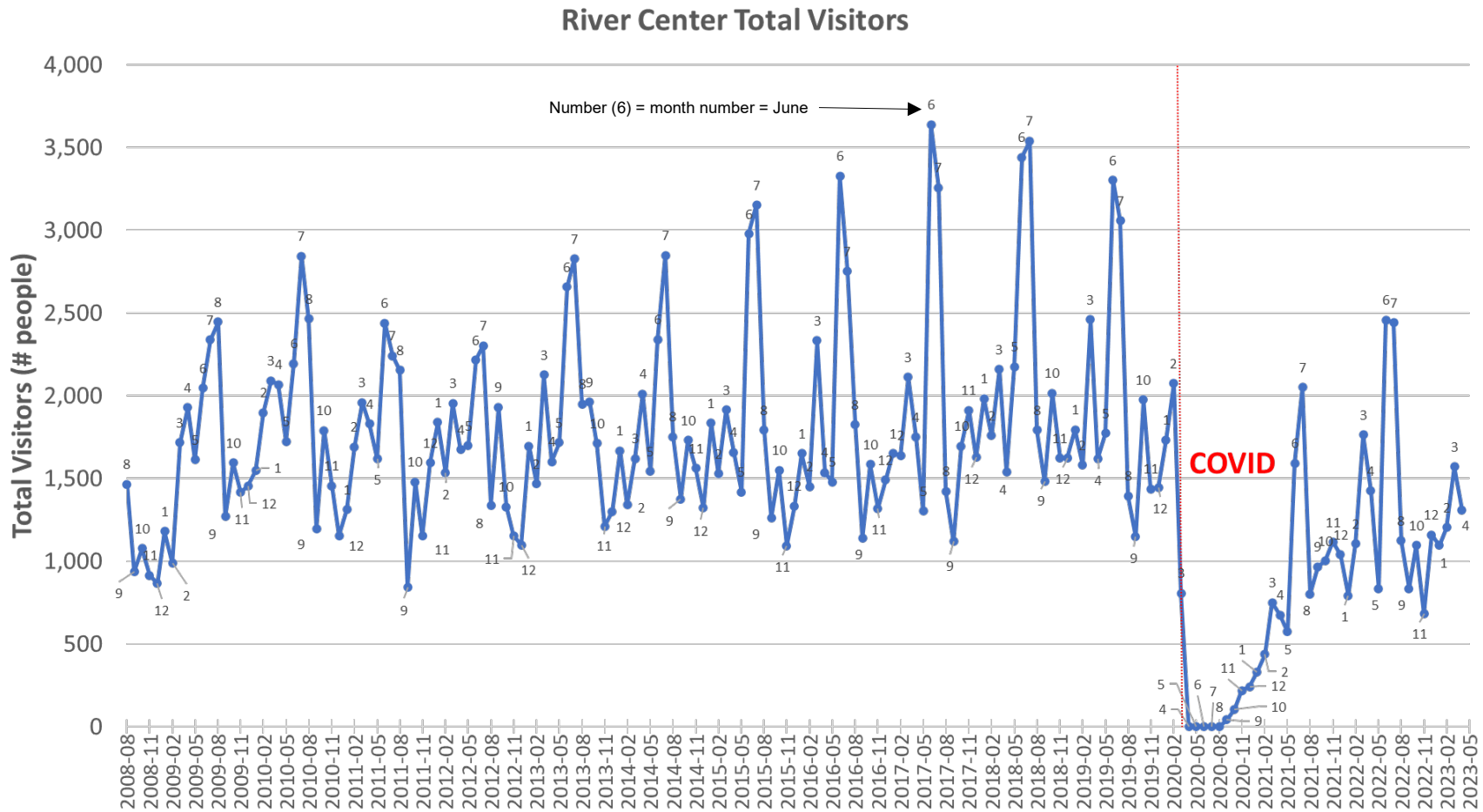
## B6: EE Programs rated by Community Building and Labor Hours Expended per Participant

The chart below shows the general correlation between the quality of education programs at building a sense of community (lower Community Building score signifies higher quality program) and the amount of staff time expended per program participant. In general, higher quality programs require more staff time per participant (e.g., AustinBlu, Jr. Angler, Kayak), though there are exceptions (e.g., Story Time, Lectures, Clean ups, Halloween).



## Appendix C: Impact of COVID-19 on the Number of People Educated Through the LRD’s Environmental Education Programs

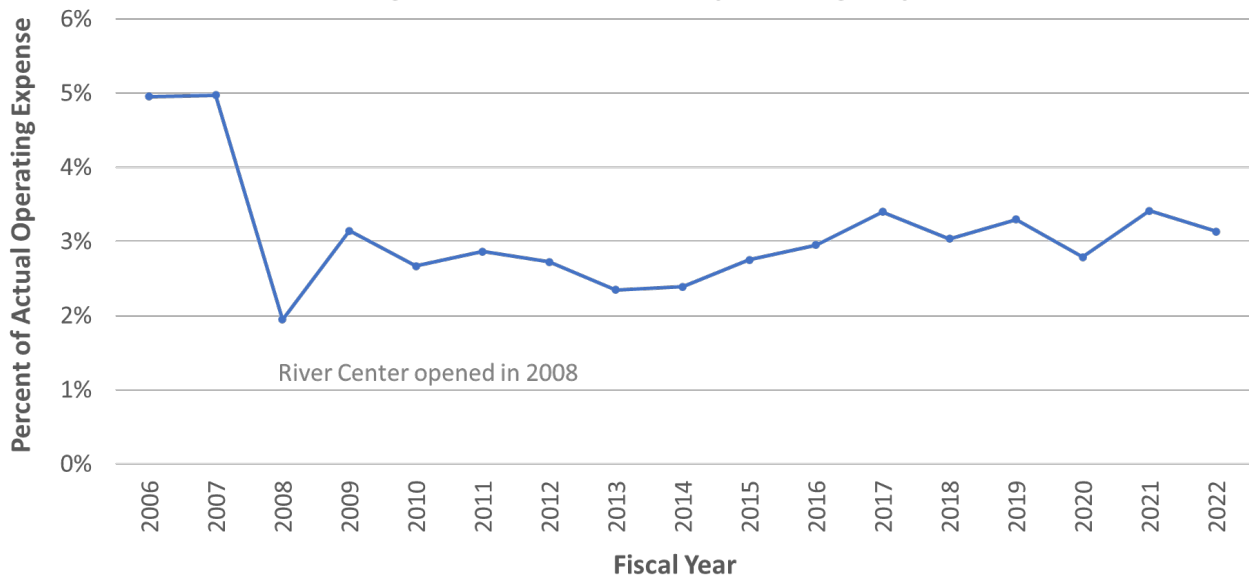
The chart below shows seasonality in the number of people visiting the River Center and engaging in LRD’s environmental education programs. Engagement consistently peaks in summer months (June and July) with lowest participation occurring in Sept., Nov., and Dec. The COVID pandemic had a massive, negative impact on participation as people sought to avoid close contact with others.



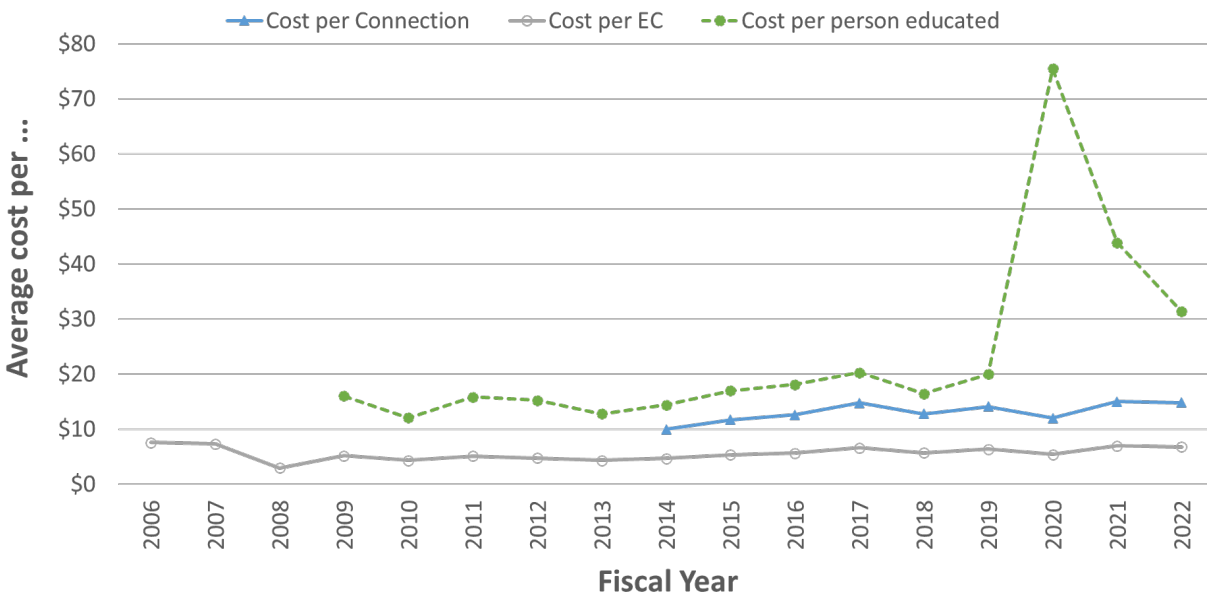
# Appendix D: Environmental Education Operating Expenses

Since 2009, the first full year of River Center operations, LRD’s annual operating expenses for environmental education have equaled approximately 3% of operating expenses. These operating expenses have remained relatively flat when viewed as a cost per connection or cost per equivalent connection (EC), i.e., a home with one toilet = 1.0 EC while a home with 4 toilets = 1.75 EC. However, the cost per person educated increased dramatically during COVID because participation in these programs decreased precipitously (see prior chart).

**LRD Environmental Education Annual Expenses as a Percentage of Total Actual Operating Expenses**



**LRD Environmental Education Annual Operating Expenses**



## Appendix E: Board SWOT Analysis

Strengths and Opportunities as identified by LRD Governing Board Members (S=Mr. Rockoff, M=Dr. Rostock, C= Mr. Yerkes, K= Mr. Baker, G= Mr. Boggie) during their individual meetings. Bold comments represent elements included as strategic initiatives in the Balanced Scorecard.

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Environmental education is not just an ancillary part of our mission (S)</li> <li>- Environmental Education is key to reducing environmental impacts and degradation in our service area and throughout the country (M)</li> <li>- Free or low-cost environmental education programming (K)</li> <li>- Our environmental education programs are well done (high quality) (G)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Actively market environmental education programs via HOA newsletters and activities calendars (S)</b></li> <li>- <b>Need to reach Seniors (S)</b></li> <li>- <b>To reduce “no shows” of Nature Walk, charge in advance, give lunch and give a tee shirt or hat (S) (M) (K)</b></li> <li>- <b>Utilize BLM to be a satellite near the Jupiter Lighthouse using grants to finance (S) (M) (C) (K) (G)</b></li> <li>- <b>Use LRPI grant funds (\$100K) at 20 Acres for remediation and to get started with parking and small chickee hut (M) (C) (K)</b></li> <li>- <b>Add volunteers and partners (eg, with schools) to gain efficiency (C)</b></li> <li>- Interactive watershed map to educate people about exploration opportunities within the watershed (S)</li> <li>- Consider trails around the lake with entrance from Central Blvd (K)</li> <li>- Increased costs could result in charging or taxing District residents not connected to the sewer system (C,G,S)</li> <li>- Loss of BWS represents increased opportunities for the River Center at 2500 Jupiter Park Drive (C)</li> <li>- Develop 20 Acres as exciting hub for eco-tourism (S) (C)</li> <li>- Get someone other than LRD to develop the 20 Acres (G)</li> <li>- Measure how programs link to stewardship based on “core” powers in our enabling act, i.e., pollution prevention via effective management of wastewater, stormwater, potable water. (G)</li> <li>- Collaborate with Audubon to conduct birding tours (K)</li> <li>- Would like “transparency” of RC costs on LRD bill (G)</li> <li>- Hire part time grant finder/writer (M)</li> <li>- Encourage a Membership package with weak and strong programs bundled and named levels like Boy Scouts (S)</li> <li>- Partner with schools and give extra credit (S)</li> <li>- Introduce interactive immersive AI for use at RC and at home (S)</li> <li>- Potential to charge more and drive revenues to cover operational costs and add to dashboard (C) (K)</li> <li>- Add gun safety and hunting safety (K)</li> </ul>

Weaknesses and Threats as identified by LRD Governing Board Members (S=Mr. Rockoff, M=Dr. Rostock, C= Mr. Yerkes, K= Mr. Baker, G= Mr. Boggie) during their individual meetings. Bold comments represent elements included as strategic initiatives in the Balanced Scorecard.

<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Not enough effective RC Marketing (need more Buzz and to improve perception of District) (S) (M) (C)</b></li> <li>- <b>3 % of Operating expense for the RC is too low (S)</b></li> <li>- <b>Increase RC Operating expense to as much as 5% by using an activity – based budgeting approach to justify (M) (K)</b></li> <li>- <b>RC not clearly identified as a program of the LRD by the public (ie, marketing or location) (C)</b></li> <li>- <b>Lack of awareness of LRD’s key role in the local water cycle (C)</b></li> <li>- <b>Challenging to document and quantify impacts of environmental education programs (S)(G)</b></li> <li>- <b>“Public education” is a weaker label than “environmental education” (C)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Large capital costs that impact our rate payers and do not affect stewardship positively (G)</li> <li>- Large capital costs on property not owned by LRD (K)</li> <li>- Higher than expected expenses may result in charging or taxing District residents not connected to the sewer system. (K)</li> <li>- Mediocre / small facilities (S)</li> </ul>

# Appendix F: Agency & Nature Center SWOT Analysis

Agencies and Nature Centers included: Busch Wildlife Sanctuary (BWS); Jonathan Dickinson State Park (JD); Jupiter Outdoor Center (JOC); Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center (LMC); Palm Beach County (PBC); South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). Staff votes were used to identify elements to be prioritized as strategic initiatives in the Balanced Scorecard.

SWOT	Partner	Note	Staff Votes
3 O	PBC	There is lots of grant funding available to support construction of environmental education facilities.	5
2 W	BWS	"Not Knowing" - people may not find RC without a direct invitation. Not a tourist attraction.	4
3 O	LMC, JDSP, JOC	Nature is the draw but accessibility and structures/amenities are required especially to reach "non-nature" people.	4
3 O	PBC	Invest \$ in infrastructure, then invest in program.	4
3 O	LMC	Fish feeding makes a connection with the animal. Both LMC and BWS think this is a good opportunity to reach "that" demographic	4
3 O	JOC	Believes people want to be guided and educated. Majority now just want to engage in nature but trend is increasing for guidance & education. Sense of "place" or Place-based education.	4
3 O	SFWMD	Connect with all surrounding natural areas and user groups: Florida Trail Assoc., Equestrians, Riverbend Park (hike, bike, paddle), JDSP, Cypress Creek, 9-gems, Ocean to Lake Trail.	4
2 W	JOC	From engagement with public at Riverbend it feels like the public is NOT informed about the watershed. Improving this is key.	3
3 O	LMC	Offer Trail Cams and Vistas (viewing platforms) at 20 acres.	3
3 O	LMC	We live here because of the environment, so environmental stewardship really matters to sustain the long-term value of this area.	3
3 O	LMC, BWS	% Participation suggestions: choose when to open registration (closer to event), use booking software that allows people to cancel themselves, use software that offers a waitlist, charge a small fee (\$3) and give them a bottle of water.	3
2 W	JDSP	Bridging gap between young (being educated) and old (being stewards). Young and middle aged adults are not represented	2
3 O	SFWMD	Include career opportunities in our educational programming.	2
3 O	PBC	Need a campus. Give people a destination. Riverbend and 20 acres would give a day experience to visitors. Get educated, float the river, go on a hike.	2
3 O	JDSP	Users need to understand what they are using. Educate the users of the river about the river	2
4 T	LMC	With only passive visitation, people can miss your main message	2
4 T	LMC	Parking - if people stay longer (destination), parking can become an issue.	2
1 S	BWS	Engagement with young children leads to continued participation at the child grows. Story time, birthday parties, all build community, not stewardship but act as a gateway to engagement and future stewardship	2
3 O	JOC	Education needs to merge with experience. Offer pre-trip or during trip education.	2
3 O	SFWMD	Need to include restoration projects in the education message. ACOE restoration but also farmland restoration	2
3 O	JDSP	Does not offer education on river - RC has opportunity to educate on river - this is not being done by LMC, BWS, JDSP, PBC	2
1 S	JOC	Appreciated partnership in the past and felt their campers and staff benefited from it. RC Program was the best part of the week.	1
1 S	LMC	Your Halloween events are a great way to engage community members that otherwise might not be in our core audience.	1
1 S	PBC	Story Time is ranked too low, it is more important than staff have suggested in their rankings.	1
3 O	LMC	Need an emotional tie to make a bond with the message.	1
3 O	LMC	Providing access to scenic vistas is important (20 acres)	1
3 O	JDSP	Visits to area and activities needs to link how these interact with the watershed	1
3 O	SFWMD	Education programming. Keep engaged as they grow. Programming for all ages.	1
3 O	JOC	Make Visit Florida an affiliate partner through FareHarbor to increase tourist participation in outdoor programs.	1
3 O	PBC	Build volunteer program so volunteers can run the facilities and programs.	1
1 S	SFWMD	Your environmental education programming is invaluable, especially getting people out to explore the watershed.	1
1 S	JDSP	It is important to connect people to the river so they value the river system and want to protect it.	1
3 O	SFWMD	It is hard to reach high school students with our message, the River Center could help us.	1
3 O	JOC	Offers free kayaks to anyone who will pick up trash on Wednesday. Thinks this could be a good opportunity for collaboration with RC	1



## Appendix G: Partner SWOT Analysis

Partners included: AustinBlu Foundation (AB); Bureau of Land Management (BLM); Coast Guard (CG); Jupiter High Environmental Academy (JH); Loxahatchee River Historical Society (LRHS); Mang; Nature Conservancy (TNC); PBC Environmental Resource Management (ERM); WPB Fishing Club (FC). Staff votes were used to identify elements to be prioritized as strategic initiatives in the Balanced Scorecard.

SWOT	Partner	Note	Staff Votes
3 O	BLM	LRD is missing an opportunity by not educating local business community. Later discussion listed BBB, Leadership Palm Beach, Chamber of Commerce as opportunities for engagement. How will climate change affect insurance brokers (risk), bankers, marinas?	5
3 O	TNC	How many programs are 100% staff run v. partner run? Perhaps there is room for more collaboration and program reach with partners sharing the load.	5
3 O	Mang	More opportunities to partner with Wild Pine Lab and RC	4
2 W	JH, TNC	Programming is missing climate change.	3
2 W	Mang	River Center and program outreach to new visitors is almost exclusively by word of mouth.	3
3 O	AB, BLM	No one is aware a portion of their quarterly bill for sewer service goes to environmental education	3
3 O	BLM	Include programming, environmental education, etc. on bills	3
3 O	BLM	Use partners for entry points to your programming by having other partner programming include information on LRD.	3
3 O	TNC	TNC has directive to reach non-conservation minded people. A variety of programs will bring people not in "conservation" community [archery, etc.]	3
4 T	ERM	Size of program compared with staff is impressive. Implication is there are too many programs or too few staff	3
4 T	ERM	LRD needs to differentiate from other partners and what makes us different from LMC, BWS, etc.	3
3 O	TNC	Would like to include interpretive signage at TNC's lift station	3
1 S	ERM	20 acres is "center" of watershed. Watershed needs an interpretive hub for Riverbend, JDSP, Hungryland, Pine Glades, Cypress Creek, etc. Those areas put together are larger than our state parks. They can all be connected through 20 acres.	2
3 O	FC	Charging for programs decreases cancellations and no shows	2
3 O	BLM	Use of interpretive signage at boat ramps and other public access points to the river	2
3 O	Mang	Use virtual programming (not field trips) to engage and entertain people so they can learn virtually. It will also help to drive in more participants when they can see what we do.	2
3 O	ERM	LRD as spokesperson for the Loxahatchee River and can be an eco-tourism driver.	2
4 T	TNC	LRDs stated education goals do not necessarily fit with apparent "youth" audience targeted by majority of programming	2
1 S	CG	Flotilla 52 is #1 in all of Florida for Boater Education because of its partnership with AustinBlu and the River Center. We get the word out.	1
3 O	Mang	The scale of the 20 acres would transition from education to "eco-tourism"	1
3 O	ERM	Eco-tourism funds lowering rates. Tourism is #1 priority for FL economy.	1
3 O	BLM	Add outdoor ethics to archery and boating programs.	1
3 O	AB	Increase the conservation message during boating classes.	1
3 O	JH	We need a "Green Cay" in Jupiter. River Center could be that at 20 acres.	1
3 O	LRHS	Collaborate on volunteer field trips with LRHS, TNC, BLM, BWS, LMC	1

## Appendix H: Participants & Parents SWOT Analysis

Participants and Parents included a diversity of perspectives. Their names are withheld for privacy. Staff votes were used to identify elements to be prioritized as strategic initiatives in the Balanced Scorecard.

SWOT	Participant	Note	Staff Votes
2 W	AH	RC is missing Tweens and Young Adult age groups.	5
3 O	AB	Signs up for seine & dips and fishing clinics because it is the closet she can get to doing summer camp herself (wants Adult Summer Camp).	5
3 O	LC, SM	Add more books and puzzles for small children, but increase the space dedicated to that. Lots of things to touch and feel. Something more experiential for small children. More biofacts. Maybe add some things outside.	4
3 O	LC, AB	Theme out the hikes like ERM does to get people to come (Wildflowers Walk). Perhaps do a nature photography hike and then have people post online with a specific #.	3
3 O	SM	Offer an "eco club" on Saturdays where kids can do things like they do in camp but offer it all year long.	3
3 O	LC	Book club for slightly older children (chapter books). Science-based books. Science adventure stories too.	3
1 S	SD / AB	My child(ren) have been changed by the River Center.	2
1 S	CH	RC is getting kids outdoors.	2
1 S	SM	I have never been able to do archery before. It was never convenient or easy to sign up for. Now it is and I went to their program and loved it! Something I did just for myself (left her son at home). "Do more archery!"	2
3 O	AH	Halloween is a bridge program that gets people to come to the River Center and learn more about programs.	2
3 O	CH	Add a "youth" lecture series for middle school students	2
3 O	SM	Bio Blitz (like ERM, FWC) to get people out experiencing the natural areas.	2
3 O	SM	Expand the touch tank.	2
3 O	CH	Need to get more people outside. Break the barriers that are prohibiting them from going outside.	2
3 O	SM	Reach out American Heritage and Trail Life USA to offer outdoor opportunities and badge workshops for those groups.	2
3 O	AB, DP	Use the RC classroom as a co-working space with free wifi (like Starbucks). Could include a short program. Young adults are asking how to meet people and networking spaces could be an answer for them.	2
1 S	DP, AB	Boater Safety promotes conservation by teaching people how to boat responsibly.	1
1 S	KC	There is something here for everyone.	1
3 O	SM	Craftapalooza is a great program for little kids. Make it "meatier" by adding an educational component outside.	1
3 O	AB,AH	Use upcycled crafts (ideas from Resource Depot) and then invite kids to display them at the River Center (garden) or take home.	1
3 O	AB	Tie visual arts and science together in curriculum.	1
3 O	DP	More evening lectures - builds community and relationships	1
3 O	AH, CH	Need a home, a place to come, and a place to gather.	1

## Appendix I: Staff SWOT Assessment of Programs

Staff votes were used to identify elements to be prioritized as strategic initiatives in the Balanced Scorecard.

SWOT	Note	Staff Votes
3 O	Improve focus and outcome scores for select programs (Girl Scout Way, Halloween, Archery, Campfire, Fishing clinic, Story time)	4
4 T	Transportation to and from River Center or alternate program location is a challenge for financially disadvantaged community members - evaluate the potential to provide transportation (through partnerships?)	4
4 T	Poor metrics can drive wrong behavior (e.g., focus on number of visitors) - consider refocus on participation rate (% of capacity) and staff utilization rate.	4
3 O	Decrease time invested per participant for select programs (Girl Scout program, AustinBlu Tournament, Science with Sam, Jr. Angler Tournament, kayak, Blooming in the Garden, Camp, Archery)	3
3 O	Potential new programs (Fishing adventure, Day camp for adults, Swamp tromp, Tots on trails, Wilderness skills)	2
3 O	Emphasize underserved communities for select programs (School group tours, Visiting camps)	2
3 O	Improve attendance for select programs (Nature hike, Bloming in the garden, Kayak, Boat tours)	1
1 S	All programs with a score < 15 (Nature Walk, Summer Camp, Atala Butterfly Festival, Kayak, Clean up, Science with Sam, Jr. Angler Tournament, Lectures, GS Programs, Homeschool Workshops, Documentary, AustinBlu Tournament, Seine and Dip, Homeschool Field Trip)	0
2 W	All programs with a score > 22 (Birthday Party, Craftapalooza, Boater Safety, Fish Feeding, Virtual Fieldtrips, Visiting Camps)	0
3 O	Science Day - help participants better connect and build community (engage and sign up for subsequent program)	0
4 T	Lack of Spanish language skills among River Center staff and volunteers	0
4 T	Public school bussing	0

## Appendix J: Staff SWOT Assessment of Operations

Staff votes were used to identify elements to be prioritized as strategic initiatives in the Balanced Scorecard. Only those SWOT elements receiving a meaningful number of votes were included here.

SWOT	Note	# Votes
2 W	Lack of connected nature trails at the River Center	5
3 O	Improve external communications through clarified internal responsibilities	5
2 W	Lack of storage space at River Center and BLM	4
3 O	Additional LRD vehicle (15 passenger van or small bus)	4
3 O	Full-time volunteer coordinator needed to improve recruitment and engagement with volunteers	4
3 O	Conduct quarterly program targeting LRD staff (e.g., kayak, nature hike) to help staff experience the river and watershed we all work to protect	4
2 W	Time management	3
3 O	Increase diversity among staff, interns, and volunteers	3
3 O	Professional development (attend conferences, PowerBI training)	3
3 O	Give an annual Watershed Status presentation to the Governing Board (target post-summer presentation)	3

## Appendix K: Staff SWOT Assessment of Facilities

SWOT	River Center	BLM	20 Acres
Strength	Facilities already exist	Site plan exists for the site	Property already owned by LRD
Strength	Site is easily accessible	Site is well known, easily accessible, and already includes a major attraction (lighthouse) with >100k visitors/year	Site plan exists for the site
Strength	Existing lease defines access to the property and building	Site gets tons of visitation from school field trips	Enough space to create a 'campus' that supports multiple programs and activities, including guided programs and passive recreation opportunities
Strength	Existing programs can be run efficiently here due to location and facilities (camp, boat tour, seine and dip, fishing clinic)	BLM wants LRD to offer environmental education programs onsite as a partner	No compromise of utility site security
Strength		Grants available from BLM to offset costs	Site is located within an extensive network of natural areas and expansive hiking and biking trails
Strength		Existing nature trails	Site location provides easy kayak access to Wild & Scenic River
Strength		Access to saltwater (downstream end of watershed)	Existing Programs that can be run efficiently here due to location and significantly expanded space: nature hikes (extensive options), camp, atala festival, AustinBlu Fishing Tournament, Girl Scout programs, Homeschool field trips.
Strength		Partners (Historical Society, BLM, TNC, MANG)	
Strength		Existing Programs that can be run efficiently here due to location and facilities (camp, boat tour, kayaking, fishing clinic, snorkeling, clean ups, nature hikes)	
Weakness	LRD is a tenant	No onsite storage	No saltwater
Weakness	Lease terminates March 12, 2027	Small facility with minimal staff office space	More work than existing staff could manage
Weakness	Constrained to very small parcel of land, which leads to very brief (non-program) visit times and negative reviews	No freshwater	Laborious to move equipment around property
Weakness	Not enough space to expand physical facilities	Cultural resources constrain some opportunities	Existing Programs that cannot be run efficiently here: boat tours, snorkeling (alligators),
Weakness	Existing Programs that cannot be run efficiently here (nature hike, kayak)	Laborious to move equipment around property	
Weakness		LRD would be a tenant with no legal guarantee for permanent or even long-term access	
Weakness		Constrained to renovating two existing houses	
Weakness		Not enough space to replace physical facilities needed (i.e., upgraded building)	
Weakness		Existing Programs that cannot be run efficiently here due to less space (seine and dip, archery)	
Opportunities		Number of visitors (not driven by a program) and duration of their visit should be significantly improved as the campus is developed	More outdoor programs because of available space and proximity to natural areas and waterways
Opportunities		Existing programs that can be run more efficiently and effectively here: summer camp (if we have certain facilities), nature hikes	Ability to create or become a destination with multiple opportunities to engage a visitor
Opportunities			Ability to grow more partnerships
Opportunities			Can take as long as we want to build out the campus
Threats	Palm Beach County's ultimate site plan does not include River Center	Cost to renovate facilities much more significant than expected	Need funding to build physical facilities (i.e., upgraded building)
Threats	Palm Beach County further limiting access to Burt Reynolds Park amenities	Lack of visitor parking	Cost
Threats		No exhibit space	
Threats		Loss of identity	