

Consortium Goals, Objectives, and Strategies – FY18

Introduction

Rutgers Raritan River Consortium (R3C) is a collaborative effort at Rutgers University's New Brunswick-Piscataway campus that recognizes the critical value of the Raritan and its environs to the social, economic and ecological integrity of the region that Rutgers calls home. The Consortium is comprised of multiple schools, programs and departments of the university that have joined together to advance two primary goals:

- To utilize Rutgers' proximity to the Raritan and its environs to inform university-based education, research and scholarship and to enhance the student experience and job readiness; and
- To apply Rutgers' research, programming and resources through its stewardship, academic programming, technical assistance, research and assimilation of data, and in collaboration with other Raritan partners to advance improvements in regional planning, policy and decision-making that positively affects the Raritan region and resources

In order to maximize existing strengths within the university and expand into exciting new areas of growth around the Raritan River, the R3C has developed a new strategic plan for the future of the Consortium. This plan outlines our vision for how best to support Raritan stakeholders both inside and outside of the university.

Strategic Goals

In May of 2017, members of the R3C met to brainstorm their vision for the Consortium for the coming year (2017-18) and for the next five years. Using this information and assessments of the needs of the larger Raritan community, the R3C steering committee has outlined the goals, objectives, and strategies that the Rutgers Raritan River Consortium needed for implementation of the strategic plan.

Goal A: Establish a community of faculty, staff, and students from throughout Rutgers that shares data, ideas and resources related to the Raritan River

Objective A.1. Search out, inform, and recruit faculty, staff, and students from all schools of Rutgers, New Brunswick/Piscataway campuses to participate in R3C activities

- a) Conduct a search of university associates working in and around the Raritan
- b) Increase presence at Rutgers events (posters, sponsorship)
- c) Identify and set up meetings with leaders in all schools

- d) Design and implement an effective marketing/communications plan to promote events and programs

Objective A.2. Provide opportunities such as information exchange forums, seminars, and professional development events for faculty, staff, and students to communicate about ongoing activities (research, teaching, recreation and arts) on and around the Raritan

- a) Host networking/information exchange forums for those interested in the Raritan
- b) Run a seminar series focused on those working in and around the Raritan
- c) Run professional development events on best practices for engaging students in fieldwork and data
- d) Develop and maintain listserve and facilitate communication within group
- e) Promote activities through SRRI website blogs, newsletter articles and press releases as warranted

Objective A.3. Actively engage faculty, staff, and students in the ongoing development of activities of the consortium

- a) Conduct annual formative assessments of the programming
- b) Make adjustments in planning to ensure consortium addresses evolving interests/needs of constituents

Objective A.4. Develop and maintain virtual support for teaching, service, research, and community engagement by hosting information sharing platforms and databases repository (for example) for Raritan data and curriculum

- a) Provide a repository for research data, projects, methods, and results from different researchers
- b) Develop educational material that supports teaching on the Raritan
- c) Provide an open access platform for faculty to share resources (e.g., Sakai site)
- d) Keep the website updated with new information and activity
- e) Maintain effective/dynamic “member” listserve

Objective A.5. Provide adequate financial support for Goal A components to advance collaboration among Rutgers faculty, staff, and students

- a) Identify components of above objectives that require funding and address in fundraising campaign
- b) Periodically review financial needs and update fundraising campaign to continue to support collaborative activities identified under this goal

Goal B: Enhance the student experience by providing students with new and expanded academic and applied experiences centered on the Raritan River, basin and bay.

Objective B.1. Facilitate the development of field-based, in-class, and on-line curricula that promote integrated multidisciplinary approaches to studying the Raritan River environs

- a) Identify, develop and/or assist in opportunities for cross disciplinary Raritan focused learning experiences
- b) Identify, develop and/or assist with online curricula focused on the Raritan and its data across disciplines

***Objective B.2.** Ensure that students across all degree programs have an opportunity to engage in coursework or programs that include a basic understanding of the natural, engineering, and socio-economic systems of the Raritan basin including the possibility of developing the Raritan as a Living Lab option*

- a) Meet with deans and undergraduate program directors to find out how to best reach their students
- b) Run professional development events on best practices for engaging students in fieldwork and data
- c) Provide an open access platform for faculty to share resources (e.g., Sakai site)
- d) Research other environmental and sustainability programs for students on campus
- e) Develop Raritan as a *Living Lab* option

***Objective B.3.** Engage students in community-based initiatives, field-based experiences, and internships to enhance their ability to address contemporary challenges to the Raritan River, its watershed and bay*

- a) Contact student clubs with a service mission or environmental clubs and co-host events (e.g., clean-ups in collaboration with the city of New Brunswick or watershed groups)
- b) Lower the cost of boat time by having a scheduling meeting with faculty to coordinate boat time bookings
- c) Identify and advertise opportunities with Raritan stakeholders for internships and/or field experiences

Goal C: Maximize the extent to which Rutgers research, science, and expertise inform and are informed by planners and decision-makers throughout the Basin.

***Objective C.1.** Evaluate, and where practicable, address gaps in the data, equipment, and information needs of the Raritan community*

- a) Conduct interviews and/or surveys of Rutgers researchers, scientists and planners to determine their (Raritan-related) data, equipment and information expertise and needs
- b) Conduct interviews and/or surveys of Raritan stakeholders to determine their (Raritan-related) data, equipment and information expertise and needs

***Objective C.2.** Enhance visibility of best management practices and stewardship activities along the Raritan by both Rutgers and external Raritan stakeholders*

- a) Conduct forums for exchange of ideas and information to facilitate matching needs and expertise between/among stakeholder groups
- b) Utilize SRRRI press releases, newsletters, website postings and *RU on the Raritan* blogs to bring attention to activities by Rutgers affiliates focused on the Raritan

- c) Utilize SRRRI newsletters, website postings and Collaborative blogs to bring attention to activities by Raritan stakeholders focused on the Raritan, especially promoting BMPs across region
- d) Utilize SRRRI/R3C meetings/events/media to communicate findings/results to increase awareness and encourage further information sharing
- e) Utilize SRRRI conferences/workshops/poster sessions to showcase new research, BMPs, collaborative opportunities, etc. by/for all Raritan stakeholders
- f) Expand/improve access to news media (both inside and outside Rutgers) and knowledge/use of RU listserves to expand coverage of Raritan activities
- g) Explore more efficient methods/mechanisms of connecting activities and needs of RU and outside stakeholders

Objective C.3. Encourage collaboration between scientists and policy/planners within Rutgers' academic community, as well as with Raritan stakeholders across the region through internships and studios and by facilitating grants or sponsorships to support collaborative projects and research

- a) Facilitate opportunities for community and academic stakeholders to partner on addressing Raritan issues
- b) Continue and expand mini-grant program with emphasis on supporting collaborations between Raritan stakeholders and Rutgers affiliates to investigate and/or address issues in the Raritan region.
- c) Facilitate applications for outside grants for community and academic stakeholders to partner on addressing Raritan issues
- d) Facilitate internships of RU students to work with Rutgers affiliates and/or with Raritan stakeholders to conduct research and/or address planning and policy issues in the Raritan region

Objective C.4. Facilitate service to community-based organizations by faculty, staff, and students to encourage collaboration and promote Rutgers as a steward of the Raritan

- a) Identify and communicate (through email blasts, newsletter and calendar postings, etc.) opportunities with Raritan NPOs for RU affiliates to provide service in the Raritan. Such opportunities may include the Raritan Scholars program, local river clean-ups, water safety programs, public access programs, participation in Raritan-focused environmental actions, etc.
- b) Highlight successful service actions through press releases, the SRRRI newsletter, website postings, RU on the Raritan blogs, etc. to raise awareness and promote Rutgers as a steward of the Raritan

Goal D: Facilitate opportunities for faculty, staff and researchers to collaborate on multidisciplinary grant projects focused on Raritan River, basin and bay issues.

Objective D.1. Identify and promote outside funding opportunities for research

- a) Mine grant providers for riparian and/or coastal funding opportunities
- b) Communicate opportunities to RU-Raritan affiliates

- c) Facilitate developing grant applications
- d) Where practicable, provide grant management support

Objective D.2. Leverage internal funds to support the development of faculty and students in the area of research and creative activity

- a) Facilitate mini-grant program to support multidisciplinary research and development of solutions to address Raritan concerns
- b) Facilitate funding of interns to support faculty to investigate and/or address Raritan concerns

Objective D.3. Facilitate communication among faculty, staff, and students of ongoing research activities on and around the Raritan

- a) Conduct forums for faculty, staff and students to exchange ideas and learn about complementary research/activities
- b) Post information about ongoing research activities in periodic communications to RU affiliates. Such communications include the SRRRI newsletter, RU on the Raritan blogs, and email blasts, etc.
- c) Maintain database of faculty and staff research and interest/focus to facilitate more efficient/targeted communications of opportunities as they arise
- d) Develop and maintain database of Raritan stakeholders including expertise, citizen science efforts, scientific research, etc. to facilitate more effective communications

Objective D.4. Provide mechanisms for researchers and students to gain access to the river data and related datasets to enhance their professional work and academic pursuits

- a) Continue to work with the Department of Marine and Coastal Sciences to identify, develop and employ a robust data management system to enable efficient storage, access and analysis of Raritan data by RU affiliates and Raritan stakeholders

Goal E: Make Rutgers a recognized center for Raritan related data, information, and service to support science, education, policy development, and decision-making in and around the region.

Objective E.1. Anticipate and meet the data, information, and service needs of our diverse constituents

- a) Periodically survey faculty, staff and students to identify what data/information/services they have and/or need to facilitate Raritan-related research/learning
- b) Periodically survey external Raritan stakeholders including government, community groups, industry and environmental organizations to identify what data/information/services they have and/or need to facilitate their work in the Raritan
- c) Facilitate coordination of Rutgers faculty, staff, students and administration to fill identified gaps in data/information/services
- d) Leverage Rutgers resources to develop robust/dynamic delivery systems for accessing Raritan data/collections

Objective E.2. Expand relationships with potential partners in government, private sector, and non-governmental organizations

- a) Identify government, private sector and NGOs that utilize or are interested in Raritan data/information/related services
- b) Promote relevant Rutgers resources to these entities to demonstrate the value of developing a relationship
- c) Facilitate opportunities for collaboration and/or service
- d) Periodically follow-up to ensure satisfaction and/or to further expand relationship

Objective E.3. Collaborate with national and international research units

- a) Identify national and international research units that utilize or are interested in Raritan data/information/related services
- b) Promote relevant Rutgers resources to these entities to demonstrate the value of developing a relationship
- c) Facilitate opportunities for collaboration and/or service
- d) Periodically follow-up to ensure satisfaction and/or to further expand relationship

Objective E.4. Develop a strategic communications and marketing plan for the R3C both internally and externally

- a) Write a communications and marketing campaign that articulates the R3C goals and objectives to support Rutgers University for the next fiscal year, over the next five fiscal years, and in perpetuity of the program
- b) Write a communications and marketing campaign that articulates the R3C goals and objectives to support Raritan external stakeholders for the next fiscal year, over the next five fiscal years, and in perpetuity of the program
- c) Implement the joint communications and marketing campaign
- d) Annually review progress on the communications/marketing campaign and make adjustments to ensure the plan continues to meet evolving R3C goals and objectives (as they evolve to address changes in the Raritan) and associated administrative/programming

Objective E.5. Facilitate participation of R3C constituents in more professional conferences and events

- a) Search out and identify conferences and events where the expertise/work of R3C constituents could be showcased
- b) Facilitate responding to calls for proposals and participation in events
- c) Promote Rutgers, R3C and expertise in Raritan related concerns to conference/event organizers and to participants

Objective E.6. Highlight/promote scientific publishing on the Raritan by Rutgers faculty, staff, and students

- a) Solicit lists/links to scientific publications on the Raritan by Rutgers affiliates

- b) Post as resource through SRRI/R3C website/pages
- c) Promote publications through press releases, Facebook page and in SRRI newsletter
- d) Promote at SRRI events/conferences through flyers in conference packets and through poster sessions or other event programming such as Lightning Talks

Goal F: Ensure R3C program sustainability.

Objective F.1. Develop and implement a strategic support campaign to ensure coverage of the R3C administrative and programmatic costs to support realization of R3C program goals and objectives

- a) Write a fundraising campaign that articulates program components and R3C administrative/programmatic costs to enable realization of R3C goals and objectives for the next fiscal year, over the next five fiscal years, and in perpetuity of the program
- b) Implement the fundraising campaign
- c) Annually review progress on the fundraising campaign and make adjustments to ensure fundraising plan continues to meet evolving R3C goals and objectives (as they evolve to address changes in the Raritan) and associated administrative/programming costs

Objective F.2. Foster goodwill and political/tactical backing for strategic support campaign

- a) Communicate to potential funders, to Raritan stakeholders, to university administration and to university deans/program directors the R3C program achievements as well as future benefits and opportunities of the program to address Raritan issues
- b) Enlist their support for continuation of the program

Objective F.3. Ensure optimum efficiencies in R3C program administration and management

- a) Annually evaluate (internally) program administration/implementation to ensure efficient use of funds and to identify areas for improvement
- b) At least annually, survey program participants and external stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, stakeholders, etc.) to request feedback on program operations/management and to solicit recommendations for improvements/efficiencies
- c) Evaluate changes identified and implement program improvements as warranted

Objective F.4. Pursue strategies for long-term sustainability of R3C programs/initiatives/administration support (including supporting Raritan-based curriculum, conducting research, data collection and access, facilitation/coordination costs, and stakeholder collaboration)

- a) Investigate opportunities to institutionalize R3C programs, initiatives and administration such as through development a Raritan River Institute