

Abstract

Creating a Business Plan for Assateague Island National Seashore
&
The Startup of a Nonprofit Friends Group

by
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Assateague Island National Seashore (Seashore) is faced with significant financial challenges. As a management consultant over an eleven week period, I worked with park staff to produce a business plan that clearly outlined operational requirements, identified financial resources currently available, and analyzed funding gaps. In addition, I worked with the Seashore to identify operational and investment priorities and develop strategies for meeting them. The purpose of the business plan is to improve the Seashore's ability to more clearly communicate its financial status with principal stakeholders. It is also intended to accomplish three main tasks. First, it provides the Seashore with a synopsis of its funding history. Second, it presents a clear, detailed picture of the state of current Seashore operations and funding. Finally, it outlines Seashore priorities and funding strategies. This document will assist management with financial and operational baseline knowledge for future decision making.

Of the six strategies recommended in the business plan, one was the creation of an independent organization to partner with the Seashore. This was the recommendation I implemented for the second part of my masters project. There were two important goals for this initiative. First, creating a nonprofit with a plan to become financially sustainable and second, ensuring the organization supports the mission of the Seashore. Assateague Island Alliance (Alliance) was incorporated on January 1, 2008 and has submitted its nonprofit application to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as of April 25, 2008. The Alliance is focused on supporting the mission of the Seashore and improving its financial flexibility. As Executive Director, I've worked on the organization's startup, board of directors recruitment, development of a mission, vision, and strategic plan, and engagement of the Seashore and community to build support for this new organization. Details on each of these initiatives are included in this master's project.

Date: _____

Approved:

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