

# **NORTH AMERICAN TRAIL RIDE CONFERENCE**



**Strategic Plan**

**The Trail Goes On**

**2014-2018**

# NATRC Overview: 2014

- Small national organization with significant history
  - Established in 1961; active in many states
  - 1000 total members
  - 1600 entries annually
  - 400-500 unique competitors annually
- Financially sound and well-structured
  - Volunteer-based
  - Non-profit
- Shrinking membership and event attendance
  - 10+ year trend of no growth
- Limited number of competitions and clinics
  - 50-60 per year
  - No geographic expansion
- Demographically identical to overall horse industry
  - Female, 45-60, educated, middle to upper incomes
- Current market leader
  - Challenging Distance Competitive Trail Events
  - Education of Trail Rider



# NATRC Summary: 2014

- Events Offered
  - Competitive Trail Rides – 15-60 miles, 3.5-6 mph
    - Two Day A-rides
    - One Day B-rides
    - Three Day AA-rides
  - Clinics
  - Conventions – Regional and National
- Education and Information Available
  - Score cards
  - Manuals (Management, Judges, Rider)
  - Newsletters, websites and social media
- Recognition Provided (including breed programs e.g. AHA, APHA...)
- Mileage records
- Some member benefits (insurance, discounts)
- Community



# NATRC Values: 2014-2018

- Safety
- Education
- **Timed distance** competitions
- **Natural** on-trail observations and obstacles
- Horse care, condition and soundness (drug free)
- Inclusivity (any breed, any tack)
- Established rules and consistent judging
- Trail Development and Advocacy
- Family orientation
- Good financial value
- Community

**These were clarified at the July Board meeting**



# NATRC Strategic Objectives

## 2014-2018

- Improve NATRC competition experience
- Increase NATRC brand awareness
- Increase NATRC Ride Attendance
- Increase NATRC membership
- Develop meaningful, working partnerships



# NATRC Strategic Alternatives

- Marketing and Membership Initiatives (separate slides)
- Additional Events
  - Introductory rides 5-15 miles, no time constraints
  - 3+ day rides (Pioneer rides)
  - Seminars
  - Judges Forums
- Additional Education and Information
  - Videos (You-Tube Series) and DVDs
  - E-books
  - Speakers Bureau
- Increased Recognition
  - Additional awards e.g. National CP Awards
  - Member Loyalty program e.g. Member Anniversary awards
  - Volunteer Loyalty program or Service Membership option at reduced cost
  - Equine Professional program
- Interactive Mileage and point records
- More member benefits (freebies, discounts)
- Multi-organization events/programs (AERC, Breeds)



# Proposed Marketing Initiatives

From Ad Hoc Marketing Committee – February 2014

- Celebrity Endorsements (\$\$\$\$)
- News Service E-Announcements (\$\$)
- Search Engine Optimization (\$\$)
- Horse Expos and Events (\$\$)
- Clinic Blitz (\$\$)
- NATRC Apparel (\$)
- TV Programming (\$\$\$)
- Radio Programming (\$)
- Direct Mail campaigns (\$)
- Publicity-in-a-Box for Ride Managers (\$\$)
- Cross Regional Awards (Buckle Series) (\$\$)
- Regional Traveling Teams (National award) (\$)



# Proposed Membership Initiatives

From Ad Hoc Marketing Committee Report – February 2014

- Retain Past members and competitors
  - Provide constant and consistent communication (social media and personal outreach)
  - Add incentives
    - To Current members
    - To Past members
- Recruit new members and competitors
  - Clinics, clinics, clinics (appropriately valued)
  - Reach experienced horsemen from other disciplines
  - Reach runners, hikers, outdoor enthusiasts
  - Introduce new incentive programs
    - Trainers and clinicians
- Expand into new Geographic areas
  - Promote Ride Management Support Fund



# Approved Strategic Initiatives

November 8, 2014 Board meeting

- Implement additional national awards (effective in 2015)
  - Competitive Pleasure National Championships
  - Competitive Pleasure High Point National Awards
- Mail “gift/member card” for membership renewals (begin for 2015 renewals)
- Introduce member loyalty program
  - Significant awards for 15, 20, 25, 30+ years
- Continue investment in Horse Radio Network (effective immediately)
- Invest in select print advertising
- Create and Distribute DVD/You-Tube Education materials



# Approved Strategic Initiatives

November 8, 2014 Board meeting (cont'd)

- Hire professional marketing firm to
  - Optimize website for search engines
  - Evaluate and recommend ride registration software
- Expand and promote Enhanced Member Services
- Identify 2-3 specific joint projects with AERC
  - Trail Development and Advocacy
  - Joint Ride Registration System
  - ?
- Remind Managers that Intro Rides are currently a local option

Slide 2 of 2



# Specific Goals

Original slide from 2009

- One Year (2010), **now 2016**
  - 10% More rides
  - 10% More competitors
  - 5% More members
  - 5% Revenue Growth
  - 5 National Sponsors (**now \$15,000**)
  - Breakeven
- Three Year (2012), **now 2018**
  - Annual member growth rates 3% per year
  - 100 rides and clinics (**now 75**)
  - Average ride attendance 50
  - 10 National sponsors (**now \$25,000**)



# Next Steps

- Obtain National Board support - **DONE**
- Obtain Region Board support - **DONE**
- Obtain Member support
- Identify specific action item owners
- Publish Plan and Action items
- Report performance results quarterly

