



Strategic Planning

After ACWA celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2019, board members looked toward the future of the organization. To answer the ‘what next?’ question and make the path clearer, board members embarked the strategic planning journey.

“When we looked at how much of the state our members and associate members touch through their regional offices, we realized that ACWA affects approximately two-thirds of Iowa,” says Roger Wolf, ACWA executive director. “We needed to explore how to make a greater impact with our members, and possible new members, as a key trusted advisor for farmer customers and for the sake of improving water quality.”

After months of facilitated workshops, committee meetings, and creative thinking, ACWA is beginning a revised annual work plan and enacting efforts to achieve long-term goals. Some of the outcomes from the strategic planning work include:

- a geographic expansion to additional Iowa regions to make a statewide impact
- a new membership dues structure that is more equitable for all members
- a recognition to enlist of potential new partners that have similar values and goals of ACWA
- a new work plan focusing on member services, outreach and targeted implementation initiatives.

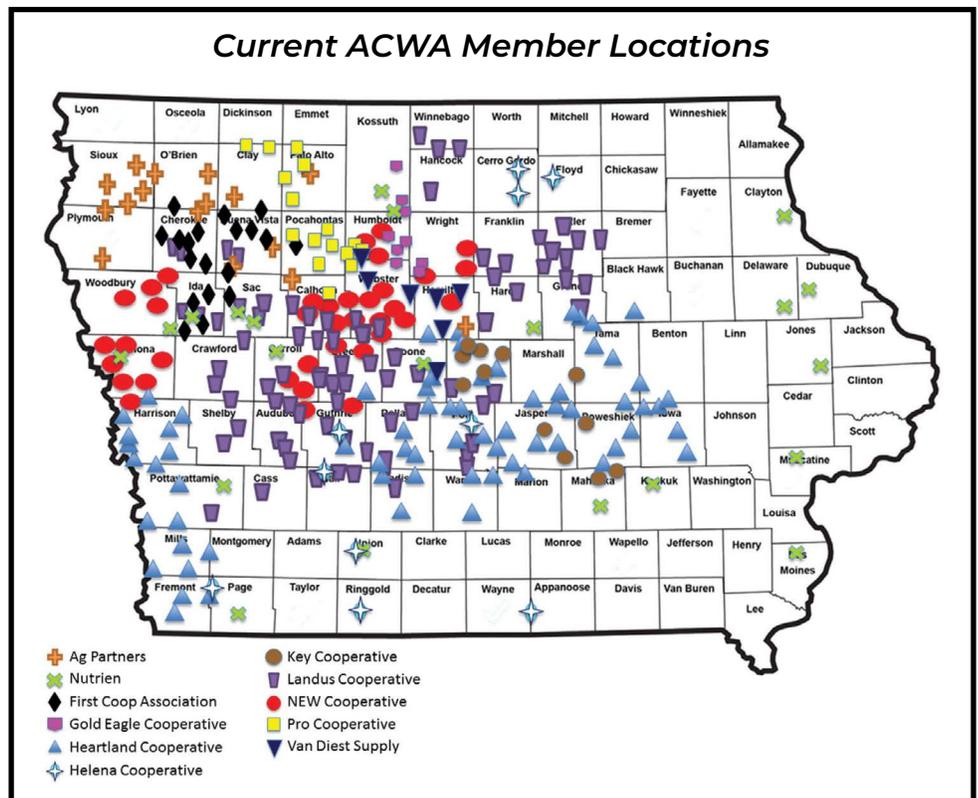
These new ideas and goals reflect how ACWA is adapting to changes in ag retail, collaborating with existing and new partners for water quality im-

ACWA Mission
Identify and advance solutions that reduce nutrient loss, build healthier soils, and improve Iowa’s waters.

ACWA Vision
ACWA is recognized for its ability to build upon its members’ extensive relationships with farmers to improve Iowa’s waters.

provement while continuing some of the tried-and-true activities in which the organization has been involved.

One of the outcomes from the strategic planning exercises was establishing new mission and vision statements to reflect ACWA goals. This mission and



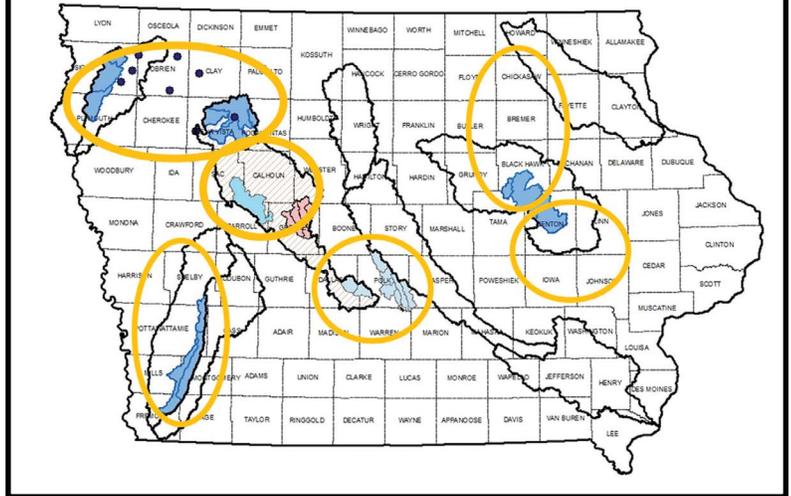
vision are built upon the 20-year foundation of ag retailers working together for clean water and they acknowledge there is still work to do.

“We know water monitoring has been ACWA’s strength for the last two decades, and we have the data that illustrates long-term water quality trends in the state,” says Harry Arhenholtz, ACWA chairman. “The organization will continue water monitoring as a priority, and we plan to expand monitoring in other key watersheds.”

One of the tactics ACWA has employed to increase member collaboration and inform their farmer customers is the creation of the conservation agronomist position. Currently, there are four conservation agronomists in partnership with ACWA and its members, working in tandem with ag retail staff to increase conservation practices on the land including the addition of cover crops, and the installation of bioreactors, saturated buffers, and wetlands. The conservation agronomists also can help farmers with other conservation efforts such as whole-farm conservation assessments and nutrient management plans. An ACWA goal for 2021 includes additional conservation agronomists placed in priority watersheds.

ACWA is a long-standing collective group of like-minded, competitive ag retailers and

2021 Conservation Agronomist Territories



aligned members who have come together with a unified mission and voice to assist with and advocate on behalf of helping farmers adopt sustainable and profitable conservation practices. ACWA can bring forth common sense approaches, as members work with farmers every day and understand the challenges of modern-day agriculture.

As ACWA continues to build its reputation across Iowa, collaborative efforts will become paramount to increase water monitoring, to establish agricultural practices that improve the quality of Iowa’s rivers and streams, and to keep productivity and profitability top-of-mind for the Iowa farmer.

