

Hunterdon Land Trust

Strategic Plan

Approved by Board of Trustees: January 18, 2011

This Strategic Plan is intended to provide clarity and focus for the Hunterdon Land Trust for the next five years as we work to further our mission. This plan was developed throughout the year of 2010 through a process of self-evaluation and with input from our community, culminating with a board and staff retreat held September 2010. It represents where we wish to see the organization be in the future and how we hope to get there.

This is a tool to more efficiently and effectively manage organizational resources to achieve specific goals. The plan provides a solid context for judging emerging opportunities, allowing us to embrace those that further our strategic goals and pass on those that don't.

The strategic goals in this plan define the most significant and ambitious ways for the land trust to fulfill its mission. The strategies are the actions that will be pursued to fulfill the strategic goals. This plan is a means to tell our story — what we intend to accomplish and how we will do it. The plan unifies the organization, provides focus, and articulates the support we will need to accomplish our goals.

Mission

To preserve and protect the rural character of Hunterdon County

Impact

Preserve ecologically and agriculturally significant land and create a legacy for conservation and stewardship.

Focus

Land preservation, resource stewardship and conservation leadership

Role

- Expert advisors
- Facilitators of conservation real estate transactions and stewardship initiatives
- Responsible steward and owner of preserved land and conservation easements
- Conservation community leader and partner

Position

Leading Hunterdon County non-profit land conservation organization

Distinctive Asset

The historic Case-Dvoor farm is the Land Trust's headquarters and place of connection with its constituents and the community.

Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Preserve 10,000 acres of land with ecological, agricultural, scenic and recreational value to complete the Land Trust's strategic conservation plan and to ensure meaningful land preservation throughout Hunterdon County

Strategies

1. Create the strategic conservation plan; map the “whole” and prioritize properties for preservation based on criteria
2. Develop relationships with landowners of priority properties
3. Coordinate the funding/ partners for high priority and feasible deals
4. Complete conservation real estate transactions

Goal 2: Maintain or improve (to baseline) the ecological, agricultural, recreational and historic values of our properties as defined by each property's management plan.

Strategies

1. Complete a baseline report for each preserved property – owned and easement protected
2. Monitor all conservation easements and fee owned properties annually
 - a. Prepare annual monitoring schedule
 - b. Staff, board, and volunteers to make annual monitoring visits
 - c. Prepare and file monitoring reports
 - d. Maintain regular communication with landowners (for easement properties)
 - d. Address any concerns with easements early
3. Complete management plans for owned properties and those we don't own but manage for conservation partners
 - a. Create an annual planning schedule
 - b. Create planning committees of neighbors/volunteers
 - c. Create a template /system for plans
 - d. Prioritize implementation among properties annually
 - e. Pursue variety of funding sources for management activities
4. Engage the community / neighbors in the land management and use properties as educational tool to showcase responsible land stewardship and resource protection
 - a. Inform the community
 - b. Tell the story
 - c. Turn community into informed land stewards
5. Estimate long term stewardship costs (based on management plans and easement responsibilities) and create and build stewardship endowment
6. Create and build capital improvement fund to support implementation of the master plan for the historic Case-Dvoor Farm, the land trust's headquarters

Goal 3: 10% of households (~ 4500) throughout the County are active conservation supporters and know that the Hunterdon Land Trust is the county's leading non-profit land conservation organization.

Metric: this goal will be measured through “opt in” for land trust conservation information and participation and support of programs. For example, number of members, email subscriptions, volunteers, etc.

Strategies:

1. Define target markets (people who are likely to be conservation supporters, but not active)
 - a. Create a marketing plan
2. Create and manage compelling and interactive conservation information sites (regular updates, action alerts, blogs, Facebook, Twitter)
 - a. Work with partners to provide content
 - b. Create platform for consumers to provide content
 - c. Invite “sign up”/”opt in”
 - d. Advertise and promote site in all communications and publications
3. Build, maintain and strengthen relationships with the conservation community (partners, funders, public officials, supporters) and enter deliberate relationships to meet this goal
 - a. Become an active member of Keep it Green Campaign
 - b. Create and host the county's conservation group (partners)
4. Mobilize (self-identified) active supporters on critical decisions for conservation
 - a. Action alert concept
5. Create and implement a purposeful media relations/ public strategy
 - a. Create stories not just about events (completed projects) but to create an informed constituency i.e. economic value of preservation
 - b. Be specific and consistent about messaging
6. Utilize facilities at the historic Case-Dvoor Farm as place for education and outreach to target markets and community at large
 - a. Host seasonal local farmers market
 - b. Conduct educational forums and workshops
 - c. Create public meeting space for community use

Goal 4: The land trust has adequate staff capacity, engaged board members and the technology and equipment to efficiently and effectively achieve goals

Strategies:

1. Ensure sufficient staff capacity
 - a. Complete staffing plan to support this strategic plan
 - b. Redefine staff job responsibilities to align with strategic plan
2. Build fundraising board
 - a. Redefine board composition
 - b. Complete board job descriptions

- c. Define committees to align with plan
3. Invest in technology and information management systems
 - a. Complete technology assessment and define investment requirements
 - b. Update web, data base, etc.
4. Continue to improve policies, procedures, systems for national land trust accreditation
5. Invest in the “ideal” office environment for the land trust at the historic Case-Dvoor Farm and make it a place of pride and of connection

Goal 5: Raise \$ 6 million dollars from diverse sources to build a sustainable and stable financial portfolio including a permanent stewardship endowment, capital improvement fund, and operating reserves

Strategies:

1. Create a long term fundraising plan to build more diverse funding base of support with specific goals to increase membership, business support, major gifts, and grant support
 - a. Turn farmer’s market customers into members
 - b. Develop and institute a moves management strategy (members to major donors)
 - c. Develop planned giving program
2. Evaluate revenue generating strategies
3. Explore feasibility of a capital campaign