

Mendocino Land Trust Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Mission

The mission of the Mendocino Land Trust is to conserve and restore valuable natural resources of the Mendocino County region. It is dedicated to providing public access to the coast and protecting working farmlands and forests, wildlife habitat, open space, scenic vistas and watersheds.

Core Values

The Land Trust:

- Is a socially and environmentally responsible organization.
- Respects diversity of opinion and background in its human interactions.
- Values the natural world and the importance of the scientific method in addressing conservation and climate issues.
- Works only with willing landowners in any conservation or restoration project.
- Commits to transparency of communication in advocating land conservation and in educating the public about the Land Trust mission.
- Meets national standards for excellence, upholds the public trust and ensures that conservation efforts are permanent.
- Demonstrates sound finances, ethical conduct and responsible governance.
- Is committed to bettering the community through conservation and education.
- Treats its staff fairly and is an equal opportunity employer.

A Long Range Vision of Success

The Mendocino County region leaves a lasting impression on all who live or visit here. The Land Trust's goal is to make certain that its natural resources and scenic beauty are conserved in perpetuity. We envision pure air, clean water and locally sourced healthy food. There will be towering trees and rivers of salmon and peace of mind for families who want to preserve their fields, ranches and forests for generations to come.

The Land Trust envisions completion of the California Coastal Trail, stretching from Oregon to Mexico. Residents and visitors to the region will be connected to the outdoors and find inspiration here. The economy will be a vibrant mix of local businesses and tourism balanced with sustainable agriculture, forestry and fishing. The rural character and natural beauty will remain unspoiled.

It also envisions creation of a countywide conservation plan that will guide our work. The Land Trust will be widely recognized throughout the region, with offices and board representation in both inland and coastal communities.

Goals: 2017-2020

1. Continue with the current work of the Land Trust.
2. Establish a fully funded trails, conservation easement and fee lands stewardship program as determined by the program manager.
3. Assure that Mendocino County residents and visitors recognize the Land Trust and support what it does.
4. Assemble the board, staff and volunteers to implement the strategic plan.
5. Raise sufficient money to fund this plan now and into the future.
6. Assume a leadership position to develop an organized community supported countywide conservation and land use plan.

Goal 1

Continue with the current work of the Land Trust:

1. Conservation of land for its scenic and recreational values.
2. Construction of trails so that people can have a direct connection to beautiful landscapes.
3. Protection and restoration of waterways and forests which provide critical wildlife habitat.
4. Preservation of family farms and ranchlands for generations to come.
5. Stewardship of the lands it has protected, in perpetuity.

Goal 2

Establish a fully funded trails, conservation easement and fee lands stewardship program as determined by the program manager.

1. Adopt stewardship standards in compliance with Land Trust Standards and Practices.
2. Create an assessment of costs needed to reach the goal.
3. Commit to a level of funding for stewardship not less than the historic high.
4. Raise sufficient funds from donations, bequests and other sources.

Goal 3

Assure that Mendocino County residents and visitors recognize the Land Trust and support what it does.

1. Create a marketing plan and budget, including advertising and promotional items.
2. Highlight the Land Trust's crown jewels through outreach and targeted demographics, enlisting business and tourism partners and using tools such as social media and email.
3. Host events (field trips, hikes, fundraisers) that engage a wide variety of community members.
4. Improve and enlarge signage at properties.
5. In a marketing plan, focus on the Land Trust's desired reputation (see Appendix 1).

Goal 4

Assemble the board, staff and volunteers to implement the strategic plan.

1. Expand and diversify the board.
2. Develop a staffing plan by the end of 2018, and consider the use of college interns, volunteers and contractors for certain tasks, freeing staff to do other important work.

Goal 5

Raise sufficient money to fund this plan now and into the future.

1. Identify the desired blend of income sources.
2. Develop and implement a fundraising plan.
3. Adopt a gift allocation policy.

Goal 6

Assume a leadership position to develop an organized, community-supported countywide conservation and land use plan.

1. Create a conservation plan.
2. Review all steps leading up to how current coastal protection plan was achieved.
3. Work with partners to engage in planning specific projects.
4. Develop the project plan.
5. Promote the effort with partners as a coalition working toward the same goal.
6. Find a way to provide staff with time and resources.
7. Prepare a conceptual budget.
8. Obtain a grant to fund the plan.
9. Create an inland staff position.
10. Complete the plan.

Role of the Board

- Serve as ambassadors for the Land Trust.
- Assist staff with implementation of strategic planning goals and vision
- Assist the executive director in fundraising by identifying and connecting with people who are interested in the Land Trust mission.
- Engage existing Land Trust members by getting them more deeply involved in Land Trust mission and activities.
- Recruit more good board members, and engage volunteers as one way of finding candidates.
- Consider joining the Land Trust's Legacy Circle.
- Become qualified for an oversight role by visiting Land Trust properties and communicating with staff.

Appendix 1: Land Trust's desired reputation

The Mendocino Land Trust is the group that people depend on to:

- Provide public access to the coast.
- Protect land and natural resources, conserve open space and preserve the scenic beauty and natural legacy of our region.
- Ensure that all people in our diverse community and future generations will have access to open space.
- Keep its promises to supporters, donors and the community and remain a trusted beneficiary of donations and bequests.