



The Land Conservancy  
of British Columbia

# STRATEGIC PLAN

FOR FISCAL YEARS 2020 TO 2022

Madrona Farm. Photo credit Frances Litman.



Strategic Plan

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## Comment from Board Chair

Dear TLC Members, donors, volunteers and partners,

On behalf of TLC's Board of Directors please let me begin by expressing my heartfelt gratitude for your continued support of TLC's programming and projects. Our small and efficient organization would not be able to make such an impact on protecting British Columbia's biological diversity without your strength behind it. With the effects of climate change and habitat losses making their presence known daily, our combined efforts are more important than ever.

As your current Board of Directors, we believe TLC's focus over the next three fiscal years should be to work with others in the conservation community to maximize our collective power in addressing our planet's most pressing issues. Historically, it has been through collaboration that we have seen our greatest achievements.

Our responsibility, as both TLC Members and volunteers on the Board of Directors, is to fulfill the organization's mandate. According to TLC's Constitution and Bylaws, the purposes of the society are to contribute to the general public through the protection, preservation, restoration, beneficial use, education regarding and management of natural communities that represent diversity of life on Earth.

TLC's Strategic Plan is a road map for how we will fulfill this mandate over the next three years. This document is an evolving resource to be revisited regularly and updated to ensure we remain headed in the right direction. While road blocks and detours may present themselves, by referring to our map we can be sure that we continue to make progress towards our goal.

We continue to welcome your feedback and involvement in this process. Please reach out with your questions or ideas on how you could participate in our programs and projects. By working together we make an impact to protect the natural communities at risk in our province.

Yours in Conservation,

Frances Sloan Sainas

A group of people, including a woman in the foreground with a white visor, are gathered in a forest. They appear to be looking at a map or document together. The background is filled with trees and foliage.

## Introduction

Strategic planning is an essential practice for the management and operation of a land trust<sup>1</sup>. It helps the organization focus its' efforts to do the right work. Land trusts need to have an identity, direction and priorities; this Strategic Plan guides this process. The Strategic Plan provides a direction for The Land Conservancy of British Columbia (TLC); its members, donors, Board of Directors and staff. With this Strategic Plan TLC will be able to clearly and concisely communicate and form relationships with government, First Nations, other land trusts, business, land owners and the public. A goal of TLC is to complement the work of other land trusts in British Columbia (BC) while differentiating TLC's role in the land trust and conservation movement. The Strategic Plan also enables TLC to monitor and measure its' effectiveness in achieving its' mission; ensuring TLC is doing the right work.

TLC has successfully come through a challenging financial and organizational period over the last ten years. TLC has taken stock of this situation. Now the organization needs to look after the places we have responsibility for, strengthen where the organization is going and communicate the role it will have in the land trust movement in BC. In light of these changes, is time for TLC to prepare a clear and thoughtful new strategic plan.

<sup>1</sup> Canadian Land Trust Alliance draft Canadian Land Trust Standards and Practices 2018.



## Organization of the Strategic Plan

Vision, Mission and Values

Programs Delivered by TLC and  
Strategic Actions to Achieve the Mission

Implementation of the Strategic Plan  
◆ Ensuring Organizational Effectiveness ◆

- ◆ Measure/Monitor Effectiveness of Each Program
- ◆ Prepare and Approve Workplans (Three-year Projection and Annual)
- ◆ Prepare and Approve Budget (Three-year Projection and Annual)

# Vision

## “Conserving Special Places in British Columbia”

TLC contributes to the conservation of vital and productive natural land and water in BC. TLC acknowledges that much of BC’s biodiversity is a result of the cultural stewardship of these lands by First Nations over millennia (e.g., camas gathering). These places have nurtured a thriving biological diversity of life and diverse cultures.

TLC conserves nature that provides habitat for a diverse range of plants and animals and helps mitigate the effects of climate change; greenspace that buffers us from development and provides nature near where people live; farmland that grows our food; forests that are wild, produce food and are a renewable resource; and natural areas for outdoor recreation that are essential to our physical and mental health. TLC also protects places of cultural value to British Columbians.

TLC achieves its’ conservation mission by two methods. First, by acquiring ownership of land. TLC may make the acquisition or accomplish this with partners. Once acquired, ownership of the land will be either transferred with conditions that protect TLC’s interests to an appropriate organization to manage or be held by TLC as long as stewardship of the land is fiscally sustainable. The second method is by securing rights to land through the use of conservation covenants. Once land is acquired or rights are secured TLC then stewards the land that it has responsibility for through careful and thoughtful planning to ensure long-term protection and effective management.

TLC’s conservation efforts are accomplished through the support of TLC members, donors and partners. We build strong and lasting relationships with our members, donors, government, business, local land trusts, landowners and citizens. TLC works in collaboration with First Nations and strives to align values and objectives for conservation and stewardship.

TLC is economically sustainable and financially secure with the necessary funds to acquire and steward land. TLC is nimble and acts swiftly when land conservation opportunities arise.

TLC stands up for nature, creating a culture of conservation that is supported by all generations. The organization cares for those small green spaces in our urban communities to larger wide-open spaces that conserve nature and anchor rural communities. These places make our province and cities incredible places to live, work, raise a family, and grow old in.

TLC works with urgency and purpose. Residential, commercial and industrial development puts tremendous pressure on our land and water. Nature is being lost to development. Population forecasts show a steady increase in growth; particularly in the Lower Mainland, eastern Vancouver Island, the Okanagan and some towns in the Kootenay. Conservation efforts are critically needed in these locations.

People across the province support the work of TLC and TLC helps conserve those special places our members and donors cherish. TLC is doing its’ part to live up to the idea that in BC “Nature Needs Half”.

## Mission

### What TLC Does

#### TLC's mission is five-fold.

1. Conserve nature, farmland and farming, cultural sites and areas for people to enjoy the outdoors by acquiring or securing the rights to land through conservation covenants.
2. Protect green space and wild areas in and near the cities.
3. Steward land held by TLC through sustainable, scientific and First Nation land and water management principles.
4. Create an intergenerational culture of conservation.
5. Connect people with nature and cultural values of land stewardship.

The foundation to achieve the mission is through organizational and governance excellence; creating the right conditions for TLC to succeed. TLC does this by:

- honouring, recognizing and engaging members and donors
- sustaining a strong team of Board of Directors, staff and volunteers to foster a positive and thriving organizational culture
- providing sufficient organizational capacity to achieve the goals of this strategic plan; and
- ensuring TLC has a culture of learning, strong internal and external collaboration and communication.

# Values

TLC is a democratic, membership-based organization, governed by an elected volunteer Board of Directors. It relies on a strong and sustainable membership to achieve the mission and maintain the operation of the organization

TLC is committed to conservation, community service, and public benefit. We serve our members and donors. We are part of the land trust movement across British Columbia and we support our peers and hold ourselves to the highest standards as we continue to conserve the places we need and love. We pledge a commitment to uphold the public confidence and the credibility of the land trust community as a whole.

The values that guide the work of TLC are:

## **Fiscal Responsibility**

We put prudent and sustainable fiscal management first in all the work we do. We provide clarity to members and donors on how their financial contributions are being used to achieve the mission of TLC.

## **Cultural Responsibility**

We acknowledge the tenure and stewardship of First Nations and endeavour to respect this in all our activities. TLC embraces the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and as TLC works in the field of land conservation the organization incorporates the relevant recommendations into our work.

## **Accountability**

The Board of Directors is fully accountable to the members for the performance of the organization.

## **Transparency**

We operate honestly and openly and in a way that it is easy for others to see what we are trying to achieve, the actions that we are taking and how we are doing; while still honouring confidentiality.

## **Inclusiveness**

TLC values inclusion of diverse partners and community members and all ideas in our effort to fulfill the mission.

### **Collaboration**

Conservation is a social endeavor<sup>2</sup>. It is also a cultural endeavor. Ours is a positive, relationship-based approach. We collaborate to accomplish the mission of TLC.

### **Partnership**

TLC works through relationships where the parties are jointly committed to the success of a process or project to advance their mutual interests. TLC brings its' interests to the table while being open to the ideas of others by engaging and listening to learn and understand their interests. We believe that this will lead to the best decisions for the conservation and stewardship of the land.

### **Respect for local communities, nature and people**

We respect the aspirations of local communities and work with local government, First Nations, land trusts, business, conservation and outdoor recreation groups, and citizens. We seek to find conservation and stewardship solutions that incorporate the local viewpoint and that meet the needs of nature and people.

### **Integrity**

We strive for excellence and professionalism in all facets of our organization. We honor our commitments and remain true to our mission. We practice professional confidentiality concerning land transactions and donor relations.

### **Innovation**

TLC is open to considering and applying new ideas and ways of doing business that advance the mission of TLC. TLC is adaptive and responsive to values created in the whole system not just those benefits to specific interests in a truly democratic fashion.

### **Adherence to Best Management Practices for Land Trusts**

TLC adheres to the Canadian Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices in all that we do.

<sup>2</sup> Sonoma County Land Trust Strategic Plan

# Programs Delivered by TLC and Strategic Actions to Achieve the Mission

This section of the Strategic Plan highlights the programs that TLC will focus on for the next three years and the specific actions for each program to advance TLC's mission. This information will be used to prepare and approve annual work plans, plan for future work and prepare the annual and three-year budgets.

## **Program: Land and Conservation Covenant Acquisition** - - - Achieves Missions 1, 2 and 5.

### **Strategic Actions**

- Prepare a land and conservation covenant acquisition policy.
- Explore establishing a land acquisition fund.
- Ensure that endowments are secured for new covenants and are adequately funded.
- Explore creating a donor campaign for specific land acquisitions.
- Where appropriate and in partnership with First Nations explore cooperatively managing land.
- Collaborate with local government to achieve plans for parks and green space.

### **Activity and Timeline**

- Complete by Summer 2019.
- Report to Board as part of land acquisition policy report.
- Report to Board as part of proposal to take on new covenants.
- Address with specific land acquisition proposals.
- Address with specific land acquisition proposals.
- Meet with selected local government by the end of 2019 to discuss land acquisition partnership opportunities.

## **Program: Culture of Conservation** - - - - - Achieves Mission 4.

### **Strategic Actions**

- Promote, deliver and collaborate with government, land trusts and non-profits to provide education, communication and outreach.

### **Activity and Timeline**

- Report to Board by end of 2019 on initiatives.

**Program: Connect People with Nature and History** ----- Achieves Mission 5.

**Strategic Actions**

- Examine opportunities to partner with local government to construct new or upgrade existing facilities that help people connect with nature, history and get into the outdoors.

**Activity and Timeline**

- Meet with selected local government staff and elected officials by end of 2019 and report outcome of meetings to the Board.

**Program: Stewardship** ----- Achieves Mission 3.

**Strategic Actions**

- Create a baseline inventory of the natural and cultural features for each of TLC's owned properties and for land held in covenants.
- Prepare management plans for all of TLC's properties.
- Develop a land management plan for each newly acquired land within 12 months after acquiring land.
- Explore with First Nations the development of an indigenous land stewardship program for land owned by TLC.

**Activity and Timeline**

- Submit a project plan to the Board by August 2019 regarding how this will be accomplished.
- One management plan to be completed in 2019 and at least two per year from 2020 onwards.
- As land is acquired.
- Report to Board December 2019.

**Program: Greenspace and Wildness in or Near Our Cities** ----- Achieves Mission 2.

**Strategic Actions**

- Acquire and secure greenspace and wildness in and near where British Columbians live.

**Activity and Timeline**

- Explore opportunities to acquire and secure green space. Report to the Board by end of 2019.

**Program: Membership** ----- Helps achieve all Missions.

**Strategic Actions**

- Increase membership.
  - Prepare a campaign to increase membership.
  - Contact lapsed members.
  - Foster stewardship of existing members.
- Report to members on the status of work on the Strategic Plan.

**Activity and Timeline**

- Report to Board on project plan by August 2019.
- Contact members by Fall 2019.
- Report to Board on project plan by August 2019.
- Report to members at the AGM in September 2019.

**Program: Organizational Development** ----- Helps achieve all Missions.

**Strategic Actions**

- Hold a Board and staff retreat annually.
- Engage members through an annual member meeting and a survey.

**Activity and Timeline**

- Have retreat by June 2019.
- Complete by December 2019.



## Implementation of the **Strategic Plan**

Implementation of the Strategic Plan is the responsibility of the Board of Directors. Working closely with the Executive Director the actions in the Strategic Plan will be addressed in annual budgeting and setting of work plans. The Board will review the status of the actions to implement the Strategic Plan quarterly (January, March, June, September). TLC will monitor and measure how effective it is in achieving the actions for each program. The results will be reported to the membership and Board at the September AGM. The Strategic Plan will be adjusted for the following year as needed. This process will ensure that TLC is responsive to the evaluation of the Strategic Plan and new information that can be used to move the organization forward.

## Definitions

*Biodiversity.* Short for biological diversity. A measure of variation amongst living things. The word is most commonly used to describe “species diversity” – the number and relative abundance of different species within a particular area. (Oxford Dictionary of Environment and Conservation)

*Conservation.* Conservation is the protection of land and water and historic values from uses that would destroy or lessen the biological or historic value of a place. It is achieved through acquiring or securing the rights to land to ensure the long-term protection and stewardship of conservation values.

*Nature.* TLC takes a broad definition of nature. Nature is habitat for plants and animals, greenspace, scenic landscapes, forests, lakes, streams and wetlands and areas for scientific research. All this contributes to conserving biological diversity.

*Nature Needs Half.* A concept where half of the planet needs to be protected for nature. It is a science-based, practical and aspirational vision that advances a reciprocal, balanced relationship between people and nature (Wild Foundation). Nature Needs Half is supported by an international coalition of scientists, conservationists, non-profits, and public officials who defend nature at the scale for which the planet needs to continue to function for the benefit of all life

*Stewardship.* Stewardship is the responsibility for the sustainable management and use of a particular resource or place (Oxford Dictionary of Environment and Conservation). It is achieved by managing the land and water that is conserved. This is accomplished by having an inventory of the conservation values of the land and water, a management plan and by protecting and restoring the values of the land and water.



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Second Lake. Photo credit Cathy Armstrong.