

LAND TRUST ALLIANCE

Strategic Plan

2018 – 2022

Land tells the story of America: Historically, it shaped us as a people; today, it is the key to a healthy and secure future for all Americans. It provides pure drinking water, healthy food, clean air and places to reflect and recreate. Conserved, well-managed land also provides protection from natural disasters, such as floods and drought, while absorbing carbon and keeping it from the earth's atmosphere.

No one knows this better than the members of the land trust community, who together have conserved an incredible 56 million acres and demonstrate daily that land is the answer to so many problems that confront our society. Yet we have much more work to do under increasingly challenging circumstances, including continuing population growth, increasing development pressures — especially from fossil fuel and renewable energy development — and a growing scarcity of quality, available land to protect.

Perhaps most critically, most Americans have never heard of land trusts. Land and land conservation play little or no role in their lives, at least as far as they are aware. And land trusts continue to rely upon the

support and engagement of a sliver of the American populace — a sliver that is far too uniform in terms of race, ethnicity, age, affluence and other characteristics.

But there is reason for hope.

We believe that private land conservation reflects American ideals on which we all can agree, regardless of political leanings or party affiliation. In particular, land trusts champion an approach to conservation premised on personal initiative, landowner empowerment and charity — core American values. And when a land trust protects a special place, it makes a promise that the land will always be there — for us, for our children, for their children, *forever*.

The mission of the Land Trust Alliance is to save the places people need and love by strengthening land conservation across America.

The Land Trust Alliance is the voice of the land trust community. As the national leader in policy, standards, education and training, we work passionately to support land trusts so they can save and secure more lands now and for future generations. The Alliance is now eager and prepared to continue its major investments in its core programs and services to increase the rate of land conservation, defend the land trust community from threats and build healthy, high-performing land trusts.

In addition, the Alliance commits to elevating land conservation as a priority nationwide. We envision a reenergized, more relevant conservation movement, in which land trusts join with partners that have not traditionally identified as conservation organizations around our shared interest in protecting special places, from urban playgrounds to native prairies, from family farms to old-growth forests and from coastal wetlands to cactus-studded deserts.

We will help people find common ground as they get outside and together see, touch, smell and protect what is real and what is beautiful. We commit that we will not only *serve* communities but actually *build* communities, planting the seeds for a nation to come back together, starting with a steadfast love of the land.

Core Values

As the leader of a network of proudly independent organizations, the Alliance knows that land conservation is as diverse as the American landscape and that one size does not fit all. Instead, the Alliance subscribes to a set of overarching principles that collectively guide our work in all contexts:

Local: The Alliance believes that lasting conservation starts at the local level and that land trusts and their staff, board members and volunteers — firmly rooted in their communities — can tailor their work to best serve the needs of people and generate passion for the land. People interacting through local conservation efforts also holds great promise to heal the political rifts and divisions that characterize this time in our nation's history.

Community-based: The Alliance believes that effective conservation engages the entire community in constructive partnerships that deliver tangible results from which all benefit. For our land trust membership, community-based conservation must be woven into the fabric of being as it is now for the Alliance. (Please see “Community Conservation” box on page 3.)

COMMUNITY CONSERVATION

The Alliance is firmly committed to community conservation and ensuring that it is embedded in everything we do. Why? Because perhaps no other initiative simultaneously advances all four of our overarching conservation goals.

People in the land trust community have different conceptions about what “community conservation” means. At the Alliance, we believe that when land trusts engage all people in their communities, especially those who have not traditionally been served by, engaged in or moved by land conservation, they make land conservation inclusive and relevant — and that’s the essence of community conservation.

When land trusts take part in this work, they build broad and deep support for land conservation. They also address inequities regarding access to land, open space and a healthy environment; increase financial and

political resources for land conservation (and, therefore, the rate of land conservation); make land trusts more reliant on and enriched by the communities they serve; and, ultimately, ensure the permanence of land conservation.

The Alliance will continue to produce robust programming and services to help land trusts engage in community conservation in ways that are tailored to their circumstances and unique realities. But it can do much more as a national organization that represents 1,000 land trusts from across the country. Namely, the Alliance can complement and amplify the local efforts of land trusts with a national, coalition-based call-to-action campaign around land conservation (see Initiative 3). This relevance campaign is absolutely essential to building broad and deep support for land conservation in communities across the nation.

Inclusive: The Alliance welcomes all people into the conservation community, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age or socioeconomic status. Likewise, it strives to bring the positive messages and benefits of land conservation to people who live in all geographies — rural, urban and suburban. To ensure its ability to meet these ambitions, the Alliance is building a board of directors and staff that reflect diversity in all of its dimensions, and is committed to helping land trusts do the same.

Voluntary: The Alliance champions conservation initiatives that respect the interests and motivations of private landowners, that encourage rather than coerce and that set standards for organizations to adopt willingly.

Nonpartisan: The Alliance’s allegiance is to its mission, and we seek out people from across ideological and partisan divides to help us save the places people need and love.

“The Alliance should empower local land trusts with the tools and skills necessary to be relevant to our own communities.” — Land Trust Alliance member

Enduring: The Alliance and our members believe in conservation that lasts. The private lands and waters that we conserve through easements or other means represent our legacy to future generations, and we will fight to defend them against all threats. We seek permanence, not temporary protection, convenience or short-term financial advantage.

This is where we stand, together. Yet no set of principles can capture our passion for conservation or our commitment to the land. These qualities, expressed through the actions of thousands of individuals across the country and the work of hundreds of land trusts, are what set the Alliance apart. It's how we earn the respect and trust of our neighbors, partners, donors and even our opponents.

Conservation Goals

Goal 1: Relevance

Elevate land conservation as a priority nationwide with individuals, communities, the private sector and government at all levels. With public apathy and disengagement posing one of the greatest long-term threats to the land trust community, it is essential that we make our issue more urgent and relevant to more audiences.

The Alliance and our partners will be successful if we can:

1. Raise the profile and perceived value of land conservation relative to other priorities.
2. Raise the profile of land trusts such that they are perceived as essential community institutions.
3. Mobilize significant new public, philanthropic and corporate funding for land conservation across the country.
4. Engage new partners and allies from across many sectors in a common cause.

Goal 2: Rate

Increase the rate of land conservation, not only in rural and suburban areas but also in urban communities that have not been the traditional focus of the land trust community. In turbulent political times and with many competing priorities, even maintaining the current rate of land conservation will be a challenge; increasing the rate will require mobilizing new and diverse resources and communities.

The Alliance and our partners will be successful if we can:

1. Increase land conservation activity and acreage conserved by land trusts each year.
2. Generate expanded funding for land conservation and stewardship through state and local ballot measures and federal appropriations (e.g., the federal Farm Bill, the Land and Water Conservation Fund).
3. Leverage funding from ecosystem services markets for land conservation and stewardship.
4. Defend federal tax incentives for private land conservation and ensure they remain accessible and workable for land trusts.

Goal 3: Rigor

Build healthy, high-performing land trusts to improve the rigor, quality and practice of land conservation nationally. By strengthening their organizational capacity — leadership, resources, skills, staff and boards — land trusts can more effectively engage local communities, steward lands, increase the rate of land conservation and address emerging threats to conservation.

The Alliance and our partners will be successful if we can:

1. Increase participation in the Alliance's capacity-building programs that results in a marked increase in the number of high-performing land trusts and a greater collective conservation impact.
2. Add to the already significant number of accredited land trusts and build incentives for land trusts to remain accredited.
3. Increase the number of land trusts with strategic conservation plans.
4. Increase the number of land trusts with adequate baseline documentation in place for all easements.

Goal 4: Resilience

Defend the land trust community from threats that endanger specific conserved lands and the viability of the entire community. For the Alliance, leading a resilient sector involves a robust conservation defense program, opposing the behavior of bad actors in the sector and developing innovative approaches to emerging conservation threats.

The Alliance and our partners will be successful if we can:

1. Increase the number of land trusts (as well as parcels and acres) eligible to enroll in Terrafirma.
2. Decrease the rate of land trust failures and increase, where warranted, the number of land trust mergers, consolidations and shared services agreements.
3. Achieve 100% success rate in conservation defense cases (i.e., permanence of conservation is achieved).
4. Increase the capacity of land trusts to address emerging threats to the landscape, such as energy infrastructure siting, climate change impacts and conventional sprawl.

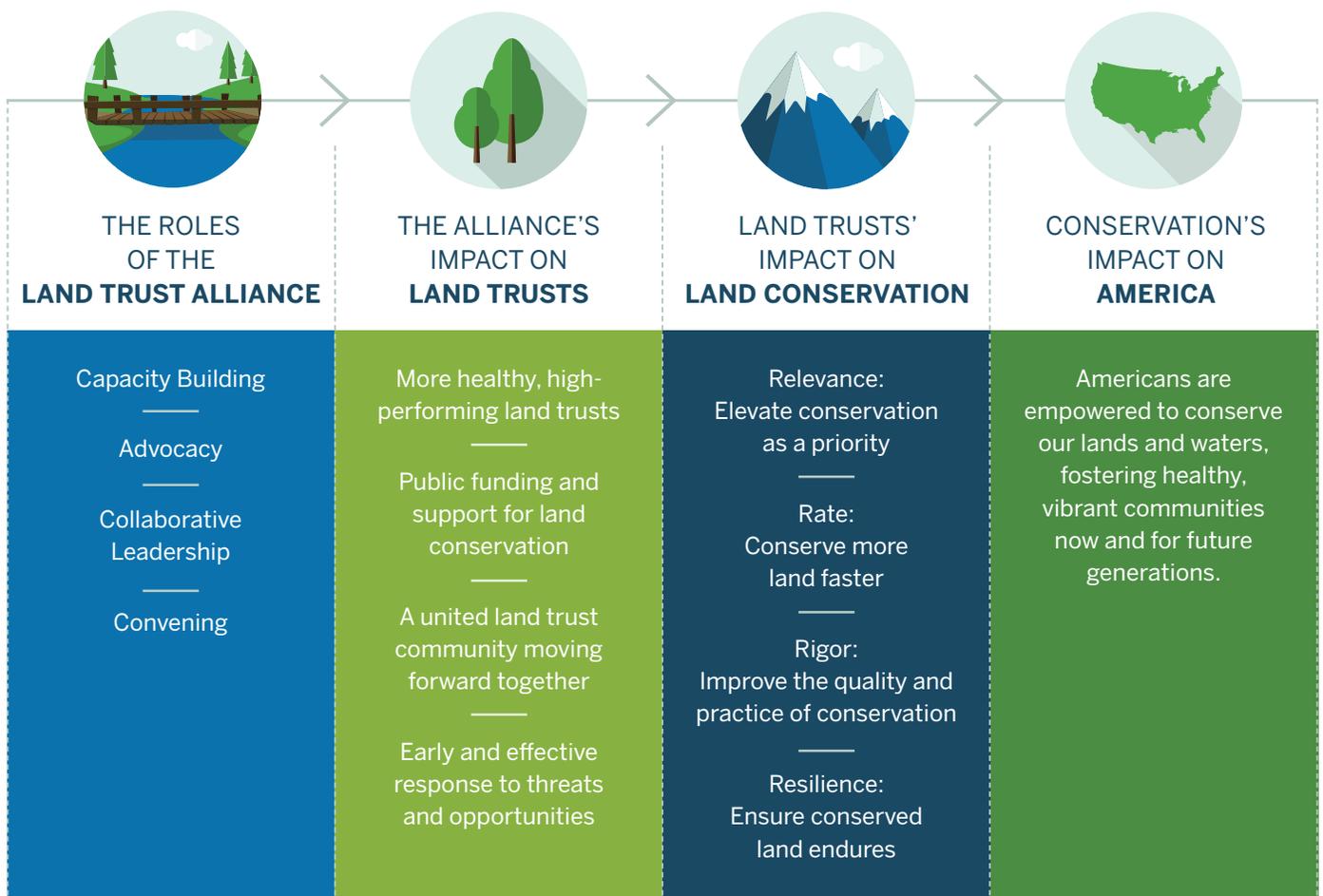
Strategic Approach

To accomplish these goals, the Alliance recommits to the broad strategic approach that has enabled the organization to grow and serve our members and mission alike. Going forward, we will continue to focus our energies and resources on four distinct and interrelated areas of activity:

- Capacity Building
- Advocacy
- Collaborative Leadership
- Convening

In all things that we do, we work with and through our network of members and partners. Accordingly, at any given time over the life of this plan, our relative investments in these activities will vary considerably based on the needs of our members and other external factors. But we believe that we must be active in all of them to maximize our chances of achieving our mission.

This set of activities also provides critical guidance on what the Alliance will *not* do. In particular, as a membership organization, the Alliance does not compete with our members in taking direct conservation action. The Alliance does not acquire, hold, steward or monitor easements or lands. While focused on policy advocacy, the Alliance does not participate directly in electoral politics.



“The Alliance should articulate a new vision for land conservation in America; be a leader in what a new era of conservation looks like and define the end game for conservation.” — Land Trust Alliance member

The Alliance **builds the capacity** of land trusts through standards and practices, educational offerings, training curricula, regrants and financial assistance to land trusts, preparation services related to TerraFirma and accreditation and other programs.

The Alliance **advocates for land trusts** at multiple levels by promoting conservation-friendly public policies and programs, defending against challenges (in courts and in the court of public opinion) and promoting the value of land conservation and land trusts to critical audiences nationwide.

The Alliance **provides collaborative leadership** to the land conservation sector by working with the community to identify emerging threats, find practical solutions and set the agenda for private land conservation nationally.

The Alliance **serves as the convener** for the land trust community, not only through our annual *Rally: The National Land Conservation Conference*, but also through land trust networks (online and regionally) and strategically in response to moments of crisis and opportunity.

Priority Initiatives

In its first 35 years, the Alliance has grown into a formidable force for land conservation, measured in the effective programs and services it provides to land trusts; numerous high-impact policy wins for the land trust community; and a talented staff that spans the country and implements an annual operating budget that now exceeds \$16 million. It is an opportune time for the organization to assess its internal systems and processes (many of which have not kept pace with the Alliance’s growth), as well as reflect on what today’s land trust community needs most from the Alliance going forward. Furthermore, given that financial resources are currently very limited, and the organization will likely struggle to raise significantly greater amounts of funding in the near term, it is essential that the Alliance clearly articulate how it will prioritize and phase its initiatives.

To address the challenging external environment for land conservation while fostering renewal internally, the Alliance will launch three broad initiatives, rolling them out in sequence starting in 2018 as resources and circumstances allow. Collectively, we believe that

these three initiatives will help the Alliance complete the transition to a more sustainable, effective business model and improve our ability to serve the land trust community.

This phased approach reflects the pragmatic appreciation of our current operating realities, tackling our challenges in sequence and managing institutional risk through a series of “go/no go” decisions at critical points. The three proposed initiatives, with target completion dates, are as follows:

1. Invest in pressing internal organizational capacity needs: **9–15 months**
2. Develop and implement a strategic, consistent model for prioritizing and delivering member services and programs: **18 months**
3. Design and launch a coalition-based “Relevance Campaign”: **24–36 months**

Initiative 1: Invest in pressing internal organizational capacity needs

Given all the encouragement and resources provided by the Alliance to land trusts to examine, measure and improve organizational health, it is time for us to “walk the talk.” Accordingly, as the first step in transforming the Alliance into a more vital, influential and sustainable institution, we will focus in the near term on a concerted effort to address a backlog of institutional “deferred maintenance” items in terms of systems and capacity. We view these investments as an essential prerequisite to taking on new initiatives and programs.

These immediate capacity needs include the following:

- Upgrading **technology** and implementing a new focus on staff technology training;
- Implementing improved management **systems** around decision-making, delegation of authority, budgeting and resource allocation;
- Nurturing a high-performing organizational **culture** that prioritizes fundraising by all staff and cultivates an allegiance to the whole;
- Building a high-performing **development** program, supported by appropriate technology and fully capable of implementing the organization’s existing fundraising plan (which focuses on increasing philanthropic donations from individuals, foundations and corporations); and
- Ensuring the adoption of best practices in **governance**, including maximizing the effectiveness of advisory boards and entities, such as the Alliance’s Land Trust Leadership Council.

We envision that this initiative will be the top priority of the organization throughout 2018, including fundraising for needed technological upgrades. After that point, we anticipate that the intensity of this capacity-building effort will begin to taper off, although some of these items — culture change and buildout of new technology platforms, for instance — will require the attention and resources of the Alliance for the long haul.

Initiative 2: Develop and implement a strategic, consistent model for prioritizing and delivering member services and programs

The resources mobilized in the recently concluded *Together: A Campaign for the Land* allowed the Alliance to expand its services and programs well beyond its historical reach and breadth. Among other things, campaign funds enabled the Alliance to launch the highly effective and valued Leadership and Excellence programs, which target and serve high-potential land trusts and their leaders, and to offer accreditation preparation services to hundreds of land trusts. Most of these programs were provided either free or at a minimal cost to land trusts. Many also included regrant programs that, to date, have provided almost \$20 million to land trusts.

In short, the Alliance has heavily subsidized its programs for years and has not effectively communicated the true costs of the services it provides to land trusts.

Absent new discretionary funding, it will not be possible for the Alliance to offer the same array of programs and services going forward, at least not at the same scale or at such steeply discounted cost. Raising more unrestricted money would help alleviate this dilemma, and the Alliance is embarking under Initiative 1 on an effort to improve its fundraising infrastructure and capacity to generate funds from individuals, foundations and corporations. But it is unrealistic to think we can address all of our budget priorities through this kind of fundraising. So the Alliance will be looking for greater contributions from its land trust members and affiliates. (Please see “Financial Support from Our Members” below.)

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM OUR MEMBERS

The Alliance will seek to increase financial contributions from its members through three means: First, greater cost recovery for services provided to land trusts (e.g., trainings and conferences). Second, a structured increase in dues that will be phased in from 2018 through 2020. Although substantial, the increase will still leave the Alliance far below the average for national associations, which typically raise 30% of annual operating budgets from member dues, thus necessitating our third strategy: soliciting philanthropic donations from our land trust members that go beyond dues payments.

In short, the Alliance will need to communicate effectively that it and its member land trusts are in this together, and that funds need to move increasingly in both directions between the Alliance and the organizations it serves. We will also need to remain acutely sensitive to the limited financial resources of land trusts — especially small and all-volunteer land trusts — and the cumulative cost of a land trust participating in Alliance offerings, especially for a high-performing land trust (e.g., Terrafirma insurance premiums, accreditation fees and Rally registration fees).

Although promising and long overdue, these efforts will not close the funding gap in the near term. Instead, circumstances compel us to adopt a new, tiered model for prioritizing and delivering programs and services to our members.

First, the Alliance will continue to prioritize a top tier of programs that have long defined our institution and speak to the unique role that we can play in the sector. First and foremost, this includes advocating on behalf of the land trust community for government policies that support land conservation — the Alliance service

that our members rank as the most important (Please see “Policy Advocacy” below.) Other core programs include our standards and practices work; education and training; Rally; community conservation; and conservation defense. To provide services effectively in the field, the Alliance will also maintain a robust regional staff presence. (Please see “Regional Programs” box on page 11.) We will also continue to make available the critical services provided by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission and Terrafirma RRG LLC — two independent entities affiliated with the Alliance that remain absolutely central to our vision for the community.

POLICY ADVOCACY

For decades, the Alliance has worked with land trusts to set federal policy priorities and advance them on Capitol Hill. For many of our members, this is the most important function of the Alliance because it spares individual land trusts from dedicating staff and financial resources to this type of work and because it leverages the collective political strength of the land trust community. This effective coordination has led to significant successes for the community — such as making permanent in 2015 the enhanced federal incentive for conservation easement donations — and it continues to generate outsize returns and resources for land trusts to do their conservation work.

The Alliance's policy agenda is set and advanced through a coordinated effort of our Government Relations, Conservation Defense and Communications departments — an essential, multi-faceted team that allows the Alliance to advocate for land trusts in Congress, the courts and the court of public opinion. Maintaining the effectiveness of this policy operation is critical, as is strengthening our Advocacy Ambassador

program, which is a key method by which we capitalize on the power of our network of 1,000 land trusts.

Advocacy Ambassadors are staff and board members of land trusts that seek to play a role in advancing the land trust community's policy agenda. They participate in advocacy training and commit to contacting members of Congress with timely messages in support of the Alliance's legislative agenda. Alliance staff constantly liaise with Advocacy Ambassadors and, each spring, the Alliance hosts Advocacy Days to welcome hundreds of Advocacy Ambassadors to Washington, D.C., for Hill visits and additional advocacy training.

The Alliance is committed to expanding this critical program by making a targeted effort to identify, educate and train new Ambassadors in key parts of the country, including the Southeast and the Pacific Northwest. Over the life of this strategic plan, we also intend to increase the number of Advocacy Ambassadors by approximately 50% to 300 nationwide.

“The Alliance needs to take care of itself first; it needs to get stronger so it can better serve us.” – Land Trust Alliance member

REGIONAL PROGRAMS

Regional program staff, dispersed throughout the country, serve as the eyes, ears and face of the Alliance, working on the ground with land trusts, partners and funders on a daily basis. In some instances, regional staff are the first and only people land trusts encounter from the Alliance. They serve as an instrumental conduit through which the Alliance delivers its educational and training content, communications and government relations priorities, and a comprehensive array of capacity-building services to help land trusts grow and achieve high standards. Moreover, for signature programs, such as accreditation and Terrafirma, national and regional services staff have invested a considerable level of effort and time to ensure land trust participation. Without this close touch and direct service delivery, these programs would not be as successful as they are today.

The overarching goal of the Alliance's regional programs is to strengthen land trusts individually and collectively through a suite of capacity-building services to help them become enduring, professional and highly-valued institutions. Regional staff also help to identify, track and help solve problems and threats that arise within the community, such as tax shelters and the prospect of easements becoming “orphaned.” The resulting feedback loop helps the Alliance be more responsive and proactive across our programs. Moreover, the deep relationships that regional staff form with land trusts, state associations and funders are critical to building trust and support and help the Alliance access donors and other critical partners. For all of these reasons, the Alliance is committed to maintaining strong regional programs.

Next, the Alliance has identified a second tier of programs that will claim priority on any new unallocated resources that become available. At the top of the list are our Leadership and Excellence programs (Please see “High-Performing Land Trusts” box on page 12.)

Also included in this second tier will be new programs designed to address emerging threats to the community. (Please see “Emerging Threats to Land Trusts” box on page 12.)

HIGH-PERFORMING LAND TRUSTS

The Alliance regularly identifies land trusts that demonstrate, through staff and/or board leadership, their commitment and ability to transform into high-performing organizations with expanded conservation impact that can be sustained. These land trusts embody the ideals represented in *Land Trust Standards and Practices* and, in almost all instances, they are accredited or pursuing accreditation and aspire to become high-performing land trusts. Through its Leadership and Excellence programs, the Alliance offers these high-potential land trusts capacity-building grants and training in leadership skills, communications, financial management and fundraising. The Alliance also helps these land trusts explore strategies to increase their ability to engage in effective policy advocacy, community conservation, strategic communications, climate change adaptation and mitigation and landscape-scale conservation.

The Alliance remains firmly committed to serving this segment of the land trust community and will continue to offer its Leadership and Excellence programs, albeit on a smaller scale in the near term until we can obtain additional financial resources. Specifically, the Leadership Program will maintain the same cohort size of participants, but will shift toward a partial fee-for-service model. The Excellence Program will continue in states in which funders have already committed funding for the program (e.g., Oregon, Washington, Idaho and New York), and the Alliance will expand the program into new states when funding is made available. Contingent on funding, we aspire to return to a nationwide Excellence Program in a few years.

EMERGING THREATS TO LAND TRUSTS

Although sustainability and relevance remain the most serious challenges facing the land trust community, overall our sector must also contend with an array of emerging threats that require thoughtful, effective responses. The Alliance can play a critical role in helping land trusts across the country address many of these threats, particularly through the Alliance's Conservation Defense Program and by helping land trusts prepare for and then enroll in TerraFirma insurance coverage.

With many land trusts operating on the edge of viability, the Alliance can also play an important role in promoting greater alignment and cooperation among land trusts, leading to a decrease in land trust failures, higher rates of success in conservation defense cases and the avoidance of "orphaned" easements. The Alliance can provide assistance in such areas as the exploration and facilitation of land trust mergers

and consolidations, as well as the creation of shared services models in which large organizations assist smaller land trusts in their service territories.

Finally, we note that many land trusts are seeking tools, resources and training to help them incorporate climate change adaptation and mitigation practices. They are also asking for help in addressing one of the principal ways that the nation will ultimately address the climate challenge: the buildout of large-scale renewable energy facilities, which, like fossil fuel infrastructure, represents a profound and growing threat to intact landscapes. In short, land trusts want to be smart about the changing climate as they continue to acquire interests in land, and they want to promote solutions that are consistent with their focus on maintaining high-value, functional landscapes. The Alliance's Land and Climate Program empowers them to do both.

“There should be a national communications campaign that raises all boats. We need to tell stories of how people connect to land. And the campaign should be one that local land trusts can tap in to.” — Land Trust Alliance member

Finally, while the programs in the two tiers described above will be the fundraising priority of the Alliance, we acknowledge that they do not satisfy all needs of land trusts (e.g., assistance in helping land trusts manage threats from *all kinds* of energy development, including linear fossil fuel infrastructure, such as pipelines). Likewise, we recognize the important, unique role that the Alliance can serve as a conduit to channel financial resources to land trusts on behalf of large funders. As such, we will continue to be open to operating additional programs than those described above but, going forward, we will seek in each instance to obtain the support of a single, large funder that can make a firm commitment to the program, including sufficient overhead recovery for the Alliance and manageable match requirements. The Alliance will exercise management discipline in applying this screen to proposed new programs to avoid distractions and the diversion of resources needed to raise the funds necessary to fund the programs in tiers one and two, as well as the needed technology upgrades described above in Initiative 1 and the Relevance Campaign described below as Initiative 3.

Initiative 3: Design and launch a coalition-based “Relevance Campaign”

To counter the long-term threat of public apathy and disinterest in land conservation, the Alliance will design, launch and lead a public engagement campaign to elevate the importance of land conservation as a priority in every community. We believe that we must strive to reach Americans from all places and walks of life — not just the rural and exurban areas that have been our historic focus, but urban communities as well.

Framed explicitly as a “call to action” campaign rather than a public awareness campaign, the impact for the Alliance would be measured in such terms as voter support for land conservation in state and local bond initiatives; new donors and corporate partners at the local, state and national level; increased access and engagement in land and land conservation, writ large, by non-traditional audiences; and new partnerships at national and community levels with other institutions and groups that share our common interest in the land. The ultimate measure of success would be that land and water conservation becomes a top-20 issue of public concern, with a commensurate investment of national resources.

The Alliance is the best — and perhaps only — national organization positioned to take on this type of initiative. First, true to our mission and practice to date, we alone can build a campaign focused on the *issue* of land conservation rather than on enhancing our own brand. Second, we can speak with authority about land conservation and its myriad benefits. Third, we can tap into relationships and networks maintained by our 1,000 land trust members across the country. Feeling at the local level many of the same pressures that the Alliance perceives nationally, many of our members have expressed a strong desire to participate in such a frame-shifting campaign.

Even so, the Alliance and our members are much too small and have insufficient brand awareness to orchestrate such a campaign by ourselves. Instead, the Alliance proposes to organize, finance and lead a *coalition-based* campaign along the lines of “Stand Up to Cancer.” Under this approach, the Alliance would reach out to the broadest array of partners who can get behind an agenda based on the benefits that land provides: recreation, clean and abundant water, healthy and sustainable food, children’s health and well-being, livable cities, thriving rural communities, abundant wildlife habitat, etc. In short, this campaign would expand the tent well beyond land trusts and conservation groups to

partner with such organizations as community garden clubs, watershed groups, chambers of commerce, Feeding America, American Planning Association, 4-H clubs, YMCA/YWCAs, etc. — all organizations that could be brought under a common umbrella of land and can help articulate the myriad ways that land is the answer to so many things that challenge our society. In turn, we believe that this coalition approach gives us by far the best chance of mobilizing resources at a heroic scale to fund an effective campaign. Eventually we expect that 100% of the costs of the campaign could be covered through corporate sponsorships.

The design and planning of this campaign will start in 2018 but at an exploratory level, ramping up only after the other two initiatives in this plan are well underway. The public components of such a campaign would probably not launch until 24–36 months after the adoption of this plan. We will need the time for further market research to test our hypotheses about the campaign, to reach out to potential partners and donors to gauge their interest and to add skills internally to support the campaign. Mindful of the high potential costs and risks of this initiative, the Alliance’s board will closely monitor progress on the campaign, especially before any major new commitment of resources.

Appendix A: Desired Outcomes and Performance Indicators

Goal 1: Elevate land conservation as a priority nationwide · *RELEVANCE*

- Higher ranking of conservation among national issues by American voters
- Reflection of this ranking in actual voting patterns from local to national
- Increased total level of philanthropic and public funding for land conservation
- New, major corporate support and engagement around land conservation and the Relevance Campaign
- Size and diversity of members of a Relevance Campaign, including representation of different geographies, landscapes and urban/rural locales
- Engagement of new, non-traditional communities in land conservation, including in urban areas
- Alliance and land trust boards and staff increasingly reflect the diversity in each of their communities
- Increased number of volunteers/participants/donors in the movement (and strong diversity among them, including representation of different geographies, landscapes and urban/rural locales)

Goal 2: Increase the rate of land conservation · *RATE*

- Expanded funding for land conservation and stewardship from state and local ballot initiatives
- Expanded funding for land conservation and stewardship from federal programs (including the Farm Bill, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, etc.)
- Expanded opportunities for land conservation and stewardship through funding from ecosystem service markets (water, carbon, etc.)
- Successful defense of the federal tax incentive for conservation easement donations, including improvements in IRS treatment of donors
- Increase in number of land trusts that participate in advocacy activities
- Growth in conserved acres under conservation easement/fee ownership, including in urban areas (even if relatively small acreage)

Goal 3: Build healthy, high-performing land trusts · *RIGOR*

- Numerical target met for accredited land trusts (e.g., 470)
- Increased percentage of land trusts that participate in Alliance training programs (especially Excellence and Leadership programs)
- Increase in number of small land trusts that are considered high-performing, particularly as reflected in community conservation and policy advocacy efforts
- Increase in the number of large land trusts that are considered high-performing, particularly as reflected in policy advocacy, community conservation, strategic communications, climate change mitigation/adaptation and landscape-scale conservation
- Increase in annual easement monitoring/stewardship by land trusts
- Increase in number of land trusts with strategic conservation plans
- Increase in number of land trusts with adequate baseline documentation for all easements
- Financial sustainability of land trusts, including adequate reserves and unrestricted income
- Growth in staff and staff retention across the land trust community
- Increase in number of land trusts with strong boards and governance structures

Goal 4: Defend the land trust community from threats · *RESILIENCE*

- Increase in number and in percentage of land trusts enrolled in Terrafirma
- Increase in land trusts' capacity and expertise to address threats, such as energy infrastructure siting, climate impacts and conventional sprawl
- 100% success rate in conservation defense cases (i.e., permanence of conservation is achieved)
- Increase in mergers/consolidation of land trusts and shared services models, where warranted, including large land trusts assisting smaller land trusts in their service territories
- Numerical target met for land trusts that have received Terrafirma preparation services
- Decrease in number of land trust failures
- Avoidance of orphaned easements