

NORTH COAST LAND CONSERVANCY

STRATEGIC PLAN 2006-2008 - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The North Coast Land Conservancy

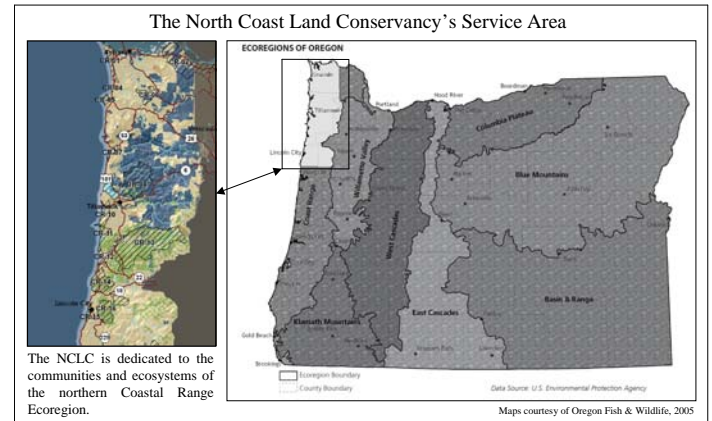
A bear snatches a salmon from the stream, children explore tide pools teeming with life, whales swim just off the coast, and wildflowers bloom on the open prairie. The north Oregon coast's lush forest, coastal prairies, sandy shores, and rocky ocean outcrops support a diversity of life and enrich the lives of the people that live here.

The North Coast Land Conservancy has worked since 1986 as a land trust with citizens, agencies, and municipalities to preserve some of the north Oregon coast's most precious places. The Conservancy furthers its mission through land acquisition, conservation easements, partnerships, and community outreach. Our properties range in size from .5 acres to 364 acres, but all hold important natural resource values including wildlife habitat, water absorption, and migration corridors. Conservation is accomplished with willing private landowners, as well as with cities and counties. Partnership and outreach programs help develop community coalitions to assist in planning, evaluation, and funding for acquisition and stewardship actions. Partners include students, watershed councils, urban forestry advocates, sportsmen groups, private natural science consultants, and other conservation organizations at state and federal levels. Impacted lands are slated for habitat restoration; pristine lands are conserved. Symposia on aspects of local natural history are provided each year, as are interpretive hikes. Conservation initiatives presently focus on the 1) Tillamook Head ecosystem; 2) The Coastal

Edge; 3) Clatsop coastal prairies; 4) a National Scenic Byway Inventory; and 5) Columbia Quite Waters wetlands.

Conserving the Coast

The Trust presently manages four conservation easements on 349 acres and holds title to 24 properties encompassing 680 acres in Clatsop, Lincoln, and Tillamook Counties. Our service area covers the northern half of what is considered the *Coast Range Ecoregion*, and extends three miles into the Pacific Ocean to incorporate the Oregon Coast's near shore marine habitat. The selected area of focus contains an extremely diverse range of habitats, from coastal prairie to temperate rainforest and from estuaries to headwater streams. Each of these habitats hosts a unique assortment of species. NCLC is dedicated to conserving the diversity of habitats that exist in the northern Coast Range Ecoregion, and maintaining the connectivity between them.



Connecting with Communities

NCLC works with communities that harbor ecologically important coastal habitats. These towns are often launch pads for tourists exploring the region's rich environment. Conserving these communities' natural resources is important for both their economy and quality of life.

"Oregonians desire vibrant coastal communities, healthy and resilient marine ecosystems, sustainable fisheries, clean and safe shorelines, and enjoyable and inspirational recreational opportunities"

-Governor Ted Kulongoski

Planning for the Future

NCLC has grown considerably in the past 20 years, becoming a leader in conservation work in the region. In order to ensure continued high performance in the future, the organization needs to plan strategically. NCLC's "Strategic Plan" was created by the organization's board and staff, with the assistance of Marc Smiley, one of the nation's top land trust consultants. The Strategic Plan consolidates our policies and work plans to increase productivity, goal sequencing and completion, fund-raising, board development, and staff hiring. The NCLC's Strategic Plan for 2006-2008 is summarized here.

Mission Statement

To serve as a resource to Northwest Oregon coastal communities and landowners to conserve and protect land in perpetuity for its ecological, passive recreational and cultural values.

Goals & Strategies for 2006-2008

Goal 1: Private landowners and other appropriate agencies work together to conserve in perpetuity the most important community and natural lands

Strategy 1: Identify and prioritize the most critical land areas for protection

Strategy 2: Link the Necanicum Estuary and its watershed to the marine environment

Strategy 3: Acquire and steward land to support the Neawanna Natural History Park and Coastal Natural History Center

Strategy 4: Provide critical support to partners involved in the Neacoxie Coast Prairie protection

Strategy 5: Facilitate a broad coalition to protect the community values shared along the Highway 101 “All American Road”

Strategy 6: Protect other non-priority lands on a case-by-case basis

Strategy 7: Steward the conservation values of lands protected

Goal 2: The community embraces private land conservation as a tool to protect important community values

Strategy 1: Target education and outreach efforts to landowners and landowner advisors

Strategy 2: Provide opportunities for other educational programs to utilize privately protected land in educational programs

Strategy 3: Participate in public outreach efforts to build support for private land conservation

Goal 3: The Trust has the organizational structure to permanently protect and manage lands

Strategy 1: Create a strong and diverse board of directors to govern and support the Trust

Strategy 2: Develop the professional staffing to guide management of the Trust

Strategy 3: Develop alliances that enhance its capacity, effectiveness, and community support

Strategy 4: Complete LTA Accreditation Program

Strategy 5: Maintain strong systems to manage information and decisions

Strategy 6: Ensure NCLC has the facilities and equipment to work effectively

Strategy 7: Develop plans and structures to respond to the changing needs of the organization

Goal 4: The Trust has a stable and growing base of financial support

Strategy 1: Build an annual giving program as a base of fundraising

Strategy 2: Seek grants to support programs and special initiatives

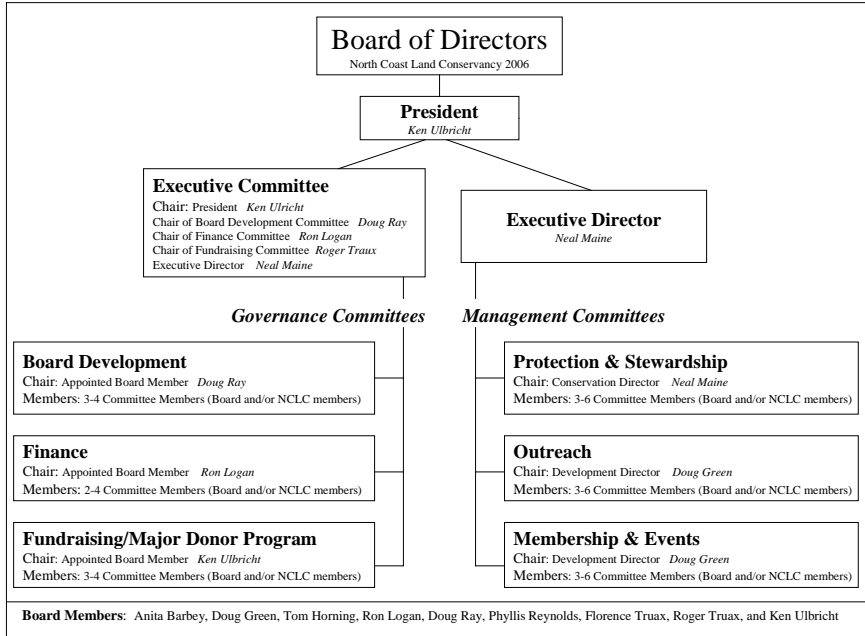
Strategy 3: Build an endowment to support conservation, stewardship, and operations.



Organizational Structure of NCLC

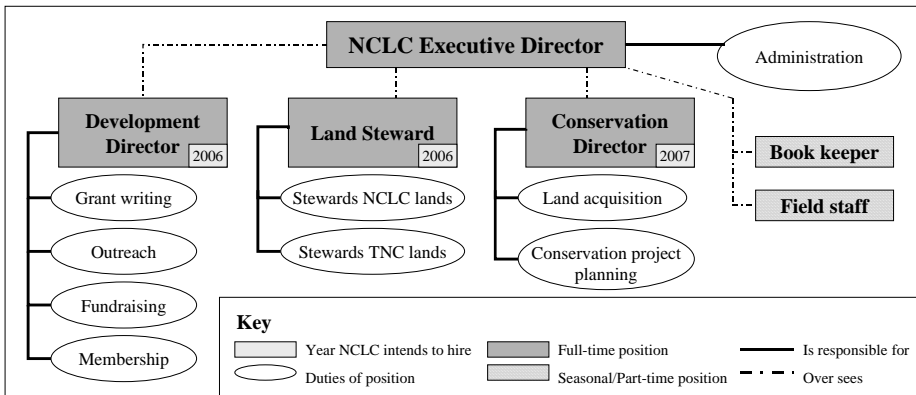
Board of Directors

The Board of Directors has ten members and six committees. The committees are: Board Development, Protection & Stewardship, Finance, Outreach, Fundraising/Major Donor Program, and Membership & Events. The Board holds monthly meetings and an annual retreat planning session.



Staff

The Conservancy is in a transitional time as it evolves from a local land trust to a regional one. The number and size of our projects are growing, as is our need for additional staff. The Strategic Plan includes the hiring of a part-time bookkeeper, a development director, and a land steward (shared for three years between The Nature Conservancy and NCLC), and a conservation director.



3-year Budget

Budget figures for the first year of our three-year plan have been defined in great detail. Future budgets are estimates of program growth based on NCLC's Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan includes hiring additional staff in 2006 and 2007. Raising funds for the new positions, especially in the first year, will be difficult. However, the additional staff will allow NCLC to accomplish more conservation work, and a Fundraising Strategy is currently being created.

NORTH COAST LAND CONSERVANCY, INC. FUNCTIONAL BUDGET 2005-2008

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Income			
Individual donors	17,000	19,000	24,000
Major donors	40,000	56,000	83,000
Grants	120,000	147,000	120,000
Investment Income	2,000	2,000	2,000
Conservation Services	3,000	5,000	7,000
Property Rental	2,000	2,000	2,000
Total Income	184,000	231,000	238,000
Expenses			
Administration	65,350	88,200	93,150
Conservation	23,650	37,975	39,400
Education/Outreach	15,700	21,850	19,300
Fundraising	38,600	40,400	41,800
Stewardship	40,700	42,575	44,350
Total Expenses	184,000	231,000	238,000

Stewardship

NCLC has 29 properties and conservation easements, totaling over 1,000 acres in protected lands. We are responsible for the stewardship of these lands and are dedicated to conserving them into perpetuity. All of our lands are inventoried and the information is catalogued digitally. NCLC's management framework for stewarding these properties is described in the Strategic Planning Report.



NCLC’s “ecosystem approach” to conservation requires an understanding of the region’s entire landscape. We cannot simply conserve small patches of pristine habitat, but must think about how to increase the overall livability of the landscape for native species. This means strategically networking natural lands to maintain ecosystem functions, ensure that habitat range requirements of species are met, and provide connectivity across the landscape to allow for continued gene flow. The Trust has selected five primary initiatives for 2006-08 that target critical components of the region’s landscape, including temperate rainforest, estuary, watershed, coastal prairie, and wetlands.



Conserving the Ocean-Estuary-Watershed Connection

The purpose of this initiative is to protect the ecological connection between the ocean and watershed provided by an estuary. NCLC has worked to conserve as much of the marsh and forest in the Necanicum estuary and watershed as possible because of the key role it plays in the larger ecosystem. This initiative also has a public outreach component, which features the Neawanna Natural History Park and the Coastal Natural History Center.

The Neawanna Natural History Park is envisioned as a large functioning river/estuary system. The park would be both a recreational place to visit and an educational tool for better understanding watershed functions.

The Coastal Natural History Center would address the cultural component of the region’s natural history, examining the long-term interactions between humans and their environment. NCLC has been testing the potential for such a museum by opening and running the Gateway to Discovery Center on Highway 101 in Seaside.

Natural and Cultural Land Resource Inventory Associated with the National Scenic Byway

NCLC had a leadership role in putting together the National Scenic Byway Acquisition grant with the City of Seaside. The Trust has also received and purchased critical natural resource lands along Highway 101. These lands protect valuable natural resources and conserve open space and views along one of the country’s 20 “All American Roads”. In the near future NCLC intends to do an inventory of lands associated with the byway to determine the ecological value and work towards conserving those of high importance.

Columbia Quiet Waters Biodiversity Project

This project would focus on the watershed and wetlands of the Skipanon, Youngs River, and Lewis & Clark River and would involve partnering with other groups to build a coalition of stakeholders that would take a proactive and long-term approach to wetland and watershed functions. The Wetland Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy, Columbia Land Trust, Coastal Watershed Council, and NCLC are coming together to complete the inventory and preliminary planning for conservation easements and acquisition of valuable natural resource lands.

Tillamook Head Ecosystem Coalition Project

Tillamook Head has stood as a landscape marker for centuries and continues today to be an icon of the north Oregon Coast. The geography of this large basaltic dike is such that it touches three major ecosystem types: ocean/inter-tidal, upland temperate rainforest, and coastal river valley. Tillamook Head’s importance is amplified by the fact that over 3,000 acres of this landscape has been protected. NCLC has an opportunity to provide the needed leadership to acquire the Circle Creek property (100 acres). If a conservation acquisition is to be made for Circle Creek, partnerships need to be formed to address the biodiversity and ecology of the entire Tillamook Head ecosystem. The size of this natural area allows it to support species with large habitat range needs, such as bears, elk, and cougars. Reserves patched together using conservation easements and multiple protected areas can be quite successful – the sum total being worth more than the individual parts.

Coastal Prairie: Restoring a Landscape

William Clark described this coastal prairie in 1805 as an “open wavering sandy prairie” (Clark’s journals in Thwaites (Ed.) 1904-1905). The Trust has been involved in conserving this unique habitat type for the past decade. We have acquired land, conducted a series of butterfly surveys, done four years of research on potential restoration options, and are now working with stakeholders through a U.S. Fish and Wildlife grant to link up parcels of land and create a Coastal Prairie Habitat Reserve. This reserve provides an important link in the region’s natural landscape: connecting wetlands, open-water, treed shelterbelts, and habitats associated with Neacoxie Lake. Together, these natural lands serve as a corridor for migrating birds and other species.

