



Strategic Plan 2015-2018

Mission Statement

We protect and sustain forests, streams, wildlife, and communities in the heart of the Cascades through conservation, education, and advocacy.

Vision

Our vision is one of a forest where wild places remain to capture our imaginations and allow native wildlife to thrive. Pristine mountain streams rush through this healthy forest, supporting people and native fish populations. The heart of this place, the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, is biologically diverse and resilient in the face of climate change; its resources are sustainable, supporting local communities and recreation. We are stewards of this landscape, working to safeguard the beauty and wonders of Washington's South Cascades for our children and future generations.

Values and Guiding Principles

- We value thriving biological diversity, which supports the high quality of life in the Pacific Northwest. It is embodied by abundant native fish and wildlife populations, fully functioning forest ecosystems, clean water, and inspiring outdoor experiences.
- We support applying the best available science to managing forests and watersheds. We work toward a forest ecosystem that is sustainable and resilient to the effects of climate change.
- We believe in connecting people to nature by engaging them in conservation science and policymaking, and introducing them to the unique and beautiful places of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest.
- Collaboration with local community members, government, and others is our preferred approach to addressing conservation issues.

- We have a responsibility to use the financial resources entrusted to us efficiently and carefully as we work to protect our natural resources.

Long-Term Organizational Goals

The Cascade Forest Conservancy has established the following five long-term goals to help us accomplish our mission:

- I. The forest ecosystem is healthy, diverse, and resilient to the effects of climate change.
- II. Streams and watersheds are clean and functioning, with thriving populations of wild salmon, steelhead, and bull trout.
- III. Viable populations of wildlife and native plant species are maintained in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, contributing to high levels of biodiversity.
- IV. The general public is more connected to nature and participates to conserve and sustain Washington's South Cascades.
- V. The Cascade Forest Conservancy is a strong, effective, and diverse organization that can successfully achieve its goals.

LONG-TERM GOAL I: The forest ecosystem is healthy, diverse, and resilient to the effects of climate change.

Three-Year Strategy A: Research, monitor, and respond to changes in the forests, waterways, and wildlife of Washington's South Cascades.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. Compile a repository of current science and monitoring in Washington's southern Cascade forest ecosystem.
2. Monitor, assess, and respond to changes in vegetation, pests, fire threats, and other measurable climate change information in susceptible areas of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest.
3. Encourage responsible strategies to help the Gifford Pinchot National Forest and its wildlife and resources adapt to climate change.

Three-Year Strategy B: Promote forest practices that retain existing old growth, promote biodiversity, and encourage fire resilience.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. Promote policies and projects that retain old growth and outline appropriate goals for diverse canopies and age classes in wet and dry forests.
2. Allow for restoration thinning in plantation stands of younger, densely planted trees that are generally all of the same size, spacing, and species to create increased diversity.
3. Support the development of scientifically supported restoration plans and fire policy for the dry, eastside forest.

Three-Year Strategy C: Protect alpine meadows, habitat refugia, and wildlife corridors for a diverse array of plant and animal species.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. Impacts to fragile ecosystems, including alpine meadows and riparian areas, are substantially reduced.
2. Identify, map, and investigate politically viable opportunities to protect sufficient habitat, refugia, wildlife corridors, and outstanding rivers permanently.

Three-Year Strategy D: Support climate mitigation strategies that reduce carbon emissions and increase carbon storage of the forest ecosystem.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. The Gifford Pinchot National Forest remains among the top four forests in the Lower 48 for carbon storage and develops an accurate carbon report card annually.
2. Review biomass utilization proposals (i.e. bioenergy) for their overall impact on carbon retention in the forest.
3. Encourage policies that maximize landscape carbon storage and promote monetization measures of carbon storage from standing trees.
4. Promote practices that minimize Conservancy carbon emissions.

LONG-TERM GOAL II: Streams and watersheds are clean and functioning, with thriving populations of wild salmon, steelhead, and bull trout.

Three-Year Strategy A: Prevent damaging mining proposals and practices.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. The Green River valley mining proposal from Ascot Resources is defeated.
2. Suction-dredge mining is prohibited in salmon, steelhead, and bull trout habitat in Washington.
3. The Conservancy develops a timetable and strategy to pursue permanent protections for sensitive streams and watersheds threatened by mining in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest.

Three-Year Strategy B: Damage to streams and watersheds from Gifford Pinchot National Forest roads and off road vehicles is significantly reduced.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. At least 10 miles of priority roads are surveyed by the Conservancy each year.
2. The most damaging roads in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest are identified to be repaired, closed, or decommissioned.
3. Legacy Roads and Trails Program funding is increased overall by 2018 and an increased portion of Region 6 funding is directed to the Gifford Pinchot National Forest to restore roads.
4. Damage from off-road vehicles is identified and significantly reduced in forest management project areas, and in roadless and wilderness areas.

Three-Year Strategy C: Outstanding, free-flowing rivers in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest are permanently protected from threats.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. No new hydropower or dam projects are permitted.
2. A bill that designates at least one of the proposed Wild and Scenic Rivers in Gifford Pinchot National Forest is introduced in Congress.
3. A responsible plan for managing the Upper White Salmon Wild and Scenic River is adopted.

Three-Year Strategy D: Forest management practices protect and promote watershed health.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. The Conservancy reviews, surveys, and influences forest management proposals independently and in partnership with the Forest Service and collaborative groups.

2. Ancient forests are protected and Northwest Forest Plan protections are maintained, including goals for Late Successional Reserves and Riparian Reserves.
3. The Conservancy has compiled a repository of science on these issues.

LONG-TERM GOAL III: Viable populations of wildlife and native plant species are maintained in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, contributing to high levels of biodiversity.

Three-Year Strategy A: Key wildlife species have large areas of improved habitat and reduced threats.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. Support efforts to recover the gray wolf across its former range in southwest Washington, including the environmental and public support necessary to establish at least one pack in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest.
2. Fishers have been reintroduced and are successfully breeding.
3. Northern spotted owl populations are monitored and important habitat areas are protected.
4. The Conservancy has identified, mapped, and publicized opportunities to protect roadless areas and key wildlife corridors as Wilderness or other designations, and discussed these efforts with decision makers.
5. Annually, at least 6 wildlife cameras monitor habitat use and species assemblages in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest.
6. Wild places remain that can capture the imagination of bigfoot enthusiasts (-:

Three-Year Strategy B: Biodiversity is preserved and enhanced.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. The Endangered Species Act is defended and enforced.
2. Appropriate invasive species removal is implemented in the forest using an integrated pest management approach that promotes environmentally-sensitive control measures, especially in riparian areas.
3. The Conservancy leads field surveys each year to map and pull invasive species.
4. Support appropriate efforts to preserve and restore rare, sensitive, and endemic species.

5. Appropriate management and collection practices are followed regarding huckleberries and other wild gathered species.

LONG-TERM GOAL IV: The general public is more connected to nature and participates to conserve and sustain Washington's South Cascades.

Three-Year Strategy A: Reduce nature deficit disorder among local youth and engage people by involving them in citizen science.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. Safe and effective trips and field surveys are organized and advertised annually through the Gifford Pinchot Stewards program.
2. Field trips related to key conservation issues are organized for decision makers.
3. Young Friends of the Forest expands to new schools in Portland, Vancouver, and other areas near Gifford Pinchot National Forest, with over 75 children reached in 2015, 100 in 2016, and 125 in 2017.
4. Our efforts to get youth and adults outside in nature are well-publicized.
5. Volunteers actively participate in Gifford Pinchot Stewards surveys and field trips, with a 25 percent increase in participation each year.

Three-Year Strategy B: Build public awareness of conservation issues in Washington's South Cascades and engage local communities in our campaigns.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. Membership outreach is increased by providing each member with 3-4 annual connections including event invites, branded materials, etc.
2. Increase email action alert list each year.
3. The Cascade Forest Conservancy website is redesigned with a new platform, messaging, and branding.
4. Cascade Forest Conservancy hosts an annual banquet and auction, regular community happy hours, and at least 4 tabling events each year to recruit new members and engage the public.
5. Develop a suite of quality, cost-effective printed outreach materials that engage and inform the public and decision makers.

6. Information is available online about unique places and natural areas to learn about and visit.
7. Stories, experiences, photos, and videos of the places we protect are posted regularly on Cascade Forest Conservancy's website and social media outlets, along with ways to take action and volunteer on key issues.

LONG-TERM GOAL V: The Cascade Forest Conservancy is a strong, effective, and diverse organization that can successfully achieve its goals.

Three-Year Strategy A: The Conservancy has strong organizational structures, policies and procedures in place.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. The Strategic Plan is reviewed annually with board and staff and updated, if necessary.
2. Staff develop active work plans and timelines annually.
3. An annual report is developed early each year.
4. A financial audit is performed every odd-numbered year.
5. Effective bylaws, staff handbook, and financial policies and procedures are practiced and kept up-to-date.
6. The Conservancy has a reliable and effective database, website, and network of computers.

Three-Year Strategy B: The Conservancy has sufficient funds to achieve mission and goals.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. Expand foundation giving annually.
2. The Conservancy maintains a team of at least 3-4 effective canvassers fundraising door-to-door.
3. Average monthly giving is maintained at current levels.
4. A major donor program is developed.
5. Implement a business partners program.
6. Hold a successful banquet and auction each year.
7. At least two to three house parties are organized each year to raise income and increase our membership.

Three-Year Strategy C: Cascade Forest Conservancy has a work environment and benefits that attract and retain amazing staff.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. Offer competitive salaries according to TREC's analysis.
2. Offer competitive health benefits.
3. Establish voluntary retirement accounts with a matching percentage.
4. Find office locations best suited for the Cascade Forest Conservancy and its staff and volunteers.
5. Hold an annual campout and regular get-togethers for staff and board members.

Three-Year Strategy D: Cascade Forest Conservancy has an effective and diverse board of directors that provides leadership and fundraising.

Three-Year Benchmarks:

1. A board recruitment subcommittee works to increase board membership to a maximum of 12 members that are diverse and represent skill sets such as major donor development, connections to decision makers, legal and communication skills, and financial expertise.
2. The board chair works with the board to establish annual board fundraising goals.
3. The board conducts an annual review of the executive director as well as board effectiveness.