

Manada Conservancy Strategic Plan

2017-2021

MISSION:

“Manada Conservancy is a land trust dedicated to preserving the natural, historic, agricultural and scenic resources of Dauphin County through land conservation, environmental education and community engagement.”

VISION:

“Manada Conservancy envisions a community in which preserved land is abundant and conservation is widely practiced for the benefit of all.”

CORE VALUES:

The staff and Board of the Manada Conservancy are committed to:

1. Acting ethically, with honesty and integrity, in all of our work.
2. Using the best available scientific information to make informed decisions and guide our actions.
3. Providing high quality community engagement opportunities and environmental education forums that support our preservation mission.
4. Upholding our responsibility as land stewards in perpetuity by providing consistent oversight, monitoring, and management.
5. Recognizing that the strength of our Conservancy reflects not only the expertise, intentions and actions of its Board and Staff, but also the respectful and thoughtful manner with which we engage with the community.
6. Valuing our donors, members, employees, and volunteers for their knowledge, commitment and diversity.
7. Being open to fresh ideas and to new opportunities.
8. Encouraging collaboration and partnerships based on mutual benefit and trust.
9. Using our resources responsibly to ensure the sustainability of our mission driven work.
10. Demonstrating the care, attention, love, and respect for our preserved properties that was shown by their original donors.

I. PRESERVATION:

Preservation Overarching Goal: *To continue to progress toward the creation of a network of connected wild lands, riparian buffers, and viable farmland that is permanently preserved, in order that migration and movement corridors are supported, and local farmland is sustained. Special emphasis is given to the Swatara Greenway and the Kittatinny Ridge.*

Goal A: Continue to preserve the natural, historic, agricultural, and scenic resources of Dauphin County.

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Identify new projects by being responsive as well as being proactive as resources allow	2017-2021
A	2.	Use available funding for specific proactive work, so long as it is mission-consistent and of appropriate priority.	2017-2021
A	3.	Use Resource Estimate Summary, Selection Criteria, Strategic Conservation Plan, and evaluation of current preservation activities for Board to determine project selection and timing.	2017-2021
A	4.	For non-acquisition projects (such as restoration), maintain mission focus and evaluate projected resource use	2017-2021

Goal B: Continue to pursue the conservation of the Swatara Creek Corridor as a signature focus of Manada Conservancy (see Greenway Strategic Plan for additional detail)

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A/B	1.	Initiate or participate in restoration projects along the corridor.	2017-2021
A	2.	Seek participation in our Swatara Stewardship Program, both with municipalities and private or corporate landowners.	2017-2021
A	3.	Continue to attempt to acquire easements and land along the Swatara Creek in Dauphin County.	2017-2021
A/B	4.	Continue to pursue partnerships which will help to facilitate protection, awareness and stewardship of Swatara Creek Greenway lands.	2017-2021

Goal C: Continue to pursue the conservation of the Kittatinny Corridor in Dauphin County as a high priority

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Maintain our current partnerships for collaboration and grant participation in landowner outreach and acquisition of Kittatinny Corridor lands.	2017-2021
A	2.	Partner with Education and Outreach committees to fulfill TNC grant required Kittatinny Ridge landowner outreach meetings.	Complete by June 2018
A	3.	Help to publicize Scientific and Economic justification for preservation of the Corridor, such as the Dauphin Co. Return on Environment Study, Climate Resiliency studies, and Natural History Science in the Appalachians.	2017-2021

Goal D: Provide appropriate management of owned properties, and proper monitoring of conservation easements and fee-owned properties

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Develop, at minimum, bare-bones management plans for all owned properties. Schedule maintenance may be included for efficiency.	2017-2018
A	2.	Identify a steward for each owned property.	2017-2018
A	3.	Identify and operationalize specific tasks appropriate for hired assistance, volunteers, corporate work-groups and/or “Friends” groups to maintain properties.	2017-2018
A	4.	Provide a primary staff supervisor for all property stewardship.	2017

Goal E: Provide improved balance of support for our Preservation mission and acquisition work at all levels: Staff, Board, volunteer

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Increase staff support for preservation to 40 hours	2017
A	2.	Include involvement in Executive Director job description to allow informed oversight and coordination with other organizational activities.	2017-2021
A	3.	Ensure that that Board-Staff communication about preservation projects remains strong, and that the Board remains fully accountable for our preservation work.	2017-2021

	4.	Increase volunteer (including Board) support for Preservation Committee, recommendations, monitoring, property evaluations, and other relevant preservation work	2017-2021
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Goal F: Continue to update and review our Strategic Conservation Plan (SCP), refining the three components—Selection Criteria, Resource Estimate and Priority Mapping—to guide our prioritization of projects and outreach for projects.

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A-	1.	Complete Natural Resource Inventory mapping and report as basis for ability to rank parcels.	2017-2018
A-	2.	After Organizational Strategic Plan is complete, methodically go through steps to update Strategic Conservation Plan, and engage Board participation until complete.	2017-2021

Goal G: Improve the transaction and monitoring process to comply with Land Trust Alliance (LTA) Standards and Practices

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A-	1.	Amend easements that would benefit from using the new CE model or are in need of other changes	2018
A	2.	Review and update records policy	
A	3.	Keep Preservation account policies up to date and in keeping with LTA S&P.	2017-2021

Goal H: Help to assure appropriate funding for preservation work

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Provide Budget Committee with anticipated budgetary needs so they can be included in the development of the annual budget.	2016-2021
A	2.	Attempt to cover staff time and other acquisition expenses through grants and partnerships where possible.	2016-2021
A	3.	Work jointly with Fundraising and Outreach for specific project fundraising efforts.	2017-2021
A	4.	Have Preservation Committee provide grant-writing where possible for projects.	2017-2021
A	5.	Work with outreach/fundraising volunteers or staff to	2017

		create a “Friends of Preserves” program which assists in maintaining and funding projects/maintenance on Manada fee-owned lands	
B	6.	Consider pursuing accreditation if not being accredited becomes an impediment to important funding. (i.e. TNC/Kittatinny).	2017-2021

Goal I. Assist municipalities when resources allow, and when particularly relevant to our mission.

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Share MC prioritization with conservation and municipal partners where appropriate to help ensure coordinated conservation planning efforts.	2017-2021
B	2.	Represent Manada Conservancy when requested at planning meetings when capacity allows.	2017-2021
A-	3.	Pro-actively make municipal officials more aware of our work and its relationship to municipal needs.	2017-2021

Goal J. Continue to get preservation message out to the public

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Coordinate with Outreach Committee to maintain web site content for landowner information, outreach and project success stories.	2017-2021
A	2.	Coordinate with Education Committee to provide at least on Education program per year about some aspect of Manada Conservancy’s preservation work.	2017-2021
A	3.	Coordinate with Outreach Committee to publicize preservation initiatives and completed projects (when appropriate) in local media on a regular basis.	2017-2021
A	4.	Provide attractive signs on all preserved properties where the landowner allows.	2017-2021

II. EDUCATION:

Education Overarching Goal: To support Manada Conservancy’s mission and vision statement of furthering preservation and conservation through attracting, informing and engaging the volunteers, members and communities we serve.

Goal A: Provide or sponsor at least four public education programs per year, free to the public.

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Include (at least) one youth-focused program.	2017-2021
A	2.	Include (at least) one preservation program.	2017-2021
A	3.	Provide variety of programming topics to retain community interest and attract broader audiences, while providing adequately for our “core audience” of attendees and supporters.	2017-2021
B	4.	Attempt to provide at least one program per year beyond our immediate geographic region, prioritizing areas where MC has an interest or presence in preservation	2018-2021
A	5.	Include a hospitality component at our programs, including a greeter and efforts by Board members to connect with specific attendees. Coordinate with Fundraising to identify members or potential donors to thank or welcome	2017-2021

Goal B: Develop and strengthen youth education programming

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A-	1.	Maintain a list of trained volunteers to provide youth programs	2018
B	2.	Develop and maintain a catalog of prepared programs for youth groups	2018
A	3.	Continue to provide annual Environmental Award to local high schools	2017-2021
B	4.	Continue to make student volunteer opportunities available.	2017-2021
B	5.	Offer internships in identified areas of need (under the supervision of the ED).	2017-2021

Goal C: Increase awareness of MC Preservation work and other MC events and activities

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Introduce each free educational program with MC brief intro, preservation updates, upcoming events and membership message. Ensure that the connection between the program and our preservation mission is stated for audience.	2017-2021
A	2.	Maintain updated slide show loop about MC for pre-program viewing.	2017-2021
C	3.	Utilize technology available to provide on-line videos of appropriate programs (when fiscal/talent opportunity arises).	2017-2021

Goal D: Standardize procedure for providing speakers bureau

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
B	1.	Offer a list of topics and maintain a list of willing speakers, and publish on web site.	2017-2021
A	2.	Create a formal request process by which other organizations can request an MC speaker and topic.	2017-2021
A	3.	Create standard presentations available for use by MC speakers.	2018-2021

Goal E: Enhance the committee’s organization to improve efficiency and enable us to achieve strategic goals and fulfill our education mission

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
B	1.	Create an operations manual for all aspects of Committee responsibilities.	2017-2021
A	2.	Bolster Committee by adding more members; goal of 8-10 total.	2017-2021
B	3.	Consider establishment of subcommittees within the Education Committee for specialized areas. These could be phased in to increase efficiency as Committee membership increases.	2017-2021

Goal F: Maintain a historical record of programs given, including contacts and participant feedback and reception.

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Continue to keep running list of dates, speakers, topics.	2017-2021
A	2.	Continue to maintain archive of program posters.	2017-2021
A	3.	Create list of recommended speakers.	2017
A	4.	Maintain results of any surveys or attendee feedback.	2017-2021
A	5.	Create list of potential venues, contacts, and cost.	2017

Goal G: Provide an educational component to other Conservancy activities where appropriate.

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
B	1.	Assist Native Plant Committee in identifying and/or arranging education programming for Native Plant sales. [Placeholder until Native Plant Strategic Plan is in place].	2018-2021
B	2.	Add an educational component to Outdoor programs.	2018-2021
B	3.	Evaluate Outreach materials used to support/train volunteers at planting events for effectiveness.	2019-2021
A	4.	Coordinate with Fundraising and Outreach to provide paid workshops relating to our mission, if capacity allows.	2019

III. OUTREACH:

Outreach Overarching Goal: To increase and engage Manada Conservancy’s membership base and engage our volunteers to better support MC’s functions and preservation mission.

Goal A: Increase membership and strengthen member relations

Objective: To provide a sound financial future to support MC

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Improve and maintain our member welcoming services.	Spring 2017
A	2.	Connect with members.	Ongoing
A	3.	Reconnect with lapsed members.	Fall 2017
A	4.	Organize a membership drive with the goal of doubling our membership.	Fall 2017
A	5.	Analyze membership fluctuations at outreach committee meetings.	Ongoing

Goal B: Develop and engage volunteer base

Objective: To utilize our volunteer support effectively, engaging those who wish to be a part of MC while lessening the need for paid staff when possible.

Priority	#	Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Identify and address Conservancy’s volunteer needs including specific leadership roles (ie: silent auction coordinator, ice cream social coordinator, outdoor recreation program coordinator)	In process, have in place by Spring 2017
A	2.	Identify list of projects that need to be done so that we are prepared when opportunities arise	Begin Dec 2016, ongoing
A	3.	Host volunteer appreciation events (also see Preservation Goal A4e).	ongoing, need a date for 2017
A	4.	Revise volunteer sign-up sheet	In process
B	5.	Host volunteer training workshops regularly	As needed

Goal C: Utilize outreach efforts to promote preservation mission

Objective: To engage the community in conserving local natural resources and to spread the word of conservation options to landowners

Priority		Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Host three Kittatinny Ridge landowner outreach events as required in TNC partnership grant.	June 2018
A	2.	Finalize preservation packet for interested landowners.	Dec 2016
B	3.	Continue to partner with Troegs Brewery annually for an Earth Day event benefiting Swatara Greenway goals	Ongoing

Goal D: Improve local presence in community

Objective: To increase membership, and awareness of land preservation options among landowners

Priority		Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Develop speaker's bureau/library of presentations that can be used when invited to speak to community groups about the Conservancy (also see Education Goal D).	2017
A	2.	Connect with Hershey Medical Center Community Health Committee	Nov 2016
A	3.	Offer a unique annual fall event to appeal to young adults/families (ie: Music Over the Mountains)	Fall 2017
B	4.	Continue recreational programs for public to engage with Conservancy, focus on preservation initiatives and educational aspect.	Ongoing
C	5.	Attend relevant community events, and expand presence throughout County	Ongoing

Goal E: Improve outreach materials**Objective:** To better brand Manada Conservancy so that the public easily recognizes and identifies us and our work

Priority		Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Revise PR (poster) distribution list/volunteers.	Feb 2017 (before next education program)
A	2.	Write regular PR column for The Sun, and other papers throughout County.	2017, ongoing
A	3.	Update all materials with new logo, consistently brand/market the Conservancy.	2017, ongoing
A	4.	Update newsletter content, website content and social media.	Ongoing
B	5.	Connect with a wider variety of advertising opportunities.	Early 2017 for 20 th anniversary promotion
A	6.	Connect with legislators, local elected officials, and municipalities, and maintain ties with those MC has already established a relationship.	2017, ongoing
C	8.	Develop a promotional video that includes segments on membership, volunteers, Partners in Preservation.	2018?
C	9.	Develop an interactive activity or game that will draw folks to Manada's table at events.	April 2017

Goal F: Enhance fundraising effort

Objective: To provide support for fundraising staff and volunteers by assisting with outreach events, fundraising events, membership recruitment, and community presence.

Priority		Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Work with Board and staff to develop a comprehensive fundraising campaign which includes various outreach efforts/events year round, starting with 20 th Anniversary campaign.	Jan 2017
A	2.	Provide opportunity(s) for members/donors to visit preserved properties	2017, ongoing
A	3.	Recruit a fundraising minded/experienced Board and committee members, staff member.	2017
A	4.	Assist Preservation Committee/Fundraising staff in establishing a “Friends of Preserves” program which helps recruit volunteers to maintain and donors to fund maintenance and projects for MC fee-owned lands. (see Preservation Goal G5)	2017
A	5.	Establish a group / identify an individual to focus on major gifts, estate planning, etc. Establish a 5-year fundraising plan. “Outreach is the engine, fundraising is the fuel.” (Also see Admin Goal E3)	2017
B	6.	Continue to participate in community/local business giving efforts	Ongoing

IV. ADMINISTRATION

Administration Overarching Goal: to advance the Conservancy’s mission by providing the tools and resources needed to make effective decisions and provide for an efficient administrative structure. Our five year goal is to transition from an organization managed by a board to an organization where management and day-to-day decision making are the responsibility of staff with the board assuming a governance role.

Goal A: Promote an effective and efficient administrative structure.

Priority		Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Develop formal employee and Board of Directors orientation protocols and set of expectations.	2017
A	2.	Develop job descriptions for staff, committee chairs and officers.	2016, ongoing
A	3.	Review Accountant’s annual audit report and make improvements to the organization’s internal controls as recommended by accountant.	2017-2021
A	4.	Conduct an annual review of operations to determine if the Conservancy’s progress is in line with the goals and objectives developed in this strategic plan and update the strategic plan as needed.	2017-2021
B	5.	Review new LTA guidelines and develop policies, procedures, and systems that will qualify Manada for national land trust accreditation.	2017-2018
B	6.	Perform an annual risk assessment based on accountant’s recommendation.	2017-2021
B	7.	Develop a gift acceptance policy.	2018
C	8.	Pursue new technologies that support and improve financial and administration controls.	2017-2021

Goal B: Recruit, develop and retain an outstanding workforce.

Priority		Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Increase staffing as required to accomplish the mission in concert with the strategic plan and as financial resources are available.	2017, ongoing
A	2.	Annually review employee performance and provide a venue for employee feedback. Executive Director will review staff and President of Board will review Executive Director.	2017-2021
A	3.	Provide competitive wages and benefits based on peer organization review.	2017-2021
A	4.	Incorporate new overtime pay requirements into payroll procedures and modify employment contracts to reflect these new overtime pay requirements.	2017
B	5.	Annually budget for and seek staff training opportunities to grow employee skills and capabilities (also see Preservation Goal A2c).	2017-2021
B	6.	Strengthen the staff's value to the organization through cross training and shared knowledge so staff have the ability to perform the duties of other staff members.	2017-2021

Goal C: Transition from a managing board to a governing board.

Priority		Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Increase staff responsibilities and management authority over the next 5 years to create a management structure that delegates day to day management of the Conservancy to staff with Board assuming a governance role.	2017-2021
A	2.	Define roles, responsibilities, and chain of command for Board, Committees, and Staff.	2017

Goal D: Continue to improve Board of Directors effectiveness.

Priority		Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Recruit board members who bring diversity and valuable skill sets to the board. Finance and fundraising expertise are especially needed.	2017, ongoing
A	2.	Ensure that each Committee continues to be chaired by a Board member.	ongoing
A	3.	Assign a mentor to each new board member to facilitate their involvement with the board.	2017
B	4.	Continue the executive director’s biennial interview of each board member.	2017, 2019, 2021

V. FINANCE

Finance Overarching Goal:

To advance the Conservancy’s mission by maintaining responsible stewardship of the Conservancy’s financial resources while recognizing our fiduciary responsibilities.

Goal A: Continue to improve financial structure.

Priority		Action Item	Timeline
A	1.	Create and maintain an operating reserve.	2016, ongoing
A	2.	When funds are accumulated in excess of the needed operating reserve, use these funds to build the endowment account.	ongoing
A	3.	Hire staff or consultant who will provide expertise in strengthening long-term relationships with donors (also see Outreach Goal F5).	2017
B	4.	Explore alternatives to TFEC for use as an endowment account.	2018