

This draft is intended to prompt stakeholder feedback and ideas. Please share your thinking by emailing gdiehl@conserveland.org.

**DRAFT TO PROMPT
STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK AND IDEAS
PENNSYLVANIA LAND TRUST ASSOCIATION
STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2016-2022**

HERE IS A DRAFT OF THE NEW MISSION STATEMENT. WHAT DO YOU THINK?

The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association helps people conserve the lands needed for healthy, prosperous and secure communities—the forests, farms, parks, urban gardens and other green places that safeguard our drinking water, prevent flooding, protect wildlife, provide recreational and economic opportunities, and preserve scenic beauty and community treasures. The Association accomplishes this by helping nonprofits and local governments improve their effectiveness and efficiency in acquiring and stewarding land and easements, advancing sustainable land use practices and connecting people to the outdoors; the Association also fosters public understanding of conservation, advocates for sound governmental policy and leads state and national endeavors to achieve far-reaching advancements in conservation.

WHAT IS PALTA'S VISION? HERE ARE SOME POTENTIAL COMPONENTS:

The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association envisions future generations enjoying—undiminished—Pennsylvania's natural areas and open spaces.

The Association envisions communities having deep connections with their urban, suburban and rural lands.

The Association envisions people recognizing the health, safety, recreational, economic and other benefits delivered by land conservation.

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Is this who PALTA should continue to be?

More than 70 land conservation organizations count themselves as dues-paying members of the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association. These organizations elect the Board and set PALTA's purposes. The organizations in turn count more than 100,000 Pennsylvanians as members and contributors.

PALTA was created by land trust leaders who recognized the value of an entity that would address and focus on the broad needs of the land conservation movement—to take on activities that no one organization could effectively handle or wish to handle on its own.

WHAT ARE PALTA'S GOALS? WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE FOLLOWING?

- Increase the pace of land conservation.
- Improve the quality and efficiency of land conservation work.
- Ensure that land conservation is lasting.
- Build strong conservation organizations.
- Improve land use planning and advance sustainable development practices.
- Raise public understanding and support for conservation.
- Align public policy with conservation goals.

HERE ARE PALTA'S DRAFT *PROGRAMMATIC* STRATEGIES FOR YOUR REVIEW:

- A. Build tools that facilitate the achievement of excellence in the execution of effective and efficient conservation acquisitions, land stewardship, land use planning, and organizational operations and service delivery.
- B. Train, deliver technical assistance, inspire, and foster stronger communications and relationships with and amongst organizations and the practitioners who serve them.
- C. Change and improve the systems in which conservationists operate to achieve better conservation outcomes and improve quality of life.
- D. Advocate for better public policies impacting land conservation and water resource protection.

Action Steps for Strategy A

Build tools that facilitate the achievement of excellence in the execution of effective and efficient conservation acquisitions, land stewardship, land use planning, and organizational operations and service delivery.

- Develop and maintain model legal documents, organizational policies and land use ordinances to provide state of the art and practical guidance.
- Develop and maintain technical guides.
- Improve ConservationTools.org.

Develop and maintain model legal documents, organizational policies and land use ordinances to provide state of the art and practical guidance.

Develop, maintain and improve model grants of conservation easement, grants of access easement as well as model documents accessory to easement acquisition and stewardship (*Grant of Conservation Easement, Trail Easement Agreement, Preliminary Agreement Regarding Conservation Easement Donation, Stewardship Funding Covenant, etc.*).

Develop, maintain and improve other model legal documents for use in conservation real estate transactions (*Grant of Purchase Option, Grant of Right of First Offer and Grant of Right of First Refusal, etc.*).

Develop, maintain and improve model land use ordinances (*Riparian Buffer Protection Overlay District, etc.*).

Develop, maintain and improve model organizational policies that advance the practice of conservation (*Model Policy for Conservation Easement Amendment, etc.*).

Develop, maintain and improve other model documents that advance the effectiveness and efficiency of conservation organizations (*Model Release of Liability, etc.*).

Develop and maintain technical guides.

Publish new guides.

Update, expand or otherwise improve previously published guides.

Improve ConservationTools.org.

Identify needs of conservation organizations and local governments for guidance and resources and plan accordingly.

Post original PALTA content; identify and collect useful content from other sources and publish and highlight it as appropriate at ConservationTools.org.

Ensure productive user experiences; maintain security and the effectiveness of site functions in a constantly changing technological environment.

Action Steps for Strategy B

Train, deliver technical assistance, inspire, and foster stronger communications and relationships with and amongst organizations and the practitioners who serve them.

- Provide training and networking opportunities that empower and inspire people to achieve more in their conservation work.
- Facilitate the creation and maintenance of peer networks.
- Provide technical assistance.
- Deepen and broaden interactions and communications.

Provide training and networking opportunities that empower and inspire people to achieve more in their conservation work.

Manage the Pennsylvania Land Conservation Conference as Pennsylvania's *premier* annual training, networking and inspirational event for land conservation.

Organize and sponsor webinars, seminars, roundtables, workshops and other events as dictated by conservation practitioner needs to supplement conference programming. Promote other organizations' offerings as appropriate.

Identify training needs of land conservation practitioners and advisors and implement or partner on offerings to meet those needs.

Facilitate the creation and maintenance of peer networks.

Manage the EAC (Environmental Advisory Council) Network.

Foster the creation of networks of other peer groups.

Provide technical assistance.

Deliver direct technical assistance from staff to conservation organizations and other conservation practitioners via phone, email and in-person.

Manage the Conservation Easement Assistance Program. The program provides small grants in support of quality conservation and public access easement transactions, easement amendments and restatements, baseline documentation and easement signage.

Facilitate peer and consultant based technical assistance to conservation organizations and foster mentoring to build organizational strength. Place emphasis on helping land trusts comply with Land Trust Standards and Practices.

Facilitate mergers and land trust collaboration where such actions present substantial potential to achieve significant operational efficiencies and better conservation outcomes.

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Deepen and broaden interactions and communications.

Use electronic communication tools (e.g. ConserveLand.org, blogs, Facebook, email and future technologies) to provide conservation news and information for the public and to build online communities for conservationists and land conservation practitioners.

Publish and distribute the ConserveLand newsletter to reach those who are not web-oriented and to reinforce web-based communications.

Keep PALTA focused on delivering high value to the land conservation community by keeping informed of land trust needs, policies, activities and expectations of PALTA (e.g., natural gas issues) via informal and *ad hoc* interactions as well as surveys.

Action Steps for Strategy C

Change and improve the systems in which conservationists operate to achieve better conservation outcomes and improve quality of life.

- Help improve and promote private land trust movement policies, standards and systems that advance land conservation excellence without unduly redirecting resources away from direct conservation work or stifling initiative and experimentation in achieving conservation objectives.
- Help build people's connections to the land.
- Communicate to the public and key subsets to build understanding of conservation.
- Build bridges with other sectors and organizations to find and build upon common interests supportive of conservation.
- Seek to identify and pursue opportunities to broadly improve upon the *status quo*.

Help improve and promote private land trust movement policies, standards and systems that advance conservation excellence without unduly redirecting resources away from direct conservation work or stifling initiative and experimentation in achieving conservation objectives.

Assist LTA in improving and promoting Land Trust Standards and Practices and other policies for the land trust movement.

As appropriate, develop and promote Pennsylvania-specific land trust movement policies and standards that help land trusts of all sizes and maturity strive for higher levels of excellence and efficiency.

Develop and promote model policies for adoption by land trusts in response to identified needs.

Deliver technical assistance and training to help land trusts achieve conformity with Land Trust Standards and Practices and prepare for Accreditation.

Facilitate sharing of experiences and discussion of issues amongst accredited land trusts and organizations pursuing accreditation.

Help build people's connections to the land.

Promote outdoor recreation via Get Outdoors PA.

Promote nature play in partnership with DCNR and other interested organizations.

Promote other activities that connect people to the land as opportunities present.

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Communicate to the public and key subsets to build understanding of conservation.

Identify and implement ways of framing land conservation that resonate with the public and that facilitate outreach to those who do not hold conservation as a core value.

Make presentations to key audiences and display PALTA materials in key locations and conferences.

Promote land conservation, sustainable land use practices and land trusts to the general public through a variety of communications channels.

Build bridges with other sectors and organizations to find and build upon common interests supportive of conservation.

Reach out to private sector groups.

Reach out to public sector entities and their associations.

Seek to identify and pursue opportunities to broadly improve upon the *status quo*.

Engage the policy advisory committee, board, the membership and/or outside parties annually in striving to look outside the box for ways to better achieve conservation.

Action Steps for Strategy D

Advocate for better public policies impacting land conservation and water resource protection.

- Meet, educate and build relationships with government officials.
 - Maintain a public policy agenda. (The highest agenda priority is ensuring continued public investments in conservation and increasing the level of investment. Other priorities will be set by the board in consultation with the policy advisory committee on an ongoing basis.)
 - Advocate for better governmental policy.
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Meet, educate and build relationships with government officials.

Reach out to:

- state elected officials and their staff.
- state appointed officials and their staff.
- gubernatorial candidates and their campaigns.
- members of the Pennsylvania Congressional delegation and their staff.

Maintain a public policy agenda. (The highest agenda priority is ensuring continued public investments in conservation and increasing the level of investment. Other priorities will be set by the board in consultation with the policy advisory committee on an ongoing basis.)

Hold regular meetings of the policy advisory committee to help guide and implement PALTA's policy work.

On an as needed basis, convene attorneys deeply committed to conservation to advise PALTA on addressing judicial threats and opportunities for conservation.

Proactively identify and research potential policy issues and initiatives and formulate policy solutions.

Foster involvement and buy-in from membership—seeking consensus, information, participation and leadership.

Advocate for better governmental policy.

Express and promote interests, concerns, positions and requests to policy makers and opinion leaders.

Enhance online outreach and advocacy functions.

Continue to build and maintain a network of organizations having intersecting agendas and work cooperatively to advance shared interests.

Engage in national advocacy efforts as appropriate. Maintain relationships with LTA and other conservation organizations active at the federal level to ensure that PALTA actions are consistent with the interests of the conservation

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movement and are calibrated to have maximum impact on the conservation issues of importance to Pennsylvania.