



Strategic Plan 2005-2008

INTRODUCTION TO CPC

Central Pennsylvania Conservancy (CPC) was founded in 1981 to address pressing environmental concerns in the greater Harrisburg region. Early recycling education efforts helped establish statewide mandates on municipal recycling. CPC's mission has evolved to focus on land conservation that protects the natural and cultural resources of the central Pennsylvania region. The Conservancy's motto is, "Conserving for Tomorrow...Today." CPC has had many successes through the years operating largely as an all-volunteer organization guided by a very enthusiastic Board of Directors and supported by a membership dedicated to preserving the region's high quality of life.

As opportunities to conserve the region's resources continue to grow, so too must CPC. In response, CPC has hired professional staff and undertaken development of its first strategic plan. With projects in eight central Pennsylvania counties including Dauphin, Cumberland, Perry, Juniata, Mifflin, Huntingdon, Snyder and Franklin, CPC has defined its future vision, mission and conservation priorities within this region the Conservancy considers "the heart of Pennsylvania."

This plan represents an effort to define the direction for CPC for the next three years. The planning process was a collaborative effort between the CPC Board of Directors and staff. It also included significant input from partners, members and other regional stakeholders. CPC is committed to reviewing the plan at an annual planning retreat and updating as needed. The plan will be used as a guide to develop annual work plans for staff and committees. Additionally, complementary fundraising and conservation plans will be developed based on the goals and strategies contained herein.

VISION STATEMENT

Central Pennsylvania Conservancy (CPC) has a vision of the future that drives its work as an organization and engages its members in support of its efforts.

- Protected mountain ridges will provide scenic views, wildlife habitat and ecosystem function throughout the region.
- Prime farmland will remain vital and fundamental to the local economy.
- Regional water resources will continue to provide life-giving nutrients and vitality to the landscape and the people who live there.
- The region's cultural heritage will be a valued and prominent part of the community fabric.
- Recreational opportunities will be available on protected lands throughout the central Pennsylvania region.

This same vision will also guide the way CPC does business as a local community institution.

- ❖ CPC will be a recognized and respected leader for conservation in the “heart of Pennsylvania.”
- ❖ CPC will be a catalyst for effective and enduring partnerships working to improve the quality of life for residents of the region.
- ❖ CPC’s diversity of programs will help ensure a balanced approach to protection of the region’s most important natural and cultural resources with support for enhancement of local economies.

MISSION STATEMENT

To conserve natural and cultural resources for the benefit of current and future generations through the protection of open space in the central Pennsylvania region.

VALUES OF THE CONSERVANCY

Central Pennsylvania Conservancy pledges to its constituents that it will never falter in its attempt to achieve its vision. The Conservancy will continually monitor societal trends and opinions to ensure fulfillment of its mission. Furthermore, CPC’s goals and strategies will be updated regularly as successes are realized and external constraints and opportunities shift. The Conservancy will continue to hold itself to the highest set of guiding standards feasible in fulfilling its mission and sustaining its vision for conservation in “the heart of Pennsylvania.”

Although there are many important principles that guide its work, Central Pennsylvania Conservancy emphasizes the following values as core to its efforts:

- ❖ The Conservancy believes in its obligation to maintain and improve the “quality of life” for future generations, which includes opportunities to experience an unspoiled natural environment.
- ❖ The Conservancy strives to build effective partnerships to achieve every objective.
- ❖ The Conservancy believes in the preservation of sustainable working landscapes and fostering a conservation ethic of connectivity between people and the land.
- ❖ The Conservancy emphasizes the important connection between land stewardship and water resource protection.
- ❖ The Conservancy believes that economic development and environmental protection are complimentary community goals, and that open space and a healthy environment are essential elements of an effective economic development strategy.
- ❖ The Conservancy places high emphasis on protecting and connecting natural areas because these connections are crucial for the preservation of the region’s biodiversity.

- ❖ The Conservancy believes the permanent protection of aesthetically pleasing views of forested mountain ridges, rolling farmland and clean streams is a benefit to society worthy of conservation efforts.

PROGRAMMATIC GOALS AND STRATEGIES

1. The most important natural and cultural resources of the region are preserved in perpetuity.
 - a. Identify and prioritize the most critical landscape areas for proactive protection.
 - b. Engage landowners in priority areas to lead them to permanently protect their properties.
 - c. Respond to opportunities presented in non-priority areas that may lead to protection of high value conservation properties.
 - d. Steward the conservation values of lands protected by the Conservancy.
2. Communities in the region embrace private land conservation as a tool to protect important community values.
 - a. Target education and outreach efforts to landowners and landowner advisors.
 - b. Work with public agencies and elected officials to improve public policies that affect private land owners and conservation options.
 - c. Utilize our network of conservation partners and supporters to lead efforts to raise support for important local conservation initiatives.
 - d. Develop consistent and compelling messaging and provide public engagement opportunities to ensure widespread organizational recognition and support of CPC's mission.

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS AND STRATEGIES

3. The Conservancy has the organizational structure and capacity to fulfill its mission and achieve its long-term vision.
 - a. Create a strong, diverse and engaged board of directors to govern and support the Conservancy through active fundraising.
 - b. Provide the structure (governance) and infrastructure (equipment and facilities) needed to support the work of the Conservancy.

- c. Develop the professional staffing to guide management of the Conservancy.
 - d. Develop alliances that enhance our capacity, effectiveness, and community support.
 - e. Develop opportunities and coordinate volunteers to assist with projects, outreach and program management.
4. The Conservancy has a stable and growing base of financial support.
- a. Build an annual giving program that emphasizes support from high-donor contributions.
 - b. Build a larger and broader membership across the region that provides a stable financial base for personnel and operational support.
 - c. Seek grants and develop campaigns to support programs and special initiatives.
 - d. Build an endowment to support conservation, stewardship and operations.
 - e. Explore unconventional programs for widespread opportunities to contribute to conservation in the region.

DETAILED SCOPE OF WORK AND TIMEFRAME

Goal 1: The most important natural and cultural resources of the region are preserved in perpetuity

Strategy	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Identify and prioritize the most critical landscape areas for proactive protection	Develop a comprehensive conservation plan for CPC's service area	Review the conservation plan annually for strategic effectiveness	Review the conservation plan annually for strategic effectiveness
	Collect landscape information and assessment results from other organizations to define critical areas in CPC service area	Expand GIS capabilities in-house or partner with organizations to develop higher level analysis of CPC regional priorities	Develop GIS maps for all key resources and project priorities as an ongoing element of conservation planning
	Develop land protection policies to guide land transaction process	Implement, review and update policies as needed	Implement, review and update policies as needed
		Develop and maintain database for tracking requests from landowners	Ongoing
		Collect parcel/landowner information for priority areas and enter into database	Ongoing
			Use Southern Perry Co. Watershed Conservation Plan to identify priorities

Goal 1: The most important natural and cultural resources of the region are preserved in perpetuity

Strategy	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Engage landowners in priority areas to lead them to permanently protect their properties	Develop information packets on CPC and landowner conservation options	Host landowner workshops in conjunction with partners throughout CPC service area	Ongoing
		Apply conservation plan priorities and criteria to proactively pursue up to five projects annually	Ongoing
	Work with partners in Juniata River watershed to engage at least two riparian landowners for conservation easements	Expand riparian protection initiative to other central Pa. watersheds in partnership with local groups	Ongoing
	Work with Kittatinny Coalition partners to engage landowners of priority parcels in discussions on protection options	Begin one acquisition campaign and five conservation easements on Blue Mountain	Ongoing
	Engage farmers in Important Agricultural Areas with protection options	Implement five agricultural conservation easements annually	Ongoing
Respond to opportunities in non-priority areas that may lead to protection of high value conservation properties	Negotiate options with landowners who approach CPC to protect properties in non-priority areas that meet criteria in conservation plan	Ongoing	Ongoing

Goal 1: The most important natural and cultural resources of the region are preserved in perpetuity

Strategy	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Steward the conservation values of lands protected by the Conservancy	Develop baseline documentation and conservation plans for all CPC properties	Ongoing	Ongoing
	Develop stewardship policies for CPC properties/easements	Review/update as needed	Ongoing
	Recruit/train land steward volunteers to monitor CPC properties	Recruit six additional land steward volunteers and hold annual training	Ongoing
	Develop and implement monitoring guidelines	Review/update as needed	Ongoing
	Monitor all CPC properties/easements	Ongoing	Ongoing
	Define stewardship contribution request guidelines	Review/update as needed	Ongoing

Goal 2: Communities in the region embrace private land conservation as a tool to protect important community values and recognize CPC as *the* regional conservation partner

Strategy	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Target education and outreach efforts to landowners and landowner advisors	Develop information packets on CPC and landowner conservation options	Work with partners to hold landowner workshops throughout CPC service area	Ongoing
	Develop list of landowner advisor groups to target	Host meetings of landowner advisors to promote conservation options for landowner clients	Ongoing
Work with public agencies and elected officials to improve public policies that affect private land owners and conservation options	Meet with one third of all municipalities in CPC service area to introduce conservation options	Ongoing	Complete meetings with all municipalities in CPC service area
	Develop CPC positions on key policy issues affecting land use and conservation	Promote key CPC positions in discussions with public officials	Ongoing
	Become engaged in local and county planning efforts where appropriate	Ongoing	Ongoing

Goal 2: Communities in the region embrace private land conservation as a tool to protect important community values and recognize CPC as *the* regional conservation partner

Strategy	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Utilize our network of conservation partners and supporters to lead efforts to raise support for important local conservation initiatives	Raise support for Cumberland Co. Open Space Plan		
	Participate on Cumberland Co. Open Space Steering Committee	Ongoing	
		Seek additional local municipal conservation initiatives to support	Ongoing
	Develop strategy for supporting ballot campaigns, including email alerts, website postings, partner network	Implement strategy	Ongoing
Develop consistent and compelling messaging and provide public engagement opportunities to ensure widespread organizational recognition and support of CPC's mission	Use strategic plan and updated mission to develop new marketing plan	Update printed CPC material and produce end-of-year report highlighting successes	Ongoing
	Upgrade website to make it more informative and interactive	Upgrade to ability to accept credit cards and make website more fundraising capable	Ongoing
	Update CPC display for use with outreach efforts	Ongoing to highlight new initiatives	Ongoing
	Attend public events throughout region to introduce CPC and conservation issues	Ongoing	Ongoing

Goal 3: The Conservancy has the organizational structure and capacity to fulfill its mission and achieve its long-term vision

Strategy	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Create a strong, diverse and engaged board of directors to govern and support the Conservancy	Recruit board members to add fundraising diversity to the board.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	Complete update of board member handbook	Update as needed	Ongoing
	Recruit new Board members based on grid analysis needs	Ongoing	Ongoing
	Develop clear roles and job descriptions for board members		
	Establish non-board opportunities for governing volunteer involvement	Implement term limits	Strengthen leadership transitions within the board
	Develop clear expectations of board members		
	Develop board member orientation and training program	Send board member to regional and national training programs	Ongoing
	Develop self-evaluation process for board	Evaluate board annually	Ongoing

Goal 3: The Conservancy has the organizational structure and capacity to fulfill its mission and achieve its long-term vision

Strategy	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
	Set up board and program committees	Recruit as needed	Ongoing
	Develop committee job descriptions and identify committee members/chairs	Review as needed	Ongoing
	Identify appropriate advisors	Strengthen involvement of advisors to support the board	Ongoing
Provide the structure (governance) and infrastructure (equipment and facilities) needed to support the work of the Conservancy	Complete and adopt personnel policies and employee handbook		
		Research options for staff pension plan	Implement staff pension plan
	Formalize staff job descriptions/goals		
	Implement revised staff evaluation process	Evaluate staff annually	Ongoing
	Develop annual work plans and budgets to implement strategic plan	Ongoing	Ongoing
	Conduct annual planning retreat for review and update of strategic plan	Ongoing	Initiate a comprehensive strategic plan revision
	Upgrade membership database software	Integrate membership database with website	

Goal 3: The Conservancy has the organizational structure and capacity to fulfill its mission and achieve its long-term vision

Strategy	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Develop the professional staffing to guide management of the Conservancy	Develop a staff development plan to guide staff expansion decisions	Hire project staff	Hire development staff
	Identify opportunities and funding support for staff training	Engage staff in regional and national training programs	Ongoing
Develop alliances that enhance our capacity, effectiveness, and community support	Explore opportunities for collaboration with neighboring land trusts, watershed associations and conservation organizations	Explore potential for mergers with smaller or neighboring land trusts to increase regional capacity and effectiveness	Ongoing
			Explore opportunities to offer technical assistance to other organizations on fee basis
Develop opportunities and coordinate volunteers to assist with projects, outreach and program management	Develop volunteer recruitment and development plan to add program volunteers as unpaid staff	Maintain veteran volunteer involvement	Ongoing
	Develop training program for six volunteer land stewards	Recruit and train six new land stewards	Ongoing
	Establish program for volunteer recognition	Recognize, publicize contributions of volunteers	Ongoing

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

Strategy	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
<p>Build an annual giving program that emphasizes support from high-donor contributions</p>	<p>Implement development plan for operating expenses</p>	<p>Develop and implement fundraising activities</p>	<p>Review and update development plan</p>
	<p>Develop formalized major donor outreach, solicitation and recognition program</p>	<p>Hold donor cultivation dinner/event</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Finalize literature on high donor “Guardian” program</p>	<p>Work with board members to identify contacts through personal lists</p>	<p>Establish connections between donors and board members</p>
	<p>Finalize literature on corporate membership program and visit five corporations to solicit annual corporate membership</p>	<p>Visit 15 corporations to solicit annual corporate membership</p>	<p>Visit 25 corporations to solicit annual corporate membership</p>
	<p>Cultivate corporate relations for event sponsorship</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Promote employer matching programs</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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

Strategy	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
<p>Build a larger and broader membership across the region that provides a stable financial base for personnel and operational support</p>	<p>Explore trading and renting membership lists</p>	<p>Implement aggressive member acquisition program using direct mail appeals to rented and traded name lists</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Compile board members' contact lists for solicitation</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Target solicitation efforts into underrepresented areas</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
		<p>Hold events in key areas and highlight local CPC projects and initiatives</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Seek grants and develop campaigns to support programs and special initiatives</p>	<p>Develop list of priority projects</p>	<p>Annually review based on strategic plan</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Research foundations for program, operational, and capacity building support</p>	<p>Make contact to foundation officers and leaders to develop proposal ideas and submit proposals</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Research government grant programs for applicable support</p>	<p>Submit proposals</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Kick-off major fundraising campaign tied to strategic plan</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing until new strategic plan or goal reached</p>
	<p>Seek challenge grant(s)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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

Strategy	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Build an endowment to support conservation, stewardship and operations	Research foundations to support endowment	Submit proposals	Ongoing
	Develop comprehensive endowment and gift acceptance policies	Explore strategies for investing stewardship and land protection funds	Ongoing financial review
	Formalize stewardship request policies	Implement	Ongoing
	Develop planned giving program for endowment support	Set up meetings with estate planning professionals to promote CPC endowment support	Market planned giving options to most loyal members and major donors
Explore unconventional programs for widespread opportunities to contribute to conservation in the region	Explore opportunities to work with local merchants to collect nominal fees from customers to support conservation	Implement nominal fee charges on hotel rooms, purchases at outdoor/specialty retailers, purchases at nurseries, etc.	Ongoing
	Develop fee-for-service program for conservation easement, baseline documentation, legal review services	Engage in initial marketing to test effectiveness of fee-for-service	Expand fee-for-service to broader audience of potential customers