



**GEORGIA
CONSERVANCY
STRATEGIC
PLAN**

BALANCING ECOLOGY, ECONOMY AND EQUITY

VISION

WHO WE ARE >>>

This document highlights Georgia Conservancy's core vision, mission and guiding principles which link members, staff, volunteers, trustees and partners to the mission.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION >>>

Our vision for the future outlines the impact we plan to achieve and the path we will follow to ensure all Georgians and the environment thrive.

Georgia Conservancy recognizes the connection between the environment, the economy and equity. Since its founding in 1967, Georgia Conservancy and its members have ensured the protection and conservation of some of our state's most precious natural places. This vital work continues to expand and evolve.

According to the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Georgia's 10-year growth rate of 14.4% is 1.5 times that of the United States population growth rate. The state anticipates a 40% population increase by 2040 to a total of 14 million people.

By 2040, there will be an average of only 2.72 acres of land per Georgian, making every acre count. The population growth will increase pressure on Georgia's land, air, water, and wildlife. Increased population means an escalation in transportation, land development and equity challenges.

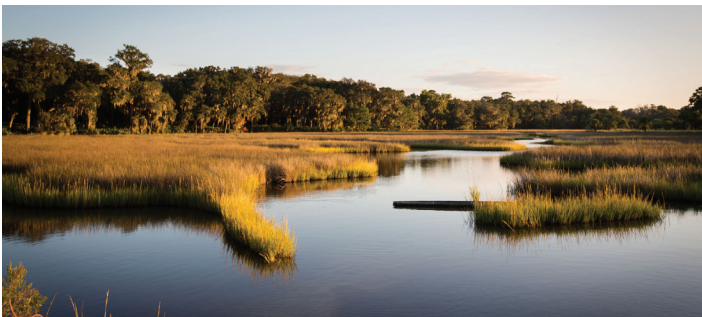
Climate change caused by carbon emissions and other factors will exacerbate challenges with increasing occurrences of extreme weather, food supply disruptions, and wildfires. Efficient use of land and strategic conservation of natural resources is critical to ensuring a prosperous and equitable future.

Georgia Conservancy believes we can overcome these challenges by partnering together to create solutions that balance the priorities of ecology, economy and equity. Our plans to address these challenges in 2021-2023 follow.



STRATEGIC ACTIONS >>>

The strategic actions described here will move Georgia Conservancy incrementally towards fulfillment of this plan. This is a living document and can be adapted to changing context and new opportunities. This plan is the result of input from a wide variety of stakeholders including trustees, members, staff, partners, legislators and funders to envision a preferred future for a Georgia where all people and the environment thrive. We hope you will join us!



VISION

A Georgia where all people and the environment thrive.

MISSION

Protecting Georgia through ecological and economic solutions for stewardship, conservation and sustainable use of the land and its resources.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The integrity of natural systems – air, land, water, plants and animals – and their services have value that must be conserved and restored for present and future generations.
- Stewardship of Georgia’s natural resources is the responsibility of every individual, organization, government, and business.
- A healthy environment and healthy economy are vital to a thriving society.
- In conserving Georgia’s natural resources, we must understand the changing climate and act accordingly.
- Principled advocacy relies upon sound data and inclusive collaboration.

GOALS



HEALTHY NATURAL SYSTEMS

GOAL 1: PROTECT AND RESTORE GEORGIA'S NATURAL SYSTEMS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE.

We believe Georgia's natural systems have an ecological and economical benefit to Georgians and can be rehabilitated and protected through intentional land use and education of current and future generations.

THRIVING COMMUNITIES

GOAL 2: POSITION GEORGIA'S COMMUNITIES TO BE MORE RESILIENT TO ECOLOGICAL, DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC STRESSES.

We believe ecologically-minded land use practices related to land development and redevelopment will produce a healthy balance of ecology, economy and equity as Georgia's population grows and changes.



ENGAGED GEORGIANS

GOAL 3: CREATE STEWARDS AND FOSTER APPRECIATION BY CONNECTING ALL GEORGIANS TO OUR NATURAL RESOURCES.

We believe educating Georgians about our natural resources will produce deeper engagement with natural systems and clearer understanding of the changing climate. This will ensure that every Georgian feels responsible for the stewardship of our natural resources.

STRONG GEORGIA CONSERVANCY

GOAL 4: INCREASE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF GEORGIA CONSERVANCY'S OPERATIONS.

We believe the Georgia Conservancy is in a unique position to effect real change in Georgia's ecology and economy through effective and efficient programming that balances the ecological, economic and equity concerns.

GOAL 1: PROTECT AND RESTORE GEORGIA'S NATURAL SYSTEMS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE.

OBJECTIVE 1.1: IDENTIFY AND PROMOTE PROMISING CARBON REDUCTION STRATEGIES, SPECIFIC TO GEORGIA.

1.1.1: In FY 2021, utilize Georgia Now and Forever (GNF) data sets to create strategies for land use change that incorporates carbon sequestration strategies in four target landscapes.

1.1.2: In FY 2023, leverage partnerships and data to foster greater acceptance of climate mitigation, increase the prioritization of carbon sequestration and spur action from city and county leadership.

OBJECTIVE 1.2: COORDINATE CONSERVATION PLANS RELATED TO DIFFERENT NATURAL SYSTEMS AND UNDERSTAND HOW THEY ARE RELATED TO KEY LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS.

1.2.1: In FY 2021, compare the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), State Water Plan, and State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), identifying common objectives and salient conservation priorities for use in public communication and policy advocacy.

1.2.2: In FY 2022, understand how state priorities for infrastructure and land development align with statewide conservation priorities, identifying common objectives and salient conservation priorities for use in public communication and policy advocacy.

1.2.3: Communicate findings of plan assessments and syntheses externally, culminating in a 2023 conference presentation.

OBJECTIVE 1.3: BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH DIVERSE STAKEHOLDERS AND CONVENE ECOLOGICALLY-MINDED DISCUSSIONS IN A MODERATE, NONPARTISAN WAY.

1.3.1: By FY 2022, identify and articulate the three most impactful conservation actions Georgia could undertake (based on the understanding gained from plan reviews and GNF data) to sustain natural resources and high quality of life.

1.3.2: Align Georgia Conservancy's programming, staffing, policy and funding plans with the conservation actions determined in Activity 1.3.1 by FY 2023.

1.3.3: Identify, support, and promote 3 specific climate-related projects by end of FY 2023.

1.3.4: Educate 4,500 Georgians and 9 major policy influencer groups on the connection between use of land and the subsequent ecological and economic impacts throughout FY 2021-2023.

OBJECTIVE 1.4: ADVOCATE TO PROTECT GEORGIA'S LAND, AIR, AND BIODIVERSITY UNDER THREAT.

1.4.1: Support maintenance of conservation regulations and defend against rollbacks on conservation policies.

1.4.2: Leverage external communication methods to connect stakeholders to information about threats to Georgia's natural resources throughout FY 2021-2023.

1.4.3: Amplify diverse perspectives and appreciation for the nuanced concerns around Georgia's land, air and biodiversity throughout FY 2021-2023.

1.4.4: Advance creative solutions for protecting Georgia's natural resources under threat through research, partnerships, supporting non-traditional approaches to use of land and compensation methods for land stewardship throughout FY 2021-2023.

GOAL 2: POSITION GEORGIA'S COMMUNITIES TO BE MORE RESILIENT TO ECOLOGICAL, DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC STRESSES.

OBJECTIVE 2.1: ENCOURAGE LAND USE PRACTICES THAT REDUCE DISTURBANCES TO NATURE.

2.1.1: Pursue 3 projects annually that develop knowledge of efficient and creative land use practices that reduce impacts on nature throughout FY 2021-23.

2.1.2: Pursue 3 collaborative projects that incorporate statewide land conservation priorities into outcomes of local planning throughout FY 2021-23.

2.1.3: In FY 2021-23, recruit 3 partners that offer expertise in the areas of redevelopment, reuse or infill of land to bolster collective conservation and land use activities.

OBJECTIVE 2.2: PROVIDE TRAINING, TECHNICAL SERVICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ENCOURAGE ECOLOGICALLY-MINDED DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITIES AND CITIES.

2.2.1: Lead 18 Good Urbanism workshops to more soundly link quality, community design to sustainability and resilience throughout FY 2021-23.

2.2.2: Support 15 presentations to city and county leadership throughout FY 2021-23 on sustainable community development.

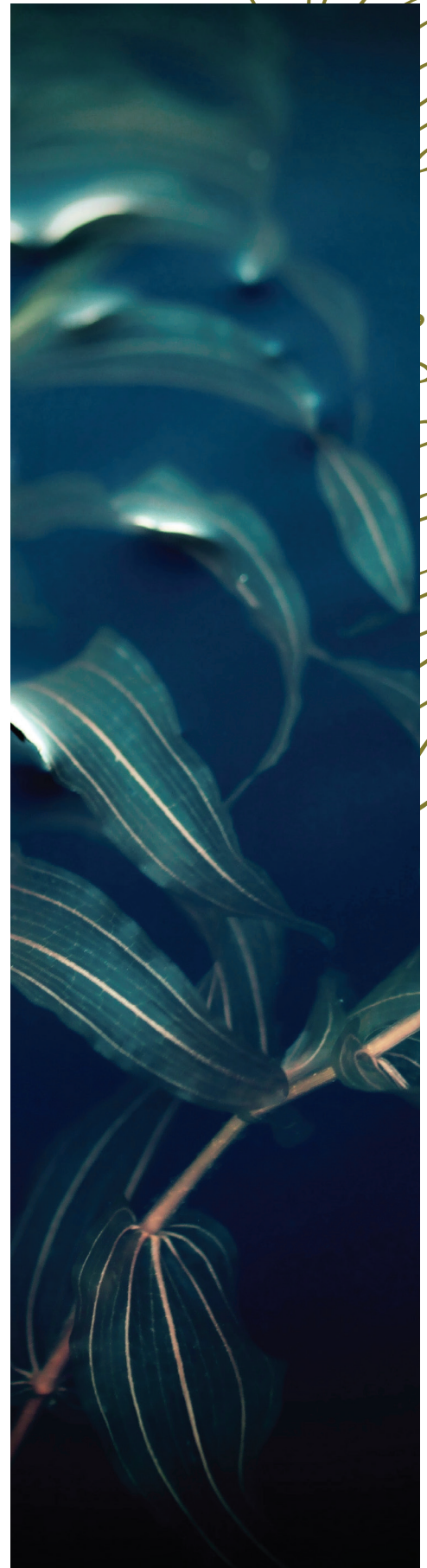
2.2.3: Target external communications to share the economic and ecological importance of redevelopment, reuse, and infill throughout FY 2021-23 using 18 articles, 36 speaking opportunities, and 6 multimedia assets.

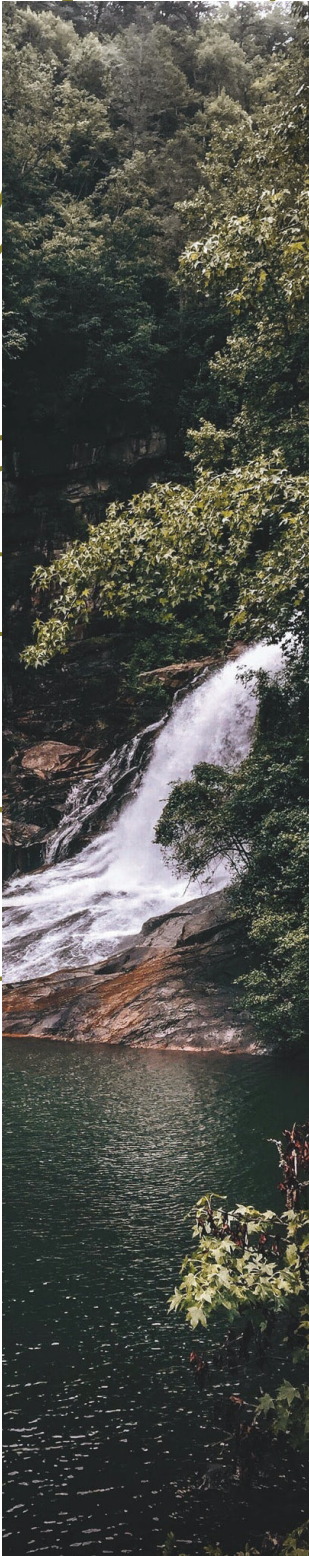
2.2.4: Foster greater awareness and use of statewide land conservation priorities in the practice of local planners by offering 3 "problem-solving clinics" throughout FY 2021-23.

OBJECTIVE 2.3: PROVIDE RELIABLE ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION TO GEORGIANS BY CONDUCTING SOUND RESEARCH RELATED TO CONSERVING AND RESTORING GEORGIA'S LAND, AIR, WATER, AND BIODIVERSITY.

2.3.1: Produce 2 publications (supplemental to project reports) in FY 2022 that position redevelopment, reuse, and infill as key community development strategies for Georgia's local governments.

2.3.2: Identify and secure key academic and government partnerships to produce four publications through FY 2023, including original research.





GOAL 3: CREATE STEWARDS AND FOSTER APPRECIATION BY CONNECTING ALL GEORGIANS TO OUR NATURAL RESOURCES.

OBJECTIVE 3.1: ENGAGE AND EDUCATE INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS, GOVERNMENTS, AND BUSINESSES ABOUT STEWARDSHIP OF GEORGIA'S NATURAL SYSTEMS AND CLIMATE CHANGE.

3.1.1: Conduct monthly engagements to tell the story of Georgia's precious places—including threats and conservation opportunities—utilizing virtual experiences and social media platforms throughout FY 2021-23.

3.1.2: Conduct 3 corporate / group service events annually during FY 2022-2023 as an education and stewardship opportunity.

3.1.3: In FY 2021, create materials for educational activities to ensure alignment with data on stewardship.

OBJECTIVE 3.2: UTILIZE OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES TO BUILD APPRECIATION FOR AND EDUCATION ABOUT GEORGIA'S NATURAL RESOURCES.

3.2.1: Throughout FY 2021-23, choose destinations for outdoor experiences that are key ecological sites and ensure a conservation call to action for each opportunity. Diversify experiences to be 60% stewardship trips and 40% service events.

3.2.2: Remove barriers to access by establishing 3 partnerships for the purpose of partnering to provide outdoor educational experiences to underrepresented populations such as people of color, veterans and the elderly. By FY 2023, conduct three educational experiences.

OBJECTIVE 3.3: INCREASE AWARENESS OF GEORGIA CONSERVANCY ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES TO RECRUIT, MAINTAIN, AND ENGAGE MEMBERSHIP PARTICIPATION WITH GEORGIA'S NATURAL RESOURCES.

3.3.1: Maintain a 60% membership retention rate.

3.3.2: Offer one member-focused service project and one membership appreciation event annually in FY 2022 and 2023.

3.3.3: Identify 3 key geographies for new membership acquisition campaigns in FY 2022. Execute on the campaigns in FY 2023.

3.3.4: Create and distribute inspirational communications to increase organizational engagement with stakeholders throughout FY 2021-23 through media and social media engagement and presentations.

GOAL 4: INCREASE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF GEORGIA CONSERVANCY'S OPERATIONS.

OBJECTIVE 4.1: ENSURE STABILITY, FUTURE GROWTH, AND LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY BY RETAINING AND INCREASING FOUNDATION, INDIVIDUAL, AND CORPORATE GIVING, YEAR OVER YEAR.

4.1.1: Cultivate existing and new foundation relationships to increase total foundation giving from \$364,500 in 2020 to \$500,000 in 2023 (37% total increase).

4.1.2: Cultivate existing and new individual supporters to increase the number of donors and members from 1400 giving units to 1450 giving units and increase total giving from individual donors from \$233,828 in 2020 to \$245,000 in 2023 (1.7% increase in 2021 and 1.9% increase in 2022).

4.1.3: Cultivate existing and new corporate partners each year to increase total corporate giving from \$187,000 in 2020 to \$193,000 in 2023 (3% increase).

4.1.4: Attract new sources of other income (fee-for service, projects, contracts) from a baseline of \$60,000, assuming 1.7% growth in 2021 and 1.9% growth in 2022.

4.1.5: Raise \$400,000 by the end of FY 2022 for the Georgia Now and Forever initiative.

** While the entirety of the strategic plan will be revisited annually, the unusual economic circumstances of the current global pandemic necessitate a commitment to revisit financial goals twice a year.*

OBJECTIVE 4.2: RETAIN, DEVELOP, AND INCREASE GEORGIA CONSERVANCY'S HUMAN CAPITAL.

4.2.1: In 2021, develop an annual calendar and operations manual for the Board of Trustees including board training, a self-performance review and a board-and-prospect matrix review to ensure participation and representation of a mix of needed skillsets, fundraising abilities and biographical diversity, resulting in 2-3 new trustees annually to fit cohort needs.

4.2.2: To ensure that human capital can be most effective and efficient, invest in technology including an upgraded database and financial software by FY 2022.

4.2.3: Develop a system for identifying and utilizing volunteers to increase organizational capacity during FY 2022.

OBJECTIVE 4.3: DEVELOP CLARIFYING ORGANIZATIONAL DOCUMENTS INCLUDING A THEORY OF CHANGE, LOGIC MODEL, UPDATED OUTCOME MEASURES, AND UPDATED DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICIES.

4.3.1: Develop theory of change and logic models during FY 2021 and review annually.

4.3.2: Develop program outcome measures and metrics during FY 2022, track quarterly and update annually as needed.

4.3.3: Update and create equity policies to recruit, develop, train, promote and retain diverse Board of Trustee and staff talent, constituents and stakeholders during FY 2023.

TIMELINE

At Georgia Conservancy, we believe in a healthy balance between planning and flexibility. The strategic actions are sorted into years to show the work that will be prioritized during that year. We understand a need may arise to adapt this plan to changing context and new opportunities.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS	2021	2022	2023
GOAL 1: PROTECT AND RESTORE GEORGIA'S NATURAL SYSTEMS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE.			
IDENTIFY AND PROMOTE CARBON REDUCTION STRATEGIES			
Create carbon sequestration strategies	X		
Leverage resources to spur action from city and county leaders		X	X
COORDINATE CONSERVATION PLANS			
Identify common objectives and priorities within conservation plans	X		
Understand how state priorities align with conservation priorities		X	
Communicate findings at conference			X
BUILD RELATIONSHIPS AND CONVENE ECOLOGICALLY-MINDED DISCUSSIONS			
Identify three most impactful conservation actions for Georgia		X	
Align GC programming with actions identified			X
Identify three climate-related projects to support			X
Educate Georgians and policy influencers on ecological impact	X	X	X
ADVOCATE TO PROTECT GEORGIA'S NATURAL RESOURCES UNDER THREAT			
Support conservation laws and defend against rollbacks	X	X	X
Leverage external communication about threats to natural resources	X	X	X
Amplify diverse perspectives about Georgia's natural resources	X	X	X
Advance solutions related to land use and stewardship compensation	X	X	X
GOAL 2: POSITION GEORGIA'S COMMUNITIES TO BE MORE RESILIENT IN THE FACE OF ECOLOGICAL, DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC STRESSES.			
ENCOURAGE LAND USE PRACTICES THAT REDUCE DISTURBANCES TO NATURE			
Pursue 3 projects annually that encourage creative land use practices	X	X	X
Pursue 3 projects using conservation priorities in local planning	X	X	X
Recruit 3 partners offering leadership in land use area	X	X	X
PROVIDE TECHNICAL SERVICES TO ENCOURAGE ECOLOGICAL LAND USE			
Lead 18 Good Urbanism workshops	X	X	X
Support 15 presentations to city and county leadership	X	X	X
Target external communications in articles, speaking and media assets	X	X	X
Offer local planners "problem-solving clinics" annually	X	X	X
PROVIDE ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION THROUGH CONDUCTING RESEARCH			
Produce publications on redevelopment as community strategies		X	

STRATEGIC ACTIONS CONTINUED	2021	2022	2023
Secure academic and government partners, producing 4 publications			X
GOAL 3: IMPROVE THE LIVES OF GEORGIANS BY CONNECTING THEM TO GEORGIA'S NATURAL RESOURCES.			
EDUCATE STAKEHOLDERS ABOUT STEWARDSHIP AND CLIMATE CHANGE			
Conduct monthly engagements using virtual platforms	X	X	X
Conduct corporate and group service opportunities		X	X
Ensure educational activities align with data on stewardship	X		
USE OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES FOR EDUCATION			
Diversify 60% stewardship experiences and 40% service events	X	X	X
Establish 3 partnerships to serve underserved populations	X	X	X
INCREASE PARTICIPATION OF MEMBERS WITH GA'S NATURAL RESOURCES			
Retain 85% membership annually	X	X	X
Offer service project and appreciation event annually for members		X	X
Execute new membership acquisition campaigns in 3 geographies			X
Use inspirational communications to increase member engagement	X	X	X
GOAL 4: INCREASE SUSTAINABILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF GEORGIA CONSERVANCY OPERATIONS.			
ENSURE STABILITY BY RETAINING AND INCREASING GIVING ANNUALLY			
Increase total foundation giving 37%			X
Increase to 1450 individual giving units and 3.6% in total giving			X
Increase corporate giving by 3%			X
Attract new income sources to produce a 3.6% increase			X
Raise \$400,000 to support Georgia Now and Forever		X	
RETAIN AND INCREASE GEORGIA CONSERVANCY'S HUMAN CAPITAL			
Develop annual calendar and operations manual	X		
Invest in technology to most efficiently use human capital		X	
Develop of system for identifying and utilizing volunteers		X	
DEVELOP CLARIFYING ORGANIZATIONAL DOCUMENTS			
Develop theory of change and logic models	X		
Develop program outcome measures and metrics and track data		X	
Create equity policies for stakeholders			X

