

Foothill Conservancy Strategic Plan

2019 - 2022



Message from the President

Dear Members and Friends of the Foothill Conservancy:

The Foothill Conservancy is a mission-driven, nonprofit organization that periodically adopts a multi-year strategic plan to provide focus for our work. After securing California Wild and Scenic River designation for 37 miles of the Mokelumne River in 2018, we began a new plan to re-focus and guide our future efforts.

Our 2019-2022 Strategic Plan will help the Conservancy continue to be an effective advocate for the environment and communities of Amador and Calaveras counties while helping the organization grow and become more sustainable.

I'd like to thank everyone who participated in the development of the plan, including not only Foothill Conservancy directors, but Conservancy staff, community members, the Impact Foundry of Sacramento, and consultant Shelly Hance.

It has been an honor to serve on the Conservancy board for more three decades, and I am confident that with a new strategic plan in place, the Foothill Conservancy will continue to serve our communities for decades to come.

Very Truly Yours,

Katherine K. Evatt
President

Foothill Conservancy Mission, Vision and Core Values

Mission

To protect, restore, and sustain the natural and human environment in Amador and Calaveras Counties for the benefit of current and future generations.

Vision

The Foothill Conservancy envisions a future for Amador and Calaveras counties where:

- Rural character and scenic quality are protected.
- Agricultural lands, forest lands and open space are conserved.
- The natural diversity and habitat of native plants and animals are protected and restored.
- Free-flowing rivers and creeks are protected and restored.
- Development is ecologically, economically and socially sustainable.
- Historic sites, small towns and community identities are preserved.
- Cities and counties coordinate their land use planning.
- Social, economic and natural diversity are balanced to strengthen local communities.

Core Values

- **Find positive solutions.** We work together with everyone to find positive solutions.
- **Promote the triple bottom line.** We know that community economic prosperity and social well-being go hand in hand with environmental protection, restoration, and sustainability.
- **Stay grounded in values.** We are clear about and true to our values.
- **Work transparently.** We are transparent in our actions and motives.
- **Focus on fact, science and law.** We ground our work in research, fact, science, and law.
- **Support community-based solutions.** We help local residents find solutions to community challenges.

Foothill Conservancy Strategic Plan, 2019-2022

1. Effective Advocates

Foothill Conservancy's effective advocacy protects, restores, and sustains lands, streams, habitat, scenic beauty, communities, forests, and watersheds.

Goal 1.1: The Foothill Conservancy has increased capacity to effectively engage in key issues.

- Strategy 1.1.1: Secure ample funding to support advocacy efforts.
- Strategy 1.1.2: Recruit, hire, support, and train staff and volunteers.
- Strategy 1.1.3: Supplement in-house knowledge with consultant expertise as needed.

Goal 1.2: The FC is a trusted, knowledgeable and productive partner in the policy and advocacy arena.

- Strategy 1.2.1: Ensure that volunteers and staff are well informed and well trained.
- Strategy 1.2.2: Partner with diverse interests and cultivate lasting relationships.

Goal 1.3: The Foothill Conservancy is a strong voice for the Mokelumne River and watershed and other area streams and watersheds.

- Strategy 1.3.1: Continue and complete the Upper Mokelumne salmon restoration project.
- Strategy 1.3.2: Participate in local and regional water, hydropower, forest and watershed planning.
- Strategy 1.3.3: Monitor state legislation and continue regional and state-level partnerships.

Goal 1.4: Working with the community, Foothill Conservancy ensures that land-use plans and projects protect agricultural and other working lands, scenic beauty, cultural resources, and community character.

- Strategy 1.4.1: Work with counties and cities to improve their planning processes and implement new plans and better projects.

- Strategy 1.4.2: Educate decision-makers and the community about sustainable land use planning.
- Strategy 1.4.3: Monitor and participate in local land-use planning processes.
- Strategy 1.4.4: Partner with individuals, organizations, and businesses to promote good land-use planning.

2. Engaged Community

Our local communities and watersheds are healthy and sustainable due to the engagement of local residents, nonprofit organizations, business groups, and government agencies.

Goal 2.1: Community members are engaged in and well-informed about land use, water, and natural resource plans and projects.

- Strategy 2.1.1: Enhance our communication tools so they are up-to-date and well-employed.
- Strategy 2.2.2: Maintain contacts and build positive relationships with media and community leaders.

Goal 2.2: Community members understand the connections between their personal interests and related public policies and actions.

- Strategy 2.2.1: Launch an outing and education program based on King Research marketing report.

3. Thriving and Sustainable Organization

Foothill Conservancy is a thriving, effective, sustainable organization with robust resources, policies, and practices to ensure its continued success.

Goal 3.1: FC has enhanced financial resources to amply address its goals

- Strategy 3.1.1: Develop and implement annual work plans with supporting financial and fund development plans.

- Strategy 3.1.2: Diversify funding sources to reduce reliance on grants.
- Strategy 3.1.3: Increase outreach to Mokelumne-dependent communities and businesses, including those in the East Bay.

Goal 3.2: FC demonstrates best practice management of our resources, our business practices, and generative leadership with the Board of Directors

- Strategy 3.2.1: Increase the effectiveness of the Board of Directors.
- Strategy 3.2.2: Make room for and cultivate new leadership.
- Strategy 3.2.3: Review and update board structure and organizational policies and procedures.

Goal 3.3: FC is a great place to work, volunteer, and make a difference

- Strategy 3.3.1: Recruit, hire, and train staff while ensuring an effective and supportive working atmosphere
- Strategy 3.3.2: Develop and launch a robust membership and volunteer program

Foothill Conservancy Strategic Planning Process

The Foothill Conservancy Board of Directors developed a robust strategic plan through visioning, brainstorming, and prioritization exercises. This extensive and inclusive year-long process involved community members and key stakeholders to help assess the current and emerging issues, resources and opportunities facing the Foothill Conservancy. The planning process reaffirmed the organization's mission, vision, and core values, and guided the development of the plan's objectives, goals, and strategies.

In late 2018, the Conservancy engaged the planning services of the Impact Foundry, a Sacramento-based nonprofit sector planning, and technical assistance organization. Impact Foundry Executive Director Kim Tucker and her staff performed telephone interviews with board members, staff members, and key stakeholders.

The Impact Foundry facilitated a day long board strategy session reviewing the Foothill Conservancy Mission, Vision, Core Values, current goals, and a planning SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). They captured what participants felt were the most pressing issues and developed transformative strategies to address them.

In 2019, with the facilitation of consultant Shelly Hance, the Conservancy board reviewed its initial brainstorming outcomes, prioritizing and synthesizing these into three strategic directions approved by the Board in June 2019. The strategic directions were refined into succinct objectives with supporting goals and strategies.

This board effort lasted just short of a year, producing a strategic plan the board used to develop action plans to implement various project elements. The organization will track the action plan accomplishments with continual updates and new action plans each year, keeping the strategic plan a living document informed by action, success, challenges, and shifting external conditions.

This strategic plan was built with care, with enthusiasm, and with devotion of the board and the Foothill Conservancy community.

The Foothill Conservancy Board of Directors would like to express gratitude to the following people for their involvement in the development of this Strategic Plan.

Community Members: Bob Hartmann, Mike Kirkley, Jane O’Riordan, Chris Shutes, Steve Wilensky

Staff: Reuben Childress, Amanda Nelson, Carolyn Schooley

Directors: Pete Bell, Susan Bragstad, Caryl Callsen, Katherine Evatt, Mara Feeney, Doug Hardy, Marta Johnson, Bob Leitzell, Will Mosgrove, Laurie Webb, Clavey Wendt, and Kelsi Williams.

Past Foothill Conservancy Strategic Objectives

2009-2016

- Economic, Environmental, Socially Sustainable Local Communities
- There is Strong and Significant Support of FC Vision
- Regionwide watersheds are protected and restored
- Regional planning and land management incorporate Greenhouse Gas Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation

2003 - 2007

- Land use and economic development are “smart and sustainable.”
- Area watersheds are protected and restored.
- There is a strong general public support for Foothill Conservancy issues.
- Foothill Conservancy is a sustainable, efficient and effective organization