

# Salt Spring Island Conservancy Strategic Planning Process

**Purpose:** *To engage a wide range of Conservancy members, volunteers and supporters to help the Board develop an ongoing Strategic Plan to guide the Conservancy's work.*

## Process:

- ✓ May 2017 – Board initiates process, establishes steering committee to shape and guide process
- ✓ June 2017 – Board and staff brainstorm possible future directions (16 engaged)
- ✓ Sept 2017 – Member survey (115 responses)
- ✓ Nov/Dec 2017-18 – Focus groups (13 participants)
- ✓ Nov/Dec 2017 - Interviews (22 participants)
- ✓ Dec 2017 – Community survey/Salt Spring Exchange (15 responses)
- ✓ Jan 2018 – Board retreat to discuss consolidated results
- ✓ Feb/Mar 2018 – Board develops and approves 5-Year Outcomes
- ✓ April/May 2018 – Board approves 2018-20 Strategic Plan
- ✓ June 2018 – Summary presentation of Strategic Plan Process and Outcomes after AGM
- ✓ Summer 2018 – Summary presentation emailed to members and planning participants

**Summary:** *Until now, Conservancy strategic planning has included Board and Staff members. Particularly given recent changes in available grants funding, this is an important time to more fully consider the Conservancy's ongoing direction. This recent, year-long process involved 180 individuals. Several organization development experts and consultants helped design the process and complimented the Board on committing to such a comprehensive process.*

## Key Findings:

- ✓ The Conservancy is well respected and plays an important role in island life.
- ✓ Keep the main focus on land acquisition and land protection.
- ✓ Fully be a land trust; avoid involvement in advocacy.
- ✓ Increase education and outreach efforts.
- ✓ Increase the Conservancy's profile in the community.
- ✓ Increase membership.
- ✓ Strengthen partnerships with other organizations.
- ✓ Understand that a wide range of views exist about access to nature reserves.
- ✓ Review and clarify the mission and vision.
- ✓ Diversify funding.

## Five-Year Outcomes:

**CONSERVATION** - *Decrease overall emphasis by about 10%.*

Goals	5-Year Outcomes
<b><i>Identify &amp; monitor priority lands</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement conservation plan integrating climate change into land protection priorities &amp; projects (opportunistic &amp; strategic approach)</li> <li>• Continue Species at Risk fieldwork &amp; monitoring, as funding allows, to help guide conservation &amp; outreach/education strategies</li> </ul>
<b><i>Protect key lands via acquisition, covenant or stewardship agreement</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase # of nature reserves at a level that resources can support</li> <li>• Increase # of conservation covenants at a similarly sustainable level</li> <li>• Increase # of landowner stewardship agreements at a higher rate</li> </ul>
<b><i>Manage, monitor and/or restore owned and covenanted lands</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue managing nature reserves responsibly &amp; sustainably, including varying levels of public use &amp; enjoyment</li> <li>• Update land management plans every decade, unless necessary sooner</li> <li>• Engage in significant restoration if approved &amp; funds are available</li> <li>• Better equalize land management &amp; restoration focus among reserves</li> <li>• Continue annual covenant monitoring &amp; enforcement, with volunteer assistance</li> </ul>

## Five-Year Outcomes:

### OUTREACH & EDUCATION - *Increase overall emphasis by about 10%.*

Goals	5-Year Outcomes
<p><b><i>Increase public awareness about SSIC and commitment to land stewardship</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep focus as a land trust; not general enviro or advocacy organization</li> <li>• Increase awareness about climate change (mitigation &amp; adaptation)</li> <li>• Clearly articulate &amp; communicate SSIC’s approach to nature protection &amp; public use &amp; enjoyment</li> <li>• Update &amp; implement comprehensive communications plan</li> <li>• Continue to update &amp; maintain website, social media, written materials</li> <li>• Increase Driftwood/SS Exchange coverage</li> <li>• Continue to sponsor nature &amp; how-to education events or workshops, large summer event at BLNR, spring or fall fundraising event</li> <li>• Have SSIC presence at key community events</li> <li>• Use Blackburn building for further nature-related purposes</li> <li>• Sponsor trail hikes to nature reserves</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Help young people experience, understand and value nature</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Stewards in Training (SiT) program at current level (K-8 students)</li> <li>• Augment SiT program with outreach to parents</li> <li>• Develop summer youth program</li> <li>• Investigate &amp; implement effective engagement with high school students</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Build stronger partnerships and relationships with key community members</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue current partnerships</li> <li>• Strengthen or build new partnerships</li> <li>• Tend &amp; build relationships with key SSI community leaders &amp; connectors</li> <li>• Tend &amp; build relationships with key elected leaders</li> <li>• Sponsor annual get-together of local conservation-related leaders</li> </ul>

## Five-Year Outcomes:

### ORGANIZATION MANAGEMENT

Goals	5-Year Results
<b><i>Develop policy and guide overall direction of the organization (board)</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review &amp; update policy manual, Land Trust Standards &amp; Practices</li> <li>• Continue building strong, diverse board &amp; board leadership (succession)</li> <li>• Increase board engagement as community ambassadors.</li> <li>• Clearly define &amp; communicate ongoing board role &amp; rationale</li> <li>• Implement 3-year strategic plan guided by 5-year outcomes, revised mission and vision, &amp; articulated core values</li> </ul>
<b><i>Manage day-to-day operations of the organization (staff)</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve staff/consulting structure to achieve 5-year outcomes: staff &amp; organization management, outreach/education &amp; conservation program management, land management, bookkeeping, office/building management, fundraising, volunteer coordination, etc.</li> <li>• Complete succession plans for all key staff positions</li> </ul>
<b><i>Build &amp; maintain a strong, stable membership base that supports and participates in the organization</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop &amp; implement membership-building plan, with clear membership benefits, to significantly increase membership</li> <li>• Continue member communications: e-mail messages, Acorn Briefs, Acorn newsletter, annual report</li> <li>• Hold several member gatherings/year to build community (AGM, etc.)</li> <li>• Continue engaging volunteers at significant levels</li> <li>• Clarify &amp; communicate clear volunteer roles, including committees.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Build solid, stable funding base to support annual operations and long-term land protection needs</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease dependence on federal &amp; required matching grants</li> <li>• Increase funding from members, donors, businesses, investments, etc.</li> <li>• Diversify funding; secure new sources for outreach &amp; education</li> <li>• Build planned giving program</li> <li>• Significantly increase Land Management &amp; Covenant Management funds</li> <li>• Explore revenue-producing strategies &amp; implement as feasible</li> <li>• Complete &amp; implement 5-year fundraising plan (2018-2022)</li> </ul>