

Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust Strategic Plan 2022-24

About

The Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust has been protecting Ontario's natural legacy for more than 20 years. With 67 properties permanently protected on and around the Moraine, at the start of this Plan, we play a critical role in solving the global problem of biodiversity loss and climate change. Together with caretakers and caring donors, we have preserved over 5,269 acres of precious habitat— and there is lots more to do! We're working every day to protect more properties and sensitive habitats in the Moraine and the Greenbelt, to ensure the future of the wild and at-risk species that live there. We do this important work in partnership with local communities across the region, all of whom benefit from these beautiful natural spaces.

The Vision

We envision that natural environments important to sustaining life are protected forever.

Ethical Value Statements

The following values statements guide and inspire every decision and action at the Land Trust. We will:

- Maintain and enhance the trust of our community
- Collaborate with communities and partners for the common good
- Effectively steward our lands in perpetuity
- Be accountable for our results, decisions and resources
- Engage, influence, persuade and advocate
- Treat volunteers, staff members, donors and all others involved with the Land Trust with respect
- Celebrate successes in environmental protection

Mission Statement

The Land Trust works to ensure a healthy ecosystem and natural environment that thrives forever, on and near the Oak Ridges Moraine.

Goals

- A. **Growth:** There is continued growth in the number of environmentally sensitive properties and area protected.
- B. **Perpetuity:** Systems, processes and resources are designed for long-term land protection, and monitored for effective implementation.
- C. **Voice:** Public policy is aligned with environmental protection and action against climate change.
- D. **Responsibility:** The Land Trust meets current annual budget needs plus growth for special projects and expansion of programs.
- E. **Engagement:** There is broad community engagement, education and participation in the work of the Land Trust, that includes and values Indigenous peoples.

Strategic Directions	Priority Action Areas	Success Measures
1. Continue to increase environmentally sensitive lands that are permanently protected by the Land Trust (serves Goal A).	1.1 Target priority properties through land securement mapping and connecting with landowners.	One landowner community engagement event or outreach initiative held each year. Conduct initial assessments for at least 5 new additional properties in pipeline per year.
	1.2 Conduct assessments and analysis of potential properties.	Secure a minimum of 6 properties, and/or 350 acres (140 hectares) of priority land as determined through the Natural Heritage Mapping Program, over a three-year period.
	1.3 For desired properties, obtain the resources and approvals and complete acquisition.	Conduct detailed assessments and analysis of each property brought forward for securement.
	1.4 Clarify the costs of the different land securement options, including potential risk management strategies.	In coordination with other land conservation groups (e.g. OLTA), clarify the costs of different land securement options and also the feasibility for a legal defense fund.
2. Ensure that the integrity of all land trust properties is maintained and/or	2.1 Ensure all properties (owned and easements) are monitored.	Ensure that all properties are monitored at least annually (or more frequently as needed) and that identified issues are acted on in timely manner.

enhanced using accepted standards. (serves Goal B)	2.2 Develop, update and implement a Stewardship Management Plan for each owned property.	Ensure that all owned properties have an up-to-date Stewardship Management Plan and that the Plans are updated as needed, or at minimum every 5 years.
	2.3 Ensure there is a property steward assigned for each owned property.	Develop the requirements and expectations of property stewards/guardians and ensure that they are trained and are involved in active property management for Land Trust owned properties, as per the Stewardship Management Plans.
	2.4 Support conservation easement owners to ensure compliance with covenants and proactively keep them informed of any opportunities to enhance the ecological features and/or protection on their land.	Endeavour to update a minimum of one CEA's (older than 10 years) to add clarity to the monitoring process for stronger protection.
3. Raise funds to support the mission and carry out the Plan.	3.1 Establish increased overall revenue generation targets and metrics.	Establish a Fundraising Plan that outlines where our best efforts should be focused on for fundraising based on tracking efforts and results for specific fundraising efforts (e.g., Major Donors vs. Foundations, Government, Community Grants etc.).
	3.2 Prioritize different funding sources and establish targets for each selected method	Sustain other overall revenues and develop new partnerships opportunities.
	3.3 Effectively track, monitor and enhance donors, volunteer and participant engagement	Database changeover completed and in use to support engagement.
	3.5 Engage the Board for 100% participation in Fundraising	Annual participation of 100% of the Board in fundraising activities, including facilitating new partnerships to enhance overall revenues.
4. Increase organization capacity and strive for excellence.	4.1 Use increased unrestricted funds for long-term staffing when feasible.	Top priority positions funded and filled with high quality staff members within an internally transparent compensation plan.
		Develop staffing model addressing cost-effectiveness based on roles, compensation and retention.

	4.2 Seek to recruited and retain qualified, dedicated and talented staff within a healthy, safe and productive work environment	StarCliff has become the Trust's head office.
		Key positions identified and succession plans prepared for those, along with cost-effective professional development.
		Effective human resource supports provided and kept up to date, including information technology.
	4.3 Enhance knowledge, participation and management of volunteers	Volunteer handbook updated.
	4.4 Continue to ensure prudent financial management within accepted standards and audit compliance.	Timely accurate reports continued, and continued audits completed without significant internal control issues.
	4.5 Update stewardship funding model to account for current portfolio	Updated at least every three years including burn rate.
	4.6 Continue to enhance wise governance including board composition, succession, education, assessment, recruitment and external participation.	Maintain high quality, skilled, and diverse board members, officers and board operations, including 100% board participation in at least one non-board event per year.
Annual update of Director, Officer and CEO succession plans.		
4.7 Maintain effective risk oversight and management.	Risk Task Force recommendations reviewed and in process, including crisis management and disaster recovery plans.	
5. Deliver educational programs that align with the Vision and Mission of	5.1 Identify key target audiences and analyze the best methods in which to engage and educate them.	Engage an average of 800 people per year by hosting 10-15 events per year.
		Update the list of target audiences and associated messages that will best engage and educate.

the Land Trust. (serves Goal E)	5.2 Create a welcoming and inclusive environment to diverse, inclusive and equitable participation.	Diversity research relevant to education done for an average of at least one group under-represented in nature events and environmental causes, per annum.
	5.3 Continue to take a leadership role in sharing knowledge with other organizations involved in protecting environmentally sensitive land	Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust's role is increasingly focussed on emerging and complex issues, not routine queries from small land trusts.
	5.4 Empower individuals to take action to engage with and support the natural environment	Three barriers relating to access to education identified and removed.
	5.5 Once the engagement database is fully functional, explore use of the data base and enhanced survey practices to better identify educational impact.	Most education events include practical ideas for individual action.
		Enhanced reporting ability to grantmakers funding Trust education.
6. Continue to be a strong voice for the Trust and Trust movement, and evangelists for the environment (serves Goal C).	6.1 Apply criteria for different levels of involvement in public policy issues	Actions taken and resources used reflect criteria. Decision-makers are well informed of the environmental consequences of key upcoming decisions.
	6.2 Maintain a network to alert the Trust to emerging issues	Key issues learned about in time to apply criteria and act
	6.3 Be a key go-to source for governments and media	Provide useful, accurate and non-partisan information to relevant inquiries (with reasonable deadlines).
	6.4 Amplify our voice through partnerships and relationships	Effective collaborations formed for significant issues, with the Trust as lead or supporter as appropriate
7. Pursue meaningful Indigenous engagement and ensure inclusion and equity of Indigenous perspectives in our work and decision making to	7.1 Ensuring we are creating opportunities for dialogue and reciprocal learning to occur to build the relationship with Indigenous communities within our geographic scope.	Board and staff participate in at least one event with an indigenous community.

support moving forward on the Truth and Reconciliation actions and United Nations Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP).	7.2 Create a value proposition that outlines what we have to offer to Indigenous communities.	Identify areas on or near the Oak Ridges Moraine that may meet the needs and priorities of local Indigenous communities.
	7.3 Engage Indigenous communities to share the value proposition and develop priorities based on shared values and goals.	Create opportunities for Indigenous community members to get involved with the Land Trust's events and activities, at least two per year.
	7.4 Develop a plan for Indigenous engagement for awareness, issues, and barriers.	Involve indigenous communities in events for the general public to better communicate the importance of indigenous ways of knowing to conservation and protection.
	7.5 With support from Indigenous communities, evaluate land trust properties to provide an opportunity for a variety of Indigenous knowledge systems to be included when determining stewardship and management action on our properties.	Number of Land Trust properties that have incorporated opportunities on moving forward on Truth and Reconciliation actions and the UNDRIP.
	7.6 Inform and engage private CEA landowners to support moving forward on this strategic direction.	Number of landowners or land donors that have been informed on actions they can take on moving forward.