



LANDSCAPE
CONSERVATION
COOPERATIVES



2014 | Network
Strategic
Plan

Landscape Conservation Cooperatives are public-private **partnerships** composed of states, tribes, federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, universities, international jurisdictions, and others **working** together to address landscape and seascape scale **conservation** issues.

ON THE COVER

River Otter in California.
RICK KIMBLE/USFWS

Edwards Plateau region of Texas.
TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE
DEPARTMENT

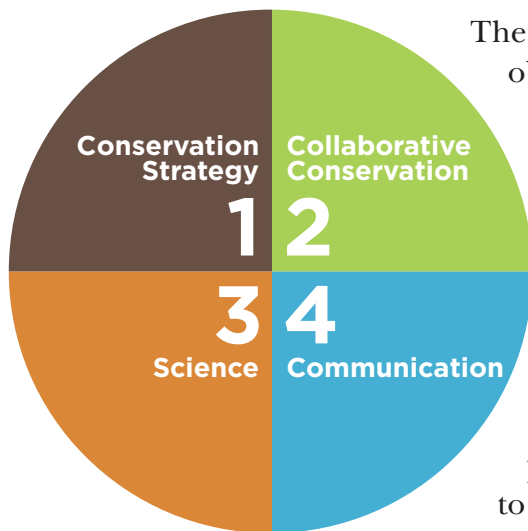
**Tiger swallowtail butterfly on a
thistle.** JEFF BENNETT/NPS

Preamble

This strategic plan for the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC) Network builds on existing work within the Network and articulates a path for the next five years to achieving the LCC Network’s vision and mission.

The purpose of the LCC Network is to harness the capacities and abilities of all partners in support of common conservation outcomes and to serve as a strategic forum for collegial collaboration, coordination, and integration. The Network is an extension of existing partnership efforts, which seeks to enhance conservation outcomes across the geographical extent of the Network.

Individually, each LCC is a collaborative, self-directed conservation partnership that connects partners and pre-existing local partnerships to a landscape vision. LCCs undertake work specific to the needs of their geographies and collaborators.



The LCC Network Strategic Plan identifies goals, objectives, and example tactics that support the Network’s vision and mission. The goals identify common aims of individual LCCs and provide a way for them to align across the Network’s geography. Each of the four goals—addressing **conservation strategy**, **collaborative conservation**, **science**, and **communications**—has a set of objectives.

The objectives describe LCC efforts that will be prioritized and implemented differently according to each LCC’s unique characteristics. Example tactics are listed for each objective purely for illustration.

They do not prescribe what the self-directed LCCs “should” be doing. Rather, they are examples provided by the LCC community that show the diversity of conservation approaches; there is no expectation or direction that all LCCs will use all tactics.

This strategic plan

- » Provides a living, iterative reference to guide the LCC Network¹
- » Builds from existing strategies within the LCC Network—every LCC should see their work somewhere in the document
- » Does not prioritize any goal, objective, or example tactic as more important than another
- » Will be updated in the next two years

The strategic plan does not

- » Prescribe the actions individual LCCs must take to achieve the vision and mission of the LCC Network
- » Encompass all things that all LCCs are working on
- » Make value statements on priorities for individual LCCs

This strategy contains common and shared elements to help individual LCCs work collaboratively as a conservation network while communicating how the broader LCC Network collectively functions.

The information and ideas in this strategic plan were gleaned from existing LCC strategic, science, operational and other plans. This strategic plan serves as a companion document to these plans. The original draft of this document resulted from a weeklong workshop in late July 2014 of over 50 representatives from within the LCC Network, including members of the LCC Council, Steering Committees, LCC Coordinators, LCC Science Coordinators, national partner organizations, and other Network leaders. The original draft was then improved by substantive comments from more than three dozen organizations within the LCC Network.

LCCs are fundamentally partnership endeavors. Although LCCs appear to be a new construct, they actually are based on existing models. The LCC Network appreciates and celebrates the long-term partnerships that have preceded its establishment and have helped steer the Network towards this collaboration model. These long-term partnerships are truly the foundation and models for success. Conservation partners, whether or not engaged with LCCs, produce valuable conservation science and delivery that intertwines with LCC goals. This strategic plan supports and does not abrogate or diminish the authorities and responsibilities of partners. Through individual partner responsibilities, authorities and accomplishments, the Network will achieve success. It is anticipated that partners will engage in those goals and objectives that are important to them and that align with their unique mission.

¹ Some sections include specific key or technical terms. Definitions for some of these have been provided. Readers of this strategic plan should think about these terms in the context of their own geography, community, culture or organization. The meaning of these terms can change over time through the efforts of a collaborating and evolving community.



Vision: Landscapes capable of sustaining natural and cultural resources for current and future generations

LCC Network

Sunrise in the
desert.
ANDREW
LOESCHER/
USFWS

MISSION

A network of cooperatives depends on LCCs to:

- » Develop and provide integrated science-based information about the implications of climate change and other stressors for the sustainability of natural and cultural resources;
- » Develop shared, landscape-level, conservation objectives and inform conservation strategies that are based on a shared scientific understanding about the landscape, including the implications of current and future environmental stressors;
- » Facilitate the exchange of applied science in the implementation of conservation strategies and products developed by the Cooperative or their partners;
- » Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of LCC conservation strategies in meeting shared objectives;
- » Develop appropriate linkages that connect LCCs to ensure an effective network.

Introduction

The purpose of this Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC) Network Strategic Plan is to create a strategic framework with shared goals for how the LCCs will aspire to achieve the LCC Network vision through collective impact.

The success of the Network depends both upon the success of individual LCC self-directed partnerships in addressing the conservation needs most important within their geographies, as well as the LCCs' collective ability to address conservation goals at even broader geographic scales.

Recognizing that conservation objectives (shared or unique) are achieved at the scale of individual LCCs, monitoring the Network's effectiveness should reflect the successes of each LCC and Network accomplishments. As an assemblage of conservation practitioners across the continent, the Pacific Islands and the Caribbean, LCCs have an obligation to future generations who will rely on natural and cultural resources for their livelihood, quality of life, and cultural connection. The network of LCCs works collectively to conserve and maintain landscapes and seascapes² capable of sustaining natural and cultural resources for current and future generations.

The LCC Network's aspiration to develop an ecologically connected network of landscapes and seascapes can be achieved through the identification and pursuit of shared, broad-scale conservation goals that span political, jurisdictional, and ecological boundaries, along with a shared understanding of the problems the Network is seeking to address. The broad geographic scope of the Network is necessary to facilitate and support unprecedented integration efforts and mechanisms that address large-scale stressors such as climate change, urbanization, pollution, energy development, resource extraction, and water stress. Working collectively, LCCs across the entire Network can face complex problems that no single organization or entity can solve alone.

This LCC Network Strategic Plan encourages national and international leaders to support the Network through information, policy, funding, and conservation action. It describes some of the shared goals and objectives that could work from multi-LCC to international scales, yet it recognizes that the success of the LCC Network depends upon the conservation successes of individual LCCs.

² The term "landscapes and seascapes," or sometimes just "landscapes," hereafter refers to terrestrial, aquatic and marine environments along with a supportive, healthy natural environment with clean air and water.

Goals & Objectives



An actionable strategy to adapt conservation to a changing world.

Children planting at Desert National Wildlife Refuge in Nevada. USFWS

The LCC Network Strategic Plan is organized into four strategic goal areas:

- 1. Conservation strategy**
- 2. Collaborative conservation**
- 3. Science**
- 4. Communications**

Each strategic area has a goal, a set of objectives, and example tactics identified under those objectives (a longer list of example tactics is included in the Appendix). The example tactics serve to illustrate what can be done to achieve the objectives, at multiple levels and degrees of specificity, which can be refined during implementation. They are not inclusive of all future actions potentially needed to meet these objectives.

1 Conservation Strategy



GOAL 1

An ecologically connected network of landscapes and seascapes adaptable to global change — such as climate change — with the ability to sustain ecological integrity and health to meet the needs of society at multiple scales.



Left: Wacissa River in Florida. FLORIDA FISH & WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Right: Wood thrush. STEVE MASLOWSKI/USFWS

Objective 1

Identify shared conservation objectives, challenges, and opportunities to inform landscape conservation at continental, LCC, island, and regional scales.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Establish conservation objectives at the LCC level and other applicable scales.
- » Roll-up LCC objectives to identify Network-scale objectives.

Objective 2

Develop then deliver (through partners) regional landscape conservation goals and designs³ that support resiliency and adaptation to both global change and regional landscape challenges, while ensuring the inclusion of all partners and stakeholders necessary for successful conservation.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Work with all necessary partners and indigenous peoples to select flagship regions and identify priority areas for conservation and restoration.
- » Complete, expand, and support the delivery of landscape conservation designs by providing tools and guidance to assist in their implementation.

³ Landscape Conservation Design is an iterative, collaborative, and holistic process that provides information, analytical tools, spatially explicit data and best management practices to develop shared conservation strategies and to achieve jointly held conservation goals among partners.



Healthy lands support diverse wildlife populations for wildlife watchers, anglers and hunters. USFWS

- » When developing conservation designs, acknowledge the extensive knowledge and practices indigenous peoples have developed over generations about large landscape processes.

Objective 3

Integrate regional or other scale-specific conservation designs to align and focus conservation action at the Network scale, within available authorities.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Facilitate the design of an ecologically connected network of large geographic regions that support priority natural and cultural resources.

Objective 4

Identify and obtain the resources required at the LCC and Network scales to inform, develop, and support implementation of the conservation designs and other conservation actions.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » The LCC Council and Network partners will identify existing and new resources, then advocate for and pursue the resources required to accomplish this goal at the LCC Network level.

Objective 5

Monitor the effectiveness of conservation design(s) and design application in terms of achieving stated outcomes, then revise as appropriate.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Identify and promote good, tested practices for design development and supporting implementation.

2 Collaborative Conservation



GOAL 2

Facilitated alignment of partnership efforts within and amongst LCCs, including planning efforts and resources, that improves conservation outcomes across LCCs and the Network.



Left:
Collaborators from Caribbean LCC. OLIVER BENCOSME/SEA GRANT PUERTO RICO **Right:**
Hurricane Irene damage on Pea Island. TOM MAKENZIE/USFWS

Objective 1

Create a high-functioning organizational culture for LCCs and the Network.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Identify institutional barriers and stovepipes that inhibit cross-agency collaboration and partnerships and seek to reduce, break-down, or overcome them.
- » Continue to pursue opportunities to expand partnerships throughout the Network, including the addition of new partners in LCCs—particularly nontraditional partners that increase the breadth, diversity, and effectiveness of the conservation community.

Objective 2

Identify and explore opportunities for collaborative actions within the LCC Network.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Identify conservation and mitigation opportunities that span multiple LCCs as well as those that extend to other regional collaboration networks.



Spring Beauty at
Sunflower Flats,
Elko District BLM
Nevada. SHANELL
OWEN

Objective 3

Demonstrate, monitor, and evaluate the value and effectiveness of the LCC Network.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Develop common definitions and performance metrics for key qualitative and quantitative outcomes that highlight, show, and demonstrate value.

Objective 4

Identify new and existing training and networking opportunities for the LCC Network.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Create a “playbook” containing best management practices for LCC Coordinators and Steering Committee Chairs.

Objective 5

Leverage conservation planning to be opportunistic in taking advantage of current and new funding sources for conservation.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Prepare to respond to funding and partnership opportunities that arise as a result of urgent conservation needs (e.g. natural disasters, species invasions, disease) that are likely to occur based on future scenario planning.

Objective 6

Create a Network-level system for prioritizing operational needs at Network and regional levels, as appropriate.

3 Science



GOAL 3

Natural and cultural resources are conserved at large landscape and seascape scales, guided by the collaborative application of science, experience, and cultural or traditional ecological knowledge and the generation of new conservation knowledge.



Left: Aurora borealis at Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge. BRYAN WORTH. Right: Magnificent Frigatebirds. USFWS

Objective 1

Identify shared science, information, and resource needs at the Network-scale.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Complete, disseminate, and implement the LCC Network Science Plan.
- » Identify and develop critical spatial, biological, and cultural data and evaluation tools across the Network.
- » Support assessment of climate change impacts and adaptation planning for cultural and/or subsistence resources that are traditionally gathered, hunted, or culturally significant.

Objective 2

Promote collaborative production of science and research—including human dimensions—as well as the use of experience and indigenous and traditional ecological knowledge among LCCs, Climate Science Centers (CSCs), and other interested parties; use these to inform resource management decisions, educate local communities, and address shared needs.



Child with fish
at the Upper
Mississippi
River National
Wildlife Refuge.
BOB DRIESLEIN/
USFWS

Traditional ecological knowledge⁴ refers to the knowledge, innovations, and practices of indigenous and local communities around the world.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Engage resource decision makers, managers, cultural practitioners, and indigenous peoples in the appropriate framing of resource-based decision problems and the formulation of clear management objectives that focus and guide subsequent science activities.

Objective 3

- » Demonstrate and evaluate the value and improve the effectiveness of LCC science.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Support efficiency among LCC and other appropriate broad-scale monitoring programs in generating status and trend information on priority resources and landscapes by facilitating sharing, cooperative synthesis, communication, and evaluation of data.

⁴ Traditional ecological knowledge is developed from experience gained over the centuries and adapted to the local culture and environment. The word “knowledge” is meant to be plural, to acknowledge the many types of knowledge it includes.

4 Communications



GOAL 4

Advance the knowledge of, support for, and engagement in landscape-scale conservation across the LCC Network.



Left: A school of manini at Kingman Reef National Wildlife Refuge. KYDD POLLOCK
Right: Atlantic puffins at Maine Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge. USFWS

Objective 1

Communicate the existence and application of LCC Network science, products and tools to partners and stakeholders in a form that is understandable, publicly accessible, engaging, and relates to what matters to end users and society.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Use the LCC Network website and other tools as a platform for sharing key LCC services and benefits such as news, products, tools, training, science, data, documents, and open source software for conservation use or research, where appropriate.

Objective 2

Increase two-way communication with, outreach to, and engagement of key partners across the LCC Network as well as new partners to expand the LCC Network and increase conservation impact and achievements.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Identify new, strategic target audiences with interests that may intersect with conservation, such as young leaders, environmental justice groups, development communities, resource extraction industries, or planners from the built environment who could use science to make decisions that support both conservation and their own interests.



Padding the
canals of
Alligator River
National Wildlife
Refuge. STEVE
HILLEBRAND,
USFWS

Objective 3

Develop and implement a communications and outreach plan that identifies and uses media to clearly convey to appropriate target audiences the value and tangible successes of the LCC Network at various scales.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Communicate LCC successes that show on-the-ground impact or how they have influenced management decisions through a variety of means. These successes also need to convey the complexities and challenges of achieving landscape- and seascape-scale conservation results.
- » Open and increase the availability of LCC products and information to diverse audiences.

Objective 4

Build communications capacity and capabilities within the LCC Network to effectively communicate the purposes and successes of the LCC Network.

EXAMPLE TACTICS

- » Foster regional communications communities of practice that build upon the strengths and expertise of LCCs and their individual partners.

Objective 5

Share lessons learned across the LCC Network.

Putting It Into Action

As a living, iterative document, this strategic plan will guide LCC actions to achieve the Network vision and mission. These actions, however, will vary depending on geographic differences and other variations among individual LCCs.



A full list of the example tactics generated through this strategic planning process is included in the Appendix, but it was never considered to be a complete list of tactics. The LCC Network governance infrastructure, including the LCC Council, LCT, LSCT, steering committees of individual LCCs, and other entities within the Network, can select which issues best intersect and meet their own needs as well as the needs of the Network. Partners are invited to collaborate and identify the best approaches for action, measurable outcomes, and needed resources to successfully implement strategies outlined in this plan.

Implementing this strategic plan will require the development of an implementation framework. The framework will identify processes to advance the goals and objectives in this strategy and will establish a schedule for monitoring and evaluating program performance.

Working groups or teams may be established to formulate next steps and help monitor and communicate how the Network collectively is addressing specific goals and objectives. The LCC Network plans to assign an LCC Strategic Plan Implementation Coordinator to facilitate broader communication across the Network. The LCC



To borrow Aldo Leopold's thoughts on the land ethic, nothing as important as the future for the LCC Network is ever 'written' — it evolves in the minds of a thinking, collaborative community.

Left: Red foxes on Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge. DON FREIDAY
Middle: Beach on the coast of Oregon. JOHN MANKOWSKI/NPLCC
Right: Flint Hills Legacy Conservation Area, Kansas. RICK HANSEN/USFWS

Network, with coordination from the LCC Network staff, will gather information about lessons learned and facilitate an ongoing dialogue with the intent to update the LCC Network Strategic Plan within the next two years.

The LCC Network as an entity will continue to listen, evolve, and support a diverse array of partners all working together to fulfill its vision for landscapes capable of sustaining natural and cultural resources for current and future generations.

Appendix

Each goal area has a set of objectives and some example tactics, which are intended to help illustrate the kinds of actions that can be taken to help achieve the Network's common goals.

This appendix includes a list of all the example tactics generated through the strategic planning process but this list is not meant to limit the tactics available to the Network. The actual tactics deployed will be determined by the various entities within the LCC Network (see "Definitions" section of this Appendix) based on which actions they support and the implementation framework that will be developed for this strategic plan.

GOAL 1: CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Objective 1: Shared Objectives

- » Establish conservation objectives at the LCC level and other applicable scales
- » Roll-up LCC objectives to identify Network-scale objectives

Objective 2: Conservation Designs

- » Work with all necessary partners and indigenous peoples to select flagship regions and identify priority areas for conservation and restoration with the aim of facilitating climate resilient lands and waters; build, maintain, or restore resilience in vulnerable regions; develop or increase carbon storage capacity (where appropriate); and address management issues within given authorities.
- » Produce first generation climate change resilient landscape designs.
- » Complete, expand, and support the delivery of landscape conservation designs with goals for priority areas and provide tools and guidance to assist in their implementation.
- » When developing conservation designs, acknowledge the extensive knowledge and practices indigenous peoples have related to large landscape processes.

- » Identify priority areas where opportunities exist to improve resilience or adaptation strategies for priority resources, ecosystem services, and communities.
- » Support the development of foundational data sets at the LCC scale that could also be rolled up to the multi-LCC, continental, and global scales.
- » Support development of analytical tools to help understand the effects of global change on natural and human systems at the LCC, multi-LCC, continental, and global scales.
- » Identify and engage Network-wide common partnerships that should be engaged in support of this objective (e.g., National Association of Counties).

Ecological resilience is the capacity of a system to resist and recover from natural or human-cause disturbances. Resilient systems can maintain their essential structure in the face of floods, fires, pest outbreaks, pollution, and other stressors.

Objective 3: Integration

- » Facilitate the design of an ecologically connected network of large geographic regions that support priority natural and cultural resources.
- » Identify, prioritize, and support implementation of cross-LCC actions where coordinated action across several LCCs could have a multiplying effect.
- » Support the implementation of national plans to achieve landscape conservation and climate adaptation such as the National Fish, Wildlife & Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy, particularly as it relates to other goals and objectives of this strategic plan.
- » Develop strategies to address cumulative, existing (e.g., non-climate) stressors broadly and major global change stressors at the relevant scale.
- » Identify additional strategies needed to adapt to global change that incorporate human and societal values.
- » Recognizing the proprietary status of traditional ecological knowledge, identify Tribal and First Nations' information needs related to conservation and management of natural and cultural resources potentially affected by global change, including climate change.
- » Collect, evaluate, analyze, then provide the best tools and information that managers need to assist them in supporting design implementation and evaluation.

Objective 4: Needed Resources

- » Identify the core resources—including for staff, science, partners, and community assets—needed for each LCC and the shared resources and approaches that would increase appropriately consistent, but not identical, approaches and integration between LCCs to accomplish this strategic goal Network-wide.

- » The LCC Council and Network partners will identify existing and new resources, then advocate for and pursue the resources required to accomplish this goal at the LCC Network level.
- » Develop a set of transparent performance metrics that enable the Network to monitor and evaluate progress.

Objective 5: Monitoring Effectiveness

- » Identify and promote good, tested practices for design development and supporting implementation.
- » Design a process or framework for evaluation of conservation designs' success using shared methodologies, standards, and other approaches across the Network, collectively giving a sense of Network-level effectiveness.
- » Develop the needed foundation that status and trend monitoring provide, in addition to existing inventory monitoring and data sets.

GOAL 2: COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION

Objective 1: Organizational Culture

- » Identify institutional barriers and stove-pipes that inhibit cross-agency collaboration and partnerships and seek to reduce, breakdown, or overcome them.
- » Create a forum for regular communication across LCCs and throughout the Network.
- » Revise, as needed, the Network's organizational structure along with defined relationships, roles, and functions within the Network.
- » Continue to pursue opportunities to expand partnerships throughout the Network, including the addition of new partners in LCCs—particularly nontraditional partners that increase the breadth, diversity, and effectiveness of the conservation community.

- » Increase ownership, participation, and engagement of partners in the work of the LCCs through developing common approaches, sharing tools, assigning leads for important products, pooling resources, and other such approaches.
- » Continue to provide and develop additional funding mechanisms to facilitate key partner engagement.

Objective 2: Collaboration Opportunities

- » Identify commonalities (e.g., needs and tools) and differences that require solutions.
- » Encourage the establishment of partner forum events that connect conservation partners to local on-the-ground action and that connect national or regional organizations to actions and initiatives at larger scales.
- » Identify inter-LCC conservation goals, challenges (e.g., data gaps, policy, technical), and opportunities.
- » Identify successful inter-LCC collaboration efforts, and then celebrate, communicate, and share them.
- » Identify conservation and mitigation opportunities that span multiple LCCs as well as those that extend to other regional collaboration networks.
- » Identify opportunities to collaborate on mitigation activities and methods.
- » Identify, celebrate, and share good practices and success stories.

Objective 3: Network Effectiveness

- » Develop common definitions and performance metrics for key (qualitative and quantitative) outcomes that highlight, show, and demonstrate value.
- » Measure collective impact (e.g., resiliency, footprint, connectivity) of those outcomes and others when needed.

- » Identify the most appropriate metrics with which to measure partner inputs into Network operations and projects (e.g., financial, personnel, technical assistance, in-kind) and capture outcomes achieved indirectly by the LCCs, when feasible.
- » Develop accountability tools.
- » Explore ways for partner organizations to maximize the benefits of performance reporting within and amongst their organizations, including at the Network level.

Objective 4: Training and Networking

- » Provide orientation training for new LCC staff and steering committee members.
- » Create a “playbook” containing best management practices for LCC Coordinators and Steering Committee Chairs.
- » Develop and distribute a “communications resource” guide for Steering Committee and LCC Council members to help effectively communicate the LCC Network vision and actions across all levels of their organizations.
- » Identify or produce training for LCC Coordinators related to developing management and coordination skills.

Objective 5: Funding Opportunities

- » Develop proactive systems, protocols, and strategies for identifying and prioritizing high-priority conservation needs (both natural and cultural) in the event resources become available in relation to an established baseline. Determine how to fund rapid response opportunities to urgent conservation needs (e.g., natural disasters, species invasions, disease) and ensure the necessary capacity.

Objective 6: Prioritizing Investments

- » Inventory conservation needs, planning efforts, and resources.
- » Identify which efforts would maximize the network-wide conservation benefit of investments.
- » Balance resource investments with LCC needs and strategies for improving performance.

GOAL 3: SCIENCE

Objective 1: Identifying Needs

- » Complete, disseminate, and implement the LCC Network Science Plan.
- » Inform and articulate network-wide or regional conservation targets (and their associated goals and objectives) reflective of the vision to achieve an ecologically connected landscape.
- » Identify and develop critical spatial, biological, and cultural data and evaluation tools across the Network.
- » Identify knowledge gaps and define research priorities via a collaborative process with federal, state, tribal, private conservation organizations, academic resource managers and research scientists.
- » Leverage resources to conduct focused research to fill critical knowledge gaps in conservation science.
- » Support assessment of impacts and adaptation planning for cultural and/or subsistence resources that are traditionally gathered, hunted, or culturally significant
- » Share guidelines developed by indigenous working groups for integrating scientific and traditional ecological knowledge within and between LCCs.
- » Partners within LCCs educate other partners at the table about each agency's needs, interests, and programs.

Objective 2: Co-production

- » Engage resource decision makers, managers, cultural practitioners, and indigenous peoples in the appropriate framing of resource-based decision problems and the formulation of clear management objectives that focus and guide subsequent science activities.
- » Engage these same groups and other end users in the identification, development, production, and use of scientific tools through technical assistance, outreach, training, and education.
- » Promote funding notifications to Tribes and First Nations for the documentation and exchange of traditional ecological knowledge with scientists to generate solutions through co-learning and co-production of knowledge.
- » Promote continual learning to improve conservation science by sharing good, tested practices and standardized approaches.
- » Provide Network-wide context for connecting the science efforts of individual LCCs to ensure they reflect the needs of LCC priority resources across the landscapes and seascapes.
- » Create forums for scientists to work with indigenous peoples to co-produce knowledge that can address landscape-scale issues in accordance with free, prior, and informed consent.⁵
- » Improve technical approaches for management and integration of adjacent conservation designs to foster a seamless, resilient, and interconnected ecological network of lands and waters.

⁵ Free, prior, and informed consent is a principle that means an indigenous group has the right to share or withhold information or traditional ecological knowledge in accordance with their beliefs, customs, rules, and traditions.

- » Translate shared conservation goals and science through spatial products and other tools to guide action at the landscape scale in those geographies where these products are value-added.

Objective 3: Evaluating Science

- » Develop metrics and methods to evaluate the use of LCC science and monitoring information in shaping resource planning, management decisions, and community adaptation.
- » Develop processes and tools that allow the LCC Network to measure progress toward achieving and retaining resilient and functional landscapes and seascapes.
- » Support efficiency among LCCs and other appropriate broad-scale monitoring programs in generating status and trend information on priority resources and landscapes by facilitating sharing, cooperative synthesizing, communications, and evaluation.
- » Improve the efficiency of conservation design and delivery process.
- » Demonstrate the iterative nature of the questions and issues that resource managers face and the resulting determinations of resource priorities for shared needs.
- » Assign project support to Tribes and First Nations to demonstrate examples of how, when, and where traditional ecological knowledge can be used to better inform management decisions.

GOAL 4: COMMUNICATIONS

Objective 1: Communicating Science

- » Encourage communications guidance, policy, training, and support to principle investigators for science delivery regarding outreach strategies and applications of their research and results to end users (e.g., land managers) and assist them in demonstrating the ecosystem services and socio-economic values of their conservation research.
- » Provide opportunities and encourage principle investigators to compete for additional funds to deliver science.
- » Use the LCC Network website and other tools as a platform for sharing key LCC services and benefits such as news, products, tools, training, science, data, documents, and open source software for conservation use or research, where appropriate.
- » Disseminate science products among the Network and other interested parties, including target audiences who influence landscape and seascape conditions and resource management activities.
- » Provide opportunities to train resource managers on how to apply LCC Network and others' science products to on-the-ground conservation activities.

Objective 2: Engaging Key Partners

- » Capitalize on, coordinate, and target local/regional/national/international opportunities to discuss LCCs and landscape conservation at existing symposia, meetings, and other forums.
- » Include key regional researchers and managers to give presentations to LCC gatherings, meetings, and workshops.

- » Support, use, and fund social science approaches and human dimensions of conservation work to assess, understand, and effectively engage new partners and to assess the needs of on-the-ground users of LCC information.
- » Identify and engage potential new partners across the LCC Network.
- » Identify new, strategic target audiences, such as young conservation leaders, diverse audiences, development communities, planners from the built environment and others who could use science to make decisions that support conservation.

Objective 3: Communications Plan

- » Identify key audiences to target outreach efforts.
- » Identify priority or timely messages for targeted audiences.
- » Include a specific strategic effort to target key audiences in other branches of government to increase awareness about the Network.
- » Find and leverage key points of influence (i.e., LCC champions) to ensure the sustainability of the Network.
- » Develop coordinated messaging from the Network to the LCC level and across the Network.
- » Explain the role of LCCs in achieving lasting, sustainable landscape-scale conservation.
- » Communicate LCC successes that show actual on-the-ground impact and how they have influenced management decisions through a variety of means. These successes also need to convey the complexities and challenges of achieving landscape- and seascape-scale conservation results.

- » Develop appropriate tools and tactics for integrating communications across the LCC Network.
- » Open and increase availability of LCC products and information to diverse audiences.

Objective 4: Communications Capacity

- » Build upon existing communications efforts to share learning, best practices, and identify communications needs.
- » Foster regional communications communities of practice that build upon the strengths and expertise of LCCs and their individual partners.
- » Improve use of existing communications tools (e.g. social media, news, and websites).
- » Prioritize national LCC competitive project support funds (not individual LCC project funds) for communications support in 2015.
- » Identify gaps and needs in communications support and develop a national campaign using expert public relations/marketing firms.
- » Improve communications skills and effectiveness by providing training to LCC communications staff and others.

Objective 5: Sharing Lessons Learned

- » Develop a Network-level means to post and distribute these lessons.
- » Integrate better and more simplified communications approaches into LCC Network gatherings, monthly LCT teleconferences, and other appropriate venues to improve the dissemination of best practices across the Network.

DEFINITIONS

LCC NETWORK—The LCC Network is composed of the 22 individual LCCs and their active members, including the LCC Council, steering committees of all 22 LCCs, staff, partners, and other associates. The LCCs collectively form a network of resource managers, conservation practitioners, cultural communities, researchers and scientists who share a common need for scientific information, and a common interest in conservation at local, regional, and continental (or oceanic) scales. The Network fosters collaboration and partnerships among federal, provincial, state, and local governments, tribes and First Nations, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organizations, universities, and interested public and private organizations.

LCC COUNCIL—The LCC Council is a representative body of executive-level leaders from LCC partner organizations. The LCC Council supports the cooperative conservation and sustainable resource management efforts of the LCC Network, assists the LCC Network in achieving its goals, contributes to building a constituency of partners, and helps sustain the LCC initiative.

LCC COORDINATORS TEAM—The LCC Coordinators Team (LCT) is comprised of the Coordinators from each of the 22 LCCs and the LCC

Network Coordinators. The LCT works on aspects of LCC Network operations and other matters as appropriate, while respecting individual LCC steering committee governance authority.

LCC SCIENCE COORDINATORS

TEAM—The LCC Network Science Coordinators Team (LSCT) is comprised of all Science Coordinators from each of the 22 LCCs and the LCC Network Coordinators. The LSCT serves as a forum for communication and collaboration on technical and scientific matters among the LCCs, and between the LCC Network and other science partners.

LCC COMMUNICATIONS TEAM—The LCC Network Communications Team is comprised of all communications, engagement, and outreach staff at each of the 22 LCCs and the LCC Council. This team serves as a forum for activities in those same areas across the LCC Network.

STEERING COMMITTEES—Each LCC is governed by a voluntary steering committee, typically with representatives from conservation and resource management entities (natural and cultural). These entities include a wide variety of federal, state, territorial and international agencies; tribal and other indigenous peoples; universities; non-governmental organizations; and others located or operating within the LCC geographic region.



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Bottomland forest, Big Lake National Wildlife Refuge.
JEREMY BENNETT/USFWS

Flint Hills of Kansas. EDWIN OLSON/WIKI COMMONS

Brown bear at Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.
STEVE HILLEBRAND/USFWS

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To find out more about how Landscape Conservation Cooperatives are working to implement this strategic plan, visit www.lccnetwork.org/strategicplan.