



*Preserving Our Agricultural, Historical And Natural Resources.*

## **STRATEGIC PLAN – 2022 to 2027**

### **Mission Statement:**

*Protecting agricultural, historical, and natural resources on land in Nebraska through education, partnering and permanent conservation*

### **Organizational Values:**

*Respect for Agriculture and Natural Resources* – We believe that agriculture is the backbone of Nebraska’s economy and that natural resource stewardship is essential to the success of every agricultural operation. Our conservation work respects the importance of agriculture and natural resources stewardship to the state of Nebraska, to Nebraskans, and to the broader population.

*Respect for Private Property Rights* – We believe that private property is a foundational element of freedom in the United States. Conservation is at its core a private property right. We unwaveringly support the principles of private property through our conservation work.

*Voluntary Conservation* – We believe that conservation of private lands should always be a voluntary decision made by the landowner.

*Local* – We are Nebraskans. We conserve the resources that matter most to the future of our state through conservation efforts that uphold the values Nebraskans hold dear.

*Relevance* – The benefits of private land conservation are largely not understood. It is up to us to share the benefits and demonstrate the relevance of our work to all.

*Permanence* - We are dedicated to providing lasting conservation solutions that benefit the families with which we work, the communities we serve, and the public at large.

*Honesty/Trust* – Our work is built on the trust we earn from landowners, donors, and partners. To build and maintain trust, we act with uncompromising honesty and integrity in everything we do.

*Transparency* - We will conduct our work in a way that creates openness and trust between stakeholders, partners, and landowners.

## Principles

NLT's conservation work is landowner-centered and based on the philosophy that conservation and sound natural resource stewardship are critical to ensuring that Nebraska, its communities, wildlife, and people continue to thrive. NLT's work is rooted in this philosophy and the principles set forth below. NLT uses these principles as filters through which strategic decisions about programs and projects are evaluated.

1. Commitment to agricultural producers: Our working lands conservation work will focus on conservation that provides appropriate management flexibility, supports profitability and the intergenerational transfer of working lands.
2. Commitment to sound natural resources stewardship: We will work to provide opportunities for landowners to further sound stewardship of Nebraska's natural resources.
3. Relevance: We will strive to make sure our work is and remains relevant to Nebraskans. We will advocate for new programs, incentives, and changes to existing programs and incentives that increases the pace and effectiveness of conservation.
4. Easement Stewardship: Perpetual stewardship of our conservation holdings is our primary obligation. We will strive to ensure that our work brings confidence to landowners and the public about the effectiveness and importance of private land conservation.
5. Quality Conservation: We will work to ensure that we meet or exceed established standards for completing conservation transactions. At the same time, we will routinely evaluate our practices to ensure that they provide appropriate flexibility. We will also work to ensure that our practices protect the identified conservation values and endure any legal and physical changes that will inevitably occur over time. We will strive to conserve the best of Nebraska's resources.
6. Capacity Development: We will prudently invest in financial, human, and technological resources to grow the capacity of NLT so that we can uphold our perpetual obligations and better deliver meaningful conservation outcomes that will benefit current and future Nebraskans.

## ***Strategic Objectives and Organizational Priorities***

The organizational values and principles will guide NLT's work in the coming years. They form the foundation for establishing the primary strategic objectives of:

1. **Relevance:**
  - a. Engage new audiences by broadening our communication reach and educational programming; and
  - b. Develop new partnerships and strengthen existing partnerships dedicated to conserving Nebraska's agricultural working lands, natural resources, wildlife habitat, historic/cultural sites and supporting communities across Nebraska.
  
2. **Capacity:**
  - a. Optimize NLT's business model to achieve its mission and remain financially secure in perpetuity;
  - b. Ensure that NLT has the human and financial resources and infrastructure that is necessary to assist the organization in achieving its mission; and
  - c. Diversify revenue streams.
  
3. **Conservation:**
  - a. Protect and improve existing tools to better meet the conservation and financial needs of landowners;
  - b. Focus conservation work on strategic landscapes with high conservation value and local support; and
  - c. Build upon existing conservation successes.
  
4. **Stewardship:**
  - a. Maintain our partner-oriented stewardship model;
  - b. Maintain a cost-effective, consistent, and responsive stewardship program; and
  - c. Ensure that we have the financial capacity to meet both our short-term and long-term stewardship obligations.
  
5. **Governance**
  - a. Evaluate Board Member Position Description.
  - b. Evaluate board membership.
  - c. Develop board leadership training.