

Strategic Plan: SELT

June 2024 – December 2030

SAVE

LAND CONSERVATION

DESTINATION 1

(The point on the horizon we're striving to reach. May take longer than the SP period to achieve)

In cooperation with highly engaged partners, permanently protect enough land across SELT's service area and within the Coastal and Merrimack River Watersheds to help mitigate climate change, and sustain ecological functioning for natural systems, wildlife, and the health and well-being of all people.

GOAL (WHAT SELT HOPES TO ACHIEVE BY THE END OF 2030)

1. Significantly increase SELT's pace of direct land conservation and protect an additional 15,000 acres across Strafford and Rockingham Counties through easements and acquisitions, with a continued focus on supporting healthy wildlife, water, and forests and mitigating the impacts of climate change
2. Complete 15 farm/farmland protection projects and, as appropriate, match farmers to active projects
3. Identify the gaps in conserved lands in communities across our service area and develop a plan to respond by 2027
4. Complete two-three (2-3) land conservation projects in cooperation with and, of importance to, communities that have had limited access to or engagement with past conservation efforts
5. Establish future SELT reservations where communities lack proximity to SELT-conserved lands within 10 miles or a 15-minute drive
6. Continue collaborative efforts with the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership to cooperatively advance Coastal Watershed land conservation

IMPACTS (THE OUTCOMES WE EXPECT TO REALIZE BY ACHIEVING THE GOAL)

1. SELT nearly doubles the amount of land it protects each year
2. Land is conserved that is important to communities that have had limited access to or engagement with past conservation efforts
3. The region's agricultural future is further secured through continued and robust farmland conservation
4. More people are connected to, and have access to, SELT's conserved lands

¹ Mapping and additional research may call for a revised metric for distance to conserved SELT lands

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LAND CONSERVATION

DESTINATION 2

(The point on the horizon we're striving to reach. May take longer than the SP period to achieve)

New and sustainable tools have been developed and implemented to protect land using non-traditional methods, meeting unique community needs, and accelerating the rate of land conservation across the Coastal and Merrimack River watersheds.

GOAL (WHAT SELT HOPES TO ACHIEVE BY THE END OF 2030)

1. Lead efforts to identify and implement strategies to help municipalities complete more land conservation projects and build the skills and tools needed to reach this goal
2. Explore opportunities to work with developers, housing advocates, and others to realize more land conservation and help to create affordable housing stock when possible
3. Research and understand local laws and regulations that may be tapped to forward SELT's conservation goals
4. Continue exploring options such as solar power and carbon credits, that are well-suited to conserved lands, encourage open space retention, and help mitigate climate change impacts

IMPACTS (THE OUTCOMES WE EXPECT TO REALIZE BY ACHIEVING THE GOALS)

1. Communities are routinely pursuing land conservation projects and can be relied upon to protect land acreage over and above land trust-led projects
2. New, cutting-edge strategies with less traditional partners are accelerating the rate of land conservation across Rockingham and Strafford Counties
3. Communities are realizing and appreciating the significant benefits of open space and land conservation

SAVE

LAND CONSERVATION

DESTINATION 3

(The point on the horizon we're striving to reach. May take longer than the SP period to achieve)

Conservation of large parcel, high-priority lands has been achieved across Rockingham and Strafford Counties, and these are connected through wildlife corridors or greenways, for the purposes of healthy ecosystems, wildlife, climate change mitigation, and extended recreational opportunities.

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GOALS (WHAT SELT HOPES TO ACHIEVE BY THE END OF 2030)

1. Develop and pursue a vision for the protection and connection of large land parcels; identify and protect these lands
2. Protect lands between Pawtuckaway State Park and Great Bay that will support the completion of the Pawtuckaway to Great Bay Greenway recreational trail, as identified in the Stewardship Department's plan

IMPACTS (THE OUTCOMES WE EXPECT TO REALIZE BY ACHIEVING THE GOALS)

1. The Pawtuckaway to Great Bay Greenway is longer and more connected, with an added focus on the creation of a viable recreation trail across its full length
2. One or more additional greenways have been identified, and collateral has been developed to help target land conservation efforts and inspire collaborators and supporters

STEWARD

LAND AND EASEMENT STEWARDSHIP

DESTINATION 4

(The point on the horizon we're striving to reach. May take longer than the SP period to achieve)

Sufficient funding supports land management responsibilities in perpetuity, allowing SELT to achieve its stewardship goals and revenue opportunities when appropriate.

GOALS (WHAT SELT HOPES TO ACHIEVE BY THE END OF 2030)

1. Establish comprehensive land management goals, including climate change adaptation, that drive decisions regarding stewardship resource allocation
2. Following the establishment of comprehensive land management goals, accurately project stewardship expenses and integrate into annual budgets. For new projects, fully raise stewardship funding based on accurate projections for each project

IMPACTS (THE OUTCOMES WE EXPECT TO REALIZE BY ACHIEVING THE GOALS)

1. SELT's lands are effectively managed and in accordance with a property management plan, guided by an overarching management philosophy
2. Funding required to manage SELT's lands effectively is accurately understood and efforts to fully fund stewardship based on well-modeled goals and costs are underway
3. Even as the pace of direct conservation increases, SELT fully funds the new obligations for each conserved property

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STEWARD

LAND AND EASEMENT STEWARDSHIP

DESTINATION 5

(The point on the horizon we're striving to reach. May take longer than the SP period to achieve)

Sufficient funding supports easement stewardship and care in perpetuity, ensuring SELT can and will uphold landowner relationships, easement monitoring, and enforcement obligations

GOAL (WHAT SELT HOPES TO ACHIEVE BY THE END OF 2030)

1. Complete the "Real Costs of Easement Stewardship" analysis, project accurate costs, and accurately reflect these costs in SELT's annual budget; for new easements, fully raise stewardship funding based on accurate projections for each project
2. Develop, expand, and/or deploy strategies to build relationships with easement landowners to prevent violations and avoid the need for violation enforcement
3. Continue practice of annually monitoring 100% of SELT-held conservation easements

IMPACTS (THE OUTCOMES WE EXPECT TO REALIZE BY ACHIEVING THE GOALS)

1. SELT has internal consensus on the full cost of easement stewardship program and how SELT intends to fund it; plans for meeting financial obligations are in place and being pursued
2. The landowners of conservation easements held by SELT receive routine proactive outreach from SELT's easement stewardship team and view them as conservation partners

SHARE

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

DESTINATION 6

(The point on the horizon we're striving to reach. May take longer than the SP period to achieve)

SELT's lands are more welcoming, available, and inspiring to all people, leading to a greater number and wider variety of people using SELT's properties.

GOALS (WHAT SELT HOPES TO ACHIEVE BY THE END OF 2030)

1. Invite a wide range of communities, representing individuals with varying needs and abilities, to collaborate with SELT to identify and address barriers to outdoor recreation and access on SELT's lands
2. Following acquisition of new SELT lands within 10 miles or a 15-minute drive² of the communities that currently lack proximity to SELT's lands, establish 1-2 new trail systems to serve these communities

² Mapping and additional research may call for a revised metric for distance to conserved SELT lands

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3. Play a statewide leadership role in documenting the physical attributes of our trails through data, analysis, and data visualization; provide online and on-site information about physical trail attributes for users of different ages and physical abilities
4. Grow a reliable stable of reservation-based volunteers to support a wide array of land management and recreational needs on SELT's reserves
5. Develop a recreational trail plan that identifies the possible locations, opportunities, obstacles, projected costs, and timeframe for the Pawtuckaway to Great Bay Greenway

IMPACTS (THE OUTCOMES WE EXPECT TO REALIZE BY ACHIEVING THE GOALS)

1. A wider array of individuals with a variety of needs and more individuals representing different backgrounds, abilities and traditions, are using SELT's lands
2. SELT owns 1-2 additional public reservations with trails in communities that currently lack proximity to a SELT reservation
3. A trail plan for the Pawtuckaway to Great Bay Greenway is in place that dovetails with the land conservation department's acquisition/easement plan

SHARE

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

DESTINATION 7

(The point on the horizon we're striving to reach. May take longer than the SP period to achieve)

All people feel a sense of belonging at SELT's programs, experience no SELT-based barriers to participation, and come away with a nuanced understanding of our work.

GOALS (WHAT SELT HOPES TO ACHIEVE BY THE END OF 2030)

1. Engage people of varied backgrounds, abilities, and traditions in the leadership of SELT's outreach programming to encourage greater variety among participants
2. While meeting program needs for every person at every program is not possible, provide something for everyone across the full scope of SELT's programming
3. Pursue outreach programs that highlight the breadth and depth of this Strategic Plan, including efforts to plan for and mitigate the impacts of climate change
4. Continue robust programming to attract a wide range of audiences to the Mathey Center and across Rockingham and Strafford Counties

IMPACTS (THE OUTCOMES WE EXPECT TO REALIZE BY ACHIEVING THE GOALS)

1. More individuals, including those from varied backgrounds, abilities, ages, and traditions, are using SELT's lands and understanding the impact of our work
2. SELT's members, stakeholders, and interested parties have an accurate understanding of the work SELT does via engaging and easy to attend programming

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SHARE

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

DESTINATION 8

(The point on the horizon we're striving to reach. May take longer than the SP period to achieve)

ATLAS (All Terrain Learning Adventures – SELT's immersive nature program for school children) is an exemplary regional model for effective nature-based education.

GOALS (WHAT SELT HOPES TO ACHIEVE BY THE END OF 2030)

1. Fully integrate farm education as a component of the ATLAS program
2. Expand the ATLAS program into communities in Strafford County where SELT's engagement would have the most impact and where students would otherwise not have the opportunity to participate without SELT's involvement.
3. Beyond expanding to new schools in Strafford County, explore options for expanding ATLAS programming to additional grades; present an expansion proposal to SELT's Board of Directors by 2027
4. Collaboratively envision and develop a model for transferring ATLAS leadership from SELT to participating schools that is endorsed by school partners, allowing SELT to serve more communities

IMPACTS (THE OUTCOMES WE EXPECT TO REALIZE BY ACHIEVING THE GOALS)

1. The ATLAS program expands to Strafford County and engages communities where students would otherwise not have the opportunity to participate without SELT's involvement
2. Farm and farmland education is routinely taught to program partners via ATLAS
3. Partners have transitioned to lead ATLAS with sufficient support from SELT

SUSTAIN

OPERATIONS

DESTINATION 9

(The point on the horizon we're striving to reach. May take longer than the SP period to achieve)

Burley Farms and its surrounding landscape of 1,000 acres is accessed and used for its highest and best purposes to help SELT achieve its mission.

GOALS (WHAT SELT HOPES TO ACHIEVE BY THE END OF 2030)

1. Secure the future of Burley Farms through a master planning process that allows for growth and access to meet existing and future program needs
2. Establish a small-scale educational farm to support ATLAS programming

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3. Specific to a production farm at Burley Farms, further define the size, scope, and purpose, including a comprehensive budget and implementation plan, once capacity building to increase land conservation is robustly underway

IMPACTS (THE OUTCOMES WE EXPECT TO REALIZE BY ACHIEVING THE GOALS)

1. SELT owns the lands necessary for the future of the greater Burley Farms area so the campus can grow to meet existing and future program needs
2. SELT understands the possible locations for various additional facilities and how those options interact and impact future choices
3. A small educational farm supporting ATLAS and other youth education programming is operating; sophisticated planning for a production farm has been completed and is ready for implementation

SUSTAIN OPERATIONS

DESTINATION 10

(The point on the horizon we're striving to reach. May take longer than the SP period to achieve)

SELT is a welcoming, vibrant, and highly desirable destination for paid and unpaid talent, including staff, the Board of Directors, and volunteers.

GOALS (WHAT SELT HOPES TO ACHIEVE BY THE END OF 2030)

1. Research and solidify new avenues for recruiting top talent for a wider array of staff and volunteers
2. Driven by the board itself, SELT's Board evolves to become a highly sought-after volunteer opportunity, with representation reflecting the variety of communities we serve
3. SELT's Board of Directors updates bylaws and meeting scope to reflect modern operations and improve efficiency

IMPACTS (THE OUTCOMES WE EXPECT TO REALIZE BY ACHIEVING THE GOALS)

1. SELT's Board and Committees represent the vibrancy of our community
2. Reliable outlets for recruiting staff from broader backgrounds, abilities, and traditions are established and routinely tapped
3. SELT's founding documents and policies allow for maximum efficiency and effectiveness

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SUSTAIN OPERATIONS

DESTINATION 11

(The point on the horizon we're striving to reach. May take longer than the SP period to achieve)

SELT's organizational structure, staffing, and procedures effectively support administrative, fundraising, and program needs as SELT grows.

GOALS (WHAT SELT HOPES TO ACHIEVE BY THE END OF 2030)

1. Develop a staffing plan to address anticipated growth realized from both general operations and new strategic planning directions. Consider volunteers, seasonal employees, and internships/apprenticeships/fellowships available through UNH and other higher education institutions as potential staffing options
2. Seize opportunities to address the historic underfunding of stewardship obligations resulting from early land conservation projects
3. Maintain a minimum staff to easement ratio of 1/100 and, following the "Real Costs of Easement Stewardship," identify an agreed-upon staffing ratio to achieve by 2030
4. Invest in the professional growth and development of early- and mid-level staffers to prepare the next generation of SELT leaders
5. Enable staff to effectively achieve program goals while maintaining a healthy work-life balance with annual work plans that are achievable
6. SELT's sponsorship program is well supported and has reached a mature fundraising stage
7. The number of donors giving to SELT and SELTie Circle Membership has increased by 50% by 2030

IMPACTS (THE OUTCOMES WE EXPECT TO REALIZE BY ACHIEVING THE GOAL(S))

1. SELT has the organizational structure and staffing to effectively meet its administrative and programmatic needs
2. SELT is implementing a plan to develop internal leadership among early to mid-career employees to prepare them for future SELT leadership
3. Staff feel valued and understand SELT is willing to invest in their growth and leadership potential; they are seen as whole people and can maintain a desirable work-life balance via achievable workplans
4. SELT's financial position remains robust with a plan launched to sufficiently address long-term stewardship obligations