



Final Version as adopted by Board of Directors

Stewards of a Special Place

A Strategic Plan for the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy: 2016-2019

Original Adopted February 20, 2013

Revision Adopted by Electronic Vote
August 3, 2016



MISSION:

**To restore, protect and promote the Pheasant Branch Conservancy and watershed for
today and tomorrow**

VISION:

**We become increasingly effective at restoring, protecting and promoting the
Conservancy as an ecological whole**

The Pheasant Branch Conservancy is a regional treasure, a natural haven in the midst of a growing urban area. As a mosaic of marshlands, springs, prairies, meadows, lowland forest and wooded hills, it offers peace and respite to the individual, as well as educational opportunities for all ages. It is part of the 25 square-mile Pheasant Branch Watershed, which includes thousands of acres of fertile farmland as well as urban and suburban development. It is also part of the larger Yahara River Watershed.



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A complex set of jurisdictions and interests affect the Conservancy and its watershed –state, city, county, townships, neighborhood and condo associations and other environmental organizations. The Friends of Pheasant Branch is the only voice speaking on behalf of this land and water system as an ecological whole. We are vital and unique stewards of an increasingly fragile ecosystem.

That responsibility requires systematic and agile leadership. We will be *systematic* in pursuing goals that are fundamental to our responsibility and objectives that are essential to our goals. We will be *agile* in pursuing unanticipated opportunities to enhance or protect the Conservancy and the Pheasant Branch Watershed.

We are volunteer and committee driven, managed by a board of directors and supported by members and donors. We collaborate with other stakeholders, including neighbors, the City of Middleton, the Middleton-Cross Plains School District, Dane County, the Clean Lakes Alliance, Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District, the Rock River Coalition and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. We seek to be transparent and open in our planning and actions.

The results of our work with this collaborative network over the next five years will be measurable. We will have an impact on water quality in the watershed, including reduction of sediment and nutrient content. The Conservancy will move closer to the ideal of pre-settlement conditions. The Yahara Chain of Lakes will benefit from cleaner headwater discharges.

VALUES:

We advocate an urban land ethic

We operate in keeping with Aldo Leopold’s advocacy of a land ethic, “which enlarges the boundaries of community to include soils, waters, plants and animals.”

- We believe in the importance of the distinction between parks, which are landscaped and recreational, and conservancies, which are managed to achieve a condition as close to natural as possible, while providing reasonable public access.
- We believe in restoring the natural ecosystems of the Conservancy by removing invasive species, gathering and planting native seed, conducting prairie burns, and monitoring the health of all flora and fauna in the Conservancy.
- We believe in the importance of environmental education, using the Conservancy as a unique local laboratory.
- We believe in the importance of science, data and measured results in assessing our effectiveness as an organization.



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- We believe that this iconic green corridor is immeasurably important to the quality of life in Dane County, to its attractiveness as a place to live and work and, accordingly, to its economic future.
- We believe in protecting and improving the water quality and environmental health of the Pheasant Branch Watershed in partnership with local governments, state and county agencies, non-profit environmental groups and water advocacy groups.

COMMITTEE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal One: Continue to Improve Restoration and Management of the Conservancy

Objective A. Support County and City management goals to enhance the biological composition and ecological functioning of the Conservancy's native plant communities, minimize the spread of invasive species through the lower Pheasant Branch Watershed and Lake Mendota, and improve water quality in Pheasant Branch and associated wetlands.

Objective B. Rebuild internal and external networks to partner with other FOPB Committees, individual volunteers, community groups, environmental organizations, land-management professionals, and government officials.

Objective C. Strengthen volunteer capacity through broadening the volunteer base, restructuring leadership responsibilities to involve more volunteers in leadership roles, and establishing a solid base for future R&M activities.

Goal Two: Understand and Support the Watershed as a Whole

Objective A: Monitor, collaborate with and assist public and private partners (such as The Clean Lakes Alliance, Dane County and the City of Middleton) in efforts to protect and improve the natural resource value of land in the Pheasant Branch Watershed

Objective B: Advocate, educate and work with public and private partners to improve the water quality of Pheasant Branch Creek, Pheasant Branch Conservancy, Lake Mendota and the Yahara Chain of Lakes

Objective C: Increase awareness and promote understanding of the Pheasant Branch Watershed through a variety of communication tools



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Goal Three: Continue to Improve Use of the Conservancy in Environmental Education

Objective A: Continue to enhance environmental programming for elementary and middle school children (grades 4K-8)

Objective B: Using the Conservancy as a field laboratory, enhance programming aimed at high school students

Objective C: Enhance environmental education programming for adult audiences and families.

Goal Four: Further Strengthen Internal Management under the Direction of the Governance Committee

Objective A: Become a more sustainable, nimble, and effective hybrid organization, employing both staff and volunteer resources, by reviewing board size, committee structure, board performance, volunteer use, staffing, policies and procedures, board by-laws and other issues as directed by the board.

Objective B: Become a more focused organization by cooperating with the Board President to use the February meeting of the board to review progress toward strategic goals and to set new objectives for the year.

Objective C: Adapt to challenges and growing workloads and to changing conditions by providing clear policies, procedures, roles, and relationships

Objective D: Encourage cooperation between committees whenever it is required to achieve strategic goals



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Goal Five: Strengthen External Relations under the Direction of the Development and Marketing Committee

Objective A: Enhance public awareness of the Friends through all effective means of communications

Objective B: Increase annual cash flow from memberships and annual gifts

Objective C: Coordinate the work of the President, other board members, committee members and ad hoc volunteers in raising restricted and unrestricted endowments and other major gifts, including bequests and memorial gifts

Objective D: Raise additional capital through special events and branded products.

Goal Six: Define Financial Management Responsibilities under the Direction of the Finance Committee

Objective A: In collaboration with other committees, ensure compliant and effective financial management, by establishing sustainable methods of monitoring, reporting and managing financial assets

Objective B: Identify and define needed policies and procedures and work with the Governance Committee to develop them.

Objective C: Direct the Board's development of the annual organizational budget

Goal Seven: Increase accessibility of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy based upon input from citizenship of area communities and city and county governments

Objective A: Develop and implement strategies designed to increase access to Pheasant Branch Conservancy by persons with physical, cognitive, or developmental challenges.

Objective B: Implement strategies developed in Objective A, considering the feasibility of infrastructure modifications, material revisions and program enhancements that would enhance the accessibility of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy for all ages, including those with cognitive and physical challenges and implement solutions.