

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles largely remain the focus of our work. These principles have been further distilled into our **Mission Statement** and what we call our **Five Pillars**.

Working Landscapes

Keep working landscapes intact for the next generation of land stewards—with biological, social and economic indicators of success.

Partnerships

Promote public and private partnerships through building trust and relationships between private landowners and managers, public agencies, non-profit conservation groups, foundations, corporations, policymakers and academic institutions for the benefit of working landscapes across the country.

Communication

Communicate, educate and share on-the-ground challenges and successes experienced by private landowners with congressional and agency decisionmakers.

Voluntary, Incentive-Based Programs

Support voluntary, incentive-based programs that are flexible, predictable, emphasize the value of people and partnerships, and have measurable outcomes.

Conservation Transfer

Transfer experiences, expertise and lessons learned about cooperative conservation and holistic land management tools, funding, and technical resources.

Funding

Increase and leverage funding for efforts that promote cooperative conservation.

Local, Watershed and/or Place-Based Conservation

Support local, watershed and/or place-based conservation efforts by providing an umbrella group to effect change at the regional and national conservation scale.

Mission Statement

Partners for Conservation is a private landowner organization which communicates and collaborates on conservation partnerships for working landscapes to benefit present and future generations.

The Five Pillars of PFC

1. *Landowner-Led*
2. *Collaboration Gets Work Done*
3. *Local Lessons Have National Impact*
4. *Support Voluntary Incentive-Based Programs*
5. *Sustainability is a Balance Between Ecology and Economy*



From its inception until the middle of 2013, Partners for Conservation (PFC) was unstaffed and all the work of the organization was completed directly by board members. During 2013, through an innovative partnership with the National Wildlife Refuge Association, PFC was able to hire its first staff person to help the board implement the work of the organization including the development of a strategic approach to guide the work of PFC over the next five years.

Partners for Conservation

IMPROVING THE LANDSCAPE
THROUGH COMMUNICATION



Growing from a small initial meeting in 2008, and formally established in 2010, Partners for Conservation (PFC) is a landowner-led organization comprised of individuals that are leaders in local collaborative efforts. The founding board members felt that there was great value in sharing real-life success stories about partnership and collaboration in ways that could influence conservation practices, policies and funding locally and nationally. **PFC was established with the goal of sustaining working landscapes for both present and future generations.** Several organizing principles that embody the vision, purpose and overarching strategies were formally identified through discussions among the board and primary partners during 2012.



Organization Sustainability and Function

25 percent of the efforts

Partners for Conservation is a highly functional, well-respected national organization. The organization operates with a small core staff, active Board of Directors, partner organizations and agencies. PFC is a growing presence in all 50 states. PFC's program work and increasing membership reflect their highly held values and exceptional reputation.

Goal: PFC is financially independent and sustainable.

- The Board of Directors adopts an annual budget.
- The Board of Directors adopts and implements a fundraising plan consistent with PFC's mission, strategic approach, and values.
- Solid fiscal management practices are in place featuring quality bookkeeping and reporting systems.

Goal: PFC supports productive staff and contracted services.

- The organization and staff will adopt annual work plans.
- The Board of Directors and staff will complete an annual review of staff and PFC's accomplishments based on the work plan.
- Contracted services will operate under a scope of work.
- Staff and/or contractors are expanded as activities necessitate and resources allow.

Goal: PFC strengthens its ability to perform key functions through an active and informed organizational structure. Through PFC activities the board is strengthened by carefully cultivating new board members.

- The Board of Directors provides governance and oversight by convening teleconference meetings on a monthly basis and two face-to-face meetings per year.
- Ad-hoc committees carry out the work outlined in PFC's annual work plan.
- PFC has a clear protocol on the process of becoming a board member.
- The membership and partner database are current.
- The bylaws are regularly reviewed to ensure that the organization's structure and activities are compatible.

Partners For Conservation Vision: PFC has attracted nationally recognized landowner leaders dedicated to collaboration. Speaking with an authentic voice and providing examples of proven conservation practices, PFC builds trusting relationships and partnerships to expand and accelerate collaborative conservation approaches that sustain ecologically healthy environments, economies and communities.

Communications and Building a Strong Network to Strengthen PFC's Voice

30 percent of the efforts

The core philosophy of PFC is building trusting private-public partnerships. Communication, education, sharing stories and face-to-face time is critical to fostering these relationships. PFC meets in the middle and focuses work on the 80 percent held in common, in contrast to the 20 percent that divides. PFC values relationships at the grass-roots level through membership, while building state, regional and national levels of partnerships with agencies and organizations. PFC is dedicated to clear, open communication that supports private lands conservation networks.

Goal: PFC supports landowners, membership and partner organizations through networking, events and engagement in the work of the organization.

- The annual Private Lands Partners Day is sponsored to expand PFC's membership with new landowners and conservation partners.
- Regional workshops and events are facilitated to build public-private partnerships and local/state/regional networks.
- Conference calls are hosted on regional issues to engage and inform the membership.

- Landowners and conservation partners are provided information on how to become a member of PFC, with associated benefits.
- PFC operates with consistent criteria to evaluate involvement and partnerships and sponsorships.

Goal: PFC supports strong and effective communications to inform supporters.

- Twelve (12) E-newsletters are produced annually.
- The PFC website is maintained and updated to share success stories, relevant news and events.
- Social media is explored and utilized for specific target groups or projects.
- Short videos are produced to showcase collaborative conservation and the work of PFC.

Goal: PFC leverages and expands its reach to develop a shared and grounded voice for solutions to complex natural resource challenges.

- Strategic relationships and partnerships are built with key administration staff, agency representatives, and congressional leaders to address priority PFC projects and initiatives.
- The Board of Directors, staff, and partners make regular visits to Washington, D.C. to communicate with decision-makers.
- The Board of Directors and staff identify and participate in key agency networking events and meetings to develop partnership opportunities.
- Opportunities are provided for landowners, partners, and decision-makers to understand real-life experiences in agriculture and conservation.

Program Work Targeting Policy, Program Implementation and Funding

45 percent of the efforts

Partners for Conservation believes that collaborative conservation through private-public partnerships creates lasting conservation outcomes that sustain agricultural livelihoods. To support, improve and accelerate this approach, actions can be taken to address policy, program implementation and funding.

Goal: Invest in the future of conservation by participating in agency trainings and professional development.

- Participate in National Conservation Training Center programs to share the perspective and values of private landowners in specialized trainings.

Goal: Improve and support effective Farm Bill programs.

- Participate in Farm Bill Guide for Implementation for Practitioners.
- Track and promote implementation of the Regional Conservation Partnership Program.
- Position PFC to inform the next Farm Bill.

Goal: Improve and support effective sensitive species management.

- Build trusting relationships with senior staffers and leadership in the Departments of Agriculture and Interior.
- Work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to enhance communication about the potential listing or listing status of sensitive species to landowners and managers on the ground.
- Work collaboratively to improve current and emerging program implementation efforts related to the Endangered Species Act and other federal/state policies.
- Focus sensitive species work on efforts that are linked to other PFC policy and program priorities.

Goal: Investigate opportunities for PFC to improve water policies supporting conservation.

- PFC will investigate specific goals related to water quality, quantity, rights and management.
- PFC will support effective water conservation programs and policies.