



## Strategic Plan 2026-30

We look forward to working with you to achieve this plan's goals. The plan has four main program areas that provide a framework for advancing our mission. Each area has an overarching goal, with anticipated and measurable outcomes.



Photo by Mario Quintana

1

## LAND PROTECTION



Photo by Tony Abate

**GOAL: Accelerate the protection of high-value conservation lands through strong partnerships and innovative land protection tools.** We will center community priorities, ensure conservation co-benefits, and support the next generation of land stewards.

### OUTCOMES

- Complete 34 projects, a 55% increase over the last 4.5 years, focusing on high-value conservation.
- Reserve 20% of the project pipeline for community-focused conservation to expand equitable public access.
- Launch the Buy-Protect-Sell+ program with a clear plan. Complete 2–5 projects that provide affordable, secure land for emerging farmers with conservation protections.
- Expand priority landscapes—such as Black Earth Creek, Patrick Marsh, and Westport Prairie—by 10% through easements or acquisitions that improve habitat, biodiversity, and equitable recreation access.
- Create a formal process for land protection partnerships to support collaboration and efficient use of staff time.

2

## LAND STEWARDSHIP



Photo by Ben Jones

**GOAL: Enhance the monitoring and management of lands and waters under Groundswell's care.** Uphold high standards for maintenance and restoration, support equitable access, and foster connections with people and place.

### OUTCOMES

- Strengthen easement stewardship with practices that support compliance and long-term success.
- Maintain Westport Prairie and Patrick Marsh as showcase landscapes that connect people with nature. Improve access and infrastructure while protecting conservation values.
- Convert 50% of remaining farmland at Westport Prairie to prairie by 2030 and involve the community.
- Create a management plan for Pasley's Swan Creek Farm wetlands, with public access options.
- Implement soil health and sustainable farming practices at Westport Farm, with infrastructure to support post-harvest handling and season extension.
- Begin stewardship planning for more farmland to build a Buy-Protect-Sell+ pipeline.
- Advance a land protection demonstration site to showcase the many benefits of conservation.
- Develop and use a new conservation easement template that supports soil health, water quality, renewable energy, agritourism, farm succession, and affordability.

## 3

## COMMUNITY AWARENESS & ENGAGEMENT



Photo by Ben Jones

**GOAL:** Grow recognition, understanding, and support for Groundswell Conservancy's mission among those who care about conservation to advance our work and expand our supporter base.

### OUTCOMES

- Invite a more diverse and representative group of people, including underserved communities, to partner with us and to participate in public events and volunteer opportunities.
- Pitch 2–4 stories to media each year to reach key audiences and highlight conservation, equitable land access, climate resilience, and local funding.
- Recognize project partners in our stories to highlight collaboration and shared impact.
- Showcase the full range of our work—from land protection to stewardship to equitable access—across all communication channels.
- Expand and diversify volunteer program to deepen community engagement and build stewardship capacity.

## 4

## LONG-TERM HEALTH



Photo by Norm Aulabaugh

**GOAL:** Cultivate Groundswell Conservancy's vision as an inclusive, financially healthy organization.

### OUTCOMES

- Support staff with sustainable workloads and a positive, inclusive, and collaborative work culture.
- Create and launch a five-year strategic development plan and budget to meet growing conservation opportunities.
- Maintain Easement Enforcement and Legal Defense funds at 120% to steward and defend easements and owned lands.
- Prepare the organization to renew Land Trust Alliance accreditation in five years.
- Ensure staff, volunteers, board, and supporters reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.
- Partner with others to advocate for continued funding of Wisconsin's Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program and the Dane County Conservation Fund.
- Grow Legacy Circle membership by one-third to reach 100 member households.
- Equip board members with the tools and knowledge to support outreach and fundraising.
- Expand and diversify the donor base through targeted prospecting and relationship-building.



**GROUNDSWELL**  
Conservation Where You Live

**Mission:** We protect special places, forever.

**Vision:** We want everyone to live in a world filled with green places where communities thrive.

*Have questions or want to learn more? We encourage you to reach out.*

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