



KAWARTHA LAND TRUST

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Kawartha Land Trust (KLT) Strategic Planning Terms of Reference: Nature Access

Why Nature Access?

Time in nature is essential to our health and quality of life. There are proven links between environmental action and a connection to nature.

As owners of land, land trusts have a unique opportunity to facilitate connections to the land. This opportunity is often unavailable to organizations that provide services or programs — they rely on a robust system of public land for their programs.

Showing that our conservation work benefits the lives of people is a way to show the relevance of conservation to more people. Through land access, we can introduce audiences that are not typically exposed to the land to the importance of conserving it.

On a personal level, everyone's love of nature has an origin story. This story likely takes place on a piece of land. Willingness to protect nature depends on people having access to places that can change their lives. We can provide these places in the Kawarthas.

KLT's Background with Nature Access

- In 2021, KLT tracked 20,000 user days on our publicly promoted properties. Our sites have become a major resource for people in the region to hike and be in nature. In 2020, the Securement Committee approved an approach to focus on an area of conservation importance south of Christie Bentham Wetland (CBW), using the creation of a trail across this landscape as a recruitment strategy. The same year, we raised significant donations through an appeal related to this project.
- KLT has worked with Kawartha Montessori, Timbernook, Camp Kawartha, TRACKS and ME to WE camps to provide spaces for youth and kids to connect with nature. Several of these organizations identify access to land as a major barrier to creating nature-based programming.



- KLT partnerships to run nature connection events on our property include naturalist organizations (Peterborough Field Naturalists), advocacy groups (ancient tree exploration network), recreational and wellness groups (Let Hike's T.O., paddling and hiking clubs) and post-secondary institutions (Trent University and the University of Toronto). Our properties are assets to these groups and many of their members support KLT.

Other Inspiring Land Access Work in the Land Trust Sector

[Community conservation spotlights](#) from the Land Trust Alliance

[#NatureForAll report](#)

[Bruce Trail Conservancy 2021 Annual Impact Report](#)

[Berkshire Natural Resources Council: U.S. land trust trail project](#)

Your Participation

- We want your expertise and vision to plan what can be accomplished in the next eight years if we take a nature access approach.
- We want you to be bold and think creatively.
- We expect everyone to listen deeply. A simple protocol for careful listening and a process for making decisions will be presented by a facilitator at the first meeting of each group.
- You are not required to attend all meetings and can attend meetings for other strategies as you like. However, any decisions made at meetings where you are not present need to be considered final and will not be revisited due to absence.
- We expect participants to also help research their topic, possibly interviewing key informants who cannot participate in the meeting. A basic interview tool and instructions will be provided.
- We request that everyone read the information circulated in preparation for the meeting and participate in discussions.

Outcome

The working group will create a recommendation to the KLT Board, related to how a nature access approach will help us achieve our strategic objectives. It will address the following:

- Define the strategy. Include a metric that indicates what KLT will have accomplished by 2030 by taking a nature access approach.
- Describe eight years of tactics that KLT might use to best implement the strategy.
- Use the "KLT Toolkit" to inform the tactics. Propose new tools if required.



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- Connect the tactics to progress toward KLT's strategic objectives. Often a tactic will help achieve multiple strategic objectives.

Milestones

- Mid-May: First meeting
- Late June: Draft circulated to the Board
- October: Wrap-up

Meetings

The Committee will meet bi-weekly starting mid-May and end in October. Meetings will be held in person in the KLT boardroom with an option to attend virtually if needed.

The designated KLT staff member will maintain written notes of all meetings, which will be shared with members of the Committee, KLT staff, Board members and other involved strategic planning committees and advisors.

Resources

The Committee will receive the necessary resources from the KLT to fulfil its mandate, including administrative support from the designated KLT staff member and technical expertise from the Director of Community Conservation and/or Executive Director.

KLT Toolkit

When considering how we will create impact by enacting a nature access strategy, consider the following toolkit.

Permanent Protection

We become owners of land to protect it forever against development. Donations of land and acquiring rights on land (CEAs) are major tools. Purchasing land is used to protect pieces of critical importance.



Land Stewardship

We manage our lands to minimize impact, enhance nature, and invite the public to experience nature. We work with other conservation organizations to steward and restore their protected land.

Volunteers

People power our impact. Boots in the mud or behind the scenes, our impact is because of the contributions of people who love the land.

Community Conservation

Finding synergy between land protection and the needs of the community can make conservation projects relevant to more people and grow our impact. This can be achieved by listening and responding to the needs of the community.

Support Landowners

Landowners will decide the future of our landscape. Our Partners in Conservation program thanks them for the care they take of their lands and helps them to take on stewardship and restoration projects.

Fundraising

We bring in government investments in conservation to this region and increase conservation-minded philanthropical efforts. Individuals are inspired to donate because of their connections to our cause.

Communication

We have a voice that can inspire and educate people on why land is worth protecting.

Partnerships

We work with others with skills in social services, education, research, technology, environment, agriculture, and business to expand the impact of our land conservation efforts.

Back End

Good governance, technology, and systems are all critical enablers of our work.