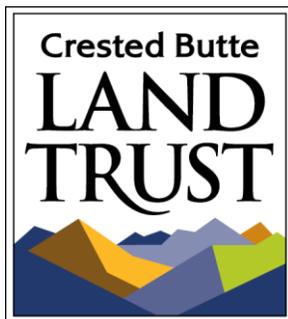


*Preserving the present for the future*  
Crested Butte Land Trust



**Strategic Plan**  
**2017-2018**

P.O. Box 2224  
308 Third Street  
Crested Butte, CO 81224  
970.349.1206  
cblandtrust.org

## Introduction:

This three-year Strategic Plan for the Crested Butte Land Trust (Land Trust) was made possible by you, the Gunnison Valley Community. Sincere thanks to the more than sixty community members who showed up, spoke up, and brought their earnest thoughts on the future of the Crested Butte Land Trust.

Many thanks to Brooke Moran, our community forum advisor/facilitator and Shannon Meyer, of the Land Trust Alliance, for supporting a community-driven planning process.

The Crested Butte Land Trust would not be the highly regarded community-driven organization it is without the exemplary leadership of its past and current Board of Directors and Staff.

### 2017 Crested Butte Land Trust

#### Board of Directors

Kiley Flint

Beth Appleton

John Simmons

Cynthia O'Brien

Margery Feldberg

Jerry Clark

Beth Hise

Michael Smith

Roger Cesario

### 2017 Crested Butte Land Trust

#### Staff

Noel Durant

Julie Ball

Hedda Peterson

Brian Lieberman

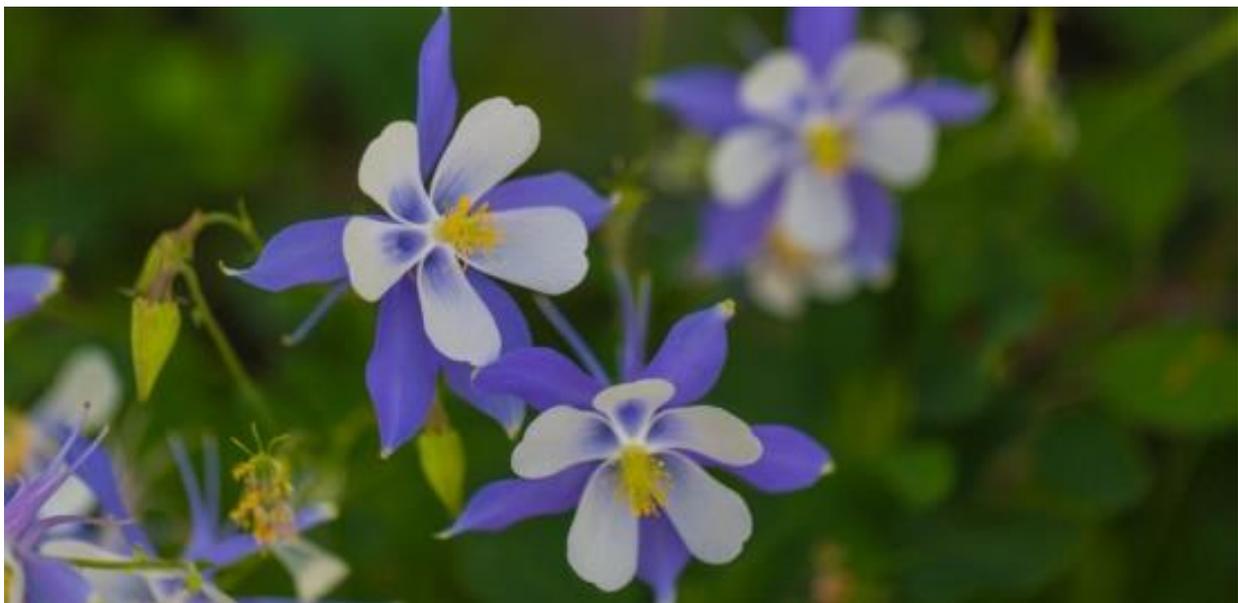
Claire Karban

## Preserving Place and the Origins of the Crested Butte Land Trust

Twenty-six years ago, members of the Crested Butte community came to the conclusion that the wonderful mosaic of natural open space and working ranches that surrounded their town was at risk. If these places were not protected, the rural character of their community would be lost to unbridled development.

Early efforts concentrated on preserving the open space that bordered the town. The first project involved protecting the wetlands that framed the Paradise Divide to the west, as one drives between the towns of Crested Butte and Mt. Crested Butte. These wetlands not only frame the incredible views of Paradise Divide, but they are a living landscape that supports wildlife and the working ranches that graze their cattle in this productive floodplain each fall.

In those early days, the Land Trust set an example for responding to community needs by creatively tackling some of the most pressing threats to the health and wellbeing of the land, water, and the people who call Crested Butte home. From its grassroots origins, the Land Trust has grown into its role as the only accredited land trust in the Gunnison Valley. The collaborative nature of the Land Trust is evident in the measures of our work. Hundreds of landowners, their families, and conservation partners have joined the Land Trust to protect more than 6,000 acres and secure more than 25 miles of single-track trails for all to enjoy.



## Where we stand today



The challenges we face today are the same that faced the founders at the outset of this organization. How do we continue to protect the areas vital to this community's sense of place in the face of increasing pressure for development on the lands that frame our communities in the Gunnison Valley, and how do we protect these lands forever?

The world in which the Gunnison Valley exists is changing. New challenges are emerging that require the many voices of the Gunnison Valley to find a shared sense of ownership in this amazing place we call home. The need for a voluntary, cooperative method for conserving land outside the function of government regulation remains pronounced. Our meadows and forests have become a national destination, yet lack the infrastructure to protect this landscape for future generations to enjoy. The Crested Butte Land Trust has become a valued and trusted community institution that not only protects the scenic vistas, working ranches, wildlife corridors, and recreational trails we all love, but is a real leader in the management of these lands to ensure the valued elements of this place are here for future generations to enjoy.

Even as the Land Trust benefits from strong community support, we recognize the need to build a stronger coalition to support the work of conservation. It is not enough to just protect the landscape; we need to make conservation relevant to all in our community. The land is the foundation--the reason that the Gunnison Valley is home to such strong and vibrant communities. To be sustainable, we must connect our work protecting this place to the greater needs present in our communities.

During the past seven years, the Land Trust has worked to refine a process to address the most pressing issues that we now face. In 2010, we formed a Strategic Planning Committee that

surveyed the community and produced our first ever Strategic Plan, which guided us from 2011 through 2013. A similar process was used in 2014 to continue to refine our Strategic Plan. The

Board and Staff tackled the goals on a daily basis, and these step-wise efforts lead significant programmatic support, as well as increased local, state, and national recognition.

As we move ahead with our third Strategic Plan, we look forward to building upon the success and passion of our founders, former Board and Staff members, volunteers, funders, and partner conservation organizations, all of whom devoted time, energy and enthusiasm to develop the Land Trust as a successful community land conservation organization.



Crested Butte Land Trust  
Strategic Plan Update  
May 5, 2017

### Mission

To forever protect and steward open lands for vistas, recreation, wildlife, and ranching, thus contributing to the preservation of Gunnison County's unique heritage and quality of life.

### Core Values

We **work with willing landowners**.

We are **non-political**.

We **focus on projects of high conservation value**.

We are **community driven**.

We strive for **integrity** in all of our work.

We serve as an **honest partner** to landowners, stakeholders, and the Gunnison Valley as a whole

We speak with **one voice** and support our decisions in a strong, unified way.

We pursue **collaborative relationships** with like-minded organizations.

We uphold the **Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices**

### Long-Range Vision of Success

Crested Butte's quality of life protected and preserved into the future. Notably present are secured open vistas, abundant wildlife and habitat, plentiful water resources, access to superior outdoor recreation activities and a thriving ranching and agricultural base. The community values the land trust as a vital contributing element of the quality of life of our area and views the trust as the preeminent land conservation organization in Crested Butte.



## Strategic Goals 2017-2018

1. Create a capital improvement plan to guide protection and stewardship activity.
2. Maintain a high quality stewardship program that exceeds accreditation requirements that meets community and environmental needs.
3. Develop, and maintain engaged and competent human resources at a sustainable level that facilitate the accomplishment of the goals of this plan, and enhance long term employee wellbeing
4. Create a Strategic Development and Outreach Plan to that solidifies the Land Trust as a welcoming organization that invites community support to accomplish the long term goals of this organization.
5. Convene and facilitate community ownership and education on the challenges of land management in the Gunnison Valley

## Goals and Objectives

### **Goal 1. Create and implement a capital improvement / to guide future land protection and stewardship activity.**

- 1.1 Review each parcel in order to identify conservation values and target opportunities/needs.
- 1.2 Produce capital improvement plan for board adoption to identify priority areas and themes for board adoption including:
  - Wetlands and watershed function
  - Wildlife
  - Recreation
  - Enhanced stakeholder participation /collaboration
  - Ambassador properties
- 1.3 Engage current and future landowners to help them identify their conservation interests and how the Trust might help.

#### **12-Month Actions**

- 1.1.1 Update the conservation map
- 1.2.1 Complete capital improvement plan

**Oversight:** Lands Committee

**Responsible Parties:** Stewardship Staff, Executive Director, Lands Chair

### **Goal 2. Maintain a high quality stewardship program that exceeds accreditation requirements that meets community and environmental needs.**

- 2.1 Advance at least one ambassador project.
- 2.2 Enhance all fee title lands to be safe, aesthetic and functional for their conservation values.
- 2.3 Maintain relationships with easement donors and monitor easements on schedule to ensure 100% compliance and increase opportunities.

- 2.4 Serve as a resource to easement donors for land stewardship.
- 2.5 Make contact with landowners acquiring property with easements as early as possible.

**12-Month Actions**

- 2.1.1 Develop staff mapping capabilities
- 2.2.1 Revisit purpose and make decision on Glacier Farm
- 2.3.1 Develop and implement annual stewardship plan
- 2.3.2 Implement monitoring schedule
- 2.4.1 Develop a landowner engagement strategy as part of the overall outreach plan
- 2.5.1 Reach out to realtors about alerting purchasers of land with easements

**Oversight:** Lands Committee

**Responsible Parties:** Stewardship Staff, Executive Director, Lands chair

**Goal 3. Develop and maintain engaged and competent human resources (board, staff, and volunteers) at a sustainable level that facilitate the accomplishment of the goals of this plan.**

- 3.1 Ensure an adequate number of board & staff.
- 3.2 Adequately train human resources to meet their roles & responsibilities in the organization
  - Develop a board orientation/onboarding plan
  - Board will strive to attend 2 educational opportunities / year, e.g. participate in easement monitoring or stewardship visit per year, participate in an LTA webinar, etc. to serve as ambassadors in the community
  - Include funds for staff training in annual budget
- 3.3 Ensure that staff workloads, compensation, and benefits are appropriate and manageable as determined in annual evaluation and annual planning.
- 3.4 Engage community through volunteer opportunities by increasing volunteer participation by 10% per year
  - Provide meaningful & diverse opportunities for volunteers including board volunteers
  - Better promote volunteer recognition program
- 3.5 Develop a board engagement strategy as part of the overall outreach plan

**12-Month Actions**

- 3.1.1 Update board matrix and develop recruiting plan based on a governing board
- 3.2.1 Create Board Orientation/Onboard plan
- 3.2.2 Incorporate learning opportunities in staff annual performance objectives
- 3.3.1 Ensure that staffing capacity analysis appears in every project or program plan
- 3.4.1 Set targets for volunteer engagement
- 3.5.1 Develop a board engagement strategy as part of the overall outreach plan

**Oversight:** Governance Committee

**Responsible Parties:** Board President, Executive Director

**Goal 4. Create a Strategic Development and Outreach Plan to that solidifies the Land Trust as a welcoming organization that invites community support to accomplish the long term goals of this organization.**

- 4.1 Create annual and long-range development/outreach plan and implement to align with the future conservation needs in the Gunnison Valley.
- 4.2 Launch the Opportunity Fund.
- 4.3 Develop an outreach plan to engage target audiences in support of the goals of this plan:
  - Ranchers and landowners to increase donations by promoting their ownership of the elements and benefits of the Land Trust
  - Local residents and visitors toward responsible use, donations, volunteerism
  - Volunteers to serve as ambassadors for the long term vision and impact of this organization

**12-Month Actions**

- 4.1.1 Create Board approved Development/Outreach Plan
- 4.1.2 Plan and implement to increase operational fundraising by 20% to fund future land protection efforts and sustainable management of our conserved lands
- 4.2.1 Publicly Launch the Opportunity Fund

**Oversight:** Development Committee

**Responsible Parties:** Executive Director, Development Coordinator, Development Chair

**Goal 5. Convene and facilitate community ownership and education and position ourselves as a leader addressing the challenges facing land management in the Gunnison Valley.**

- 5.1 Provide Summer forum event for community input on stewardship projects
- 5.2 Facilitate the creation of a Slate River Working Group
- 5.3 Pursue implementation based on results of working group goals set in 5.2
- 5.3 Craft a valley wide message on the worth of working ranches with conservation partners

**12-Month Actions**

- 5.1.1 Lead community field trip for Gunsight Bridge Replacement
- 5.2.1 Secure funding, partners, for collaborative planning in the Slate River Valley
- 5.3.1 Craft and execute a communications campaign highlighting the working ranch as an integral part of the Gunnison Valley

**Oversight:** Shared oversight by Lands Committee and Development Committee

**Responsible Parties:** Executive Director, Lands and Development Committee Chairs

## Appendix: How to Use This Plan

- Set goals around it
- Measure and report on results regularly at the committee level
- Review progress at the board level semi-annually at the board retreat and September Board Meeting
- Use it as a communication tool with the community
- Develop action plans
- Judge opportunities against it

