



WHITE HOUSE
FARM FOUNDATION

Strategic Plan 2025-2030



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Introduction: Where We Have Been...

In 2005, Scott C. Plein purchased the historic White House Farm property in Page County, Virginia. After considering several land uses, Mr. Plein enrolled the property under a permanent conservation easement held by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. This process inspired Mr. Plein to create the White House Farm Foundation (WHFF), an educational nonprofit with a focus on ecology, wise land use, and local history. For many years, WHFF's programs centered exclusively on the Farm.

In the mid-2010s, Equinox Investments LLC, a real estate development and entitlement firm headed by Mr. Plein, undertook an ambitious conservation development project near Haymarket, Virginia. In addition to creating 400 homes, the project also created Leopold's Preserve, a 380-acre park protected under a permanent conservation easement held by the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust. In 2015, Equinox Investments generously donated this property to WHFF. Maintaining Leopold's Preserve for public access, education, and habitat value quickly became one of WHFF's key priorities.

Today, the White House Farm Foundation is proud to implement a wide array of education, volunteer, and habitat restoration programs at both of these properties. Leopold's Preserve sees an estimated 20,000 visitors annually, and has earned recognition from multiple state agencies and local leaders. In addition, WHFF supports more than 20 partner organizations per year and administers the Plein Environmental Scholarship.

OUR MISSION is to enrich individuals with knowledge of and involvement with our natural ecological systems, holistic community planning, and respect for local history and culture.

... and Where We Are Going

Our team is incredibly proud of what we have accomplished since 2010. We anticipate continued growth over the next few years, and we sought a guiding framework to help inform future expansion of our programming. To develop this framework, we initiated a strategic planning process in the fall of 2024 with help from Elevating Conservation consultant David V. Brotman. We surveyed our board, staff, volunteers, visitors, partners, and other supporters, seeking insight into each group's priorities, ideas, and concerns for the next five years.

Thoughtful synthesis and analysis of survey results led us to create three strategic goals for 2025-2030, outlined on subsequent pages of this document. These goals will ensure WHFF grows in a targeted way that supports our mission and the needs of our community. Thank you to everyone who participated in this process - we truly appreciate your support!

GOAL 1: Increase WHFF's educational impact.

Strategy I: Increase diversity of program attendees.

Strategy II: Increase WHFF's educational capacity.

Strategy III: Expand programming at WHFF properties.



Education has been at the heart of our mission since WHFF was founded in 2010. We are extremely proud to offer dozens of free educational programs each year, engaging thousands of participants across Northern Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley.

However, when we think about our educational impact, we should consider more than just the number of programs we offer or the number of participants who attend.

Over the next five years, we want our programs to reach more people in our community - including people who face barriers to participation and people who are not already interested in our mission.

To reach this goal, we will work on connecting with new audiences, increasing staff time spent on education, and offering new and different programs.



GOAL 2: Expand the availability of high-quality, publicly-accessible green spaces in our region which demonstrate land ethics in practice.

Strategy I: Maintain WHFF properties as “case studies” to fuel the creation and maintenance of high quality green spaces for both human and ecological benefits.

Strategy II: Influence conservation and land use policy at the local, regional, and state levels.

Our work is informed by Aldo Leopold’s Land Ethic, which outlines the need for a caring, mutually beneficial relationship between humans and ecosystems. At Leopold’s Preserve, the White House Farm, and beyond, we strive to showcase a balanced approach that supports both humans and nature.

Leopold’s Preserve represents our vision for conservation-minded development, a model for suburban land use where clustered housing developments are created alongside protected open spaces. The White House Farm is a case study in sustainable agriculture, where we demonstrate how critical conservation practices can integrate with the operations of a working farm.

WHY HIGH-QUALITY? It is not enough that green spaces and trails simply exist. Green spaces should be managed to ensure native species thrive and invasive species are responsibly controlled. Trails should be maintained to ensure an excellent visitor experience that invites people to connect with nature.

WHY PUBLICLY-ACCESSIBLE? Our mission emphasizes not only education, but involvement. Green spaces should offer opportunities for visitors to appreciate and enjoy nature and local history.



GOAL 3: Elevate WHFF's stability, visibility, and credibility.

Strategy I: Expand WHFF's network of partners and advisors.

Strategy II: Ensure wise allocation of WHFF's resources.

Strategy III: Increase consistency of WHFF's marketing and public messaging.



Over the past 15 years, we have built meaningful partnerships and deep community ties. Over the next five years, we hope to reach even more partners and communities. To do this, we will focus on improving three key organizational markers:

- **Stability:** weathering changes in board, staff, or funding in an organized way that does not interrupt our programming.
- **Visibility:** communicating WHFF's mission, services, and achievements to the broader community.
- **Credibility:** WHFF's operations should be conducted efficiently and widely reported, demonstrating that we are capable of taking on new and challenging projects.





Educate



Expand



Elevate

In Conclusion: Director's Note

Creating this strategic plan was a shared effort. On behalf of the entire White House Farm Foundation team, I send my sincere thanks to everyone who participated in this process - from our board and staff members, to our many partner organizations, to our volunteers, visitors, and social media followers.

Your active input shaped the strategic plan from the start, providing a framework for board and staff discussions about our vision for the future and WHFF's role in shaping that future. Thank you for being part of our team.

With your help, we have created a plan to guide the White House Farm Foundation's growth. It was fun to gather and synthesize everyone's thoughts, but we are going to have even more fun working with our community to put these goals into action. I hope you will continue to be part of this journey with us!

Finally, special thanks to David V. Brotman, whose thoughtful guidance of the strategic planning process was critical to our success.

Marie Pinto
WHFF Executive Director