

# TRANSITION HABITAT CONSERVANCY

## STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2026



## **Vision**

By 2050, we will have protected several areas of ecological significance and wildlife corridors and facilitated the creation of several natural parks in the West Mojave to protect important species and biodiversity. The land we preserved will allow people living in the high desert to continue to enjoy nature and will enable our children and grandchildren to see for themselves these rich resources.

## **Mission Statement**

Transition Habitat Conservancy protects transition zone and wildlife corridor ecosystems and their scenic, agricultural, and cultural resource values in the West Mojave Desert. We provide education about the fragile and inspirational nature of our desert plants, animals, and ecosystems to connect people to nature.

## **Core Values**

- We are committed to our dream and to the integrity of our mission statement.
- With the aid of the community, we will persevere and pursue the support of all interested parties, to shape our vision for the greater good.
- We value integrity and will strive to work cooperatively while maintaining a high level of professionalism in dealing with stakeholders.
- We will preserve land using practices that are ethical and agreeable to all parties in the transaction.
- We will honestly and openly discuss our goals and intentions with willing partners.
- We will provide stewardship plans for land we preserve and uphold our agreements and responsibilities over time.
- We value communities' desires to maintain their rural character and will respect the property rights of landowners with whom we work in partnership.
- The Transition Habitat Conservancy board will remain directly involved in all aspects of operations.
- Preserve and promote the equine ethics and skills necessary to manage land in a non-motorized low impact way.
- We value and respect individual perspectives and will encourage open communication by providing a safe environment for disagreement.

## Main Objectives

- Protect sensitive ecological areas.
- Protect properties with significant wildlife habitat within our previously and newly defined service areas.
- Plan/implement open space natural areas and protect those important resources.
- Identify/update priority areas, and increase as needed, for protection based on conservation science and good planning.
- Protect watersheds within the scope of our mission and vision.
- Define a variety of strategies for land conservation.
- Monitor the status of protected parcels according to our policies, and utilize innovative, cost-saving, ways to achieve those requirements.
- Collaborate with other agencies (county, state, and federal), non-profits, and other stakeholders to develop “regional” protection strategies.
- Maintain flexibility to take advantage of opportunities as they arrive Build support for protecting sensitive ecological areas.
- Improve our knowledge of these sensitive areas and their important linkages in terms of biodiversity, climate refugia, community needs, hydrology, etc.
- Develop a plan to engage and support the local community via schools, societies, local authorities, and other organizations. Utilize educational presentations, outreach collaborations, and field workshops to convey this message to visitors and help sensitize the public to the desert as a rich, diverse habitat.
- Collaborate with and help other organizations, public agencies, and stakeholders in resource protection.
- Participate in organizations, meetings, and conferences at state and local levels to present our projects and identify new ways/means to achieve our goals. Support legislation that strengthens or furthers our mission.
- Use web-based and social media platforms to inform the public about THC’s priorities and activities, and to help educate our community about the importance of open space and conservation.
- Develop and maintain relationships with key media outlets.
- Build the capacity of the Conservancy.
- Complete and maintain Land Trust Alliance accreditation.
- Refine the fundraising strategy.
- Write grants, CAPPs, proposals, initiatives, and project ideas.
- Increase and develop our volunteer and membership base.
- Utilize committees to implement work plans.
- Diversify and expand the Board of Directors.
- Maintain and support experienced staff, board, and consultants. Key elements include technology proficiency, land transactions and mitigation, accounting and finance, policy and procedures, ecology and biology, land and habitat management plans, fundraising, writing and content composition, public relations, education, and outreach.
- Increase knowledge of land trust operations and strategies

## Portal Ridge Wildlife Preserve

Conduct Baseline Stewardship- management, taxes, insurance vehicle, etc- this is an ongoing item
Acquisitions- *Additional costs include Phase 1 fee, Allyson Lavender time to help with escrow/transaction, staff time to assist with transaction, baseline, etc.
AmeriCorps Activities- remove fencing, erosion control, invasives, etc.
Volunteers- add and evaluate members
Policy Development – Access (roads, trails, public), camping, fires, etc.
Mountain Lion Plan and Discussion- Better informed, risk management, community engagement. *Consultation and/or field trip to see how other organizations/communities are handling this. Signage.
Install Monarch Waystation
Erosion Plan finalized and funded
Trail System Marked and Mapped
Cultural Site Evaluation Plan
Invite archeological organizations to map and document cultural sites on conservancy land.
Acquire key lands to promote connectivity between Conservancy lands, state parks and other conserved land.
Construct new trails to connect new acquisitions to existing trail network.
Grazing to control invasives
Develop -Stinknet /invasives task force
Develop trail access to our lands from Lake Hughes area either through existing California Riding and Hiking Trail easement near Fairmont reservoir or land acquisition near Bushnell summit on Pine cyn. Rd.
Develop a plan to restore OHV routes and hill climbs on Goltche parcel.
Develop a plan to prevent tumbleweed spreading onto our lands from adjacent green waste dumping.
Restore Cho parcel to acceptable foraging for Swainson hawk

**Fremont-Kramer:**

Desert Wildlife Management Area (DWMA)  
Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)  
Critical Habitat Unit (CHU)

Drone/Lens monitor all lands (except foot monitoring) and respond to unwanted impacts-
Foot monitor as needed
Close Out OHV Grant Requirements- match and Restoration Crew
Maintain Polygon Stronghold and restoration sites
New restoration grant administration – NFWF & WCB (Desert Conservation Program)?
New DWMA Brochure and Kiosk Map update – NFWF grant requirements
Improve our fee lands- consider fencing some locations
Integrate new WEMO Route Update system, continue work with BLM for suggestions of route choice
Desert Tortoise Plan continued – Large WCB grant with Hardshell Labs
Outreach Events- Educational Outreach, Volunteer events, etc.
Baldy Mesa / Silver Peak Mitigation for AES- Closing and integrate into DWMA Land Management Plan
Assess new mitigation opportunities, donations, and tax sales when appropriate
Interagency Fremont Group- Stay active, watch other acquisitions from Wildlands Inc. and MDLT
Assess need and capacity for additional field staff

## Puma Canyon Ecological Reserve

Add map boxes to park entries
Study of having bicycles in Puma canyon
Conduct research and monitoring
Develop and maintain a nature trail
Host event programs
Maintain/update picnic area and nature center
Monarch Waystation education and sale of Milkweed and nectar plants.
Plan and implement a trail to the summit
RDDC Sceptic system upgrade
Implementation of small parking lots
Trail Maintenance
Trail map maintenance
Trail signs maintenance
Update kiosk content
Remove invasive mustard and mistletoe
Expansion projects