



SOUTH OF THE SOUND
COMMUNITY FARM LAND TRUST

STRATEGIC PLAN

APRIL 2009 TO JUNE 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This strategic plan was created by the South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust (SSCFLT) to help advance our mission and prioritize our work over the next two years. It is informed by our accomplishments to date, our five year vision and our collaborations with other partners. The plan defines our four core goals, the strategies to achieve them, associated work plan elements and benchmarks, and the current status as of April 2009.

Goals and Strategies of this Strategic Plan:

- 1. Acquire Farmland by 2011 and Create or Enhance a Working Farm on the Site.**
 - Continue to actively pursue acquisition of the Black River Ranch and, if successful, secure farmer lessees, ground lease agreements, a farm plan, and other items needed to develop and manage the site for sustainable farming.
 - Establish farmland acquisition criteria.
 - Identify potential farmland properties for acquisition.
 - Assess farmers' needs and interests regarding access to farmland.
 - Assist current farmers who wish to learn about legal and financial methods of assuring that their farmland land remains in agriculture in perpetuity.
 - Develop a process for reviewing unexpected opportunities to acquire farmland.
 - Identify funding sources for farmland acquisition.
 - Develop a policy for purchase of conservation easements on farmland.
 - Take leadership in creating a Community Farm Cooperative as a potential lessee of farmland acquisitions.
 - Establish legal and administrative tools for property acquisition, ownership, and management.
 - Create Project Committees for each property acquisition project.
- 2. Effectively Manage the Organization and Build Organizational Capacity and Sustainability.**
 - Develop a strong organizational infrastructure.
 - Expand our funding base to increase organizational capacity.
 - Support and celebrate our staff, volunteers and community partners.
- 3. Mobilize Support for the Organization's Work through Education and Outreach.**
 - Develop and sustain a growing membership and network of supporters.
 - Cultivate active participation in our work.
- 4. Support Local Farming and Promote Local Food Security.**
 - Advocate for policies and programs to help preserve farmland and strengthen local farm economies.
 - Create projects that provide direct assistance to local farmers.

MISSION

South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust (SSCFLT) promotes a local food and farming system through the application of community supported farmland preservation strategies, through partnerships with other organizations that increase opportunities for farms and farmers to flourish, and through public educational outreach.

THE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST MODEL

Using the model developed by community land trusts, the South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust acquires and holds agricultural lands for the benefit of the larger community. It provides opportunities for farmers to lease agricultural lands at affordable rates on a long term basis and assures that the land is used for agricultural production in perpetuity. It provides opportunities for new farmers to have access to affordable farmland and for low income households to secure housing that is decent and affordable on a long term basis.

Community Land Trusts are democratic community-based non-profit organizations directed by a Board of Directors elected by its members. One-third of the board is composed of current or potential lessees of land trust properties; one-third is composed of representatives of the general membership; one-third is composed of representatives of the general public, and, of the total board, one-third represent the interests of low and moderate income households.

Initially developed as a model to provide permanent affordability of low and moderate income housing in our communities, Community Land Trusts' primary strategy is to acquire fee title to land, provide an opportunity for low or moderate income families to purchase the houses on the land, and assure perpetual affordability through 99-year limited equity land leases. The South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust is one of a few land trusts adapting this model to the preservation of farmland, to making farmland accessible and affordable to new farmers, to assuring that agricultural lands are farmed in perpetuity using sustainable agricultural practices, and to helping assure the vitality of local food security programs and strategies in our region.

FIVE YEAR VISION

- South of the Sound Community Farmland Trust (SSCFLT) will be the lead community organization in the South Sound region working to preserve farmland and viable farms.
- SSCFLT will secure titles or easements on at least one or two working farms, and will negotiate leases or easement agreements that will assure active and sustainable farming of those properties.
- SSCFLT will be an active partner in local and regional coalitions promoting sustainable farming and sustainable communities, local food security, technical and economic support for family farms, viable agricultural economies, and secure land and housing tenure for farmers and low income households.
- SSCFLT will build a large public membership and volunteer network to financially and actively support the work of the land trust.
- SSCFLT will have an active and diverse Board of Directors, committed to its mission, and bringing the skills and professional expertise necessary to oversee the financial, political, legal and organizational responsibilities of a community land trust.
- SSCFLT will ensure its own sustainability as an organization committed to long term stewardship responsibilities. It will accomplish this goal with a realistic funding strategy and reliable public financial support from its membership and community partners, adequate to maintain a professional staff to implement SSCFLT's mission.

AUTHORIZATION

We, the board of the South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust, approve the contents and support the implementation of this Strategic Plan for April 2009 to June 2011.

- Melissa Barker, Organic Farm, The Evergreen State College
- Colin Barricklow, Kirsop Farm
- Ben Dryfoos-Guss, Northwest Cooperative Development Center
- Russell Fox, The Evergreen State College
- Nicci Johnson, Cascade Northwest Brokers Real Estate
- Pat Labine, Oyster Bay Farm
- Lea Mitchell, WA State Department of Community, Trade & Economic Development
- Steve Scheuerell, The Evergreen State College
- Ann Vandeman, Left Foot Organics

GOALS, STRATEGIES and WORK PLAN for 2009-2011

Goal 1: Acquire Farmland by 2011 and Create or Enhance a Working Farm on the Site

Acquiring farmland will help ensure that farmland is protected in perpetuity, managed for community benefit, and available for lease to farmers who cannot afford to purchase farmland in this region. The South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust will be both proactive and reactive in our acquisition strategies and ensure that our efforts are focused on farmland that best fits our mission and the needs of the region.

Status as of April 2009

Since February 2008, the *Black River Ranch Project Committee* has been actively working with The Nature Conservancy to solicit funding for the acquisition of the Black River Ranch, a 720-acre dairy farm in southern Thurston County. *Russ Fox* is the chair of this committee. The majority of acquisition funding has been secured, but The Nature Conservancy and the current owners have not yet finalized a purchase-and-sale agreement. This committee is primarily responsible for working on Strategy A.

A *Farmland Preservation Committee* has been created to research and identify additional potential farmland acquisitions. *Lea Mitchell* is the chair of this committee. This committee began its work in December 2008 and is primarily responsible for working on Strategies B-H.

In 2008, the Community Farm Land Trust secured a \$20,000 technical assistance grant from the Northwest Cooperative Development Center to research the feasibility of creating a Community Farm Cooperative to serve as a potential lessee of farmland acquired by the farm land trust. Community meeting began in February 2009, and a *Community Farm Cooperative Steering Committee*, with Community Farm Land Trust membership, is being established. *Ben Dryfoos-Guss* will be the co-chair of the Steering Committee. This committee is primarily responsible for working on Strategy I.

Our *Legal Committee* has been in communication with the staff of Equity Trust, a national organization providing technical, legal and financial assistance to community land trusts working to preserve farmland and economically viable local agriculture. They have shared Model Agricultural Ground leases with us for our adaptation to our organization's needs. *Russ Fox* is the chair of this committee. This committee is primarily responsible for working on Strategy J.

Strategy A: Continue to actively pursue acquisition of the Black River Ranch and, if successful, secure farmer lessees, ground lease agreements, a farm plan, and other items needed to develop and manage the site for sustainable farming.

Work Plan

- Assist TNC with additional funding applications for acquisition, as needed.
- Negotiate contracts and working agreements with TNC and PCC Farmland Trust.
- After property closing by TNC, modify and begin implementation of Project Business Plan.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By July 2009

- Assist PCC Farmland Trust and TNC in the application for NRCS acquisition funding.
- Assist, as requested or needed, completion of a purchase and sale agreement between the current owners and The Nature Conservancy.*
- Revise and update the Project Business Plan approved by the Board of Directors in October 2008.*
- Negotiate funding, property acquisition and property management agreements with The Nature Conservancy.*
- Negotiate a property management agreement with the PCC Farmland Trust.*

By January 2010 (if property acquisition is successful)

- If a purchase and sale agreement is finalized, assume fee title ownership of approximately 300 acres of the Black River Ranch.*
- Hire a Property Stewardship Manager.*
- Determine whether or not to offer to renew the current property lease on the Black River Ranch for an addition year—until December 2011—and complete lease renewal negotiations with the current lessee by November 2009.*
- Create a *Sustainable Practices Farm Plan Committee* to complete a Farm Plan for agricultural enterprises and farming practices on the Black River Ranch.*
- If a purchase and sale agreement is not successful, terminate the project and concentrate on Strategies B-K.

By July 2010 (if current lease is not renewed and terminates in December 2010)

- Complete a Sustainable Practices Farm Plan for the Black River Ranch.*
- Identify farmer lessees for the Black River Ranch (the Community Farm Cooperative and/or individual farmers or other organizations).*

By January 2011 (or July 2011 if current lease is renewed until December 2011)

- Propose appropriate Agricultural Ground Leases to the Board of Directors.*
- Determine whether a Community Farm Cooperative or individual farmers and organizations will be the lessees.*
- Finalize Agricultural Ground Leases with lessees.*

Strategy B: Establish farmland acquisition criteria.

Work Plan

- Review farmland acquisition criteria currently used by other farmland trusts, farmland preservation groups, and government agencies.
- Develop and adopt criteria for South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust farmland acquisitions.
- Monitor and participate in development of Thurston County Conservation Futures funding criteria.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By July 2009

- Complete research of farmland preservation criteria.
- Propose farmland acquisition criteria to the Board of Directors.*

Strategy C: Identify potential farmland properties for acquisition.

Work Plan

- Examine Thurston County Farm and Farmland Inventory data to identify categories of farms or farmland and to identify potential farms for acquisition.
- Explore surplus county lands that could be leased for a nominal fee.
- Identify land that might be donated or transitioned to new farmers.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By July 2009

- Review and assess data gathered and compiled in the Thurston County Farm and Farmland Inventory.
- Complete database of seniors owning farmland.
- Create an ongoing database of other potential acquisition lands.

By January 2010

- Recommend a potential new working land acquisition project to the Board of Directors.*
- Recommend a project for Thurston County Conservation Futures funding applications in 2010.*

By January 2011

- Recommend a project for Thurston County Conservation Futures funding applications in 2011.*

Strategy D: Assess farmers' needs and interests regarding access to farmland.

Work Plan

- Identify potential new farmers and assess their interests in access to farmland.
- Assess current farmers' needs regarding access to farmland and agricultural facilities.
- Recommend general criteria to be used in selecting farmers as lessees for SSCFLT farmland properties.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By July 2009

- Work with data from the Thurston County Farm and Farmland Inventory, the Cascade Harvest Coalition's Farm-Link program, the Thurston County Conservation District and other sources to identify current and potential farmers in our region.

- In collaboration with the *Community Farm Cooperative Steering Committee* (see Strategy H), staff at the Thurston Conservation District, and others, begin to identify, categorize and assess the interests and needs of current and potential farmers in Thurston County.

By January 2010

- Create an on-going database of current and potential new farmers with needs and interests in access to farmland.
- Contribute information to Farm-Link regarding existing and new farmers needing farmland, local farmland that is potentially available to lease, and/or farm facilities available or needed for their businesses.
- Propose general criteria to be used by the *Project Committees* in recommending lessee farmers (see Strategy J) to the Board of Directors.*

Strategy E: Assist current farmers who wish to learn about legal and financial methods of assuring that their farmland land remains in agriculture in perpetuity.

Work Plan

- Assess local farmland owner's interests, needs and concerns regarding preserving their farmland.
- Develop talking points, resources, and strategies to respond to farmland owners who are curious about preserving their farmland with the South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust.
- Identify regional estate planners and other professionals with an expertise in estate planning methods and the potential benefits of various land trust models.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By July 2009

- Work with data from the Thurston County Farm and Farmland Inventory, the Cascade Harvest Coalition's Farm-Link program, the Thurston County Conservation District and other sources to identify current and potential farmers in our region.
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Strategy F: Develop a process for reviewing unexpected opportunities to acquire farmland.

Work Plan

- Empower the *Farmland Preservation Committee* to investigate and evaluate unexpected farmland acquisition opportunities using criteria and data developed in Strategies B&C above.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By July 2009

- Propose a process for investigating unexpected potential farmland acquisition offers or possibilities to the Board of Directors.*

Strategy G: Identify funding sources for farmland acquisition.

Work Plan

- Define primary funding sources for acquisition of farmland, with their criteria, application processes and deadlines.
- Create and participate in regional networks to share successful farmland preservation strategies used by other farmland trusts, farmland preservation groups, and others.
- Explore and develop farmland acquisition funding strategies with the Olympia Food Coop, the Friends of the Olympia Farmers Market, the Thurston Conservation District, local CSA farms and other potential partners for local farmland acquisition.
- Assist the *Development Committee* (see Goal 2 Strategy 2) and the *Membership and Outreach Committee* in a "buy-the-farm" capitol campaign.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By July 2009

- Create an ongoing database of farmland acquisition funding sources.

By January 2010

- Develop farmland acquisition partnerships with at least two local and/or regional organizations.*
- Present a "buy-the-farm" capitol campaign model and plan to the Board of Directors.*

Strategy H: Develop a policy for purchase of conservation easements on farmland.

Work Plan

- Develop criteria for farmland where easements with an option to purchase would be an acceptable strategy to assure farming or food production in perpetuity.
- Using the model Agricultural Easement with Option to Purchase proposed by Equity Trust, develop easement documents appropriate for our organization.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By January 2010

- Develop criteria and processes for consideration of purchasing conservation easements instead of fee interest in farmland.

Strategy I: Take leadership in creating a Community Farm Cooperative as a potential lessee of farmland acquisitions.

Work Plan

- In partnership with and technical assistance from the Northwest Cooperative Development Center, initiate community meetings to explore the feasibility of creating a Community Farm Cooperative (CFC) as a potential lessee for farmland acquired by the South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust.
- Actively participate in the creation of a business plan for a Community Farm Cooperative.
- Help solicit investor, community and farmer shareholder members for a CFC.
- Secure a second-year of technical assistance grant from the NWCDC to provide board training and organizational development assistance for the Cooperative.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By July 2009

- Form a *Community Farm Cooperative Steering Committee* composed of Community Farm Land Trust board members, current prospective farmers and other community members interested in a co-op model for keeping local food local.
- Research the feasibility creating a Community Farm Cooperative for the purpose of leasing farmland from the Community Farm Land Trust.

By January 2010

- Create a business plan for the Community Farm Cooperative and make a “go/no go” decision on whether to continue creating the cooperative.

By July 2010

- If the Black River Ranch acquisition is successful, recruit and gain financial commitments to purchase co-op shares from at least 5 farmers or farm organizations (potential lessees) and 25 community members.
- Assist with the legal incorporation and organizational start-up of an independent Community Farm Cooperative.
- Secure on-going technical assistance and board training for the Community Farm Cooperative so that it is financially and organizationally ready to assume farm property management by January 2011.

By January 2011 (or July 2011 if current Black River Ranch lease is renewed to December 2011)

- Determine whether the Community Farm Cooperative is sufficiently established and prepared to lease the Black River Ranch farmland and purchase the facilities.*
- Finalize an Agricultural Ground Lease and the purchase of buildings and infrastructure by the Community Farm Cooperative.*

Strategy J: Establish legal and administrative tools for property acquisition, ownership, and management

Work Plan

- Recruit legal expertise in the community to serve on or assist our Legal Committee.
- Review model legal documents used by other community and conservation land trusts.

- Create an Agricultural Ground Lease appropriate for our community farm land trust.
- Define core responsibilities of Project Committees that will be created for each property acquisition project.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By July 2009

- Recruit additional membership on the Legal Committee.
- If a purchase-and-sale agreement for the Black River Ranch is signed, negotiate agreements with The Nature Conservancy and PCC Farmland Trust.*

By January 2010

- Create an appropriate Agricultural Ground Lease for our community farm land trust.

Strategy K: Create Project Committees for each property acquisition project.

Work Plan

- Create *Project Committees* to oversee the acquisition and management planning for any farmland acquisition projects recommended by the *Farmland Protection Committee* and approved by the Board of Directors for acquisition—as needed.
- The Project Committee responsibilities include;
 - Further research to assess project feasibility
 - Research and clarify acquisition funding strategies.
 - Establish working relationships with project partners.*
 - Work with the Board of Directors and other committees (such as the *Development Committee, Legal Committee, Sustainable Practices Farm Plan Committee* and others, as needed, to bring project to fruition.
 - Recommend final action (i.e. land acquisition, easement acquisition, partnership agreements or contracts) to the Board of Directors.*
 - Interview and recommend farmers as lessees for the project farm property.*

Goal 2. Effectively Manage the Organization and Build Organizational Capacity and Sustainability.

The South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust's recent and current accomplishments—and our local community's increasing awareness of the critical importance of supporting local farms and saving working lands—now require a staffing and funding strategy to help the organization to achieve its mission.

Status as of April 2009

Since its creation in 1997, the South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust has been characterized by its energetic working Board of Directors. Since 2007, we have had sufficient funds to hire a part-time Membership and Outreach Coordinator. Staff assistance has enabled us to advance the organization by increasing our community membership from a few dozen to about 100 households in 2008. During 2007 and 2008 we have been successful in securing grants from the Bullitt Foundation, the Northwest Community Land Trust Coalition and the Northwest Cooperative Development Center. The NWCLT Coalition grant, with funds from the WA Dept of Community, Trade and Economic Development, included participation in a six-month intensive Capacity Building Institute.

In March 2009, the Board of Directors committed to contracting with Richard Oldenburg and Associates for professional assistance in establishing Annual Fund and major donor campaigns. At the same time, we began leasing office space in downtown Olympia for our staff and conference meeting needs. *Ben Dryfoos-Guss* is the 2009 Chair of our Board of Directors. The *Executive Committee* and Board of Directors are responsible for working on Strategies A-C.

Strategy A: Develop a strong organizational infrastructure.

Work Plan

- Develop organizational policies and procedures and refine organizational structures.
- Assess and prioritize staffing and consultant needs (i.e. Executive Director, Membership and Outreach Coordinator, Property Stewardship Manager) and other priority needs.
- Secure board and project liability insurance.
- Develop and sustain an engaged member and volunteer base.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By July 2009

- Adopt a 2009 Organizational Budget.*
- Develop staff work and professional development plans.*
- Develop and maintain an updated directory of committees, with roles, responsibilities and membership.
- Adopt Board of Directors criteria, job descriptions, recruitment, selection and election processes, and Board Member orientation and training procedures compatible with the By-Laws.*
- Establish an *Advisory Board* of invited professionals with skills and expertise needed by the organization.*

By January 2010

- Expand the Board of Directors to 12 members and use the Board Selection Criteria to recruit and approve new Board members.
- Develop (or revise) job descriptions for Executive Director, Membership and Outreach Coordinator and Project Stewardship Manager.*
- Expand the hours, job responsibilities and compensation for our Membership and Outreach Coordinator.*
- Hire a half-time Executive Director.*
- Secure board and project liability insurance.*
- If needed, hire a Property Stewardship Manager for the Black River Ranch and/or any farmland acquired during 2009.*
- Adopt 2010 Organizational and Project Budgets by January 2010.*

By July 2011

- Adopt a June 2011-January 2013 Strategic Plan.*

Strategy B: Expand our funding base to increase organizational capacity.

Work Plan

- Maintain and develop diverse and sustainable funding sources including grants, large and small private donations, business support, sales, and other creative funding opportunities.
 - Apply for grants to support the organization's or program work
 - Expand membership
 - Create annual major fundraising events
 - Develop an annual fund campaign
 - Develop donors
- Work with Rick Oldenburg and Barbara Hammerman to build sustainable Annual Fund and major donor campaigns.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By July 2009

- Create a *Development Committee* composed of Board Members, Advisory Board members, staff and volunteers to work with our fundraising consultant.*
- Identify most viable grant funding sources for organizational development.
- Complete case statements, board fundraising training and development plan preparation in consultation with consultants.

By January 2010

- Complete planning and organization for an Annual Fund solicitation.
- Complete plan defining core grants to apply for in 2010.
- Create an annual celebration and fundraising event.
- Expand our membership by 50%.

By July 2010

- Successfully raise \$60,000 through an Annual Fund.
- Assess readiness for legacy gifts and Phase II development planning.*
- Have applied for at least three grants.

By July 2011

- Successfully raise an additional \$60,000 through an Annual Fund.
- Begin implementation of major donor and legacy gift programs.*
- Have applied for at least three grants.

Strategy C: Support and celebrate our staff, volunteers and community partners.

Work Plan

- Maintain a happy, healthy and productive staff.
 - Provide opportunities for professional and leadership development
 - Create a productive workspace (including access to good technology)
 - Provide benefits, such as sick leave and vacation, and seek collaboration with other non-profits to provide additional benefits
 - Expect staff members to participate in critical decision-making for the future of the organization
- Celebrate successes with staff, members, volunteers and community partners.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By January 2010

- Have provided opportunities for staff and board member professional and leadership development—including sponsoring participation in the semi-annual Northwest Community Land Trust gatherings in spring and fall each year.*
- Create and adopt Personnel Policies, including hiring and evaluation procedures and staff benefits.*

Goal 3: Mobilize Support for the Organization's Work through Education and Outreach

The overriding purpose of education and outreach is to cultivate community relationships, educate stakeholders about key issues, and help people engage with our work.

Status as of April 2009

A Membership and Outreach Committee oversees our board and staff efforts to build and support our membership and to promote the South of the Sound Community Land Trust's mission. Through the success of outreach efforts of our Membership and Outreach Coordinator and summer interns from The Evergreen State college, we increased our current paid memberships over four-fold in 2008. The Bullitt Foundation grant also enabled us to supplement our Coordinator's efforts in providing public outreach in all of the Farmer's Markets and other venues in Thurston County over the summer and into the fall. Our Annual Meeting held in January 2009 was attended by over 125 community members, many of whom became new members that evening. The Bullitt Foundation grant also enabled us to contract for the design and implementation of a new web site. And, since all board members are active in many networks of community organizations, promotion of our mission and goals was regularly spread throughout the community through these networks. *Pat Labine* is the chair of this committee.

Strategy A: Develop and sustain a growing membership and network of supporters

Work Plan

- Produce and regularly update materials for existing members, potential members, and volunteers.
- Develop and distribute outreach materials to help members and supporters comment on and help shape public policies or programs that SSCFLT is working to develop (i.e. Thurston County Working Lands Plan).
- Maintain regular communication with members and supporters.
- Create annual promotional events in the community, such as a "breakfast-on-a-farm."
- Plan and promote educational and fun Annual Meetings for members and the community.
- Conduct regular outreach at community events, such as local Farmer's Markets.
- Regularly update and maintain web site.
- Develop effective media outreach and communications.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By July 2009

- Publish a spring/summer newsletter for members and supporters.
- Provide information about SSCFLT and farmland protection issues and initiatives in at least six community events.
- Create a media packet and press release template and have sent at least two press releases to local media.
- Develop a list of reporters to cultivate and educate.
- Create information packets and scripts for public speaking opportunities.

By January 2010

- Increase membership by 50% (from April 2009).
- Publish a fall/winter newsletter for members and supporters.
- Complete design and distribution of a new rack card/brochure, donor information packets and table display materials.
- Create a slide show with talking points and train members to present at community events.
- Provide information about SSCFLT and farmland protection issues and initiatives in at least ten additional community events.
- Complete a pilot annual promotional event in the local community.
- Host a well-attended Annual Meeting, celebrating our successes and supporters.

By January 2011

- Increase membership by 100% (from January 2010).
- Publish spring/summer and fall/winter newsletters for members and supporters.
- Provide information about SSCFLT and farmland protection issues and initiatives in at least fifteen additional community events.
- Complete a second annual promotional event attended by at least twice as many participants as in the previous year.
- Host a well-attended Annual Meeting, celebrating our successes and supporters.

Strategy B: Cultivate active participation in our work

Work Plan

- Define and advertise prioritized volunteer activities.
- Provide on-going guidance, training and support for volunteers.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By July 2009

- Solicit and organize volunteer opportunities with each committee.
- Define prioritized volunteer opportunities and advertise them to members and supporters.
- Establish work party partnerships with other organizations.
- Define and schedule tabling and associated outreach at upcoming summer and fall events and festivals.

By January 2010

- Involve at least 20 volunteers in support of the organization and its projects.
- Complete at least two work party partnerships with other organizations.
- Highlight volunteer contributions in each newsletter and the Annual Meeting.

By January 2011

- Involve at least 40 volunteers in support of the organization and its projects.
- Complete at least four additional work party partnerships with other organizations.
- Highlight volunteer contributions in each newsletter and the Annual Meeting.

Goal 4: Support Local Farming and Promote Local Food Security

Supporting local agriculture requires not only farmland protection and affordable access to land for farming, but also expanding local farm economies and advancing public policies to help farmers thrive in this region.

Status as of April 2009

Since 2007, Board Members of the South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust have been particularly active in research and advocacy for farmland protection in Thurston County. With a \$20,000 grant from the Bullitt Foundation, we completed a thorough inventory of farms and farmlands in Thurston County. Because the inventory was intended to help document the need for farmland protection in Thurston County, Board Member Lea Mitchell has been active in a community-wide effort to place an open space ballot measure before the voters in 2010. With Board Member Pat Labine as an active member of the Thurston County Agricultural Advisory Committee, the land trust provided valuable data from the inventory to a Working Lands Plan prepared by the Agricultural Committee and forwarded to the Thurston County Commissioners. The SSCFLT also continued to be an active member of the Northwest Community Land Trust Coalition and joined the new Washington Association of Land Trusts.

To help promote local farms, the SSCFLT has published and distributed 12,000 free copies of the Thurston County Farm Map for many years. We also received a \$1500 matching grant from Heifer International to purchase a mobile poultry processing unit. The *Executive Committee* coordinates efforts in addressing this Goal.

Strategy A: Advocate for policies and programs to help preserve farmland and strengthen local farm economies.

Work Plan

- Actively participate on the Thurston County Agricultural Advisory Committee and other farmland protection policy committees when opportunities arise.
- Participate in planning a 2010 Conservation Lands ballot measure.
- Maintain active membership and participation in the Washington Association of Land Trusts and the Northwest Community Land Trust Coalition.
- Identify and develop strategic partnerships with agencies and community organizations addressing issues of local or regional food security and working lands conservation.
- Attend and testify at public meetings and hearings addressing issues of farmland protection and local or regional food security.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By January 2010

- Have at least two Board Members or staff attend the fall conference of the Northwest Community Land Trust Association.
- Mobilize SSCFLT members and community members to attend and provide testimony at Thurston County Planning Commission and County Commission hearings on the Working Lands Plan.

- Have developed a partnership with the Olympia Food Co-op, the Friends of the Olympia Farmers' Market and one additional local community organization in new efforts to promote local food security and farmland protection.

By July 2010

- Have played a strong supporting role in convincing the Thurston County Commissioners to place an Open Space Conservation ballot measure on the fall election ballot.

By July 2011

- Have developed at least three additional partnerships in new efforts to promote local food security and farmland protection.

Strategy B: Create projects that provide direct assistance to local farmers.

Work Plan

- Continue to publish and distribute free copies of an annual Thurston County Farm Map.
- Work with the Thurston Conservation District and others to make small farm equipment, such as a Mobile Chicken Processor, available to local farmers at a reasonable cost.
- Work with Enterprise for Equity and others to explore new marketing strategies and programs to assist local farmers with marketing their products locally and regionally.
- Provide information to farmers about estate planning and generational transition.
- Create a local Farm-Link program to broker connections between owners of existing farms and new farmers seeking mentoring and access to farmland.
- Solicit suggestions from local farmers for other programs or projects that would help enable them to sustain their businesses.

Benchmarks for Implementation (* requires Board of Directors approval)

By July 2009

- Complete fundraising to match the Heifer International grant, purchase the Mobile Poultry Processing unit and complete an agreement with the Thurston Conservation District to make the unit available to local farmers at a reasonable daily cost.

By July 2010

- Publish and distribute at least 12,000 copies of a 2010 Thurston County Farm Map.
- Have acquired or assisted in the acquisition of additional agricultural processing equipment to assist small farmers in Thurston County and/or adjacent counties.
- Co-sponsor at least one public forum on marketing strategies for local farmers.
- Identify and collaborate with regional estate planners and other professionals with an expertise in estate planning methods and the potential benefits of various land trust models.
- Develop talking points, resources and strategies to respond to farmland owners who are curious about preserving their farmland with the Community Farm Land Trust.
- Partner with the Northwest Agriculture Business Center for at least one local workshop for farmers on generational transition of ownership and operation of their farms.

By July 2011

- Publish and distribute at least 12,000 copies of a 2011 Thurston County Farm Map.
- Partner with the Northwest Agricultural Business Center and others for at least two workshops for farmers on estate planning and generational transition of their farms.