

A Stronger Tomorrow

STRATEGIC ROADMAP FOR 2022-2024



One Conservancy

Founded in the U.S. through grassroots action in 1951, The Nature Conservancy has grown to become one of the world's most effective and wide-reaching environmental organizations. Our strength and vitality lie in being one organization working together in local places and across borders to achieve our global mission. Thanks to more than a million members and the dedicated efforts of our diverse staff, including more than 400 scientists, we impact conservation in 75 countries and territories: 37 by direct conservation impact and 38 through partners and have protected more than 125 million acres of land.

The Nature Conservancy has been working in Pennsylvania since 1975 and in Delaware since 1990 to lead large-scale conservation efforts that protect the lands and waters that are critical to the health and well-being of both people and nature.

OUR MISSION is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. We must boldly address the biodiversity and climate crises over the next decade to achieve this. By maximizing our ability to effect change between now and 2030, we can shape a brighter future for people and our planet.

OUR VISION

We envision a future where people and nature thrive together across Pennsylvania and Delaware. As one united Chapter, we protect our states' biodiversity, combat the effects of climate change and ensure that conservation promotes equitable and just communities.

OUR VALUES

- We commit to building trust to nourish a thriving organization.
- We honor different perspectives to elevate inclusion, authenticity and creativity.
- We collaborate with the communities where we work and with our partners to solve problems together.
- We prioritize high-impact work that sustains our vision and values.
- We refuse to compromise the integrity of our science-based work.



Invest in a Stronger Tomorrow

The natural world is at a tipping point, and rapid climate change and biodiversity loss aren't distant threats—they are happening right now. We face the greatest, most complex challenges of our lives, which call for our biggest, most ambitious plans—for people and nature. For nearly 70 years, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has met the conservation challenges of a changing world. By working together with international partners and communities, we can create planet-sized solutions for the planet-sized problems we face.

Closer to home, in Pennsylvania and Delaware, we are in the center of so many issues—the threat of sea-level rise, development pressures, recreational demands, intense flooding, and many others. **We know that nature is our best defense to adapt to a changing world**, and our mission demands that we do everything in our power to create a world where people and nature can thrive.

TNC has established a set of global 2030 goals that represent the most ambitious conservation agenda in our nearly 70-year history to tackle these complex challenges. These goals are intentionally aligned with goals set by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) so that TNC has the most significant impact on a durable future for all forms of life on Earth.

Within this framework, the Conservancy's Pennsylvania/Delaware chapter established a three-year strategic plan with actions grounded in the places identified by our science and ambitious goals that reflect the urgency of climate change and biodiversity loss. **The Nature Conservancy of Pennsylvania and Delaware is poised to make a significant, measurable difference in these areas for both nature and people.**

This Strategic Roadmap summarizes our priorities, outcomes, and direct actions that will have an out-sized impact through influence and policy across our two states.

As the executive director of TNC's Pennsylvania/Delaware chapter, when I think about our staff, volunteers, and supporters, I always think of that evergreen environmental adage: *Think global. Act local.* Since the entire organization is laser-focused on climate and biodiversity, you are making an impact globally by helping us accomplish the goals outlined in this three-year strategic plan.

Making an investment in The Nature Conservancy of Pennsylvania & Delaware is a tangible way to make a measurable difference for a stronger tomorrow. Join us to be part of the most remarkable success story in the planet's history. We are grateful for your support.

Lori Brennan, Executive Director
The Nature Conservancy in Pennsylvania & Delaware

What Sets Us Apart



WE ARE SCIENTISTS

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Science matters, especially at this critical turning point for nature. TNC's leadership in cutting-edge science has enabled us to understand how to maximize the conservation return on our investment. Our science tells us where to work, and our on-the-ground experts use that science to determine how to work to achieve the greatest impact for nature and people.



WE WORK ACROSS THE AISLE

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Our government relations team uses a practical, nonpartisan approach and peer-reviewed science to show policymakers how nature can provide effective solutions to environmental challenges facing our local communities.



WE ARE CLIMATE LEADERS

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As the largest net exporter of electricity in the country, Pennsylvania is a major contributor to climate change. This presents an opportunity for TNC to lead with solutions that will have global implications. Delaware's compact size, support for climate action and pressure from rising waters means we can influence changes that will benefit its citizens and serve as a proving ground of climate-smart policies.



WE USE MARKET FORCES

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The Pennsylvania/Delaware chapter is a major player in carbon offset markets due to our leadership in multiple forest carbon programs. By working closely with NatureVest, TNC's impact investing unit, our chapter and the whole organization is directing private equity to conservation in innovative ways. This is a critical component in meeting global climate and biodiversity goals.



WE ARE LANDOWNERS

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TNC's 74,000 acres of owned and protected lands across Pennsylvania and Delaware serve as living laboratories to develop and test best conservation practices that we want to see implemented by others. Our preserves and other land holdings also give us a presence in dozens of local communities across our two great states and give us added political credibility.



WE LEVERAGE YOUR CONTRIBUTION

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We make charitable giving easy, meaningful and powerful. We partner with our supporters to direct their time and resources to where it will have the greatest conservation impact, both locally and globally. And we match private donations with public funds to maximize and leverage our supporters' conservation return on investment. The power to protect and restore nature—now and for future generations—is in your hands.



“Looking ahead, we have enormous opportunities on the horizon to protect biodiversity, use nature to solve the climate crisis, and support communities most harmed by climate change, and I look forward to our continued work together in this critical decade for people and our planet.”

— 2021, Jennifer Morris, CEO of The Nature Conservancy



Climate and Energy

Pennsylvania is a major contributor to the pollution that causes climate change; the state is ranked fifth in the country for carbon dioxide emissions. The Keystone State is also the largest net exporter of electricity in the country, supplying power to many states within the regional grid. Actions to reduce Pennsylvania emissions and to encourage our elected leaders to prioritize climate action are essential to overall success in the United States.

Although Delaware's emissions footprint is considerably smaller than Pennsylvania's, pressure from rising waters, increased flooding and rapid land development create a favorable policy environment in the First State on climate and clean energy to contribute to meaningful greenhouse gas reductions in the region.



WHAT WE DO. When it comes to climate action, TNC has established a four-pronged approach: we advocate for smart clean energy policies at all levels of government; we promote nature-based solutions that sequester carbon; we build resilience for the most vulnerable communities by restoring nature where it can help; and we inspire productive conversations about climate change to broaden the base for support. We take this approach in Pennsylvania, Delaware, across the country and around the world.

HOW WE SCALE. TNC's recently established 2030 goals are entirely focused on tackling the dual crises of climate change and biodiversity loss. Every level of the organization, including the Pennsylvania/Delaware chapter, is aligning our local work around these goals—particularly when it comes to policy. When it comes to achieving global emissions reductions targets, policy is the greatest lever; our nonpartisan status opens legislative doors that are closed to many others.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, we can continue to drive legislative efforts that **advance climate actions** that are consistent with the country's commitment to the **Paris Climate Agreement** to reach **net-zero by 2050**. Our supporters not only fund our dedicated team, they often **work directly with our Government Relations staff to reach out to legislators** to advocate for climate-smart policies.



Appalachian Forests

Stretching from Alabama to Canada is one of the most resilient, diverse and carbon-rich landscapes in the world—the Appalachians. Originally inhabited and stewarded by many Indigenous nations and communities, over 22 million people now call this region home and depend on it for their health and livelihoods. Given our geography, our Chapter plays a critical role in TNC’s grand vision for continental conservation across the Appalachians.

The Appalachians were selected by TNC as one of four focal places globally—and the only one in North America—that present an exciting opportunity to identify the “Best in Class” approaches for how we work together to expedite progress towards the organization’s 2030 Goals. Together, with partners and TNC colleagues across the region, we can conserve one of the most important ecosystems in the world.

LARGE © Matt Kane/TNC; INSET, LEFT TO RIGHT © American Forest Foundation; © Kent Mason

WHAT WE DO. Our conservation strategy in the Appalachians takes a three-pronged approach: protection, restoration and improved management. Science guides our protection efforts to lands that will create climate-resilient corridors. In places where Appalachian forests have been degraded, TNC works with partners and volunteers to restore the lands and waters that are critical to people and nature. On our dozens of nature preserves and other land holdings across the Appalachians, TNC implements best management practices that serve as demonstration sites for our public and private landowner partners that we want to see adopt similar practices.

HOW WE SCALE. With staff working on-the-ground, living in local Appalachian communities, TNC has become a trusted advisor across this landscape. We convene diverse coalitions of public and private partners that have shared conservation goals in the Appalachians and create frameworks that accelerate the rate and pace of conservation projects, programs and funding. TNC has more than a dozen state chapters working together to advance these efforts, sharing best practices and strategizing on a scale that goes beyond our state borders.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, we can counter the growing threats to this critical climate resilient corridor from development, mining, unsustainable forestry and fragmentation that put the region’s public, economic and ecological health at risk. At present, **only 26% of this globally important landscape is protected.** By 2025, TNC and our partners will conserve in Pennsylvania an additional **15,000 acres** of priority lands within the Kittatinny Ridge-Tuscarora to the Delaware Headwaters Focal Landscape and **10,000 acres** of priority lands within the Allegheny Front Focal Landscape.



Delaware Bayshore and Seascape

Coastal marshes and wetlands are some of the most diverse habitats in the country. Around the Delaware Bay and up and down the Atlantic coast, these brackish wetlands occupy a sliver of space where saltwater mixes with freshwater that drains from the land. North America is home to the majority of our planet's tidal salt marsh vertebrates.

Conserving these habitats is a national responsibility with Delaware serving as a vital home for spawning horseshoe crabs and migrating red knots. Coastal wetlands, dunes and maritime forests not only play an important role as wildlife habitat, but they also serve as a green suit of armor against rising seas and intense storms.

WHAT WE DO. Coastal habitats have evolved as dynamic ecosystems that can adapt to changing conditions. However, accelerated sea-level rise and increased precipitation combined with unrestrained coastal development has led to something called “coastal squeeze” where these ecosystems lose their ability to migrate and shift. TNC’s resilient and connected science has identified healthy coastal habitats along the Delaware Bayshore and coast that still have the best opportunity to adapt to a changing climate. By protecting and restoring land that is adjacent to these dynamic places, we provide space for coastal ecosystems—and all who depend on them—to persist into the future.

HOW WE SCALE. With a focus on the future, we influence policies and build partnerships now to protect the places along the Delaware Bayshore and coast that will become critical coastal habitats in the years to come. TNC’s resilient and connected science will help focus and direct coastal conservation efforts beyond our direct actions so that TNC, the state of Delaware, and other local conservation groups lay the groundwork for a coastal-resilient future for the lowest lying state in the country.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, by 2025, **50% or more of Delaware’s resilient coastal habitats** will have space to shift inland in response to sea-level rise. We will achieve this goal by building capacity for nature-based solutions through the development and delivery of science, planning, policy, mapping and community engagement. **TNC will advocate in partnership with other NGOs and at-risk communities** for access to new sources of state and federal funding to adapt to climate change by using natural infrastructure.



Delaware River Headwaters

The upper Delaware River is known for its extensive forests and high-quality headwater streams and wetlands. The Delaware River watershed is a 13,500-square mile system which provides clean drinking water for 13 million people.

TNC has had a major presence in this landscape for more than 60 years, protecting one of the world’s “Last Great Places,” which harbors the highest concentration of globally rare plants and animals in Pennsylvania. Across the Delaware River Basin, TNC also plays an important role in the management and conservation of migratory fish. Building on an already strong foundation, we will continue to work with partners across the watershed to improve fish passage, fishery management and water quality so that migratory fish conservation in the Delaware River Basin can be held up as a model to the world.

LARGE © Nicholas Tonnelli; INSET, LEFT TO RIGHT © Getty Images; © Matt Kane/TNC

WHAT WE DO. Given our long-standing conservation leadership role in the Delaware River headwaters, TNC will continue to advance new and innovative strategies, including forest carbon programs, to expand protection and improve management on both public and private lands. We will also continue building the body of migratory fish science across the watershed to help state regulatory agencies improve fisheries management, fish passage and habitat protection.

HOW WE SCALE. TNC’s conservation footprint in the Delaware River headwaters is already significant. Through new and innovative programs such as Working Woodlands and the Family Forest Carbon Program, we can expand that footprint to reach new landowner partners to achieve mutual conservation goals.

In the Delaware River and tributary streams, TNC’s migratory fish experts are leaders within the larger scientific community focused on fishery trends, management issues and research projects that help improve the population health of migratory American shad, eel, and river herring. Not only are these species key forage fish for commercially important species like striped bass, they’re also important food sources for birds like eagles and herons and are indicators of good water quality.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, we can capitalize on TNC’s innovative forest carbon programs to expand land conservation in the Delaware River headwaters with a **focus on the protection of active river areas, forested headwaters and wetlands.** Together, we can also leverage TNC’s migratory fish research, partnerships, and positions held on fisheries advisory and management boards to influence state and federal fisheries management policy.



Urban Conservation

The Delaware River watershed is home to the largest cities in both Pennsylvania and Delaware. Accelerating the use of nature-based solutions in our cities will create more equitable, climate-resilient urban communities. Improving our aging stormwater infrastructure while expanding urban green space will benefit both the Delaware River and the mental and physical well-being of the people who live where our work touches down. By prioritizing urban conservation in Pennsylvania, Delaware and across the country, TNC is demonstrating a recognition that successful conservation efforts are inextricably linked with equity and social justice.

WHAT WE DO. In Philadelphia and Wilmington, we are working with municipalities and other community partners to increase the use of nature-based solutions to tackle urban environmental challenges like stormwater pollution, urban heat and sea-level rise. Tree canopies, green roofs, rain gardens, and other nature-based solutions offer numerous benefits to city infrastructure, private property and resident well-being. We are expanding the adoption of these solutions in these cities to improve water quality in the Delaware River, support urban biodiversity, and create healthier and more equitable communities that are better adapted to the impacts of climate change. Our ability to work with private landowners makes us a critical partner to the municipalities in these two cities, as we work together towards more nature-based solutions across the built landscape.

HOW WE SCALE. The Nature Conservancy has created a North America Cities Network through which science, experience and best practices around urban conservation are shared. Our chapter helped create this network and continues to export and import best practices with colleagues across the country—and in some cases—around the world. Within Pennsylvania and Delaware, we play the role of convener between city governments, academic institutions and community partners to help “mainstream” nature-based solutions as projects and partnerships are being formed around community needs.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, we can accelerate the implementation of **Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI)** projects on private lands to support the Philadelphia Water Department’s **2036 goal to reduce stormwater runoff and combined sewer overflows by 85%** using primarily GSI. In Delaware, we can connect with local municipalities and at-risk communities to increase green infrastructure, address stormwater pollution, and facilitate access to resources to combat flooding.

LARGE © Severn Smith/TNC; INSET, LEFT TO RIGHT © Severn Smith/TNC; © Steve Weinik



Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Like Yellowstone or the Grand Canyon, the Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure. The six-state Chesapeake Bay watershed is home to 18 million people—a population that has more than doubled in the past 50 years. Despite this population growth, and thanks to persistent conservation efforts by a legion of partners including TNC, the health of the Chesapeake Bay is actually improving but we still need to make major progress to improve water quality. The Susquehanna comprises 43% of the Chesapeake Bay’s watershed but contributes 60% of the nitrogen load to the Bay. Those excess nutrients fuel the growth of algae blooms that lead to low-oxygen “dead zones” that are harmful to fish, shellfish and other aquatic life. When we talk about creating a world where people and nature thrive together, the Chesapeake Bay restoration can be held up as a shining example.



WHAT WE DO. The largest source of pollution currently entering the Chesapeake Bay is agricultural nutrient and sediment runoff coming from farms in the Susquehanna River Basin in Pennsylvania. The good news is that TNC plays a critical role in addressing this issue. Through our partnerships in the Mid-Atlantic 4R Nutrient Stewardship Association with The Fertilizer Institute, local agribusinesses, crop advisors and farmers, TNC is accelerating the adoption of conservation agriculture practices that are good for nature and farmers’ bottom lines. We have boots on the ground in both Pennsylvania and Delaware agricultural communities and play a leadership role in coordinating these efforts. We also engage private landowners to restore wetlands and floodplains, helping to filter sediment and nutrients from upstream waters before reaching the Bay.

HOW WE SCALE. By working directly with the trusted advisors to farmers, we are improving practices on many more acres than if we were to attempt to work farm-by-farm. At the same time, our government relations team works with state and federal agency partners to create and improve incentive programs that Pennsylvania and Delaware farmers can leverage to offset any costs associated with adopting best practices that will help improve our local streams, rivers, and ultimately, the Chesapeake Bay.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, we can help expand enhanced **nutrient management and soil health** conservation agricultural practices on **50% of cropland** in Pennsylvania and Delaware. And we’ll work with landowners and farmers to implement restoration practices that **improve water quality and climate resilience** on **3,000 acres** of priority lands in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in Pennsylvania and Delaware.

LARGE © Nicholas Tonnelli; INSET, LEFT TO RIGHT © Jason Houston; © Gates Rhodes



Stewardship and Management

When TNC acquires a parcel of land, we commit both legally and ethically to steward that land in perpetuity. The Chapter currently has management responsibility for more than 74,000 acres on 31 nature preserves and 46 conservation easements across Pennsylvania and Delaware. Of those 31 nature preserves, 14 are open for public recreation where our stewardship actions not only enhance the visitor experience but also place public safety as a top priority. Our preserves also provide engagement opportunities for hundreds of dedicated volunteers from across Pennsylvania and Delaware. Whether it's helping with trail maintenance, installing bird houses or planting trees, our volunteers are a huge asset to help us accomplish tasks both big and small.

WHAT WE DO. TNC has been protecting land across Pennsylvania since 1956 and Delaware since 1991. As good stewards of our lands, we manage and leverage our network of preserves and easements in Pennsylvania and Delaware for maximum impact to our mission. Whether we're planting trees to restore forests, conducting controlled burns to ensure vibrant grasslands, or working with volunteers to build new hiking trails, we consider the impacts our choices will have on wildlife, local communities and the people who visit our preserves. Our land holdings and management practices play an important role in inspiring, educating and influencing others to advance our strategic priorities.

HOW WE SCALE. Our preserves are one of our greatest differentiators and often give us a strategic advantage due to their popularity and value as tourism draws. Improving our most strategic preserves is a good, long-term investment. With this new Strategic Plan guiding our efforts, we will optimize our management and restoration activities, taking careful consideration of future projected climate impacts and sharing best practices across state lines. We will review our portfolio of preserves to ensure that is consistent with the Conservancy's primary conservation interests, and meets strategic goals of the Chapter and larger organization.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, we will develop a system of flagship preserves that leverages multiple strategic needs for the chapter, including **managing for resilience and providing educational, outreach and volunteer opportunities** for supporters and local communities.

Nature's Future is our Future

By letting science guide our focus and integrity guide our execution, together, we can shape a better 2030 for people and our planet. Your ongoing generosity will ensure that the conservation progress we have worked so hard to achieve will continue for generations to come.

Thank you for being a dedicated supporter of our work to create a world where people and nature thrive together.

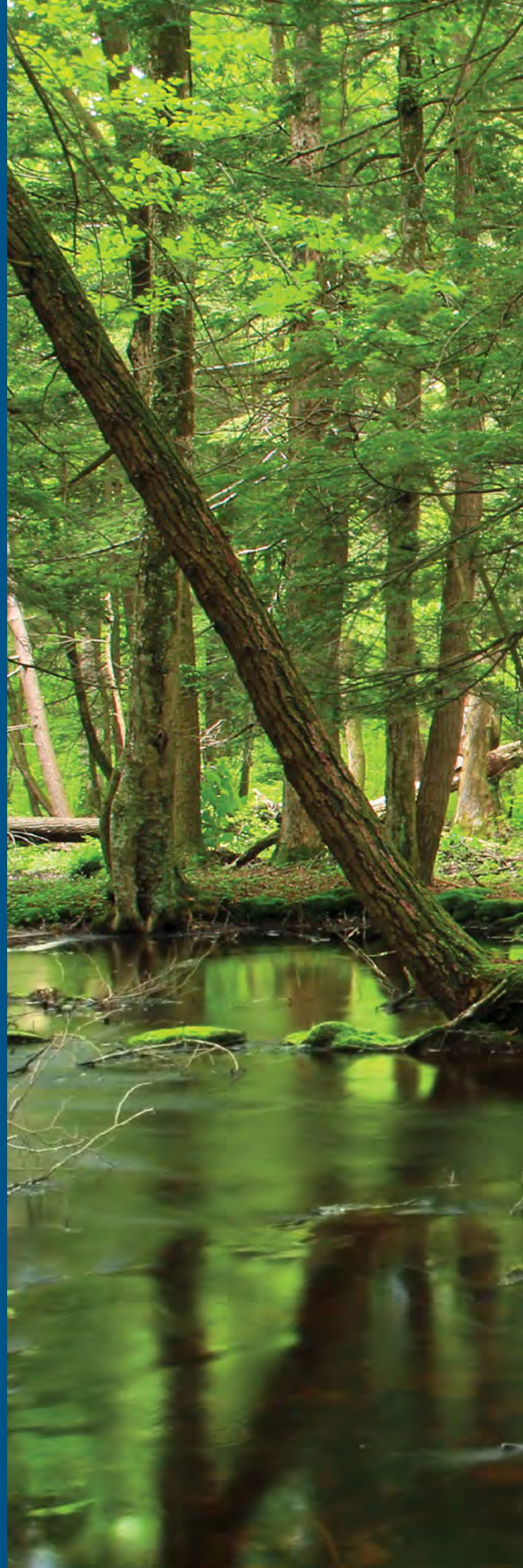
Support our work in Pennsylvania and Delaware by giving online at **Nature.org/PAgiving** or **Nature.org/DEgiving**. If you would like more information or have questions, please email us at **PADEfundraisingteam@tnc.org** or call **610-834-1323**.

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Create Your Conservation Legacy

A planned gift is one of the most impactful ways you can support The Nature Conservancy's critical conservation work. You may be able to save on taxes, receive income for life or enjoy other financial benefits—all while helping to keep nature healthy for years to come.

Don't hesitate to reach out to our Development staff at **PADEfundraisingteam@tnc.org** with any questions. Additional contact information for our offices can be found on the back cover of this document. Learn more by visiting **Nature.org/Legacy**.





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