

# North Carolina Native Plant Society

## Strategic Plan 2025-2030

Approved by Board - Nov 8, 2025

### NCNPS Mission

Our mission is to promote the enjoyment and conservation of North Carolina's native plants and their habitats through **education, protection, cultivation, and advocacy**.

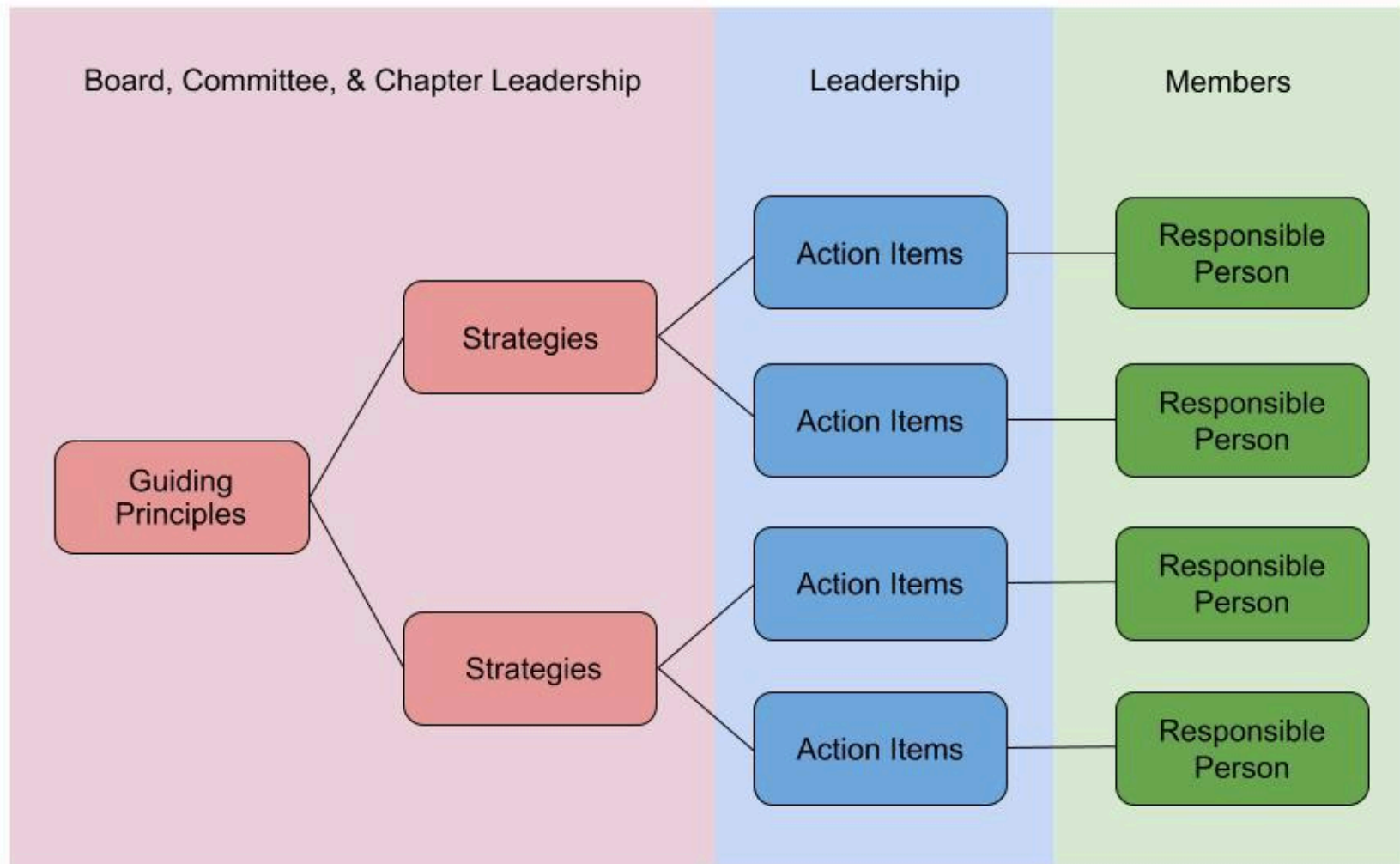
### Scope

The Strategic Plan is meant to serve as a playbook that maps a course for achieving the mission and objectives of NCNPS. This Strategic Plan should provide guidance for decision-making on how to allocate the Society's resources. The Plan is not meant to be static but should be periodically revisited to determine if the current strategies are still relevant for achieving the Society's objectives.

### The Strategic Plan Process

The NCNPS mission statement was used as a guide for developing a series of high-level **guiding principles** that are fundamental to achieving the Society's mission. **Strategies** related to each guiding principle were then outlined. The specific **actions** needed to implement the individual strategies are not being generated in the Plan, but rather will be determined at the discretion of the identified responsible parties, contingent upon the available resources.

## NCNPS STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION



## **Guiding Principle 1: Share knowledge of native plants [Education]**

Educating the membership and the public about native plants remains a principal endeavor of NCNPS, as it is paramount to meeting all our objectives and achieving our mission.

**Strategy 1:** Provide, maintain, and improve the availability of our North Carolina native plant resources for audiences of all ages, so that information is easy to find and delivers a compelling message. [current activities: NCNPS website, educational materials, handouts, online materials, and presentations (Speakers Bureau and YouTube videos)]

**Strategy 2:** Hold Chapter meetings/events/hikes with timely and inspiring themes.

**Strategy 3:** Maintain a robust and comprehensive plant database for identification and learning about our native species. [current activity: "Native Plant Gallery"]

**Strategy 4:** Initiate public outreach activities for audiences of all ages. [current activities: the demonstration garden at the State Fair, the Green and Growin' Show, information booths at various venues, social and electronic media]

**Strategy 5:** Publish the quarterly Society newsletter to expand the understanding of NC native plants and plant communities. [current activity: Native Plant News]

**Strategy 6:** Organize and facilitate key regional events. [current activities: the Spring and/or Fall Outings, workshops, Chapter events]

**Strategy 7:** Provide monetary support for attendance to conferences or educational events. [current activity: scholarships for the Cullowhee Native Plant Conference]

## **Guiding Principle 2: Support scientific research pertaining to North Carolina's plants and their habitats [Education]**

The Society is a wellspring of regional botanical expertise and has positioned itself to serve as a catalyst for the growth and dissemination of scientific knowledge.

**Strategy 1:** Provide monetary support for student scientists engaging in research on NC native plants.  
[current activity: Shinn Fund]

**Strategy 2:** Highlight grant recipients and the results of their research.

**Strategy 3:** Cultivate and increase our network of scientific partners (universities, native plant certificate programs). [current activity: sending representatives to the NC-Invasive Plant Council, UNC native plant certificate programs]

## **Guiding Principle 3: Champion the conservation and stewardship of native plants and habitats [Protection]**

North Carolina is one of the most beautiful and ecologically diverse states in the Southeast. It is vital that we support the careful and responsible management of our natural ecosystems to maintain and restore habitats, enhance ecosystem services, and protect biological diversity.

**Strategy 1:** Bring awareness to the Society's conservation efforts. Highlight conservation projects, the efforts of members, and how members can get involved. [current activities: B. W. Wells Stewardship Fund (community projects), Alice Zawadzki Land Conservation Fund (land conservation)]

**Strategy 2:** Promote awareness of the problem of invasive species. [current activities: articles in the newsletter, Invasive Plant list, Plant Gallery, sponsoring the NC Invasive Plant Council annual conference]

**Strategy 3:** Work with nurseries, the landscape industry, and regional land-use boards to discourage the sale and use of invasive species and encourage the use of native plants in landscapes.

**Strategy 4:** Ensure we have an active Plant Rescue Program to salvage native plant species whose habitat is going to be destroyed.

**Strategy 5:** Engage in habitat conservation work with plant conservation partners

## **Guiding Principle 4: Encourage the availability and use of ethically propagated native plants in the landscape [Cultivation]**

North Carolina's native plants should become the standard in all residential and commercial landscapes. We want to demonstrate the beauty and benefits of gardening with North Carolina natives if we are to convince people to deviate from the mainstream gardening culture. Most importantly, native plants need to be made readily available for this change to occur.

**Strategy 1:** Provide a source for obtaining native plants through the Society's seed exchanges, plant sales, and auctions.

**Strategy 2:** Support plant nurseries, consultants, and landscape designers that promote native plants.  
[current activities: cover vendor fees at the Cullowhee Native Plant Conference, Native Plant Nurseries list on our website]

**Strategy 3:** Encourage the establishment of habitats that support and showcase our native species. [current activity: Native Plant Habitat Certification Program, B. W. Wells Stewardship Fund (community projects)]

## **Guiding Principle 5: Be an active voice on native plant issues**

[Advocacy]

As a Society, we must speak out and advocate for native plant conservation and ecological land management practices that conserve native plants and their habitats, and encourage the use of native species in planting projects.

**Strategy 1:** Increase our efforts to identify and advocate on local, statewide, and legislative issues regarding conserving and promoting native plants and habitats.

**Strategy 2:** Form alliances - generate and maintain partnerships with other conservation, stewardship, and native plant related entities.

**Strategy 3:** Identify government agencies and individuals within those agencies who promote the use of native plants.

**Strategy 4.** Find our voice through action alerts, social media, and press releases.

## **Guiding Principle 6: Increase NCNPS visibility and brand awareness** [Education, Protection, Cultivation, Advocacy]

Marketing and communications support every facet of the Society's mission. Increasing public enthusiasm and support for North Carolina's native plants is imperative for carrying out our mission. Growth and engagement are what keeps our society alive. Having mechanisms in place for increasing visibility, brand awareness, membership, and volunteerism are essential for our work to continue.

**Strategy 1:** Evaluate and promote the best use of communications platforms, social media, and marketing techniques to increase recognition of the Society's mission objectives and programs. [current activity: FaceBook, YouTube, NCNPS website, Native Plant News, community events, email].

**Strategy 2:** Identify and create awareness of best practices for marketing and communications at the state and chapter levels.

**Strategy 3:** Evaluate ways to build brand awareness through collateral materials. [current activity: logos, style guide, signage, handouts, T-shirts]



## Guiding Principle 7: Foster Organizational Sustainability

In order to continue to meet our objectives and achieve our Society's mission, we must direct resources towards maintaining and building upon our NCNPS foundation.

**Strategy 1:** Ensure chapters are functioning and well-supported to carry out local activities.

**Strategy 2:** Cultivate membership: increase new members; improve member retention; and identify ways to re-engage past members. Find ways to engage members who do not currently belong to any chapters.

**Strategy 3:** Keep all society governing documents aligned and updated in accordance with legal hierarchies.

**Strategy 4:** Maintain financial viability. Evaluate current revenue streams and seek ways to identify additional ones.

**Strategy 5:** Evaluate ways to recruit NCNPS leadership.

**Strategy 6:** Evaluate creating a paid position to coordinate NCNPS efforts and support the Society's mission.

**Strategy 7:** Focus our efforts on native plant science including the importance of native plant ecology and conservation.

**Strategy 8:** Maintain document access within the Society to better preserve Society history and institutional knowledge over time.

**Strategy 9:** Nurture Chapter members to become Board active. Chapters are encouraged to nominate open leadership positions.