

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# National Conservation Training Center Strategic Plan 2015-2020

*Conservation Through Learning*



# Message from the Director—Conservation through Learning

Vision, excellence and commitment to service—these characteristics are poured into the stone and mortar, the very foundation of the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC).

The vision of a national “home” for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and for the conservation community is that foundation. Now, 17 years, and 260,000 students later, this vision for NCTC is a reality.

NCTC is designed for learning and collaboration, but it is our people who make this a home for conservation. It is our people who exemplify the words of Theodore Roosevelt, who said that, “far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.” We proudly work hard to advance conservation through the hearts and minds of the dedicated professionals who pass through our doors, returning to their work with renewed commitment and

improved capabilities to advance the Service’s mission.

We have worked diligently to become a home for inspiring conservation excellence through learning and collaboration. We are committed to “conservation through learning”—building and sharing knowledge among Service professionals and our many partners who work to conserve and manage fish and wildlife resources. We are committed to providing opportunities for a diverse

range of youth to engage in the outdoors, so they become the next generation of conservationists that reflect the make-up of our Nation. And, we are committed to developing and coordinating efforts to reach out to the American people as partners in conservation.

The NCTC facilities were solidly built to serve the Nation for many generations, and it is to the future that we turn our attention. How can NCTC best serve the Fish and Wildlife Service and

our shared conservation mission? This strategic plan seeks to answer this question, and is our blueprint for the future. It is a simple document that lays out the basis for what we do.

By enhancing the competencies of dedicated conservation professionals, by serving as a think tank where conservation professionals can jointly solve the conservation issues of our day, by developing programs to encourage the involvement of the our Nation’s young people in

outdoor recreation, conservation efforts, and careers, and by preserving and honoring the past while looking toward the future, NCTC can fill an important role in the conservation of America’s fish and wildlife resources.





## **Our Vision**

*A home for  
inspiring  
conservation  
excellence  
through  
learning and  
collaboration.*



## Our NCTC Mission

To conserve fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats through leadership in:

- **Home and Heritage:** NCTC serves as the physical and virtual “home” of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, where the history and heritage of the Service are preserved and shared;
- **Training for the Mission:** NCTC provides exemplary training and professional development tailored to support Service employees and conservation partners in accomplishing the agency’s mission;
- **Youth in Conservation:** NCTC helps the Service provide opportunities for a diverse range of youth to play, learn, serve, and work; so they become the next generation of conservationists that reflect the make-up of America. In this way, NCTC is working to ensure our natural resource legacy is left in capable hands;
- **Partnerships:** NCTC helps solve urgent conservation challenges, such as climate change, by bringing together diverse partners representing multiple points of view; and
- **Sustainability:** NCTC is a national leader in the conservation community for its state-of-the-art facility and green practices.





## Core Values

*We have fallen heirs to the most glorious heritage a people ever received, and each one must do his part if we wish to show that the nation is worthy of its good fortune*

—Theodore Roosevelt

The people of NCTC have adopted the following core values as their guide through the competing requirements of their daily work.

### **Mission Commitment**

We advance the mission of the FWS through our exemplary training and collaborative environment.

### **Science**

Our work is grounded in thorough, objective science.

### **Service**

It is our privilege to serve the American people and we place a high priority on customer satisfaction.

### **Excellence**

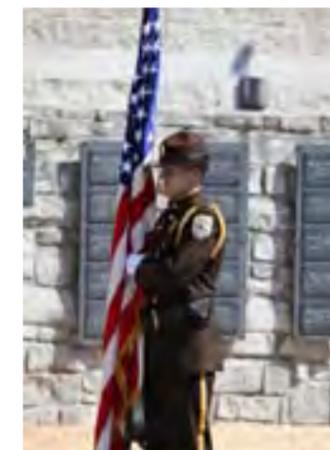
We provide stellar services and products.

### **Professionalism**

We hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards, strive for excellence, and respect others.

### **People**

Our employees are our most valued asset.



# Mission Goals and Objectives

*In the end we will conserve only what we love. We love only what we understand. We will understand only what we are taught.*

—Baba Dioum

## **Mission Goal 1**

Provide professional development programs for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the conservation community to support performance and mission accomplishment.

### **Objective #1:**

The NCTC will enhance the work of the FWS through learning and knowledge resource services. By providing a rich, dynamic suite of career and professional development services in support of the FWS mission, NCTC supports Service employees in all FWS programs and across organizational levels, thereby enhancing the agency's ability to achieve its mission.

Learning resources include targeted course offerings in the classroom, field, and online, covering a range of conservation and management topics. Knowledge resources include access to conservation literature (peer reviewed journals, NCTC's collections, and collections worldwide), as well as recorded and live webinars, training

videos, podcasts, imagery, maps, and online communities for collaborative interaction.

### **Objective #2:**

Utilize the DOI Learning Management System (LMS) to enhance job performance and career development planning, including on-line collaboration.

Communities of Practice will be developed and nurtured to share and to create a culture of scientific and collaborative excellence.

### **Objective #3:**

NCTC will support FWS workforce development.

Design, deliver and evaluate training classes for FWS employees and other conservation professionals that are competency-based and focus on scientific excellence, leadership, and collaboration. Equip Service and non-Service employees with the knowledge, skills, and tools they need to achieve measurable conservation goals in an ever-changing world.

*If facts are the seeds that later produce knowledge and wisdom, then the emotions and the impressions of the senses are the fertile soil in which the seeds must grow.*

—Rachel Carson

## **Mission Goal 2**

Build a 21st century, highly skilled and diverse workforce through a successional blend of outdoor engagement, education, work experience, service, and career programs.

### **Objective #1:**

Work within the Service and with partners to offer a continuum of programs for young people throughout their developmental process that begins with a foundation of outdoor engagement, and continues with education opportunities that ultimately build support for and interest and participation in natural resource conservation.

### **Objective #2:**

Build a Service workforce that represents the face of America by developing and providing programs that recruit and retain top young talent, including those from underrepresented audiences, to address complex conservation issues. Provide training and professional development to Service employees to ensure they mentor, build, and maintain an inclusive work environment.

### **Objective #3:**

Develop and use communication tools including social media, online learning platforms, and other technology that effectively reach the target audiences of the Youth Initiative to increase the number of participants in our programs that engage, educate, and employ.



# Mission Goals and Objectives

*The land is one organism. Its parts, like our own parts, compete with each other and co-operate with each other. The competitions are as much a part of the inner workings as the co-operations. You can regulate them—cautiously—but not abolish them.*

—Aldo Leopold

## **Mission Goal 3**

Science in ever-changing and increasingly 'global' world requires that we all work together.

NCTC will foster collaboration among all parties whose mission and practices affect conservation.

## **Objective #1:**

Serve as the catalyst and the location for bringing together conservation problem solving initiatives.

Direct current and future work efforts to investigate and solidify new opportunities for collaborating with the conservation community. Establishing new alliances will move beyond traditional partners to encourage the investment of individuals, agencies, organizations, and corporations who can work with the Service to solve the conservation problems of our day.

## **Objective #2:**

Increase the number of partner organizations using the NCTC facility.

Evaluate the partnerships analysis and implement a marketing plan to increase the number of new partners using the facility for training and special events, while maintaining priority for Service employees.

## **Objective #3:**

NCTC will include partners as course participants, instructors and design team members in all courses with identified opportunities.

Review training courses and special events to identify and invite new partners to attend courses, workshops, symposia, and other special events, as practical and needed. Course designer, instructors, and participants from outside of the Service and its current contractors will be targeted.

*How can one express the intangible qualities of the wilderness and the solitude around a gem of a lake in a wild mountain setting? How can we measure such things as happiness, the good life, the elation of being in high country in free surroundings? These things bring peace.*

—Olaus Murie

## **Mission Goal 4**

Serve as a "home" for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and conservation community, sustaining an environment for FWS and conservation professionals so they have a sense of heritage, community, inspiration, and commitment.

## **Objective #1:**

Continue to make high interest documents, photographs, and objects from the NCTC archives available for research online and at NCTC.

## **Objective #2:**

Continue to do heritage outreach in the field using the National FWS Heritage Committee and the Association of FWS Retirees to conduct oral histories, identify important Service artifacts, and provide historic resources for the public and our employees on the history of FWS.



*When we try to pick out anything by itself we find that it is bound fast by a thousand invisible cords that cannot be broken, to everything in the universe.*

—John Muir

**Mission Goal 5**

Serve as a model for green buildings and sustainable practices to the FWS and the world.

**Objective #1:**

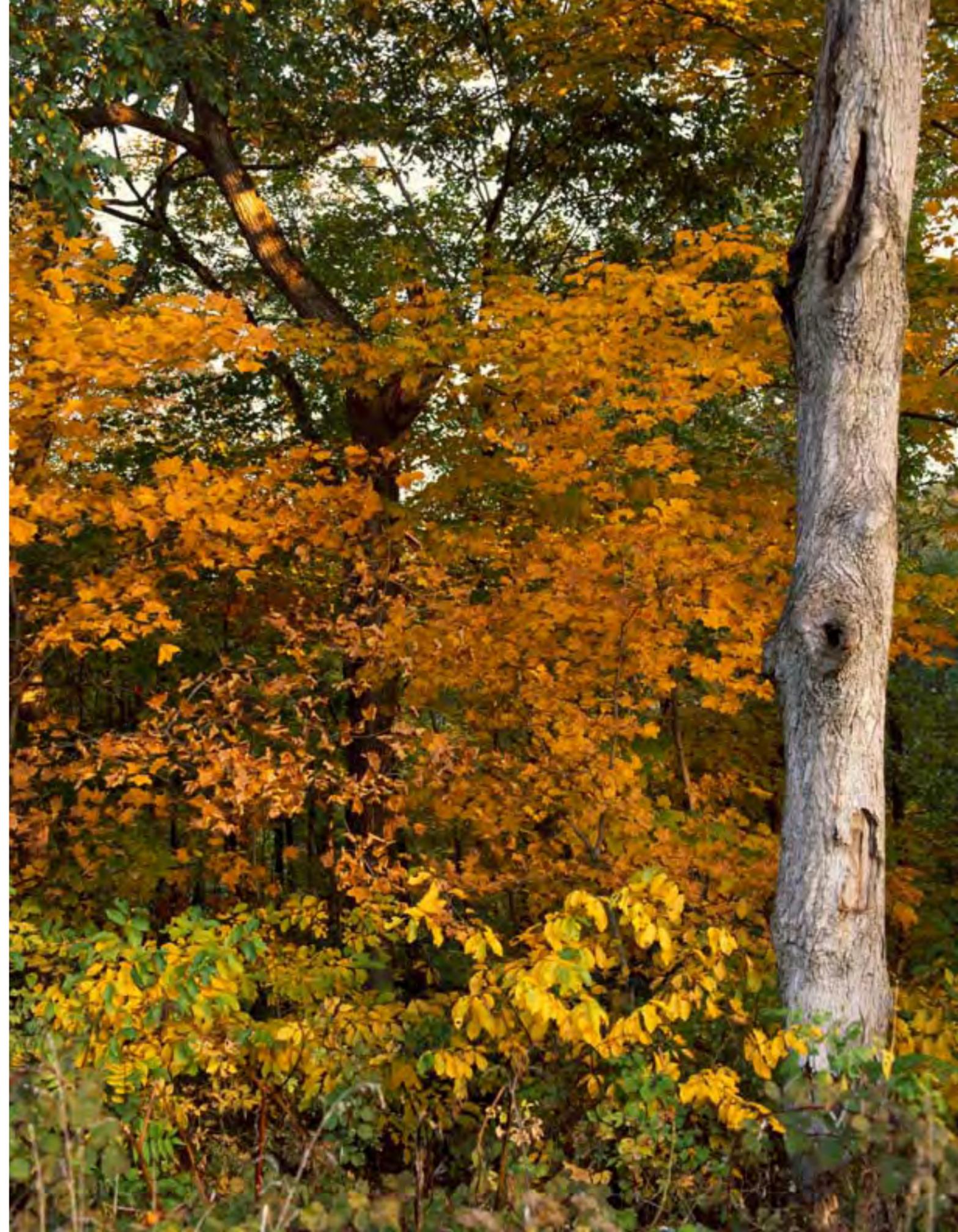
Showcase NCTC as a world-class, sustainable facility. This includes highlighting architectural design as well as green practices implemented during construction, remodeling, and corrective maintenance.

**Objective #2:**

Adopt emerging technologies to enhance NCTC's efforts to conserve resources, provide alternative energy, maintain a healthy, safe environment for guests, and maximize benefits for wildlife.

**Objective #3:**

NCTC will advance and support a culture of sustainability by serving as a green meeting facility. By utilizing sustainable practices on all facets of operation (including green purchasing, land management, energy and water saving measures, use of environmentally friendly cleaning products, and recycling), NCTC offers a sustainable alternative to the typical conference center.



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