



NatureServe

# Strategic Plan

2007-2011

GUIDING  
CONSERVATION ACTION

# Our Mission



# Our Vision

We envision a world where people recognize and value the importance of biodiversity, and where the information and expertise of the NatureServe network is relied upon to understand and effectively conserve the diversity of life on Earth.

To achieve this, we will invest in NatureServe's core strengths: an extensive database of knowledge about species and ecosystems, cooperatively developed by an interconnected network of partners. Members of this worldwide network will share a commitment to providing information and expertise that guides society's conservation and use of biological resources. Each member will serve the biodiversity information needs of its own region using consistent methods that are adapted to local conservation challenges.

Informed by this new level of scientific understanding, everyone making natural resource decisions—including governments, conservation organizations, corporations, landowners, and the scientific community—will take biodiversity into consideration as a means to better focus conservation actions and to more responsibly manage natural resources. The end result will be the sustained health of our natural heritage, which supports prosperous human communities for the benefit of current and future generations.

**A** non-profit organization dedicated to providing the scientific basis for effective conservation action, NatureServe is a leading provider of scientific information, expertise, and information technology tools that connect science with conservation. The NatureServe network is a public-private partnership that includes 80 independent member programs, commonly known as natural heritage programs or conservation data centers. Together, we seek to bring high-quality, consistent, and objective information about species and habitats to the forefront whenever people make decisions about how to best use or conserve natural resources.

Decisions about the management and use of natural resources are most directly made by those who own or manage lands and waters—principally by governments, corporations, landowners, and conservation groups. These *natural resource decision-makers* are our key target audiences; informing their decisions to help secure desirable conservation outcomes is our primary focus. We will work closely with natural resource decision-makers to identify their key information needs, and will serve them by providing information products that are globally consistent, yet adapted to specific circumstances.

The quality of our data, our scientific expertise, and our information technology must continually meet the high standards required by our partners and clients. We will advance the quality of our core datasets on species and habitats, and will develop analytical tools that evaluate and integrate our information with other data about natural resources and human communities. We will use current and emerging technologies to ensure that the information is easy to access, to understand, and to apply.

To meet these high standards, all member programs of the NatureServe network must be active and healthy institutions, working collaboratively towards common objectives. Over the next five years we will invest in and build on our existing network in the Western Hemisphere, and extend its reach by establishing enduring partnerships with like-minded organizations and networks elsewhere. Each node of our network will help inform on-the-ground resource management, and will bring the value of local experience and innovations to the entire enterprise. This strong emphasis on supporting our network and building conservation capacity provides the essential foundation for mission success.

We will organize our work for the next five years around these three goals:

**Goal 1: Inform Natural Resource Decisions.** Help make biodiversity a mainstream consideration in all significant conservation and natural resource management decisions by making it simple for conservationists, government agencies, corporations, and landowners to access and use high-quality biodiversity information.

**Goal 2: Advance Scientific Understanding.** Advance our scientific resources and information technology systems in order to meet the needs of our clients and partners.

**Goal 3: Build Conservation Capacity.** Strengthen our organizational effectiveness and capacity and better leverage the power of the NatureServe network to inform conservation action at local, regional, national, and international scales.

We recognize that these goals, and the detailed objectives and strategies supporting them, are ambitious. Clearly, we face significant challenges in terms of organizational growth and the continued need for increased funding. But the power and reach of our network presents enormously promising opportunities. NatureServe has made great strides since the establishment of our partnership. Now, with this strategic plan, we take the next step. No other organization is as well prepared as NatureServe to fill the crucial niche where biodiversity science and information technology meet.

# Executive Summary

**No other organization is as well prepared as NatureServe to fill the crucial niche where biodiversity science and information technology meet.**

## INTRODUCTION

# Who We Are

**NatureServe is a leading provider of scientific information, expertise, and information technology tools that connect science with conservation.**

**N**atureServe is a non-profit conservation organization whose mission is to provide the scientific basis for effective conservation action. We are a leading provider of scientific information, expertise, and information technology tools that connect science with conservation.

We believe that knowledge, well-applied, leads to better decisions. Access to reliable information about species and ecosystems allows people and organizations to do their best to protect these resources even while pursuing other business goals. Therefore, we seek to bring high-quality, consistent, and rigorously objective information to the forefront whenever people are making decisions about how to best use or conserve natural resources.

The NatureServe network is a public-private partnership that includes 80 independent member programs, known as natural heritage programs or conservation data centers. These programs and centers are operated by state and provincial natural resource agencies, ministries of environment, public universities, and locally-based non-profit conservation organizations. The NatureServe network is international in scope, operating throughout the United States, Canada, and 11 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. When we refer to "NatureServe," we mean a single, united organization—comprising both our central institution headquartered in Arlington, Virginia, and this international network of cooperating members. We measure the success of NatureServe fully in terms of the success of all parts of the organization.

NatureServe has come a long way since 1999, when our predecessor organization, the Association for Biodiversity Information, merged with portions of The Nature Conservancy's conservation science group to form a new non-profit organization. During the past seven years, we launched this organization, established the needed business systems, reengaged our network of member programs, changed our name, developed a new biodiversity data management system, released a major new software product, grew a collaborative organizational culture, and completed hundreds of important conservation science projects on two continents. We benefited from the generous support of The Nature Conservancy, whose seven-year funding commitment was essential to our success.

No longer new or in transition, NatureServe is a well-established member of the international conservation community. Our member programs operate in 13 countries, and through other partnerships we work in many more places as well. The natural heritage programs and conservation data centers, with their local knowledge, on-the-ground capacity, and wealth of partnerships, are the primary means through which NatureServe directly influences conservation efforts at local scales.

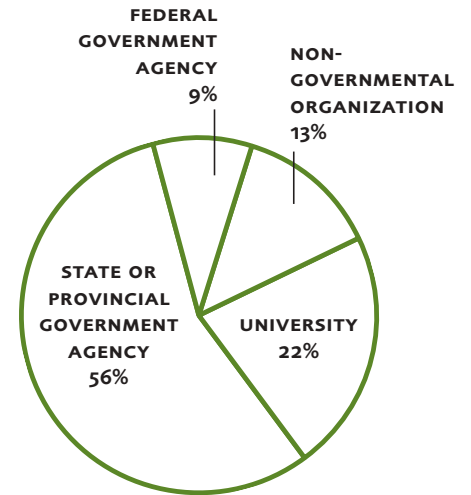
The nearly 1,000 staff throughout our network include some of the most knowledgeable field biologists, conservation planners, and data management experts working in their respective fields. The staff of the member programs serve as the primary source of information within their jurisdictions, and cooperate with NatureServe in the development of new tools, standards, and methods that are shared throughout the network. Members in the U.S. and Canada also contribute detailed local biodiversity data to the network enterprise. All members in turn benefit from the global data, network coordination, scientific standards and methods, and expertise provided through NatureServe.

The central staff of NatureServe provides coordination for network activities by establishing relationships with other national and international partners, developing and

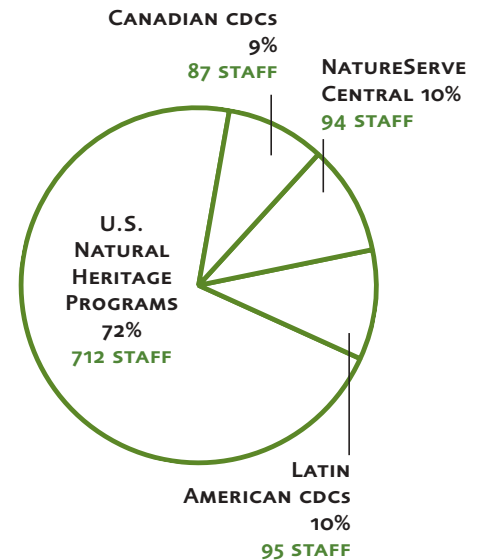
## 2006 NatureServe Network Membership

8 Canadian Conservation Data Centres (CDCs)  
54 U.S. Natural Heritage Programs  
18 Latin American CDCs

## Institutional Affiliation of Member Programs



## Staff of NatureServe Network



implementing projects across regional, national and international boundaries, developing and supporting software tools and technology, providing training in scientific methods and protocols, and facilitating communication and collaboration. Consistent standards for collecting and managing data allow information from different programs to be shared and combined by NatureServe regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Building effective partnerships is essential to everything we do. Our partnerships extend beyond our own network to embrace the larger communities of practice with whom we collaborate. We welcome the opportunity to work with all sectors of society—including government, corporations, the scientific, academic, and museum communities, private landowners, and non-governmental organizations. Built on a foundation of mutual respect and trust, true partnerships require consulting closely, making decisions together, and acting together. Visible, public recognition of our partners for their important role is also essential. NatureServe is committed to working collaboratively with all of our partners to achieve mutual goals while serving the broader public good.

## INTRODUCTION

# How We Work

Partnership, innovation,  
and service are at the  
heart of our business  
approach.

**H**ow do we approach our mission of supporting effective conservation action? NatureServe's role in conservation is *not* to directly protect lands and waters—that is the work of our many partners and clients, such as government agencies, conservation groups, and landowners. Our role, instead, is to *guide* effective conservation action by our partners and clients by providing the scientific basis for action. To help visualize how our scientific and technical work connects to and informs conservation action, we use the concept of the Conservation Information Value Chain (see diagram). Each successive stage along the value chain builds on those prior to it, and at each stage, additional value is added to the information product or service delivered to our clients and data users. Excellence at each stage is essential to mission success.

**Scientific standards and methods.** In cooperation with our partners, we develop and promote the use of consistent, widely-accepted standards and methods for gathering, analyzing, and managing biodiversity data. Examples include standards and methods for assessing conservation status, evaluating the viability of species populations and ecosystems, and classifying ecological systems. Sound scientific standards and methods are the essential foundation for all that follows.

**Data collection and recording.** Our scientists and collaborators conduct field inventories and research to discover and collect detailed data about species and ecosystems. Natural heritage program scientists are widely recognized as experts on the plants, animals, and ecosystems of their jurisdictions.

**Data management and quality assurance.** We manage vast amounts of data about biodiversity in our local and central databases, including detailed information on more than 500,000 separate occurrences of at-risk species and natural communities, based on millions of individual field observations. Our scientists and database specialists continually review and update data records to assure their consistency, quality, and accuracy. The use of the same standards, methods, and data management system throughout the NatureServe network ensures information consistency, enabling data collected in each state, province or nation to be compared, exchanged, and combined for analyses at broad geographic scales.

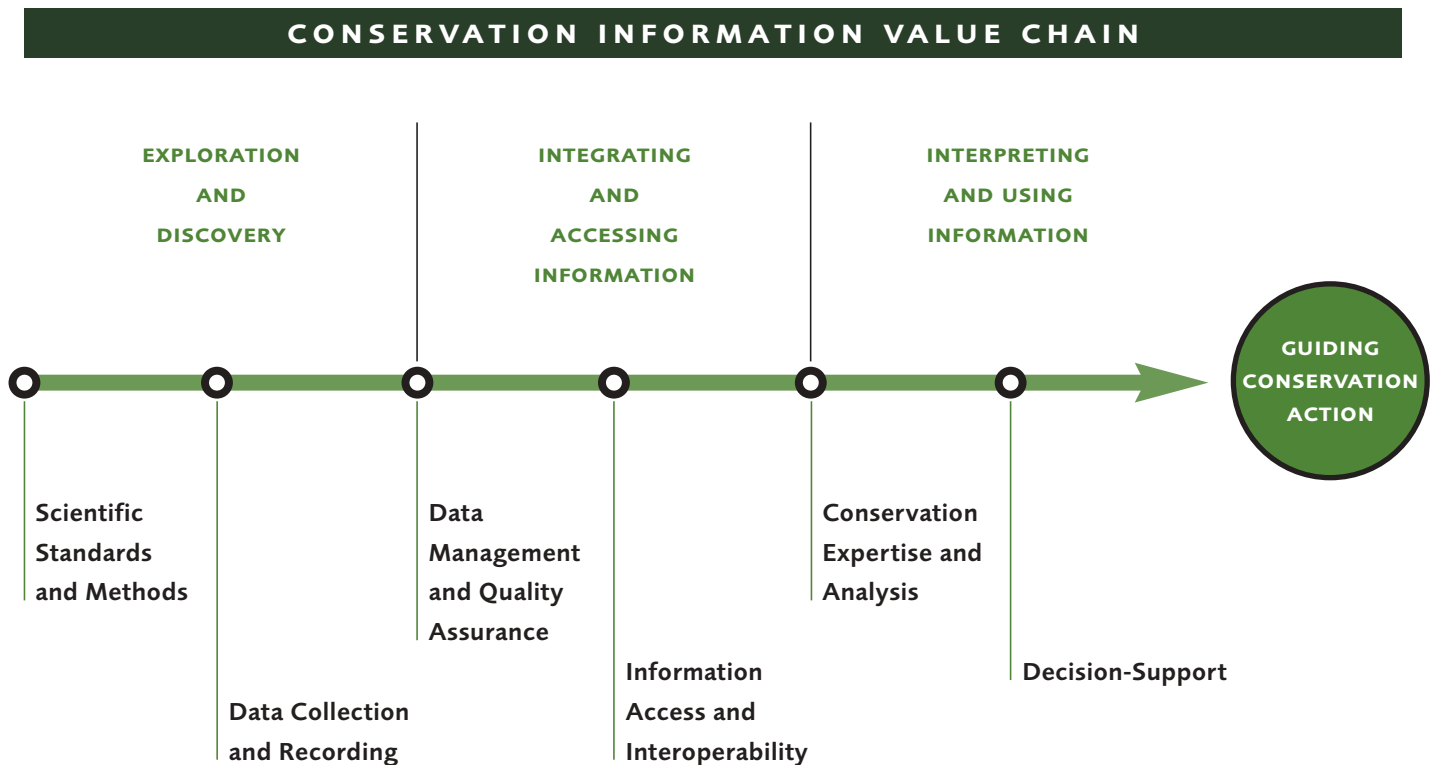
**Information access and interoperability.** To be useful, data must be easy to access, understand, and use. The public can access much of our data directly through websites such as NatureServe Explorer ([www.natureserve.org/explorer](http://www.natureserve.org/explorer)), an online searchable database providing detailed information on more than 65,000 plants, animals, and ecosystems of North America. Through a new web services framework, we are going a significant step further, enabling our databases to communicate with other databases maintained by related organizations, and providing enhanced access to the data in multiple formats for end user applications.

**Conservation expertise and analysis.** Transforming biological data into conservation-relevant knowledge requires the application of in-depth expertise and sophisticated analytical tools. Drawing on expertise from our staff, member programs, and partners, we focus on understanding the needs of land managers and policy-makers to help them address complex natural resource issues.

**Decision-support.** Working with the leading organizations in conservation planning, we have developed rigorous methods for supporting the conservation decision-

making process. By taking advantage of advances in information technology, we have embodied these methods in customized decision-support software, such as NatureServe Vista, that lets users analyze and visualize information about species and ecosystems within socioeconomic and land use contexts.

Since our information products and services require activities that integrate across multiple stages of the value chain, we have used a similarly integrated approach to present our strategies in this plan. This approach will be reflected in the way all the staff and members of NatureServe work together to pursue the goals and objectives of this plan over the next five years.



NatureServe's activities span the entire Conservation Information Value Chain, from biological exploration and discovery, to integrating our data with other information sources and making it accessible, to interpretation of this information for specific uses. All stages connect to support the ultimate goal of guiding conservation action.

## GOAL 1

# Inform Natural Resource Decisions

Help make biodiversity a mainstream consideration in all significant conservation and natural resource management decisions by making it simple for conservationists, government agencies, corporations, and landowners to access and use high-quality biodiversity information.

Our first goal is based on the strategic premise that providing high-quality biodiversity information to key decision-makers will lead to more effective conservation action. The objectives are structured around the *conservation outcomes* that we hope to inform.

In developing these objectives, we asked two related questions: Who are the people making natural resource decisions, and what are the major decision-making processes in which they are involved? Natural resource decisions are made in every sector—but principally by governments, corporations, landowners, and conservation groups. To serve these clients effectively, we need to begin by identifying their information needs and how to most effectively meet them. Their needs must drive the types of products and services that we provide.

While there are many different types of natural resource decisions, nearly all the decisions we want to inform can be characterized as one of four basic categories:

1. decisions about **species conservation**, such as which species need protection, and how best to protect them;
2. decisions about **landscape-scale conservation**, such as which places are important for achieving regional conservation goals;
3. decisions about **natural resource management on working landscapes**, such as how to balance biodiversity conservation with farming and forest management;
4. decisions about **infrastructure development**, such as where to build new highways and pipelines that may affect ecosystem health.

While we recognize that there is overlap among the categories, this is a useful framework to organize thinking about natural resource decisions because within each category, both the needs of decision-makers and the processes themselves have much in common. Objectives 1–4 under Goal 1 relate to these four categories of natural resource decisions, while Objective 5 concerns making NatureServe more effective at reaching out to potential clients and partners, and better positioning our organization in the public eye.

We emphasize our aspiration to “help make biodiversity a mainstream consideration” in these decisions. We want consideration of biodiversity eventually to be as routine and widespread a practice as recycling—a practice that was once novel, but has now become an everyday habit for most people. Some aspects of this aspiration, such as legal and political changes that may be required, are outside of NatureServe’s hands. But the information aspect is squarely part of our mission. To “mainstream biodiversity,” we must make it easy for anyone to access high-quality biodiversity information, to understand it, to integrate it with their customary business processes, and to apply it to specific problems.

**Objective 1:** Advance efforts of both public and private sectors to **conserve at-risk plants and animals** and prevent the decline of other native species.

- Promote the incorporation of NatureServe status assessments into regulatory processes related to protecting rare and endangered species, including the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Canadian Species at Risk Act (SARA), CITES, and state and provincial-level protected lists.



- Encourage the use of NatureServe data and analyses in incentive-based processes, such as landowner incentive programs, aimed at species of conservation concern that lack legal protection.
- Work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and others to improve the national consistency of State Wildlife Action Plans and to support data management needed for their effective implementation.
- Expand our expertise at modeling and mapping suitable habitat for species of concern, complementing our current strength in documented species occurrences, to better meet client needs.

**Objective 2:** Support effective **regional and landscape-scale conservation** by helping to identify sites of global significance as well as those of regional or local importance.

- Complete the broad-scale mapping of ecological systems across the United States, Canada, and Latin America in order to provide partners and clients with a common framework for landscape characterization and planning.
- Working in concert with our member programs as both developers and implementers, create a powerful, fully integrated product line of tools to support effective conservation planning by land use planners, land trusts, governments, and conservation groups. Advance the development and adoption of NatureServe Vista software and its underlying methods for mapping conservation values and evaluating land use scenarios. Using these methods, work with partners and local communities to implement conservation planning projects from local to ecoregional scales.
- Provide information and analyses in support of The Nature Conservancy's 2015 Conservation Goal to conserve places that represent at least ten percent of every major habitat type on Earth. Support the Conservancy's *Conservation by Design* by integrating our data about occurrences of species and habitats into the Conservancy's process for identifying key conservation sites in the Western Hemisphere.
- Incorporate NatureServe data and methods into efforts to identify priority conservation sites worldwide by working with partners and consortia such as the IUCN–World Conservation Union, World Conservation Monitoring Center, Alliance for Zero Extinction, and Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOS).
- Work with conservation and academic partners to assess the impacts of climate change on species and ecosystems by predicting future changes in distribution limits, developing the capacity to track changes in species ranges, and developing metrics and monitoring networks to track leading indicators of climate change.

**Objective 3:** Help landowners and land managers to **sustain and restore biodiversity on working landscapes** by enabling better natural resource management.

- Increase involvement in industry certification processes, such as forest products, energy exploration, and mining. Get NatureServe data incorporated into certification requirements, make the data easily available to industry land managers, and improve the quality and rigor of certification standards related to biodiversity.
- Develop ecological integrity assessments of ecosystems and selected natural communities as baselines for measuring progress towards restoration and mitigation goals.

- Apply our expertise about vegetation classification approaches to meet the mapping, planning, and land management needs of our clients and partners.
- Through voluntary cooperation between private landowners and our member programs, provide landowners with data and expertise to assist their stewardship efforts for sensitive species and habitats.
- Work to build reliance on NatureServe data into U.S. federal programs geared towards farmland and rangeland conservation, such as the USDA Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program and the 2007 Agriculture reauthorization bill.

**Objective 4: Prevent harm to ecologically sensitive areas by helping to inform decisions about infrastructure development and management.**

- Work with state and federal transportation agencies to effectively integrate NatureServe data and expertise into their transportation planning processes.
- Work with companies in key industries that influence land and water use, including the energy exploration, land development, electric utility, and pipeline industries, to incorporate NatureServe data and expertise into their planning processes and decisions about where to site new development projects and utility corridors.
- Create easy to use industry-specific "views" of our data and analyses that are optimized for addressing their environmental review and compliance needs.

**Objective 5: Effectively market NatureServe products and services to our key constituencies, position NatureServe as the leading source of scientifically-credible biodiversity expertise, and improve understanding of the value of biodiversity among broader audiences.**

- Listen carefully to clients and conduct periodic surveys of data users in order to understand their needs, to determine their satisfaction with NatureServe products and services, and to identify areas of improvement.
- Improve and deepen our partnerships with U.S. and Canadian federal agencies by working more closely with regional offices of key agencies. Facilitate process for contracting with U.S. federal agencies by getting approved on the GSA schedule of authorized vendors.
- Expand our portfolio of policy-relevant publications, analyses, and indicators, producing them through collaborations among NatureServe, our member programs, academic partners, and other NGOs.
- Package our information into formats that are suitable for educational use, including developing a student-friendly interface for NatureServe Explorer and partnering with others to develop biodiversity wall maps and an online atlas of biodiversity.
- Help member programs increase their capacity for local outreach that builds constituencies and raises awareness, through efforts such as developing marketing toolkits, providing training, and increasing visibility for member programs on our website.

**T**he strategic premise of our second goal is that NatureServe is most effective when we fully integrate our processes for developing and delivering content. The objectives describe the specific data types, scientific standards and methods, information products, conservation analyses, and information technology tools that are the most essential to develop or advance over the next five years.

"Content" is used broadly here to describe our entire suite of information products and services. At NatureServe, content development has traditionally been the responsibility of our scientists, while content delivery (the means by which the data or product reaches the end user) has primarily been the responsibility of our technology professionals. Increasingly we are integrating these functions; examples include our decision-support systems and conservation planning projects. This paradigm—integrating the work of multi-disciplinary teams on projects that span the entire Conservation Information Value Chain (*see diagram, page 5*)—will be our standard approach as we go forward.

NatureServe is well-regarded as a leading source for information on imperiled plants, animals, and habitats of the Americas. The spatial component of this information—comprising a dataset of more than half a million tracked locations (element occurrences) and mapped species ranges—is one of our core resources. Many of the information products and services that we provide to clients and partners are based on analyses of these data, applied to specific places or to specific natural resource management problems. In these objectives, we recommit to maintaining this essential data resource and to improving the quality of our data on species location and distribution, conservation status, and taxonomy. In addition, we will continue to advance our investment in ecological classification by furthering the International Vegetation Classification and by completing our classification of terrestrial ecological systems for all of North, Central, and South America. All of these efforts will engage our technology experts in designing and deploying tools to support information management, data sharing, and quality assurance.

Clearly, natural resource management needs evolve in response to new threats and societal changes. Information technology, by its very nature, also continues to change rapidly. To be a leader in the nexus where conservation science and information technology meet, NatureServe must ride this wave of change by embracing a spirit of innovation. In this spirit, we will supplement our foundation of data on species and ecosystems with new types of data and innovative analytical tools. We will increasingly develop information and approaches relevant to wildlife and habitats that are still common, but that may be declining or susceptible to declines. This addresses a need expressed by many of our stakeholders and exemplified in processes such as regional open space protection efforts and the state wildlife action plans.

We also have identified related needs for documenting threats and trends for species and habitats, which we plan to meet by collaborating with leading partners in the academic, conservation, and government sectors. And we will use innovative scientific methods, such as species distribution models, to help extend the power of existing data, and to help forecast future trends and needs. Such approaches appear to be particularly useful for addressing two daunting threats to biodiversity—climate change and the rapid spread of invasive species.

Using multi-disciplinary teams to integrate science and technology, we will build a

## GOAL 2

# Advance Scientific Understanding

**Advance our scientific resources and information technology systems in order to meet the needs of our clients and partners.**



web services infrastructure as the primary means of delivering biodiversity data to our clients and partners. This approach will use the Internet to fully connect everyone involved in the data development and data delivery process—from data providers (scientists) to data managers to end users (clients) and their software applications. The web services approach empowers users as never before, while also automating many aspects of data sharing to greatly increase efficiency. Although the NatureServe network consists of a set of geographically distributed local databases linked to a central database, exchange of data among these databases is time-consuming and costly. Implementing our web services strategy will enable NatureServe to more fully realize our potential as an interconnected, multi-local network of decentralized databases, all able to communicate in real time via the web.

**Objective 1:** Improve the **quality and consistency of our data** about species taxonomy and ecological classification and ensure the consistent application of these standards across our network.

- Complete a consistent, terrestrial ecological system classification for the entire Western Hemisphere. Create and publish a map of the terrestrial ecological systems of the Western Hemisphere.
- Develop consensus across our network on the creation and maintenance of consistent standards for ecological classifications, including establishing Benchmark Data Content Standards for ecological data. Implement these standards and the associated data management requirements needed to exchange, aggregate, and analyze ecological data.
- Expand our partnerships with various taxonomic authorities to create workable and cost-effective approaches to meeting NatureServe's need to maintain current taxonomic data for key plant and animal groups.
- Develop and apply sound criteria (including cost, capacity, need, and member program participation) for evaluating the feasibility of maintaining new datasets on topics such as invasive species and protected areas.
- Determine the best role for NatureServe to leverage existing member program efforts to develop protected areas datasets and the associated data management systems.

**Objective 2:** Be the leading authority on the **distribution and location of at-risk species and ecosystems** of the Western Hemisphere by advancing our scientific methods and filling gaps in our knowledge.

- Set targets for implementing the Benchmark Data Content Standards across the entire organization, and assist member programs in meeting these standards. Publish an annual Benchmark Data Content Standards report card as an accountability mechanism to report on progress towards meeting these standards.
- Update and streamline our framework for spatially representing biodiversity data, to explicitly include biological mapping approaches that go beyond traditional element occurrences. Review and revise the element occurrence data standard to simplify the methodology that will be implemented in our next-generation data management system.
- Improve the quality of element occurrence data by investing in efforts to bring these data up to current spatial standards. Develop and implement standard methods for bet-

ter depicting the probable footprint of element occurrences and, as needed, for appropriately "buffering" how they are depicted in our information products.

- Advance methods for modeling species distributions and promote their use across our network. Use these methods for analyses to better target areas for biodiversity inventories, to guide conservation planning, and to predict the impacts of climate change and distributions of invasive species.
- Develop a suite of standard mapping products designed to make our spatial biodiversity data more readily accessible and relevant to users. Identify innovative uses for our existing distribution and range map data, such as the capacity to deliver location-relevant species lists for download by field workers onto handheld devices.
- Launch a concerted network-wide effort to locate populations of lost or missing species (i.e., those with conservation status ranks of GH).

**Objective 3:** Advance NatureServe's role as a leading authority for **evaluating conservation status** of species and ecosystems, and for **documenting threats and trends** for key species groups and ecological systems.

- Integrate NatureServe conservation status assessment methodology with IUCN Red List methods, and expand our role in IUCN global assessments, such as the Global Reptile Assessment and Global Freshwater Assessment.
- Review and update all North American global and subnational ranks for GH, G1, G2, and G3 species every five years as part of meeting Benchmark Data Content Standards.
- Develop network-wide capacity and needed standards to monitor species and habitats in order to inform threat and trend assessments. Greatly expand development of trends and threats data for at-risk species and ecological communities. Collaborate with partners on efforts to report on ecosystem status and trends (e.g., Heinz Center, EPA).
- Develop and implement an observation data standard that facilitates data aggregation and information-sharing across the research and conservation communities. Seek adoption and implementation of this standard across our network and with key partners, including the Taxonomic Databases Working Group.
- Develop and refine methods for assessing the viability of species populations and the ecological integrity of natural communities and implement them across the network.

**Objective 4:** Develop a **next-generation data management system** that simplifies the user experience and integrates work flow from field data collection to end user data access.

- Develop and release a new data management system that functionally replaces Biotics 4, using an approach that addresses the need for hosted services, simplified methodology, an intuitive user interface, multi-language support, and a transition strategy for current users of Biotics 4.
- Develop and release the observations data management module, using the observations data content standard, as the first major component of the next-generation data management system.
- Develop and release a handheld-based software application for field collection of observational data in order to increase the geospatial accuracy of field data collection, and decrease the time needed to process and share these data.

- Where feasible adopt open source models for technology development as a way to encourage widespread adoption of our standards, methods, and data.
- Identify the best methodological and technological innovations developed by member programs and facilitate their implementation across the network. Focus on technologies that adhere to the service-oriented architecture and fill functional gaps for lower cost and "lightweight" alternatives to our supported software suite.

**Objective 5:** Build and implement a **web services infrastructure** that supports the seamless flow of information among data providers, data managers, and end user applications.

- Provide streamlined, one-stop access for data users and clients to all NatureServe data resources, including the detailed locality data held by member programs, by designing and publishing web services that allow end user applications to connect directly to our data.
- Greatly improve the efficiency of our process for data synchronization and data exchange between member programs and central databases by providing automated assistance for taxonomic reconciliation among all network members.
- Develop metadata and metadata guidelines for all NatureServe products and services. Register metadata with established clearinghouses (e.g., NBII, Conservation Geoportal, GeoConnections, IABIN, GBIF) to maximize the discovery and use of NatureServe data.
- Plan and build all NatureServe information technology systems and software applications in a way that ensures they are fully interoperable with each other.

**Objective 6:** Refine and expand NatureServe's **decision-support systems and conservation services** to bring more scientific rigor, repeatability, and technological support to the process of conservation planning and the evaluation of land use impacts.

- Advance our network's suite of decision-support services and tools, including tools for conservation planning, ecosystem-based management, and environmental review.
- Update and document methods for delineating conservation sites that better integrate knowledge of the ecological processes needed to support elements of concern along with information on compatible land and water management regimes.
- Further develop needed staff expertise in specific areas of information technology and conservation science (e.g., forestry, freshwater) in order to deliver high-value conservation services to partners and clients.
- Continually improve NatureServe Vista software by identifying and implementing those new functions and user interface improvements most needed by users. Investigate the feasibility of developing a web-based interface for NatureServe Vista and of publishing a development framework that will allow users to create and share open-source modules that interoperate with NatureServe Vista.
- Improve access to the data sets, including element occurrence data, required to use NatureServe Vista. Develop data translation utilities that automate the process of preparing and importing data from Biotics into NatureServe Vista. Consider the creation of data libraries that house Vista-ready data layers for at least ten regions.

**W**hile Goal 1 and Goal 2 deal with the content of our work, Goal 3 concerns *how* we work. The strategic premise of this goal is that through a continuous emphasis on the power of networking and partnerships, we can build the capacity of our central institution, our member programs, and our other partners. We define *networking* as the power that is unleashed when people and institutions with shared goals agree to work together for a common purpose, to collaborate on projects, to share ideas and information, and to build long-lasting, constructive personal relationships.

Our network of member programs is the single characteristic that most uniquely defines NatureServe. Our 80 member programs currently span all 50 U.S. states, Puerto Rico, Canada, Belize, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, and Peru. Each member program is an independent institution that voluntarily affiliates with the NatureServe network, and of necessity each must customize its programs and activities to meet the demands of its own local situation. While member programs therefore have many differences, all share the common purpose expressed in our mission statement: providing the scientific basis for effective conservation action.

NatureServe will only succeed if all of its members are programmatically strong, well funded, and institutionally committed to each other. The uneven institutional capacity of our member programs as of 2006 is a cause for concern. Among our U.S. and Canadian programs, for example, nearly three out of four have a significant need for additional staff capacity, based on their own self-assessment. The main cause of low capacity is insufficient financial or institutional support from their parent institutions, most of which are state or provincial government agencies.

Against this backdrop, a key objective is to support our existing network of member programs. In addition, we seek to expand our capacity in two ways. First, by building lasting partnerships with organizations that constitute our informal network, including international and U.S. national partners (led by our central staff) as well as extended networks of partnerships at state, provincial, and national levels (led by our members). Second, by expanding our formal network of member programs into new countries.

We are aware of the tradeoffs that can come with growth. Therefore we will move strategically in this area, and pursue opportunities for growth that are well-funded and based on a sound business model. We seek growth not for its own sake, but so that we can expand the capacity of ourselves and our partners to achieve conservation results that are commensurate with the scale of the threats facing biodiversity.

**Objective 1:** Provide essential support, training, and services to our existing **network of member programs.**

- Regularly assess the institutional health and mission alignment of member programs. Provide needed scientific, technical, and institutional assistance to ensure that they can meet local conservation needs and actively participate in network activities.
- Strengthen the health of Latin American member programs by making available our most current methods and technology, assisting in the development of regional collab-

## GOAL 3

# Build Conservation Capacity

**Strengthen our organizational effectiveness and capacity and better leverage the power of the NatureServe network to inform conservation action at local, regional, national, and international scales.**



orations, and better integrating CDCs into the design and implementation of NatureServe activities. Involve CDCs early in planning projects within their jurisdiction and seek to accomplish project objectives through our CDC partnerships whenever possible.

- Strengthen the health of Canadian member programs by supporting national program development efforts, initiating CDC development for Arctic Canada, securing funding for NatureServe Canada, and securing support from Canadian federal agencies for core data and network activities.

- Strengthen the health of U.S. member programs by securing an annual appropriation or other reliable funding from federal agencies to ensure the quality and consistency of our data resources via the "Data Excellence Program." Engage our state partners to work vigorously for a larger appropriation to support a state grant program.

- Support the efforts of all member programs to extend the effectiveness of their own partnerships by formally recognizing the role that other institutions can play in achieving NatureServe's mission at the member program level.

**Objective 2:** Extend our **international reach and capacity** to influence conservation by building lasting partnerships with international initiatives and multi-lateral agencies.

- Expand our engagement with key national and international initiatives focused on access to, use of, and standards for biodiversity information (e.g., IABIN, GBIF, TDWG, and IUCN) to ensure that NatureServe approaches inform and are consistent with these broader efforts.

- Connect NatureServe member programs more directly to key international agreements such as CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species), the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Increase involvement of member programs in international processes such as the IUCN Red List Programme, the Global Plant Conservation Strategy, and the International Polar Year.

- Create new models for our international partnerships by expanding and strengthening in-country partner networks and collaborating with partners in countries and regions not currently served by member programs. Seek funding from internationally-focused institutions such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme, and USAID.

**Objective 3:** Expand our **network** to new countries and territories by partnering with existing institutions in those places.

- Develop clear criteria for where and how to expand, including a self-funding business model for expansion. Develop programmatic models for "conservation resource centers" that are appropriate to the social and political conditions and biodiversity information needs of each country or region.

- Complete our network in Canada by partnering with government agencies to establish new CDCs for the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

- Increase conservation capacity in Latin America and the Caribbean by expanding our network to at least eight new countries, both through traditional member programs and through new partnership models. Extend our current work in Brazil by partnering with established Brazilian institutions in the government, conservation, and academic sectors.

- Cultivate opportunities to expand the network beyond the Western Hemisphere based on the strategic criteria developed above.
- Develop new types of network membership for partners in order to supplement our own areas of expertise and to encourage mutually beneficial collaborations.

**Objective 4:** Cost-effectively address common conservation information needs by **propagating effective new methods, tools, and conservation approaches** across our network and to the broader conservation community.

- Actively identify important innovations in technology, methods, and conservation approaches developed by member programs; evaluate their potential to serve the entire organization, and develop mechanisms for implementing these innovations across the network.
- Develop a NatureServe extranet or similar web-based project work-space for all member program staff and collaborating partners.
- Establish clear, inclusive, decision-making processes and use expertise drawn from across the organization to develop and implement methodology changes.
- Develop, fund, and initiate at least two new collaborative conservation projects annually that cross regional or national boundaries, as clear demonstrations of the value of addressing strategic conservation issues at network-wide scales.

**Objective 5:** Become a **people-centered organization** that emphasizes and rewards collaboration, learning, and innovation.

- Strengthen the connections among NatureServe and member program staff at all levels through regular training and conference opportunities and creation of a staff exchange program. Provide staff with opportunities for professional advancement and collaboration across our network and within the broader conservation community.
- Develop a leadership training program to invest in the next generation of natural heritage program coordinators and NatureServe managers. Promote entrepreneurial leadership skills to increase member program success, and the ability to build and market a program within an institutional or agency setting.
- Improve communication, collaboration, and decision-making processes, both internally and throughout our network, on scientific, technological, and administrative issues. Use Section Councils as an essential means to achieve this.
- Develop a human resources strategy that focuses on recruitment and retention of a top-level workforce by providing an outstanding work environment, opportunities for professional development, rewards for superior performance, flexible working schedules, and a competitive compensation and benefits program.

**Objective 6:** Ensure sufficient funds from a variety of sources to support a **financially stable and growing organization**.

- Implement a refined billing rate structure and apply it consistently to all projects in order to cover cost of the project deliverables as well as the underlying data quality costs.

- Enhance our project management process by providing tools that support improved budget tracking, easier balancing and forecasting of staff workloads, and better monitoring of our performance at meeting project budgets and project schedules.
- Operate regional offices with adequate organizational support, staffing, and infrastructure in locations that best advance organizational objectives.
- Build fundraising capacity by recruiting and retaining outstanding fundraising staff, establishing the needed management systems and procedures, and creating successful annual giving programs for individuals and corporations. Raise an average of at least \$500,000 annually in unrestricted income.
- Conduct a capital campaign feasibility study, test the effectiveness of various campaign themes, and launch a network-wide capital campaign by 2008.



**"I hope that others will join in helping to make NatureServe a growing and strong organization, because of the extremely important services that it offers...not just to nature, served by our conservation effort, but because of how nature serves humanity."**

—DR. EDWARD O. WILSON  
UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR EMERITUS, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

**A**s Dr. Wilson's comments reflect, it is entirely appropriate that *serve* is part of our organization's name. In this plan, we have highlighted several different contexts for the term. First, NatureServe serves our partners and clients by helping them meet their information needs and natural resource management goals. Second, we serve the public good by advancing efforts to protect biodiversity. Third, we will serve the needs of our member programs, and the personal and professional aspirations of our staff, by becoming a people-centered organization. Finally, nature itself serves humanity through the essential contribution to human well-being made by biological diversity in all its facets.

### **Implementing the Plan**

The difference between a vision and a dream is a plan to make it real. We will make the vision laid out in this plan a reality through a concrete process for implementation. The key implementation forums are the annual plans developed by NatureServe staff and our regional Section Councils. These business implementation plans will provide explicit annual milestones for achieving the strategic plan objectives and for measuring progress. In addition, individual member programs are encouraged to integrate their own strategic plans and activities with the objectives of this overall NatureServe plan.

### **A United Network**

This plan lays out our major goals and objectives for the next five years and describes the specific strategies we will pursue to accomplish them. It also highlights the challenges that NatureServe faces, while articulating our common purpose and direction. That common purpose is exemplified in our new mission statement: *to provide the scientific basis for effective conservation action.*

NatureServe is, and must be, one united network. Each of our member programs and all of our central staff are part of this network, voluntarily cooperating to achieve shared conservation goals. We carry on a tradition of more than three decades of conservation science excellence, begun through The Nature Conservancy, extended by scientists and conservation professionals working in dozens of institutions, and carried on today by a network of partners working in 13 different countries and in three main languages.

All of us who are part of NatureServe are passionately dedicated to conserving the world's biological diversity for the benefit of current and future generations. By collaborating and communicating effectively, by sharing data, ideas, and innovations, and by leveraging our individual strengths, we have created a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. We take pride in the success of the whole, and the contributions that each of us make to this larger and greater purpose.

## CONCLUSION

# Serving Nature

**We envision a world where people recognize and value the importance of biodiversity, and where the information and expertise of the NatureServe network is relied upon to understand and effectively conserve the diversity of life on Earth.**

# NatureServe Member Programs

## Canada

**Alberta Natural Heritage Information Centre**  
Alberta Parks & Protected Areas Division  
[www.cd.gov.ab.ca/preserving/parks/anhic/flashindex.asp](http://www.cd.gov.ab.ca/preserving/parks/anhic/flashindex.asp)

**Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre**  
Mount Allison University  
[www.accdc.com](http://www.accdc.com)

**British Columbia Conservation Data Centre**  
British Columbia Ministry of Environment  
[www.env.gov.bc.ca/cdc/](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/cdc/)

**Manitoba Conservation Data Centre**  
Manitoba Conservation Wildlife & Ecosystem  
Protection Branch  
[web2.gov.mb.ca/conservation/cdc/](http://web2.gov.mb.ca/conservation/cdc/)

**Ontario Natural Heritage Information Centre**  
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources  
[http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/nhic\\_cfm](http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/nhic_cfm)

**Quebec Conservation Data Centre / Centre  
de Données sur le Patrimoine Naturel du  
Québec**  
Ministère des Ressources Naturelles et  
de la Faune  
Ministère du Développement durable et des parcs  
[www.cdpmq.gouv.qc.ca/](http://www.cdpmq.gouv.qc.ca/)

**Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre**  
Saskatchewan Environment  
[www.biodiversity.sk.ca](http://www.biodiversity.sk.ca)

**NatureServe Yukon**  
Yukon Dept. of Environment  
[www.environmentyukon.gov.yk.ca/fishwild/index.html](http://www.environmentyukon.gov.yk.ca/fishwild/index.html)

## United States of America

**Alabama Natural Heritage Program**  
Florida State University  
[www.alnhp.org](http://www.alnhp.org)

**Alaska Natural Heritage Program**  
University of Alaska - Anchorage  
[www.uaa.alaska.edu/enri/aknhp\\_web/](http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/enri/aknhp_web/)

**Arizona Heritage Data Management System**  
Arizona Game & Fish Dept.  
[www.azgfd.com/hdms](http://www.azgfd.com/hdms)

**Arkansas Natural Heritage Program**  
Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission  
[www.naturalheritage.org](http://www.naturalheritage.org)

**California Natural Diversity Database**  
California Dept. of Fish & Game  
[www.dfg.ca.gov/whdab/html/cnddb.html](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/whdab/html/cnddb.html)

**Colorado Natural Heritage Program**  
Colorado State University  
[www.cnhp.colostate.edu](http://www.cnhp.colostate.edu)

**Connecticut Natural Diversity Database**  
Connecticut Dept. of Environmental Protection  
[dep.state.ct.us/cgnhs/nddb/nddb2.htm](http://dep.state.ct.us/cgnhs/nddb/nddb2.htm)

**D.C. Fisheries & Wildlife**  
D.C. Dept. of Health  
[http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1374,Q,584468,dohNav\\_GID,1810,.asp](http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1374,Q,584468,dohNav_GID,1810,.asp)

**Delaware Natural Heritage Program**  
Dept. of Natural Resources & Environmental  
Control  
[www.dnrec.state.de.us/nhp/](http://www.dnrec.state.de.us/nhp/)

**Florida Natural Areas Inventory**  
Florida State University  
[www.fnai.org/](http://www.fnai.org/)

**Georgia Natural Heritage Program**  
Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources  
<http://georgiawildlife.dnr.state.ga.us/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=87>

**Hawai'i Natural Heritage Program**  
University of Hawaii  
[www.hinhp.org/](http://www.hinhp.org/)

**Idaho Conservation Data Center**  
Idaho Dept. of Fish & Game  
<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cdc/>

**Illinois Natural Heritage Information Center**  
Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources  
[dnr.state.il.us/conservation/naturalheritage/index.htm](http://dnr.state.il.us/conservation/naturalheritage/index.htm)

**Indiana Natural Heritage Data Center**  
Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources  
[www.in.gov/dnr/naturepr/index.html](http://www.in.gov/dnr/naturepr/index.html)

**Iowa Natural Areas Inventory**  
Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources  
[www.iowadnr.com/other/inventory.html](http://www.iowadnr.com/other/inventory.html)

**Kansas Natural Heritage Inventory**  
University of Kansas  
[www.ksnhi.ku.edu/research/current.htm](http://www.ksnhi.ku.edu/research/current.htm)

**Kentucky Natural Heritage Program**  
Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission  
[www.naturepreserves.ky.gov/](http://www.naturepreserves.ky.gov/)

**Louisiana Natural Heritage Program**  
Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries  
[www.wlf.louisiana.gov/experience/naturalheritage/](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/experience/naturalheritage/)

**Maine Natural Areas Program**  
Maine Dept. of Conservation  
[www.mainenaturalareas.org/index.php](http://www.mainenaturalareas.org/index.php)

**Maryland Natural Heritage Program**  
Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources  
[www.dnr.state.md.us/wildlife](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/wildlife)

**Massachusetts Natural Heritage &  
Endangered Species Program**  
Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife  
[www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/nhsp/nhsp.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/nhsp/nhsp.htm)

**Michigan Natural Features Inventory**  
Michigan State University Extension  
[www.msue.msu.edu/mnfi](http://www.msue.msu.edu/mnfi)

**Minnesota Natural Heritage & Nongame  
Research**  
Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources  
[www.dnr.state.mn.us/ecological\\_services/nhnrp](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ecological_services/nhnrp)

**Mississippi Natural Heritage Program**  
Mississippi Museum of Natural Science  
[www.mdwfp.com/museum/html/research/index.html](http://www.mdwfp.com/museum/html/research/index.html)

**Missouri Natural Heritage Program**  
Missouri Dept. of Conservation  
[www.mdc.mo.gov/nathis/heritage/](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/nathis/heritage/)

**Montana Natural Heritage Program**

Montana State Library  
[nhp.nris.state.mt.us/](http://nhp.nris.state.mt.us/)

**Navajo Natural Heritage Program**

Navajo Fish & Wildlife Dept.  
[www.navajofishandwildlife.org/nnhp.htm](http://www.navajofishandwildlife.org/nnhp.htm)

**Nebraska Natural Heritage Program**

Nebraska Game & Parks Commission  
[www.ngpc.state.ne.us/wildlife/programs/nongame/nongame.asp](http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/wildlife/programs/nongame/nongame.asp)

**Nevada Natural Heritage Program**

Nevada Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources  
<http://heritage.nv.gov/index.htm>

**New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau**

New Hampshire Dept. of Resources & Economic Development  
[www.dred.state.nh.us/divisions/forestandlands/bureaus/naturalheritage/index.htm](http://www.dred.state.nh.us/divisions/forestandlands/bureaus/naturalheritage/index.htm)

**New Jersey Natural Heritage Program**

New Jersey Office of Natural Lands Management  
[www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/natural/heritage/index.html](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/natural/heritage/index.html)

**New Mexico Natural Heritage Program**

University of New Mexico  
[nmnhp.unm.edu/](http://nmnhp.unm.edu/)

**New York Natural Heritage Program**

New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation  
[www.nynhp.org](http://www.nynhp.org)

**North Carolina Natural Heritage Program**

North Carolina Dept. of Environment & Natural Resources  
[www.ncnhp.org/](http://www.ncnhp.org/)

**North Dakota Natural Heritage Inventory**

North Dakota Parks & Recreation Dept.  
[www.ndparks.com/Nature/Preserves.htm](http://www.ndparks.com/Nature/Preserves.htm)

**Ohio Natural Heritage Program**

Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources  
[www.dnr.state.oh.us/dnap/heritage/](http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/dnap/heritage/)

**Oklahoma Natural Heritage Inventory**

University of Oklahoma  
[www.oknaturalheritage.ou.edu/](http://www.oknaturalheritage.ou.edu/)

**Oregon Natural Heritage Information Center**

Oregon State University  
<http://heritagedata.oregonstate.edu/ornhic/>

**Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program**

Pennsylvania Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources  
 Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
[www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us/](http://www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us/)

**Rhode Island Natural History Survey**

University of Rhode Island  
[www.uri.edu/ce/rinhs/index.htm](http://www.uri.edu/ce/rinhs/index.htm)

**South Carolina Heritage Trust**

South Carolina Dept. of Natural Resources  
[www.dnr.sc.gov/](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/)

**South Dakota Natural Heritage Database**

South Dakota Dept. of Game, Fish & Parks  
[www.sdgifp.info/wildlife/diversity/index.htm](http://www.sdgifp.info/wildlife/diversity/index.htm)

**Tennessee Division of Natural Heritage**

Tennessee Dept. of Environment & Conservation  
[www.state.tn.us/environment/nh/](http://www.state.tn.us/environment/nh/)

**Texas Conservation Data Center**

The Nature Conservancy of Texas  
[www.nature.org/wherework/northamerica/states/texas/science/art6069.html](http://www.nature.org/wherework/northamerica/states/texas/science/art6069.html)

**Texas Wildlife Diversity Branch**

Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.  
[www.tpwd.state.tx.us/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/)

**TVA Regional Natural Heritage Program**

Tennessee Valley Authority  
[www.tva.com/environment/land/habitat.htm](http://www.tva.com/environment/land/habitat.htm)

**Utah Natural Heritage Program**

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
[dwr.cdc.nr.utah.gov/ucdc](http://dwr.cdc.nr.utah.gov/ucdc)

**Vermont Nongame & Natural Heritage Program**

Vermont Fish & Wildlife Dept.  
[www.vtfishandwildlife.com/wildlife\\_nongame.cfm](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/wildlife_nongame.cfm)

**Virginia Division of Natural Heritage**

Virginia Dept. of Conservation & Recreation  
[www.dcr.state.va.us/dnh](http://www.dcr.state.va.us/dnh)

**Washington Natural Heritage Program**

Washington Dept. of Natural Resources  
[www.dnr.wa.gov/nhp/index.html](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/nhp/index.html)

**West Virginia Natural Heritage Program**

West Virginia Division of Natural Resources  
[www.wvdnr.gov/wildlife/wdintro.shtm](http://www.wvdnr.gov/wildlife/wdintro.shtm)

**Wisconsin Natural Heritage Program**

Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources  
[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/nhi/index.htm](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/nhi/index.htm)

**Wyoming Natural Diversity Database**

University of Wyoming  
[www.uwyo.edu/wyndd/](http://www.uwyo.edu/wyndd/)

**Latin America and Caribbean****Belize****Biodiversity and Environmental Resource Data System for Belize (BERDS)**

Belize Tropical Forest Studies  
[www.biodiversity.bz/](http://www.biodiversity.bz/)

**Bolivia****Centro de Biodiversidad y Genética**

Universidad Mayor de San Simón  
[www.fcyt.umss.edu.bo/investigacion/biodiversidad/index.php](http://www.fcyt.umss.edu.bo/investigacion/biodiversidad/index.php)

**Centro de Investigación y Preservación de la Amazonia**

Universidad Amazónica de Pando  
[www.uapnet.edu.bo](http://www.uapnet.edu.bo)

**Colombia****Centro de Datos para la Conservación de Colombia**

Corporación Autónoma Regional del Valle del Cauca  
[www.cvc.gov.co/](http://www.cvc.gov.co/)

**Ecuador****Centro de Datos para la Conservación de Ecuador**

Alianza Jatun Sacha  
[www.jatunsacha.org/ingles/cdc\\_ecuador.htm](http://www.jatunsacha.org/ingles/cdc_ecuador.htm)

**El Salvador****SalvaNATURA**

[www.salvanatura.org/](http://www.salvanatura.org/)

**Guatemala****Centro de Datos para la Conservación de Guatemala**

Universidad de San Carlos  
[www.natureserve.org/nhp/lacarb/guate/index.htm](http://www.natureserve.org/nhp/lacarb/guate/index.htm)

**México****Centro de Datos para la Conservación de Sonora (CEDES)**

[www.cedes.gob.mx](http://www.cedes.gob.mx)

**Pronatura Noreste A.C.**

[www.pronaturane.org/](http://www.pronaturane.org/)

**Pronatura Chiapas A.C.**

[www.pronatura-chiapas.org](http://www.pronatura-chiapas.org)

**Pronatura A.C. Veracruz**

[www.pronaturaveracruz.org/](http://www.pronaturaveracruz.org/)

**Pronatura Península de Yucatán A.C.**

[www.pronatura-ppy.org.mx/](http://www.pronatura-ppy.org.mx/)

**Pronatura A.C. Noroeste**

[www.pronatura-nmc.org](http://www.pronatura-nmc.org)

**Nicaragua****Sistema Nacional de Información Ambiental (SINIA)**

[www.sinia.net.ni/index.asp](http://www.sinia.net.ni/index.asp)

**Panamá****Centro de Datos para la Conservación de Panamá (ANCON)**

[www.ancon.org/mambo/](http://www.ancon.org/mambo/)

**Paraguay****Centro de Datos para la Conservación de Paraguay**

Secretaría del Ambiente  
[www.seam.gov.py/](http://www.seam.gov.py/)

**Perú****Centro de Datos para la Conservación de Perú**

Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina  
<http://cdc.lamolina.edu.pe/>

**Puerto Rico****Programa de Patrimonio Natural**

Departamento de Recursos Naturales y Ambientales  
[www.gobierno.pr/drna](http://www.gobierno.pr/drna)

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Board of Directors

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Gary Knight, Board of Directors  
United States Section representative

Ron Pulliam, Board of Directors

Eduardo Velasco, Board of Directors  
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Bruce Stein, Vice President and Chief Scientist

Larry Sugarbaker, Vice President and Chief  
Information Officer

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Costa Rica

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# Our Core Principles

The diverse people and programs that make up NatureServe are united by a shared commitment to a common set of organizational values. These values span our varied geographies, cultures, political systems, languages, and natural heritage. They define what we are and what we aspire to be.

## **OBJECTIVITY**

We are committed to maintaining our reputation for scientific credibility by presenting information that is objective, unbiased, and based on the best available data.

## **INTEGRITY**

We act with personal and institutional integrity in all aspects of our work and we respect the integrity of others.

## **INNOVATION**

We strive to be innovative in our approach, welcoming new ideas that challenge us to improve, and incorporating the best thinking from across our network and from the broader conservation and scientific communities.

## **RESPONSIVENESS**

We are responsive to our partners and clients and seek to understand and meet their information needs.

## **COLLABORATION**

We respect the views and contributions of our colleagues and work collaboratively to advance our mission. Working in cooperation with others, we seek to build effective partnerships and strategic alliances to achieve our objectives.

## **COMMITMENT TO CONSERVATION**

By pursuing our mission with enthusiasm and optimism, we will serve the public interest and help to protect biodiversity, making our communities and the world a better place.



NatureServe

A Network Connecting Science With Conservation

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