



ELCAT STRATEGIC PLAN

2018 - 2020

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE - NATIONAL TRAILS INTERMOUNTAIN REGION





Strategic Plan 2018 – 2020

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Introduction

On April 21-22, 2017, El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association (ELCAT) conducted strategic planning sessions at its headquarters in Austin, Texas. ELCAT partners the National Park Service – National Trails Intermountain Region (NTIR) and the Texas Historical Commission (THC) were also part of the activity. Invited parties also included the Louisiana Office of State Parks and the Louisiana Office of Cultural Development. Susan Shore and Emily Koller, staff from the THC, facilitated the sessions.

Over the two-day period, board members and staff of ELCAT, as well as NTIR superintendent Aaron Mahr, discussed items such as organizational framework, mission/vision/values of the association, audience, situational analysis, goal setting, and more. After the sessions, THC staff worked to compile the information gathered from the meetings into a report and a work plan chart; the latter of which was a workable document that was intended to be refined by ELCAT before its finalization.

At its July board meeting, ELCAT established a Strategic Planning Task Force for the purpose of refining the work plan chart into a document to be presented to the board of directors for its approval at its October 2018 meeting. Over the next several weeks, the Task Force held three meetings, refined the plan, and sent it to the board of directors and agency officials for comments prior to the October meeting. Feedback was received and a fourth meeting was held to consider and incorporate suggestions into the document. The plan was then finalized and presented to the board of directors for its approval at its annual meeting in Goliad, Texas on October 21, 2017. The plan will remain in effect until October 2020.

EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL ASSOCIATION
Strategic Plan 2018 – 2020 _ ANNUAL WORK PLANNING DOCUMENT _ REVIEW ANNUALLY

In Partnership with
The National Park Service – National Trails Intermountain Region

MISSION: El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association seeks to protect the historic integrity of the trail, to educate and engage the public about its significance, and to promote resource development, interpretation, and tourism along its path.

VISION:

- For the trail:

El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT is a nationally recognized and protected cultural resource connecting nations, cultures and places through time.

- For the association:

ELCAT is a champion for the trail and achieves its work through the strength of its volunteers, partners, and staff.

VALUES:

- Collaboration

- To preserve and protect shared resources
- To leverage expertise of partners, sharing best practices
- To provide access to federal, state, and local governmental resources

- Communication

- Inform partners and users about trail resources and opportunities
- Listen to diverse constituents
- Stay on message

- Trust and Respect for

- Authentication of Trail Resources
- Governance processes
- Partners
- Landowner's property rights and autonomy over property
- Voluntary landowner participation in trail and association activities

GOALS/STRATEGIES/ACTIVITIES:

STRATEGY	ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME FOR COMPLETION	PROJECT LEAD	What physical/human/financial resources do you need to accomplish this activity?	STATUS (update quarterly)
Goal 1: Build capacity to further enhance the organization's sustainability					
Strategy 1: Identify diverse funding priorities and pursue appropriate funding pathways	Activity 1: Develop and implement a coordinated plan for requesting memberships/sponsorships from members and volunteers, statewide and local businesses, and other stakeholders	April 2018	Development Cttee & Exec. Dir.		
<i>Measurement:</i> Coordinated plan in place and sponsorships/donations continuously incoming and active.					
	Activity 2: Pursue grants for project-specific needs	Ongoing/Per project	Dev. Cttee , Board Members, Exec. Dir., Volunteers		
<i>Measurement:</i> Ongoing/active demonstration of grant seeking evident.					
	Activity 3: Utilize crowd-funding avenues if project-appropriate	Per project	Exec. Dir. , Board Members		
<i>Measurement:</i> Crowdfunding effort endorsed by board and actively engaged in by all association representatives.					
Strategy 2: Improve organizational structure for more effective operation	Activity 1: Engage paid, part-time administrative employee	January 2019	President , Exec. Director		
<i>Measurement:</i> Part-time employee on payroll with sufficient funding sources for permanence.					
	Activity 2: Provide leadership training/team building for board members	April 2018	Tom Byrd		
<i>Measurement:</i> Training completed by all board members and enhanced engagement by board in association activities.					

STRATEGY	ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME FOR COMPLETION	PROJECT LEAD	What physical/human/financial resources do you need to accomplish this activity?	STATUS (update quarterly)
	Activity 3: Develop and implement a process for succession planning within the structure of the board of directors	October 2018	Executive Cttee.		
	<i>Measurement:</i> Written documents for succession planning in hand and approved for use by general membership.				
Goal 2: Elevate the identity of El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT as a recognizable, significant historical asset for users and stakeholders					
Strategy 1: Develop communications plan that includes branding and messaging for specific audiences, including potential funders	Activity 1: Research similar organizations to build ideas to develop a cohesive plan	April 2018	Exec. Dir. & Comm. Rel. Cttee		
	<i>Measurement:</i> Outline of branding of other organizations in hand.				
	Activity 2: Engage a facilitator to help board through this process.	September 2017	Exec. Dir. & Comm. Rel. Cttee.		
	<i>Measurement:</i> Texas State University – Public Relations class will develop a branding/outreach plan for association consideration.				
Strategy 2: Expand educational and outreach opportunities for targeted audiences	Activity 1: Expand speaking opportunities by training selected board members, members/volunteers, and agency officials to present programs	April 2018	Exec. Dir. & Comm. Rel. Cttee		
	○ Create common program materials – talking points, PowerPoint, etc.				
	○ Train board members and members/volunteers to present programs				
	○ Co-brand activities with agency partners for education and outreach				

STRATEGY	ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME FOR COMPLETION	PROJECT LEAD	What physical/human/financial resources do you need to accomplish this activity?	STATUS (update quarterly)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Actively solicit appropriate opportunities to present programs (CHC/historical societies, outdoor organizations, museums, etc.) 				
	<i>Measurement:</i> Board members and members/volunteers will be trained on common speaking points and delivering presentations to potential funders/supporters on a regular basis.				
	Activity 2: Develop and prioritize opportunities for visitor access to publicly and privately-held trail sites	April 2019	Comm. Rel. Cttee		
	<i>Measurement:</i> Report outlining opportunities in hand and made available to the public.				
Strategy 3: Create a structured, volunteer-driven, collaborative community approach to enrich and sustain local trail experiences	Activity 1: Engage professional community development expertise	April 2018	Exec. Dir. & Comm. Rel. Cttee		
	<i>Measurement:</i> Professional community development expert working with association. (Potential NPS-NTIR, RTCA, THC Staff)				
	Activity 2: Select up to two (2) communities to work with to develop pilot Model Trail Community projects	July 2018	Exec. Dir. & Comm. Rel. Cttee		
	<i>Measurement:</i> MTC communities selected and members/volunteers within MTCs engaged in trail outreach, identification, protection, and development.				
	Activity 3: Work with local communities and NPS to sign official routes of the trail	Ongoing	Exec. Dir. & Comm. Rel. Cttee		
	<i>Measurement:</i> Signing installed in locations across the trail on an annual basis and local funding support provided toward effort documented.				
Strategy 4: Expand engagement through enhanced use of social media	Activity 1: Highlight local/regional programs, tie into National Trails System's 50th anniversary PR and events, create online contests, etc.	Emphasis on 2018, but Ongoing	Exec. Dir. & Comm. Rel. Cttee		

STRATEGY	ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME FOR COMPLETION	PROJECT LEAD	What physical/human/financial resources do you need to accomplish this activity?	STATUS (update quarterly)
<i>Measurement:</i> Public outreach for 50 th , contests, local/regional programs in evidence and engaged by multiple stakeholders.					
	Activity 2: Research social media formats beyond Facebook to determine what might work well to engage new audiences	January 2019	Exec. Dir. & Comm. Rel. Cttee		
<i>Measurement:</i> Report in hand with suggestions for new uses.					
	Activity 3: Look into use of an online system such as HootSuite to schedule and disseminate posts among different programs/apps for effective social media management	July 2019	Exec. Dir. & Comm. Rel. Cttee		
<i>Measurement:</i> Assessment of cost and effectiveness of such programs and whether or not they are of utility to the association in hand.					
Goal 3: Facilitate the identification and protection of authentic sites and segments					
Strategy 1: Acquire and/or engage other means of protection of properties	Activity 1: Identify and prioritize sites/segments and include on a private database	April 2019	Proposed Resource Prot. Cttee & Executive Dir.		
<i>Measurement:</i> Active database in use and consistently updated by GIS interns.					
	Activity 2: Identify threatened resources	July 2019	Proposed Resource Prot. Cttee		
<i>Measurement:</i> A ranking for level of threat will be assigned and prioritization of protection efforts will be developed.					
	Activity 3: Research acquisition and/or creation of buffer zones/easements for selected threatened sites/segments	December 2019	Proposed Resource Prot. Cttee		
<i>Measurement:</i> Acquisition of priority sites and segments and/or easements will be sought and entities/mechanisms engaged towards these efforts.					

STRATEGY	ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME FOR COMPLETION	PROJECT LEAD	What physical/human/financial resources do you need to accomplish this activity?	STATUS (update quarterly)
Strategy 2: Develop a trail protection program to help landowners become good stewards	Activity 1: Develop volunteer stewardship program for monitoring	January 2020	Proposed Resource Prot. Cttee & Comm. Rel. Cttee.		
	<i>Measurement:</i> Written manual for volunteer stewardship in place and stewards engaged in each region.				
	Activity 2: Engage several landowners to assist in implementation of stewardship program	July 2020	Proposed Resource Prot. Cttee & Comm. Rel. Cttee.		
	<i>Measurement:</i> Private landowners in each region will be engaged and actively promoting conservation of trail resources in their area.				
	Activity 3: Encourage participation in NPS Certification Program, THC Marker Program, and Louisiana Marker Program	Ongoing with increased activity after April 2019	Proposed Resource Prot. Cttee & Comm. Rel. Cttee		
	<i>Measurement:</i> Multiple landowners in each region will be voluntarily engaged in the Certification Program, THC Marker Program, Louisiana Marker Program and promoting it to other landowners.				