By 2050, two-thirds of the U.S. population may live on less than 20 percent of the country’s privately owned land.

Major infrastructure investments are taking place in the nation’s “megaregions”—interlocking economic systems that share natural resources, working landscapes and connected transportation systems—where demand to protect natural and recreational areas will only grow.

Our Strategic Conservation Planning team thinks big and offers solutions to metropolitan regions that promote livable communities through practical approaches that balance protection of natural systems with essential investments in the built environment, establishing an environmental legacy for future generations in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.

Our Approach

Our strategies include:

- Linking people and nature through protection of nature next to cities, creating defined edges or transition zones between developed areas and their surrounding natural areas and working landscapes
- Linking people and nature through integration of nature into cities—purposefully protecting and restoring green infrastructure inside urban areas.

We help communities identify their conservation priorities and goals, and recommend high-impact and cost-effective implementation strategies that help build the capacity of communities to fulfill their conservation visions.

Through the use of sophisticated planning and mapping analysis tools, we strategically evaluate areas for land protection and stewardship as well as identify opportunities to integrate planning for green and gray infrastructure.
Projects at a Glance

Chicago Wilderness Vision. Chicago Wilderness turned to The Conservation Fund in 2011 to help refine a Green Infrastructure Vision that was originally developed in 2004. With support from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, the Fund created an enhanced vision to inform future regional and local planning and decision-making. It is now guiding decisions on how to protect invaluable nearby lands that provide important natural assets like wildlife habitat, clean water, flood control and recreational opportunities.

Green Infrastructure Plan for Nashville. Like many fast-growing American cities, Nashville needed a green strategy. The area saw its population jump by 10 percent in just a decade, while only three percent of Davidson County was devoted to parkland—and very little floodplain control. Together with ACP Visioning+Planning, Hawkins Partners, Inc. and Clarion Associates, we inventoried and evaluated the region’s natural areas and engaged the public to develop an ambitious vision that is transforming Nashville’s green spaces—naturally—over the next 10 years.

An Emerald Necklace for Los Angeles. Through collaboration on a regional green infrastructure vision plan and a loan to the nonprofit Amigos de los Rios, the Fund is helping the Los Angeles area increase green space and improve local communities around the Los Angeles, San Gabriel and Rio Hondo Rivers. This work will continue to have a tremendous positive impact on public health and green infrastructure in an underserved, sprawling county.

About The Conservation Fund

At The Conservation Fund, we make conservation work for America. By creating solutions that make environmental and economic sense, we are redefining conservation to demonstrate its essential role in our future prosperity. Top-ranked for efficiency and effectiveness, we have worked in all 50 states since 1985 to protect nearly 8 million acres of land.

With the Fund’s national expertise and outstanding technical assistance, we are charging ahead on dozens of projects with great momentum. These projects wouldn’t happen without them.

Claire Robinson
Executive Director
Amigos de los Rios

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