



A SANCTUARY FOR LIFE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2027

WHEN THEY CAN'T BE WILD, THEY DESERVE TO LIVE WILD AT HEART.

The Wildcat Sanctuary provides a natural sanctuary to wild cats in need and inspires change to end the captive wildlife crisis. Accredited by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries, we are a home for life for the animals in our care.

We have a strong-rooted belief that wild cats should not be kept as pets or exploited for profit. Combining natural and spacious habitats with a life free of exhibition and exploitation, TWS allows all residents to live wild at heart. As a true sanctuary, we do not buy, breed, sell or exhibit animals.

Sanctuary services are going to be needed for years to come. With the recent passage of the Big Cat Public Safety Act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be relying on sanctuaries to transport and provide permanent placement of big cats seized under the law.

In, addition the United States Department of Agriculture has been closing facilities that are in violation of the Animal Welfare Act, causing an influx of small cats needing sanctuary. This, combined with recent sanctuary closings, means there will be a higher demand on sanctuaries like The Wildcat Sanctuary. Our strategic plan ensures we are sustainable far into the future for our residents and those still in need of rescue.

The Wildcat Sanctuary prides itself on being a sanctuary for life for the animals in our care and those we rescue in the future. Since we receive no government funding and rely on donations, it is imperative that we plan for their future.

We will lead by example through strategic and succession planning, valuing, and investing in our people and elevating animal care with an intent focus on psychological well-being of our lifelong residents.

You are just as important to us as the cats. Therefore, we invite you to learn how we plan to be stewards of your support, their lifetime care and ending the captive wildlife crisis.

For the cats,



Tammy Thies
Founder & Executive Director



Julie Sirek
Board Chair





EXCELLENCE

INSPIRE

ELEVATE

MISSION

Provide a natural sanctuary to wildcats in need and inspire change to end the captive wildlife crisis.





Help create a
world where
wild animal
sanctuaries are
no longer
needed.

VISION

STRATEGIC ANCHORS

Our strategic plan and actions are driven by the following fundamental beliefs:

- Human safety is always first.
- Treat all staff, donors, and supporters as special as our cats.
- Go above and beyond to make our cats happy — always.
 - Customize care for each resident.
 - Keep our cats at "sanctuary weight".
 - Be proactive with medical care, husbandry, habitats, and enrichment.
 - Compassionate end of life decisions are a gift.
- Inspire advocates at every touch point.



Our goal is to share our specialized animal and medical care with audiences that can help end the suffering of animals. We will also share our knowledge and experiences with other like-minded facilities to make lives better for all wild cats living in captivity.

EXCELLENCE



EXCELLENCE

IN ANIMAL WELLNESS

It is our responsibility to create and maintain the most natural and stimulating environment for the cats in our care. This requires us to continually monitor the health of our animals and provide the best diets to ensure a healthy and long life. When animals do have medical problems, it is incumbent upon us to seek out the best care for that animal and to make decisions that put the health and well-being of that animal first and foremost. It requires us to maintain large, customized enclosures that provide a safe and natural habitat for each animal resident.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Individualized Animal Care

- Continue to set high standards for animal care while also sharing examples to inspire people to care more deeply about our sanctuary and the captive wildlife crisis.
- Evaluate animal wellness, identify practices that advance animal care and wellbeing and share best practices with other sanctuaries/facilities.
- Emphasize psychological well-being over general husbandry by moving from a process-based to system-based care so animals engage in more natural behaviors a larger percentage of the time.
- Continue to rescue cats as our space permits.
- Develop measures of animal care that demonstrate the sanctuary animals are living physically, behaviorally, and psychologically healthy lives.
- Continuously evaluate, expand and improve habitat design for each individual cat to ensure it supports physical and mental wellness.

EXCELLENCE IN ANIMAL WELLNESS

WHAT WE'LL DO

Teaching Hospital & Veterinary Care

- Continue to provide the best medical care to our residents, including intake exams, preventative care, wellness checks and geriatric comfort care through an on-site, full-time veterinary team.
- Demonstrate the damage done by private ownership and life in captivity through closed circuit TV's, videos, and social media posts.
- Create an internship program to train future vet technicians
- Grow recognition of sanctuary medicine as a specialty (much like shelter medicine):
 - Create and lead a working group of sanctuary/rescue veterinarians.
 - Leverage the on-site hospital and observation suite as a catalyst for collaboration.

We believe that The Wildcat Sanctuary is uniquely positioned to reach, inform, and inspire a large and diverse audience to join us in acting for captive wildlife and providing a natural sanctuary to those we rescue.

INSPIRE



INSPIRE

STRATEGIC SUSTAINABILITY

The Wildcat Sanctuary has both the opportunity and the responsibility to elevate sanctuaries to be agents of change. We believe that professional organizations will ensure sustainability so all rescued residents remain safe at sanctuary for their lifetime.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Inspire Social Change

- Create targeted education and advocacy that decreases wild and hybrid cats being kept as pets and exploited for profit.
- Provide expertise and testimony for legislation that protects wild cats and hybrids and share with our supporters so they can also act.
- Engage and educate industry adjacent organizations who have authority to make change.
- Continue to be a lead resource for the media, legislators, Department of Justice, United States Department of Agriculture, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other decision makers about the captive wildlife crisis.

INSPIRE

STRATEGIC SUSTAINABILITY

WHAT WE'LL DO

Relationship Driven Funding

- Foster meaningful, loyal, and diverse connections to support our mission of providing a home for life until the last captive wild cat is rescued and the last resident passes away.
- Treat our donors as special as the cats we rescue through timely personalized attention and ongoing cultivation to ensure retention and engagement.
- Continue to create innovative and inspirational outreach and online experiences to recruit new supporters and advance our impact.
- Embrace transparency in all communication to inform stakeholders how and where their donations are being used and how it supports our mission/vision.
- Maintain and update leadership succession plan and communicate this plan with our supporters.

INSPIRE

STRATEGIC SUSTAINABILITY

WHAT WE'LL DO

Engaging Leadership

- We will lead by example both internally and externally by ensuring best practices in business, finance, animal care and safety.
- Share what has been successful in helping diversify, elevate, and professionalize the sanctuary field to be on par with leading non-profits.
- Invest in the human side of animal welfare and work diligently on maintaining a positive and healthy culture, compensation, & opportunities for advancement within our organization.
- Support work-life balance and a healthy career path to decrease compassion fatigue and industry burnout.
- We see great value in including diverse ideas, voices, and perspectives in every aspect of our work including our staff, board of directors, volunteers, partners, and supporters.
- Continue to play an active role in associations, alliances and working groups that share best practices, industry challenges and collaborate to find solutions.

We are a learning organization driven toward creative approaches, innovating thinking, and transformational solutions. We approach our vision with a spirit of hope, and we share that spirit with our supporters and partners.

ELEVATE



ELEVATE

OPERATIONS

We believe that rigorous evaluation of our work, using and sharing our measurements of our impact, are essential to sustainability. We will responsibly and transparently measure and report our efforts and our progress.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Innovative Infrastructure

- Maintain an infrastructure that supports efficient & safe/compliant operations.
- Invest and use new expertise and technologies where appropriate to enhance our environment sustainability and efficiency, cyber security, and to connect within people more deeply.
- Implement our 5-year facilities plan to support our overall facility/sanctuary needs.

Ensuring Accountability

- Proactively exceed professional regulations and humbly share these accomplishments with our supporters.
- Retain and train the leadership team with the expertise to match our business growth and ensure a plan for succession.
- Empower leadership to develop checks and balances to ensure internal protocols & day-to-day activities are aligned.

ELEVATE

OPERATIONS

WHAT WE'LL DO

Invest In Partnerships

- Build essential partnerships in animal care, facilities, and business practices to support our mission.
- Offer mutually beneficial opportunities to our partners to develop long term relationships that further our animal welfare/environmental goals.
- Deliver equitable internships that are obtainable and sought after by a diverse group of people who want a career in animal related careers.
- Create meaningful volunteer opportunities that support a variety of backgrounds and skills while providing a welcoming and engaging experience.
- Engage in partnerships with likeminded individuals and organizations to decrease the captive wildlife crisis.



5-YEAR PLAN

THE 5-YEAR PLAN

There are projects and improvements in our facilities plan that are unique to TWS and will put our organization in a position to grow support and sustainability. These initiatives will reinforce its mission of being a natural sanctuary to wild cats in need and inspiring change to end the captive wildlife crisis.

THE PLAN INCLUDES:

- Catio Town (new hybrid area)
- Pavilion area for volunteers & donors
- Construct workshop
- Habitat enhancements

CATIO TOWN



Due to the Small Cat Crisis, there is a need to construct a new hybrid building with indoor suites and outdoor covered catios.

CATIO TOWN

The area will provide brighter and more dynamic indoor areas, as well as more usable year-round space. It will increase our capacity by 10%. The building /catio design will dramatically decrease outdoor maintenance such as snow removal and mowing in the current 14 hybrid areas. That time savings will be reallocated back to quality time and enrichment for the cats.

We will demolish all but three of our current bungalow areas to create the footprint for the new building and catios.

Temporary housing and shelter to be built in other areas of the sanctuary to accommodate the cats during the demolition and rebuild.

Demolition of the current yards, furniture and bungalows will take place by staff and volunteers. Excavation and construction will be done on the new Hybrid building before the cats can move into their new home.



MEME WELCOME CENTER & VOLUNTEER AREA

We would like
to reimagine
the use of the
Welcome
Center.



MEME WELCOME CENTER & VOLUNTEER AREA

We will build additional pavilions with easy access to restrooms for volunteer use. This pavilion will be equipped with outdoor heaters. The Team Room in the Animal Care Center can also be used during inclement weather.

This will free up the Welcome Center to be repurposed as overnight housing, onsite seasonal staff housing and future office space.

Currently, the garage is being used as a small, heated workshop for the facilities department. But a more appropriate workshop is needed in the future to protect our equipment investments and provide a suitable area for winter work on equipment and vehicles.



ANIMAL AREAS

Habitats and animal buildings will always need improvements and maintenance.



ANIMAL AREAS

- Rebuild leopard yard in Roar Ridge to provide more vertical and dynamic space.
- The Quarantine floor will be redone to include floor drains to a septic tank and in floor heat.
- The Bengal Quarantine area will be upgraded and relocated to another area of the sanctuary.
- Boulder caves will be added to habitats to provide more shade and climbing structures.
- Additional inground pools to be constructed in big cat habitats.
- Create larger indoor spaces by combining indoor rooms or larger walk-thru areas.
- Combine yards in Roar Ridge and Wild Woodlands for larger habitat space for younger and active cats.
- Construct new small cat habitats to accommodate recent rescues.



The goal of land acquisition is to provide a forever buffer to the 40-acre site.

OPEN PROPERTY & LAND ACQUISITION

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WORKSHOP & STORAGE

Unless adjacent property becomes available in the next 2 years, we will plan to build a large pole building for storage, heated workshop with living quarters on the empty land. The area would also need to include a secure fence and utilities.

ADJACENT LAND

We will purchase adjacent land that becomes available. We continue to foster relationships with adjacent landowners.

The goal of the land acquisition is to provide a forever buffer to the 40-acre site, not to develop the site or use it for animal habitats. Most of the land will be kept wild for native wildlife. Partnerships can be created with land advocacy groups for funding and ensuring the land remains wild.

It is important for our volunteers, staff and donors to have areas where they can reflect and enjoy what their hard work has provided to wild cats in need.

DONOR REFLECTION AREAS



DONOR RELECTION AREAS

Three to four micro pavilions and seating areas will be constructed around the Sanctuary for a quiet place for people to reflect. The overlook deck on the Administration Building will also be included in this with the addition of stairs.

These areas will contribute to Sanctuary sustainability by providing a place for hosting fundraising events, having one-on-one time with donors, and allowing donor participation through commemorative bricks and benches placed in these areas.



THE WILDCAT SANCTUARY



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