

Below is an example of a talking points document with recommended messages to be utilized by a local land trust in an urban community. This organization divided their messaging targets into current and future audience groups for increased success and a personalized approach to their core supporters.

Current audience

Quantitative survey results of your current audience showed that your audience matches the profile of traditional land trust and conservation advocates who are motivated by messages related to clean water, clean air, healthy forests and wildlife habitat. They also specifically want to understand how local actions add up to global impact.

Local action to global impact:

- Addressing the impacts of climate change begins with nature nearby — in our backyards and communities.
- As our region experiences rapid growth, local land trust efforts are vital to preserving undeveloped land for parks, open spaces, tree cover, natural habitats and farms.
- Every acre we conserve seeks to keep land natural and undeveloped for the health of our waterways, parks and open spaces, and farmland.
- By conserving land today, we can keep our communities clean, beautiful and sustainable, for the health of Northern Virginia's people now and for future generations.
- There is a substantial amount of work to be done to protect our environment, but by conserving land in our local region, we can have an impact on a national scale by contributing to an interconnected network of conserved lands.

Land, water and habitat resilience:

- Northern Virginia is home to diverse flora and fauna. Preserving land means preserving habitats for our native wildlife and their ecosystems.
- By conserving natural and open spaces, land trust's conservation efforts will safeguard clean water, protect important wildlife habitat, keep local farms and agriculture in operation for local food production, and build communities that are more resilient to change.
- Storm water connects us all whether it's playing in storm puddles or responding to the aftermath of a flood. As storms and hurricanes become stronger and more frequent, it's important to understand how we mitigate water run-off that ultimately impacts our local waterways, rivers, and streams.
- Storm water run-off directly impacts the quality of our drinking water. Conserving land can reduce the negative impact of storm water run-off that threatens the quality of drinking water in communities.
- We must be conscious of habitat loss as our state continues to develop and carve out protected spaces for all that share this land.
- We are already working to preserve wildlife important to local ecosystems. Last year, partners protected one of the largest great blue heron nesting sites in the region. It is imperative to both organizations that we combine resources to protect this biologically diverse site.
- This partnership works to maintain the ecological integrity of the wetland for future generations as well as protecting vital habitat for one of the state's favorite bird species.
- Every year, we are fortunate to see these large, beautiful birds up-close as they breed, nest and catch fish. As our state's largest wetland bird and North America's largest heron, these creatures are a priority to protect, which means protecting surrounding wetlands.

- Approximately 3.3 billion tons of greenhouse gases are released in the atmosphere annually. Carbon sequestration attained by keeping natural lands undeveloped can reduce this trend while providing a host of benefits related to keeping our communities healthy, our drinking water clean, and our food systems operating effectively.
- Preserving the connectivity of our forest lands and limiting tree removal, we can help sequester carbon from our atmosphere and create spaces for wildlife and other biodiversity to thrive.
- Conservation delivers substantial environmental and health benefits. By preserving natural and open spaces that remain free from development, we can have a positive impact on the air and water quality for all members of our communities.
- By removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and putting it into our soil, it will not only boost agricultural output and help build healthy farms, but it will reduce emissions leading to global warming and climate change.
- Carbon has a slew of benefits on soil health: helps soil retain moisture, improves soil structure, moderates pH and temperature, and reduces erosion.
- Conserving land for carbon sequestration could have massive benefits to healthy soils and robust agriculture operations.

New audience messaging

Although the message themes below will also resonate well with land trust's current audience, we recommended utilizing these themes specifically when recruiting new audiences to your network.

Recreation and natural spaces

- Parks and public greenspaces serve an essential role in preserving natural resources and wildlife habitats. By creating public parks and recreational spaces on protected lands, we can support the conservation and stewardship of the land, water, and natural resources.
- For many Virginians, natural spaces are a key part of community health. We turn to nature, parks, greenways and blueways for wellness and happiness in uncertain times.
- Natural land provides spaces for both mental and physical wellbeing to people. Preserving natural spaces is key for personal well-being as well as the natural and environmental benefits it provides.
- As the Northern Virginia region becomes more developed and populations of people increase each year, it is imperative that we balance the need for land conservation alongside community development in order to provide natural places for people to connect with nature.
- Everyone deserves to have a park, trail, or green space nearby. Natural areas provide important public health solutions as our communities become more urbanized. We all need spaces that provide an opportunity for wellness and connection with nature.
- Virginia is home to a beautiful array of landscapes and wildlife. As our climate changes, it will be more important than ever to find solutions that preserve our region's parks and natural areas for future generations to enjoy.

Natural versus urban solutions to the climate challenge

- To meet growing challenges of climate change, the conservation sector must establish new approaches to conserving our natural spaces using a mixture of natural and urban solutions.
- Expensive technology is not always necessary to combat climate change.
- Natural climate solutions play a key role in reducing harmful emissions and improving the resilience of communities across the state
- Natural solutions to mitigate our individual greenhouse gas emissions does not need to be difficult. A few natural solutions include composting, planting trees in our backyards and reducing plastic usage. We all can play a part in reducing the impacts of climate change from the actions we take in our homes and communities.
- Reforestation, habitat restoration, improved land management and land conservation are solutions that can help keep our state resilient for future change as climate change worsens.

- Focusing on clean electricity and limiting transportation emissions are important steps towards a more resilient state.
- Conservation efforts to protect wetlands, farms and grasslands have a huge impact on reducing emissions, storing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and improving resilience of ecosystems.
- Renewable energy and innovations to transform energy systems and infrastructure to be more sustainable are necessary for combating the changing climate.

Environmental justice and climate action

- Economically challenged communities at the coast feel a greater negative impact from climate change with worsening hurricane and storms.
- Areas of lower socioeconomic status and communities of color are likely to suffer the worst consequences of climate change.
- More than 260,000 Virginians live in areas at an elevated risk of inland flooding. Heavy precipitation is likely to worsen flooding both in coastal and inland regions.
- Leaving tracts of land natural and undeveloped will alleviate the damage from flooding by capturing more of the water.
- Vulnerable populations are less likely to have the means to evacuate during storms and hurricanes, and they will be hardest hit by natural disasters and devastation.
- Outdated and/or undersized storm drainage infrastructure harms inland communities