



2026-2030

STRATEGIC PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In the summer of 2009, I set out on a grand adventure—my first attempt to follow a route that existed only on old maps and in my imagination. I walked in awe through the Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness and along the deep rhythm of the Trinity River. But north of Hayfork, in the Trinity Alps, the map failed. The trail vanished beneath brush and fallen timber. After 24 grueling hours of bushwhacking, I finally staggered out near Hobo Gulch and kissed the dirt road in relief.

In that moment, one question rose like smoke from the forest floor: **How could these trails be forgotten?** That question sparked what became the Bigfoot Trail Alliance.

Fifteen years later, we stand in another defining moment. In the past year, we hired our first staff, welcomed a new Board President, and I transitioned from founder and Board President to Executive Director. **We have grown from a grassroots dream to a staffed nonprofit rooted in stewardship, education, and community.**

In that evolution, our mission has expanded. What began as a trail-building movement has grown to include educational experiences, workforce-training pathways, and programs designed to support the next generation of caretakers across the Klamath Mountains. Young people deserve opportunities to learn, earn, and serve in the landscapes that define their home—and we are committed to building those bridges.

At the same time, we face a national challenge: a period where public lands and equitable access are not being prioritized at the scale needed to meet the moment. Trails do not maintain themselves. Ecological resilience does not arise without investment. And the future of public access depends on building sustainable community-powered models of care.

This strategic plan is our commitment to that future. It calls us to expand youth stewardship, deepen agency and Tribal partnerships, strengthen volunteer programs, and build a sustainable funding model capable of enduring shifts in federal and state investment. We will continue to activate the power of community—because the mountains are calling, and the responsibility is ours.

With gratitude,


Michael Kauffmann

PURPOSE & VISION FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Purpose:

The Bigfoot Trail Alliance cultivates ecological understanding, public-land stewardship, and a sustainable future for the Klamath Mountains by connecting people to place through trail work, education, and community engagement.

Vision:

We envision a world-renowned trail corridor that serves as a living classroom, a catalyst for conservation, and a source of transformative experiences. Through strong partnerships, community engagement, and ecological stewardship, the Bigfoot Trail will be sustained by an active trail community and cherished as a pathway to celebrate the region's extraordinary biodiversity—connecting people, landscapes, and communities across the Klamath Mountains.



2025-2030

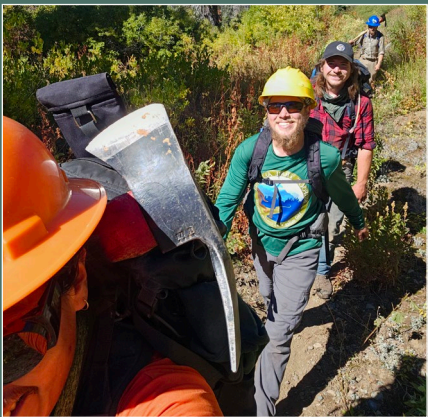
STRATEGIC PLAN

OVERVIEW

The Bigfoot Trail Alliance protects, restores, and celebrates a 360-mile route through the Klamath Mountains—home to global biodiversity, rich cultural history, and some of the best public lands in the West.

Values

- **Stewardship & Reciprocity** — Caring for the land that cares for us
- **Ecological Literacy** — Science-rooted, place-based learning
- **Community & Belonging** — Everyone has a place on the trail
- **Indigenous Respect & Partnership** — Honoring original stewards and land histories
- **Youth Leadership & Mentorship** — Cultivating the next generation of caretakers
- **Adventure, Curiosity, and Joy** — Trails spark wonder
- **Resilience & Responsibility** — Durable systems for a changing climate and economy

Initiative 1	Initiative 2	Initiative 3
Trail Stewardship & Land Care	Education & Community Engagement	Organizational Strength & Resilience
• Strengthen volunteer programs and youth trail crews • Improve signage, mapping, and wilderness access • Deepen partnerships with Tribes and land agencies 	• Expand youth internships and ecological learning • Share Indigenous knowledge and local stories (with permission) • Grow community science and natural-history programming 	• Diversify funding streams and strengthen donor programs • Build digital infrastructure and modern communications • Support strong board and staff leadership pathways 
 	 	 



NEXT STEPS

DIG

Join us in the field at a volunteer trail work event. We host multiple events every year, and would love to see you out there. There's no prior experience required, and we provide all the tools and equipment you'll need.

See upcoming events at bigfoottrail.org/volunteer

DONATE

Make a contribution to support our work with a tax-deductible donation today. We'll use funds to maintain trails, support youth and community engagement, and promote stewardship.

Make your gift today at bigfoottrail.org/support

BECOME A MEMBER

Members are the foundation of our work. They provide either a monthly or annual gift to trails and allow us to leverage dependable income for trails' most urgent needs. Plus, our members enjoy some pretty sweet perks like exclusive giveaways and events.

Join us today at bigfoottrail.org/membership



Get in Touch

Drop us a line to chat about upcoming projects and pick our brains about trail work. We'd love to hear from you!

Email us at bfta@bigfoottrail.org.

Newsletter

Stay connected with events, access guides, and real-time construction updates.

Join our mailing list today at bigfoottrail.org/newsletter.

Follow Us

See the latest trail updates and behind-the-scenes trail work.

We're on Instagram and Facebook [@bigfoottrail](https://www.facebook.com/bigfoottrail)

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