

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021- 2026



NC STATE College of Natural Resources

THE PLANET IS OUR CLASSROOM

Our Strategic Plan 2021-2026

Our work at the College of Natural Resources has never been as relevant as it is today. Our communities are waking up to the immense realities of the local and global challenges at the intersection of our environments and society here in North Carolina, nationally, and around the world.

The issues our work touches are broad and complex. From the significant rise in forest fires, deforestation, and flooding, to the growing challenges of air and water pollution; from the rapid depletion of natural resources, to the need for accelerated innovation to sustainably engineer bio-based materials; from social and environmental injustice, to the profound need for healthy and inclusive parks and recreation infrastructure, as well as recreation services that contribute to healthier people and communities, and so much more.



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Our College's relevance lives in the diverse ways in which we act on these challenges and work collectively to foster healthy ecosystems and communities through our work.

This is why, at this powerful juncture in our College's history and in the trajectory of these issues, we are ready to launch a new strategy that will take our longstanding commitment to the people and natural resources of North Carolina, our nation, and the world more broadly, to the next level.

Our future-focused strategy is all about taking our work more deliberately out into the world around us to learn from and contribute to the critical challenges impacting our environment and our society. This strategy will help us deepen our connection with our environment and our communities so we can help to create **a world in which everyone is welcomed and empowered to explore, protect, and enjoy the full diversity of our environment and our communities, while building justice and sustainability for all.**

About the College

The College of Natural Resources (CNR) at NC State University has a compelling 90+ year history of creating value at the intersection between the natural and built environment. We are a tight knit community of passionate and caring people dedicated to improving the environments and communities in which we live, work, learn, and play.

Over the years, we have evolved from our first incarnation as the School of Forestry in 1929 into the innovative public research, learning, and community extension institution that we are today. Now ranked among the top five natural resources colleges in our nation, we have three high-impact departments - Forestry and Environmental Resources, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management, and Forest Biomaterials - along with a world class Center for Geospatial Analytics, and Extension and Outreach programs and services through which we continue to express the spirit of our land grant mission, offering continued value and impact to the people of North Carolina, and beyond.

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About This Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan was developed throughout late 2020 and early 2021 against the backdrop of the global COVID-19 pandemic, widespread protests centered around social injustice, and the 2020 Presidential election.

All of our staff, faculty, and graduate students from across the College of Natural Resources at NC State University were invited to take part in designing the plan as part of a participatory and equitable strategy design process called a Tidal Equality Wave®. This new approach for our College empowered us to co-design our vision, values, and strategic priorities, brought new and diverse voices and perspectives to our strategy table, and helped us shape a plan that will have relevance and resonance for years to come.

Most organizations and institutions around the world faced unprecedented challenges in 2020 and 2021. For all of us at the College of Natural Resources, it was an exceptionally challenging time emotionally, physically, and in terms of the creativity and tenacity it took to continue to pursue our work and add value. Despite these realities, just over 200 College community members - including a diversity of graduate students, staff, faculty, volunteers, and alumni - made time to contribute their voices and best ideas to the design of this Strategic Plan, and also contributed ideas that are now contained in our aligned Culture Charter.



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Our Strategy

The relevance of our work lives in the environments we study and contribute to, the industries we support and enhance, and the communities we serve. What brings us together is a desire to get out into the world and serve those diverse environments and communities. Hence, this strategy is about focusing more deliberately on the unique value of our institution - which is how, and where our students and our researchers learn, think, and do. All of our students learn not just in the classroom, but also in state-of-the-art research laboratories and in the field through regular trips to nearby Schenck Forest, during summer camp at Hill Forest, and in many other locations around the State. Our students participate in internships, cooperative work rotations with industry, study abroad, research projects with faculty, professional development activities, and other practical experiences that prepare them to graduate ready for the career of their choice. Innovations come from seeing problems and creating solutions. We take our students off campus and into the world where they truly think and do.

This strategy empowers us to do even more of that, because our relevance lives in our ability to serve our environment, our industries, and our communities. This strategy is about transforming the world around us at the College of Natural Resources, at NC State, and into the most relevant classroom of all - it's about empowering us to create space at the intersection between the Academy and the environments, communities, and industries that we serve so that we can facilitate innovation and new solutions, and so we can ultimately **help build a world in which everyone is welcomed and empowered to explore, protect, and enjoy the full diversity of our environment and our communities, while building justice and sustainability for all.**



Equity & Inclusion + Community + Collaboration + Innovation + Sustainability

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Strategic Priorities



1. Collaborate now to solve urgent challenges at the intersection of the environment, economy, and society

Let's empower collaborative research, learning, engagement, and sharing that contribute to critical solutions toward sustainable environments, and healthy, prosperous communities.

2. Engage with our natural environments, industries, and communities as the world's best classrooms, laboratories, and platforms

Let's nurture spaces and places where industry, community, and academia can come together to innovate a sustainable, inclusive, and prosperous future for all.



3. Take the bold actions to build genuinely equitable and inclusive environments

Let's center the need for justice, equity and inclusion in all our work, and break down any barriers in learning, research, and knowledge-sharing.

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

The Planet Is Our Classroom

VISION

The College of Natural Resources aspires to build a world in which

Everyone is welcomed and empowered to explore, protect, and enjoy the full diversity of our environment and our communities, while building justice and sustainability for all.

MISSION

We deliver inclusive and innovative education, research, engagement, and partnerships that empower our students and stakeholders to better our planet, communities, industries, economy, and the world.

CALL TO ACTION

Collaborate now to build a sustainable and equitable future

VALUES

Equity & Inclusion + Community + Collaboration + Innovation + Sustainability

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Collaborate now to solve urgent challenges at the intersection of the environment, economy, and society
2. Engage with our natural environments, industries, and communities as the world's best classrooms, laboratories, and platforms
3. Take the bold actions to build genuinely equitable and inclusive environments

This Strategic Plan was created in partnership with Tidal Equality, Inc.