

Rooted in Restoration

Strategic Plan 2025-2027



More than a century ago, the American chestnut tree flourished throughout the eastern U.S. Its branches were heavy with nuts that fed generations of families and wildlife, and its wood formed the bones of homes, barns, and railroads.

This once-dominant species in the Appalachian ecosystem was nearly decimated by a fungal blight, accidentally introduced in the late 1800s. Within 50 years, an estimated four billion trees were lost, rendering the tree functionally extinct.

Since 1983, The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) has led a science-powered movement to bring this tree back, driven by a multi-faceted and collaborative research and breeding program.

Today, we stand at a turning point: TACF's 2025–2027 Strategic Plan outlines a bold path forward, grounded in science, imbued with hope, and powered by community.

Our strategic focus centers on restoring the American chestnut through three key areas:

- Using advanced science to develop a resilient tree
- Broadening **engagement** through increased visibility
- Strengthening funding through **new partnerships**

With decades of innovation and collaboration behind us, TACF is entering a bold new chapter - bringing the American chestnut home.

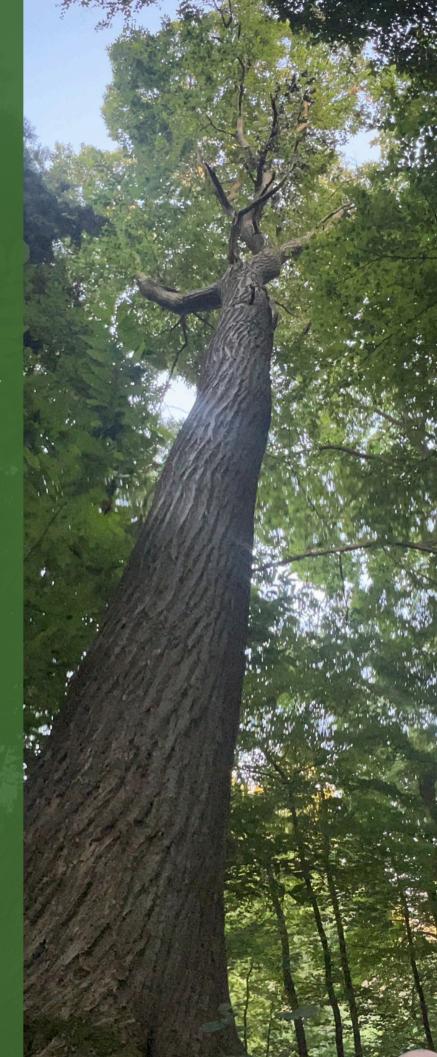


SCIENCE

Strategic Priority #1

Create disease-resistant
American chestnut trees
and test their suitability
through reintroduction
trials as a first step
toward introducing everimproving populations of
these trees into the
American chestnut's
suitable habitat.

- Measurably improve disease resistance of the American chestnut and predominantly American hybrid trees in our breeding population.
- Create a network of researchers working to improve disease resistance in American chestnut using biotechnology.
 - Maintain and enhance American chestnut genetic diversity.
- Establish chestnut plantings of variable size, diversity, and purpose toward incremental reintroduction.





STORY

Strategic Priority #2

Improve public awareness of the American chestnut story and TACF's vital role in restoring this iconic species to its native range.

- Develop and implement targeted messaging that resonates with key audiences and aligns with our brand.
- Use TACF's rebranding to enhance engagement and cohesion.
- Engage specific stakeholders with targeted outreach.
- Ensure consistent messaging and public engagement.
- Update public relations strategies to include a broader range of media.
 - Strengthen chapter storytelling and educational programs.

FUNDING

Strategic Priority #3

Identify and welcome new funding partners; prioritize and professionalize development efforts to increase and diversify fundraising and ensure the long-term sustainability of restoration efforts.

- Increase annual revenues
 through increased
 engagement with memberdonors, foundation grants, and
 major donors.
- Diversify funding sources and reduce our dependence on foundation grants and restricted funding by attracting major gifts, increasing chapter fundraising, and obtaining corporate grants and sponsorships.
 - Improve long-term financial stability through increased revenues and improved supervision of organization finances.

