The Nature Conservancy

Social Media Campaign Proposal



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INTRODUCTION

History of The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is a global environmental nonprofit organization with roots in the 1915 creation of the Ecological Society of America in Washington D.C. by a group of scientists and activists concerned about the danger posed to animals through habitat loss (The Nature Conservancy Records, 2024). In 1951, the modern association, The Nature Conservancy, was officially incorporated as a nonprofit organization, taking inspiration from the ESA. TNC acquired its first nature preserve in 1954, marking the beginning of its active pursuit of land conservation projects.

Since its founding, TNC has grown into one of the world's most influential and wide-reaching environmental organizations. It now impacts conservation in over 70 countries and territories, operating more than 100 marine conservation projects globally. With over 3,500 staff, TNC has protected over 125 million acres of land and thousands of miles of rivers worldwide (Who We Are, 2024).

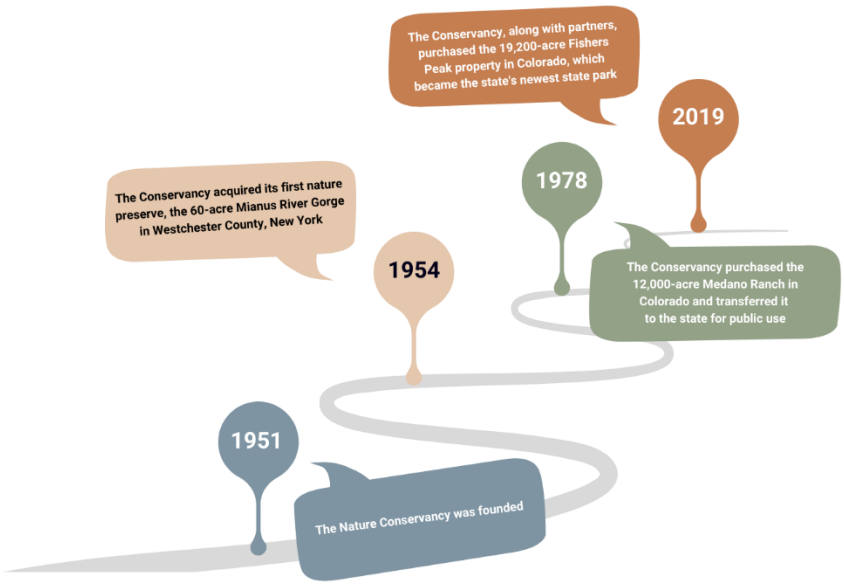


Figure 1. Notable years in TNC's land conservation efforts (The Nature Conservancy, 2024)

Mission and Vision

The mission of TNC is "to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends," an overarching mantra that forms the foundation for TNC (The Nature Conservancy GuideStar Profile, 2024). TNC prides itself on developing innovative solutions to the world's environmental problems, ensuring that people and nature can thrive together and build toward a stronger future.

TNC's vision is "a world where the diversity of life thrives, and people act to conserve nature for its own sake and its ability to fulfill our needs and enrich our lives" (The Nature Conservancy GuideStar Profile, 2024). The organization aims to create a future in which human needs are met in an environmentally sustainable way, allowing nature to thrive.

Corporate Goals

TNC has set six corporate goals to meet by 2030, as identified in their 2021 *Together We Find a Way* report, to confront the intertwined climate and biodiversity crises over the next decade (The Nature Conservancy, 2021).

Key Goals:

1. Avoid or sequester 3 billion metric tons of CO2 emissions annually (The Nature Conservancy, 2021).
2. Help 100 million people at severe climate risk by safeguarding protective natural areas (The Nature Conservancy, 2021).
3. Conserve 650 million hectares of biodiverse habitats (The Nature Conservancy, 2021).
4. Conserve 4 billion hectares of marine habitats (The Nature Conservancy, 2021).

5. Conserve 1 million kilometers of rivers and 30 million hectares of lakes/wetlands (The Nature Conservancy, 2021).

6. Support environmental leadership of 45 million people from Indigenous/local communities (The Nature Conservancy, 2021).

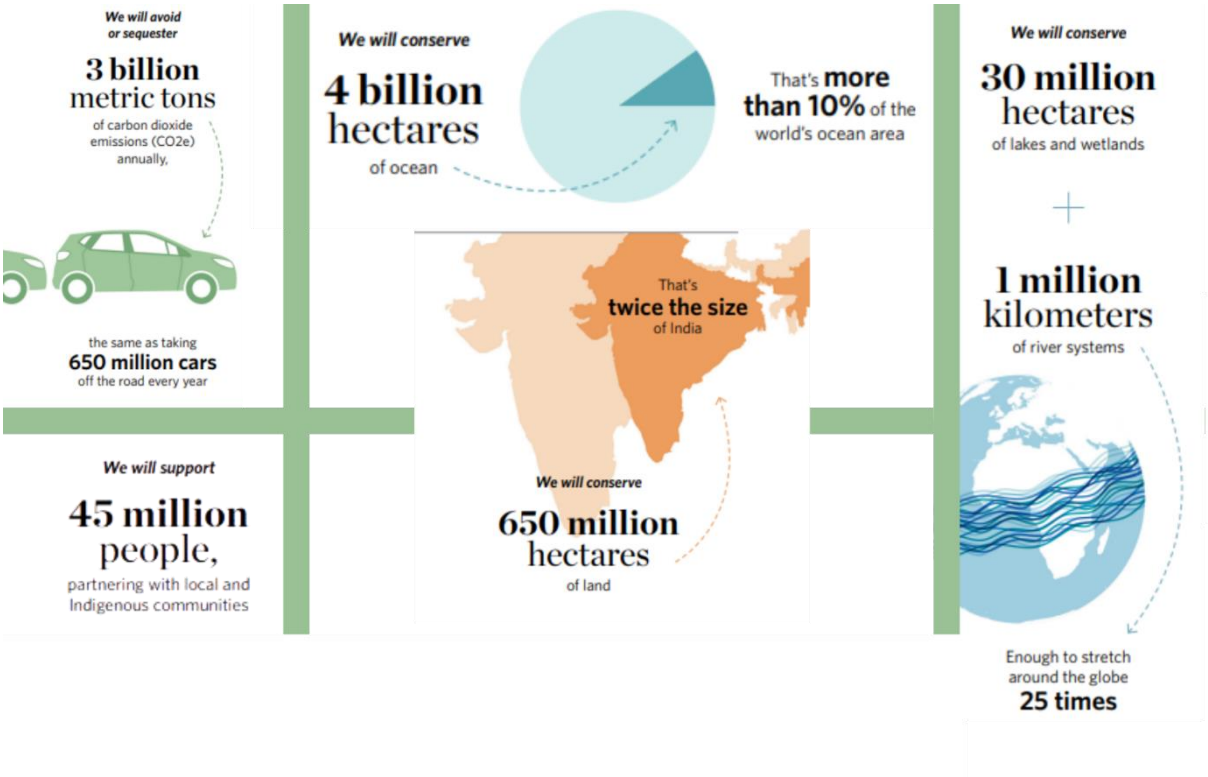


Figure 2. Infographic of key corporate goals (The Nature Conservancy, 2021)

SITUATION ANALYSIS

PEST Analysis

Landscape Analysis 1: The Balancing Act of Environmental Politics, the Green Economy, and Social Technology.

Landmark environmental regulations like the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and the Land and Water Conservation Fund have facilitated significant ecological protections that benefit TNC's mission of nature conservation (Environmental Conservation Laws, 2022). However, this has also spurred partisan debate. As the political situation in the United States continues to polarize, the potential for unilateral support for conservation movements decreases significantly.

Recent conservation regulations and initiatives have presented additional opportunities for TNC to expand their mission. Recently, the Biden administration has set a goal to conserve 30% of lands and waters within the country by 2030 through the America the Beautiful initiative, garnering widespread support within the conservation movement (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2024). Such initiatives present new pathways for collaboration, advocacy, and amplifying TNC's messaging through social media.

The Giving USA 2022 report notes that only 3% of charitable donations were allocated to environmental and conservation organizations (Smith, 2022). The low donations are primarily caused by a lack of clear information and a failure to demonstrate impact (Smith, 2022). Consequently, TNC must address these concerns through its

digital media campaign to ensure that it receives an adequate amount of donations to fuel its mission.

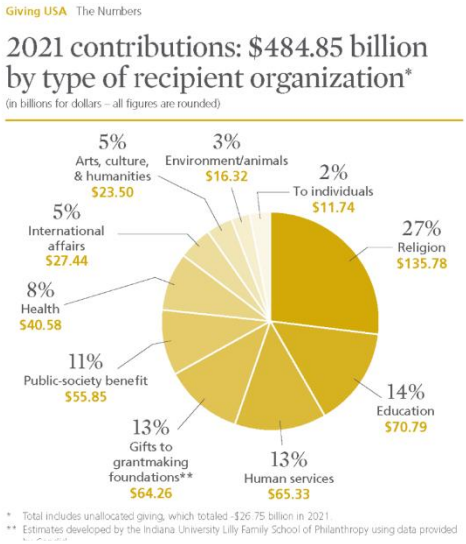


Figure 3. Graph of Donation Recipients by Type (Smith, 2022)

Social media usage is abundant, with 72% of U.S.-based adults using at least one platform (We Are Social, 2022). Additionally, 62% of Americans report taking personal measures to protect the environment (Funk & Hefferon, 2019). As younger generations skew more environmentally conscious, further opportunities exist as an eco-friendly audience increasingly dominates the market.

Landscape Analysis 2: Analyzing TNC's Current Publics

There is a diverse group of stakeholders that interact with TNC as it seeks to fulfill its conservation mission. TNC has over 1 million members, including outdoor enthusiasts, lifelong learners, and those passionate about sustainability and conservation (The Nature Conservancy, 2016). This group of supporters further engages with TNC for expert insights, photography and storytelling, and opportunities to contribute to

environmental initiatives. Additionally, TNC engages with corporate partners, with 92% of S&P companies publishing sustainability reports annually (Principles of Corporate Engagement, 2024). These partners facilitate TNC's scaling and provide necessary funding for TNC's mission.

On a more local level, TNC's current publics include community organizations, conservation groups, and policy influencers (The Nature Conservancy, 2023). Additionally, TNC engages with government agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency and myriad indigenous groups and cultures. These entities allow TNC to reach a wider audience and amplify messaging through concentrated channels.

Target Audience

TNC focuses on two distinct target audience personas through digital media: The Eco-Conscious Millennial/Gen Z Professional (ECMP) and the Corporate Sustainability Leader (CSL).

The ECMP is a passionate conservationist who lives a sustainable lifestyle, part of the 62% of Americans who take personal measures to protect the environment (Funk & Hefferon, 2019). Being part of the 33% to 37% of young Americans who list environmentalism and climate change as their top concern, they are motivated to learn about the latest environmental issues, legislation, and solutions. They are also very active on current and emerging social media, primarily Instagram, Reddit, and TikTok, where they engage with environmentalist peers and communities, influencers, and thought leaders. They prefer educational videos, user-generated content focused on sustainability, and influencer-led, engaging videos.

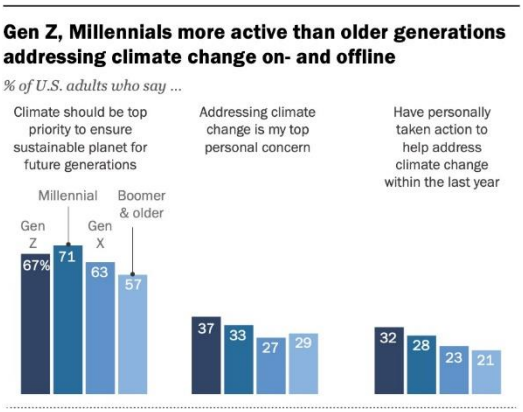


Figure 4. Pew Research of Generational Views on Environmentalism (Funk, 2022)

The CSL is part of the 92% of S&P companies that publish sustainability reports Principles of Corporate Engagement, 2024). They primarily follow thought leaders, professional communications, and NGOs like TNC to identify potential partnerships and industry best practices and represent TNC's goal of corporate engagement. Their digital media preferences lean towards substantive, data-driven posts and case studies that measure impact. The primary social media outlets that the CSL engages with are LinkedIn and Facebook.

The ECMP is the targeted audience for this campaign proposal.

Competitive Analysis

Primary Competitors

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) is one of the largest environmental organizations by membership, with over 5 million supporters worldwide. They have approximately 38 million followers across major social media networks and, in 2021, spent $12.8 million on digital marketing (World Wildlife Fund, 2021). They leverage celebrity influencers such as Leonardo DiCaprio and have succeeded with their #EndangeredEmoji social media

campaign. Greenpeace is a global brand with over 10 million social media followers, successful social media campaigns in their #PraisePetbrick initiative against plastic, and $23 million raised through online merchandise (Greenpeace International, 2020). Thirdly, Conservation International (CI) has gathered 2.5 million social media followers, integrates emerging technology such as their "Valen's Reef" virtual reality experience, leverages celebrity partnerships such as with Giselle Bundchen, raising over $1 million from their audience (Conservation International, 2023).

SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING

To best monitor TNC's social media performance, this audit will focus on the differences between TNC's social channels and those of its key competitors, the WWF, Greenpeace, and CI. By comparing TNC's social metrics with its competitors, we can identify opportunities to enhance TNC's social media presence, analyze the effectiveness of TNC's current approach, and strengthen its ability to connect with its audience.

1. **User-generated content will amplify community engagement.**

   TNC should explore ways to amplify authentic, user-generated content from its social media followers, particularly within the Instagram and TikTok communities, critical platforms for the ECMP target audience. TNC has not employed a comprehensive UGC plan, so they risk falling further behind their competition. In particular, the WWF's #WWFTogether campaign and CI's "Nature's Selfie" campaign represent successful UGC campaigns in the conservation sphere.
2. **Limited influencer marketing inhibits shareable social media campaigns.**
3. Although TNC has worked alongside celebrities such as Alec Baldwin and Jessica Alba, they have been mainly relegated to more supportive and passive

roles than as active influencers. As younger demographics increasingly look to influencers for critical opinions and information, integrating influencer marketing through all social media channels represents a significant opportunity. Consequently, major competitors like the WWF, CI, and Greenpeace use high-profile celebrities to actively push messaging through calls to action through social media.

4. **Optimizing platform-specific content enhances results.**

While TNC maintains an active presence across major social media channels, much of the content is similar in style and not optimized to the platform's strength. Each platform has unique formats, algorithms, and audience behaviors that necessitate a carefully curated content strategy. For example, the WWF uses immersive, short-form video content optimized for TikTok to connect with younger demographics. As such, TNC must monitor the progress of platform-specific content to ensure that the optimal content strategy is pursued.

The Nature Conservancy Brand Social Ecosystem						
Platform	Handle	Followers	Objective	Cadence	Avg. Engagement	Engagement Rate
Instagram	*@nature_org*	932K	Engagement	Four posts/week	1.28K	0.14%
YouTube	*@TheNatureConservancy*	32.7K	Education	Three posts/week	400	1.2%
Facebook	*@TheNatureConservancy*	1.4M	Awareness	Seven posts/week	2.62K	0.19%
Twitter	*@Nature_Org*	8.7K	Awareness	Three tweets/week	152	1.74%

Figure 5. The Nature Conservancy Brand Ecosystem

Metrics and Monitoring Streams

TNC should use comprehensive social media monitoring tools and metrics to gauge engagement rates best and measure campaign success. For Twitter, TNC should monitor mentions of the @nature_org username, relevant hashtags such as #AnimalConservation, and keywords such as "conservation" and "environment." For Facebook, TNC should track comments, shares, and reactions to posts and any discussions found within affiliated groups. Likewise, comments, mentions, and hashtags will be essential to monitor on Instagram. Due to TikTok's inherent limited monitoring, TNC can track mentions of their user handle and relevant hashtags. Tools such as HootSuite, Modash, Awario, and Brandwatcher offer additional, convenient means to monitor social media streams over numerous channels.

COMMUNICATION GOALS

1. **Increase brand awareness and establish TNC as a leading conservation voice among younger audiences.**

   Rising interest in environmental issues among Millenials and GenZ offers the potential to raise awareness about their brand and position the organization as a credible, authoritative voice in the conservation movement.

2. **Build engaged communities that share content, actively participate, and advocate for conservationist causes.**

   TNC can leverage social media to build passionate communities of younger supporters who share user-generated content and news, engage in discussion, and advocate for conservationist causes that fall under TNC's mission.

Justification

The situation analysis justifies these communication goals, which detail the rising passion for environmentalism and proclivity to engage heavily with social media. By focusing on brand awareness, community building, education, and advocacy, TNC can leverage a strategy that inspires the younger target audience. Consequently, this inspiration can prompt the audience to advocate more strongly for environmental and conservation issues, aligning with TNC's mission and corporate goals for 2030.

CAMPAIGN PROPOSAL

Campaign Platform: Nature Needs Us

Nature Needs Us. This simple message communicates the powerful message that the health of the natural world depends on the audience's collective efforts to protect it. Through the #NatureNeedsUs campaign and hashtag, TNC will incorporate inclusive and unifying messaging to unite diverse communities by fostering an urgent sense of responsibility to the world around them. This campaign will act as a call to action, prompting the audience to be proactive in conservation movements. It will further act as the foundational piece for UGC campaigns, community organizations, and influencer marketing, aiming to amplify TNC's conservation advocacy.

Campaign SMART Objectives

Objective 1: Increase Brand Awareness

- **Objective**: Increase TNC's follower count across Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube by 30% among the 18-24 and 25-34 age groups by Dec. 2024.
- **Business Outcome:** Establish TNC as an authoritative voice on conservation efforts for Millennial and Gen Z audiences.

- **Justification:** As 62% of millennials and Gen Z express priority concerns about environmental issues, the audience is receptive to targeted messaging concerning conservation movements. TNC can grow its following in this demographic by distributing creative, visually appealing, engaging, and educational content across popular platforms, ensuring that content is optimized to specific platform traits.
- **Measurement:** Use native analytic tools and third-party social media monitoring tools, such as Hootsuite, to track views, likes, comments, and shares on individual posts, consolidating data across platforms. Monitor performance trends of the #NatureNeedsUs hashtag. Conduct sentiment analysis on mentions to identify brand affinity and compare with competitors.

Objective 2: Foster Engaged Online Communities

- **Objective:** Establish an active presence in at least ten environmental and conservation-focused Reddit subreddits and 5 TikTok niche communities within four months, generating a combined total of 100,000 upvotes, comments, and shares.
- **Business Outcome:** Build strong connections with millennial and Gen Z environmentalists in their native online communities. Establish TNC as an engaging, receptive, and dedicated organization, fostering long-term advocacy and participation in conservancy initiatives.
- **Justification:** Reddit and TikTok are two of the most popular social media platforms among millennials and Gen Z, each offering powerful collectivization and community traits inherent to its platform. Engaging in these communities allows TNC to interact and connect with dedicated environmentalists organically

and participate directly in important conversations relevant to the target audience.

- **Measurement**: Use platform analytic tools and social listening tools to track post engagement metrics (upvotes, comments, shares) and monitor sentiment, mentions, and hashtags or critical phrases across platforms. Further measure increased traffic to Nature.org and any potential conversions from these communities.

Channel Breakdown and Tactics

To best achieve the SMART goals in this digital media campaign, a strategic approach focusing on the most impactful and popular channels will maximize the potential to reach the ECMP target audience. Less impactful channels will still incorporate #NatureNeedsUs messaging but with comparatively decreased emphasis. See Appendix I for a complete table of channels and tactics.

Channel	Audience	Rationale	Tactic	Objective
Instagram *(3 times per week)*	ECMP (Eco-friendly Millenial and Gen Z Professionals)	Highly visible, digestible format is ideal to showcase natural beauty for #NatureNeedsUs. High popularity with younger demographics.	Visually appealing photography and short-form video content demonstrating aesthetics of nature and TNC's work in the field. Influencer partnerships with highly-visible environmentalists. UGC campaigns for ECMP audience to share why #NatureNeedsUs to protect the areas they love.	Brand Awareness
TikTok *(3 times per week)*	ECMP	Very popular with younger demographics. Short-form video style provides engaging messaging	Engaging and educational short-form videos about conservation. Viral campaigns tied to #NatureNeedsUs. Influencer partnerships to amplify campaign. Active participation in niche communities.	Brand Awareness / Community Building
Reddit *(Daily / Continuous)*	ECMP	Discussion-based communities allows TNC to directly engage with audience and participate in active discussions organically. Very diverse set of subreddit communities, allowing TNC to participate in specialized groups.	Share educational resources and insights as an active voice in significant environmental subreddits. Leverage Reddit's unique culture, such as "Ask Me Anything" threads, to incorporate #NatureNeedsUs messaging. Use a mixture of appealing photography and videography in conjunction with in-depth discussion and textual analysis. Monitor conversations to identify potential concerns to target.	Brand Awareness / Community Building
Youtube *(1 Long-form video per month, 1 short-form video per week)*	ECMP, Activists, Policymakers	Useful in sharing documentary and educational style video format. Increasing popularity as a short-form video platform through YouTube shorts, something to monitor due to TikTok legality issues. Established a reputation as the premier video-hosting platform.	Immersive and engaging videos demonstrating TNC's conservation activities. Educational series exploring different environmental topics relevant to the #NatureNeedsUs campaign. High potential for influencer collaboration.	Brand Awareness

Figure 5. Content Channels, Rational, Tactics, and Objectives

Sample Content



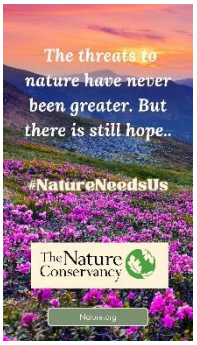


Figure 6. Sample Instagram and TikTok Content

Justification

The #NatureNeedsUs campaign is a concise, impactful message that provides a base to create content that evokes emotion and motivates engagement. The inherent call-to-action incites collective responsibility, while consistently stunning natural imagery has immediate impact and resonance with the audience, increasing its shareability.

The SMART objectives support TNC's business goal of increasing brand awareness within the millennial and Gen Z demographics. They are specific, measurable, relevant to the target audience, and time-bound, both influenced by by audience insights.

The channel breakdown prioritizes platforms that are popular with younger demographics and incorporate visually aesthetic imagery in conjunction with potential to build and foster relationships. Niche communities on teddit and TikTok allows TNC to fully immerse itself within the current trends of environmentalist and conservation. Finally, maintaining a presence across secondary channels like Facebook allows TNC to maintain contact with its established base of conservationists.

EDITORIAL CALENDAR

Please see attached for editorial calendar. Metrics to measure success and reach, as well as tactics, can be found under **Campaign Proposal, Channel Breakdown and Tactics.**

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