

**Wildfire Resilient Landscapes**

**Strategic Plan 2026–2030**

**A Foundational Implementation Framework for Organizational Development,  
Program Innovation, and Community-Scale Resilience**

Prepared by  
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## **Wildfire Resilient Landscapes Strategic Plan 2026–2030**

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This strategic plan reflects the organization’s developmental stage as an emerging nonprofit and is intended to guide institutional growth, program development, and mission implementation from 2026 through 2030. The plan will evolve through implementation, evaluation, and organizational learning.

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## Executive Summary

### Wildfire Resilient Landscapes Strategic Plan (2026–2030)

Wildfire Resilient Landscapes (WRL) was established in response to a growing convergence of environmental, infrastructural, and institutional pressures shaping communities across Southern California and other climate-vulnerable regions. Rising temperatures, prolonged drought, vegetation stress, urban expansion into fire-prone areas, and aging infrastructure are increasing wildfire risk while simultaneously placing new demands on public systems and community capacity.

Many existing wildfire prevention efforts remain concentrated on emergency response and large-scale land management. While these activities are essential, less attention is consistently directed toward the everyday landscapes where people live, work, and learn. Residential neighborhoods, institutional campuses, and community spaces play a critical role in shaping long-term fire risk, yet practical, accessible guidance for managing these environments remains uneven. As climate conditions become more volatile, communities require approaches to landscape stewardship that are adaptive, place-specific, and feasible within real-world constraints.

Wildfire Resilient Landscapes operate within this space by focusing on the translation of knowledge into practice. The organization is a knowledge-centered environmental nonprofit dedicated to advancing practical, scalable approaches to wildfire resilience through education, planning support, pilot development, and systems-based learning. Rather than functioning as an emergency response entity or a large-scale land management contractor, WRL concentrates on building implementation readiness by helping communities and institutions understand risk, evaluate options, and test workable solutions in modified and highly managed landscapes.

The organization advances resilience by translating scientific research and policy guidance into accessible educational resources, designing and testing pilot-scale programs that demonstrate feasible landscape interventions, providing planning and technical assistance to organizations and institutions, and documenting lessons learned to support replication and long-term institutional learning. WRL's work is grounded in the understanding that resilience develops cumulatively through informed stewardship, cross-sector collaboration, and adaptive governance over time.

This strategic plan establishes a set of integrated priorities that guide WRL's development from 2026 through 2030. The organization will concentrate on developing and validating a limited number of high-quality pilot programs that demonstrate practical approaches to wildfire-resilient landscapes. These initiatives will emphasize implementation readiness and learning rather than immediate large-scale replication. Education and knowledge translation will function as core resilience infrastructure, supporting informed decision making among residents, institutions, and partner organizations. Financial sustainability will be pursued through diversified, mission-aligned revenue sources combined with a deliberately lean operational model. Governance

capacity and internal infrastructure will be strengthened to ensure transparency, accountability, and institutional durability. Partnerships and technical assistance will extend the organization's reach without requiring asset-heavy operations, while communications will contribute to broader resilience conversations through transparent reporting and field-based learning. Throughout this period, WRL will maintain clear structural and financial separation between nonprofit mission activities and any affiliated social enterprises in order to protect independence and public trust.

Organizational development will follow a deliberate, capacity-based growth model structured in three phases. The first phase, spanning 2026 through 2027, focuses on organizational stabilization and foundational capacity. During this period, WRL will establish governance systems, build operational and knowledge infrastructure, launch pilot programs, and initiate small-scale advisory services. The second phase, covering 2028 through 2029, centers on program validation and strategic capacity expansion. Successful pilot models will be refined and selectively expanded, technical assistance services will be formalized, partnerships will deepen, and revenue diversification will increase. The third phase, occurring in 2030, is dedicated to sustainability and strategic readiness. The organization will conduct comprehensive evaluations, assess long-term viability, and prepare the subsequent strategic planning cycle. Movement between phases is determined by demonstrated readiness in governance effectiveness, financial stability, operational capacity, and documented program performance.

WRL's financial strategy emphasizes diversification, mission alignment, and conservative growth. The organization avoids dependency on any single funding source and prioritizes planning-stage support, pilot development resources, and flexible funding that enables learning and adaptation. Long-term financial strength is defined as institutional resilience rather than rapid expansion or scale.

As an emerging organization, WRL recognizes that institutional development is iterative and adaptive. This strategic plan represents a foundational implementation framework that will evolve through structured learning, evaluation, and board oversight. Growth will be paced to demonstrate capacity and financial sustainability rather than projected opportunity alone.

By 2030, Wildfire Resilient Landscapes aims to function as a stable and credible regional resource advancing wildfire resilience through education, planning support, validated pilot programs, and documented systems learning. Through this work, the organization seeks to contribute to landscapes and communities that are better prepared to adapt, recover, and sustain ecological and social stability in an era of increasing climate volatility.

## **About this Strategic Plan**

This strategic plan establishes the guiding framework for Wildfire Resilient Landscapes from 2026 through 2030. It defines the organization’s priorities, development pathway, and operating principles during a formative period of institutional growth.

Wildfire Resilient Landscapes is an emerging nonprofit organization. As such, this plan is designed to support deliberate, capacity-based development rather than rapid expansion. Programs, partnerships, and operational systems will be built progressively through pilot testing, structured learning, and ongoing evaluation.

The plan prioritizes steady growth and financial stability. Governance systems and internal infrastructure will be strengthened before expansion. Program development will emphasize feasibility, documentation, and replicable learning. Partnerships will extend impact without requiring asset-intensive operations. Financial decisions will prioritize diversification, transparency, and long-term resilience.

This document is both directional and adaptive. It provides a clear framework for decision making while recognizing that implementation occurs within changing environmental, funding, and policy conditions. Strategic priorities and timelines may be refined as new knowledge emerges, if adjustments remain consistent with mission and oversight governance.

The strategic plan is also a transparency tool. It communicates the organization’s intentions, development model, and accountability commitments to funders, partners, and the public. Progress will be monitored through defined performance indicators, and major developmental transitions will occur only after demonstrated readiness and board review.

Wildfire Resilient Landscapes will periodically review this plan and use accumulated learning to inform future strategic cycles. The objective is not simply organizational growth, but the development of a stable, credible, and effective institution capable of advancing long-term landscape and community resilience.

## **Section 1: Mission, Vision, and Values**

### **Mission**

Wildfire Resilient Landscapes strengthens long-term wildfire resilience and climate adaptation by advancing systems-informed landscape stewardship, community education, pilot-scale program development, and institutional capacity building.

The organization translates scientific research, policy guidance, and field-based learning into accessible planning support, educational resources, and practical implementation frameworks that help communities and institutions manage landscapes more safely and adaptively.

WRL works within the everyday environments where people live, work, and gather, recognizing that resilience is built through informed decision-making, coordinated action, and sustained stewardship over time.

### **Vision**

Wildfire Resilient Landscapes envision communities that approach wildfire resilience as a shared and ongoing responsibility embedded across natural and human-built environments.

In this vision, landscapes are understood as interconnected systems shaped by ecological processes, infrastructure, governance structures, and human decision-making. Resilience is not a single intervention or checklist, but a sustained process of adaptation, stewardship, planning, and institutional learning.

Communities are supported by organizations and public systems that possess the knowledge, capacity, and coordination necessary to manage climate risk proactively rather than reactively. Landscapes protect people, biodiversity, infrastructure, and long-term environmental stability while remaining adaptable to changing conditions.

### **Core Values**

#### **Ecological Integrity**

WRL prioritizes stewardship practices that support native biodiversity, ecosystem function, and long-term environmental health. Resilient landscapes depend on intact ecological relationships and adaptive ecological processes.

#### **Systems Awareness**

WRL recognizes that wildfire risk emerges from interconnected ecological, social, economic, and policy dynamics. The organization approaches resilience as a systems challenge and seeks to address underlying structural conditions rather than isolated technical fixes.

#### **Equity and Access**

WRL acknowledges that wildfire risk, heat exposure, and landscape degradation disproportionately affect under-resourced communities. The organization designs programs and planning support to expand access to information, capacity, and resilience-building practices in ways that are economically realistic and responsive to local conditions.

### **Evidence-Informed and Adaptive Practice**

WRL grounds its work in scientific research, implementation learning, and emerging best practices. The organization remains responsive to uncertainty and evolving environmental conditions, treating adaptation and iteration as central to long-term resilience.

### **Institutional and Community Capacity**

WRL recognizes that durable environmental outcomes depend on the strength and readiness of organizations, partnerships, and communities responsible for stewardship. The organization supports planning, governance development, and knowledge translation as foundational elements of resilience.

### **Fiscal Responsibility**

WRL commits to prudent financial management, realistic growth, and transparent stewardship of resources. Organizational expansion is aligned with demonstrated capacity to ensure long-term sustainability.

### **Partnership and Collaboration**

WRL values collaborative problem-solving and cross-sector engagement. The organization works alongside local organizations, public agencies, researchers, and community members to build trust, share knowledge, and strengthen coordinated action.

### **Long-Term Resilience**

WRL prioritizes sustained institutional and environmental impact over rapid expansion. The organization approaches resilience as a cumulative and enduring process requiring continuity, reflection, and disciplined stewardship.

## Section 2: Strategic Context

### 2.1 Regional Landscape Conditions

As of 2026, Southern California landscapes are experiencing converging environmental, infrastructure, and social pressures that significantly increase wildfire risk and reduce community resilience. These pressures include prolonged drought, rising temperatures, increased vegetation stress, urban expansion into fire-prone areas, aging infrastructure, and persistent inequities in access to green space and tree canopy.

Wildfire risk is no longer confined to remote or rural areas. Urban neighborhoods, institutional campuses, transportation corridors, and peri-urban open spaces increasingly function as ignition pathways, heat amplifiers, and vectors for fire spread. In many communities, legacy landscaping practices, invasive plant species, fragmented land management, and deferred maintenance compound these risks.

At the same time, public awareness of wildfire danger has grown faster than practical understanding of what every day, non-emergency prevention actually looks like. Many residents, institutions, and local organizations lack accessible, place-specific guidance on defensible space, fire-resilient planting, and non-toxic land management practices appropriate to highly modified, human-shaped landscapes.

Climate volatility further complicates planning. Conditions now shift rapidly between drought, extreme heat, high wind events, and episodic precipitation, requiring adaptive landscape strategies rather than static design approaches.

### 2.2 Policy and Institutional Environment

California has made significant investments in wildfire response and large-scale land management. However, persistent implementation gaps remain at the community and parcel scale, particularly in urban and suburban settings where responsibility is fragmented across homeowners, renters, institutions, municipalities, and private landowners.

Existing policies and funding streams often prioritize emergency response and suppression, large-acreage fuel reduction, capital-intensive restoration projects, and infrastructure protection.

While these efforts are essential, they do not consistently translate into place-based, educational, and preventive practices that residents and institutions can implement within their own landscapes.

In addition, public sector funding environments are increasingly constrained and volatile. Budget reductions, shifting political priorities, and competitive grant structures create uncertainty for small organizations attempting to develop preventive, community-centered resilience programs.

Early-stage organizations frequently face structural barriers, including limited access to implementation funding, complex compliance requirements, and the need to demonstrate

capacity before capacity-building resources are available. Many small organizations and local initiatives lack access to system-based planning guidance, proposal development support, and structured program design expertise necessary to compete for or responsibly manage resilience funding.

WRL operates within this gap by focusing on translation, education, planning support, and pilot-scale learning — helping communities and partner organizations connect broader policy goals to practical land stewardship decisions and locally feasible implementation pathways.

### **2.3 Social and Equity Considerations**

Wildfire vulnerability is closely linked with housing insecurity, increased heat exposure, economic hardship, aging infrastructure, and limited access to well-maintained green spaces. Communities that are under-resourced often face a greater risk of tree canopy loss, lack sufficient cooling features, and have less access to wildfire-prevention information tailored to their unique needs.

WRL recognizes that effective resilience strategies must address the realities faced by renters and those living in multi-family housing, as well as the specific needs of institutional landscapes such as schools and campuses. These strategies also need to consider barriers related to language, cost, and ongoing maintenance, along with limitations in available time, labor, and financial resources. Additionally, communities may experience climate-related stress and decision fatigue, and often have uneven access to technical guidance and planning support.

For wildfire resilience efforts to succeed, approaches must be realistic, scalable, and responsive to actual constraints experienced by communities, rather than relying on idealized models that presume stable funding, consistent land ownership, or discretionary resources.

Achieving equity in resilience involves more than just fair distribution of resources; it also requires ensuring equal access to knowledge, planning capacity, and long-term stewardship support.

### **2.4 Organizational Niche and Role**

Within this context, WRL occupies a specific and intentionally bounded role.

WRL is not an emergency response organization, a large-scale land management contractor, a regulatory or enforcement body, or a capital-intensive project developer.

Instead, WRL serves as an educator translating science and policy into practical guidance, a convener facilitating cross-sector learning and collaboration, and a pilot designer testing small-scale, adaptable approaches. In addition, WRL is a documentation-focused organization capturing lessons for replication, a planning and capacity-building resource supporting early-stage resilience initiatives, and a research-informed platform synthesizing field experience, policy trends, and systems analysis to strengthen resilience practice.

By maintaining this niche, WRL avoids duplication of existing efforts while contributing a missing layer of preventive, landscape-centered resilience that connects knowledge, planning, and implementation readiness.

## **2.5 Strategic Implications for 2026–2030**

This strategic context shapes WRL’s decisions over the next five years in several key ways. Programs must be adaptable to diverse, imperfect, and resource-constrained landscapes. Growth must be paced to organizational capacity and funding reality. Planning and pilot development serve as foundational stages for long-term implementation. Partnerships are essential to extending reach without asset-heavy obligations. Building institutional capacity is necessary for durable environmental outcomes. Evaluation and documentation hold equal importance to implementation. Communications should avoid fear-based messaging, instead emphasizing agency, stewardship, and practical learning. Finally, funding strategies must include planning grants, pilot support, and diversified revenue pathways.

WRL’s work is grounded in the understanding that wildfire resilience is not achieved through singular interventions, but through cumulative, informed actions embedded in everyday landscapes, supported by knowledge, partnerships, and adaptive governance over time.

### **Section 3: Strategic Priorities and Goals (2026–2030)**

Wildfire Resilient Landscapes (WRL) establishes strategic priorities that reflect a deliberate balance between mission ambition and organizational capacity. These priorities guide program development, funding decisions, partnerships, governance, and institutional growth over the 2026–2030 planning period.

Each priority advances wildfire resilience through education, planning support, pilot development, and systems learning, while intentionally avoiding overextension, duplication of effort, or mission drift. Together, these priorities provide a structured framework for sustained impact, responsible growth, and long-term field contribution.

#### **Priority 1. Program Development, Planning, and Demonstrated Impact**

WRL will focus on creating a select number of high-quality programs that offer practical solutions for wildfire-resilient landscapes in actual settings. This work will start with thorough planning and will move to small-scale pilot implementation when it is feasible. Programs will be designed with an emphasis on implementation readiness, structured learning experiences, and detailed documentation, rather than aiming for immediate, large-scale replication.

In terms of focus areas, WRL will address wildfire-resilient native plant education, guidance on defensible space and fire-safe landscaping for both residential and institutional environments, urban tree canopy renewal and innovative 'stump-to-canopy' pilot projects, education on non-toxic and ecologically balanced land management, and the development of plans and feasibility studies for community-scale resilience initiatives.

Key commitments for this priority include a strong preference for program quality and clarity over quantity, designing initiatives that can function effectively in imperfect and resource-limited landscapes, leveraging planning grants and pilot project funding to build implementation capacity, documenting outcomes, challenges, and lessons learned, and developing program frameworks that partners can readily adapt and use.

WRL will not operate as a landscaping contractor, manage large-acreage fuel reduction projects, take on maintenance-heavy obligations that exceed its organizational capacity, or implement projects without adequate planning and feasibility assessments.

#### **Priority 2. Education and Knowledge Translation as Core Resilience Infrastructure**

WRL regards education and the translation of knowledge as essential tools for wildfire prevention and adaptation to climate change. By providing education, WRL supports informed decision-making among residents, institutions, partner organizations, and new resilience practitioners. The organization's educational work will focus on making scientific and policy guidance accessible and practical, supporting decision-making in a variety of property and institutional contexts, reducing confusion and misinformation about wildfire-resilient practices, and building the capacity of communities and organizations for long-term stewardship.

To achieve these aims, WRL will offer workshops and community learning sessions, produce written guides, case studies, and digital resources, collaborate with partners on training and material development, provide technical assistance and planning support, and promote demonstration-based learning through pilot projects. Education will be positioned as a means of empowerment rather than compliance, recognizing that sustained resilience relies on understanding, agency, and the ongoing learning of institutions.

### **Priority 3. Financial Sustainability and Mission-Aligned Revenue Development**

WRL is committed to achieving financial sustainability by diversifying its funding sources in ways that support long-term organizational stability and independence. The organization's funding strategy is mindful of the realities of early-stage growth and the need for investment in planning. Funding sources will be chosen to match organizational capacity and growth stage, with a preference for planning, pilot, and capacity-building opportunities. WRL will seek flexible and multi-year support whenever possible and avoid overreliance on any single funder or revenue stream. Each funding opportunity will be assessed for its alignment with WRL's mission and administrative feasibility. Revenue will be managed in accordance with nonprofit governance and compliance standards, ensuring a clear separation between activities for public benefit and fee-for-service operations.

By 2030, the targeted revenue mix will include approximately 40–50% from public and foundation grants, 20–30% from individual donors and community giving, and 20–30% from consulting, technical assistance, and educational services. The emphasis will remain on sustainability, independence, and the integrity of WRL's programs rather than rapid expansion.

### **Priority 4. Governance, Infrastructure, and Organizational Resilience**

WRL understands that the resilience of its organization is inseparable from its programmatic impact. Therefore, building and maintaining institutional stability, ensuring compliance, and strengthening governance capacity are all seen as essential to fulfilling the organization's mission. Key objectives include creating and sustaining a functioning board of directors, enhancing internal policies, financial controls, and compliance systems, developing administrative and documentation infrastructure, clarifying the distinction between governance and management roles, and building systems that promote transparency and accountability. Organizational growth will be managed carefully, with expansion of staff, technology, and administrative capacity occurring only as resources and stability permit. WRL will not increase staffing without secured funding, make long-term commitments without board review, or compromise governance integrity for short-term gains.

### **Priority 5. Partnerships, Technical Assistance, and Field-Based Collaboration**

WRL will enhance its impact through partnerships that expand its reach without requiring ownership of land, facilities, or capital-intensive assets. These partnerships may involve program collaboration and technical assistance to support planning, capacity-building, and readiness for

implementation. WRL’s strategy is to work with nonprofits, public agencies, schools, and community organizations, providing planning guidance and program design support, sharing knowledge, tools, and pilot frameworks, co-designing programs that honor partner expertise and community context, and helping partners access funding and implementation pathways. In all partnerships, WRL’s role is centered on education, facilitation, technical guidance, and documentation, not on ownership or direct operational control.

### **Priority 6. Communications, Learning, and Field Contribution**

WRL will use communications as a tool for education, accountability, and building the professional field, rather than for promotion alone. The organization aims to share practical lessons from planning and pilot efforts, normalize iterative learning and adaptive practice, contribute to broader conversations about wildfire resilience and climate adaptation, and report transparently on organizational progress. Communications will intentionally avoid fear-based messages, instead highlighting stewardship, learning, and realistic pathways toward resilience.

### **Priority 7. Ethical Collaboration with Mission-Aligned Social Enterprises**

WRL acknowledges that mission-aligned social enterprises can enhance program implementation by providing materials, technical expertise, or educational collaboration. During the 2026–2030 period, WRL may work with legally distinct for-profit ventures, including founder-affiliated initiatives such as the Wildfire Resilient Native Plants Nursery, provided these collaborations further WRL’s program goals. All such collaborations will be conducted at fair market value, with no exclusive vendor relationships, and a clear separation between governance, decision-making, and operations. WRL will retain full control over program design and evaluation, and vendor involvement will not dictate the scope or continuation of programs. Programs must remain viable with alternative suppliers. These safeguards ensure compliance with nonprofit governance standards and protect the independence of the organization.

### **Strategic Priority Summary**

Across all priorities, WRL commits to acting within realistic organizational limits, building capacity for implementation through deliberate planning and pilot projects, valuing learning alongside outcomes, maintaining institutional integrity and disciplined governance, remaining responsive to changing climate, funding, and community needs, being clear about the organization’s scope of work, and ensuring that professional expertise and sector engagement continue to strengthen analytical and implementation capacity. WRL views resilience as a cumulative, long-term process that is supported by education, planning, partnerships, and adaptive organizational development.

## **Section 4: Phased Implementation Timeline (2026–2030)**

Implementation of this strategic plan is organized into three deliberate phases that mirror Wildfire Resilient Landscapes’ evolution as a knowledge-driven, emerging environmental nonprofit. Each phase places emphasis on organizational stability, continuous learning, and capacity development, as opposed to following a linear or rapid growth trajectory.

Advancement from one phase to the next depends on demonstrated readiness in governance, financial health, operational capabilities, and program effectiveness. The calendar serves as a guide rather than a determinant, with capacity-based decision-making taking precedence.

Throughout all phases, WRL remains committed to sustainable growth, the maintenance of institutional integrity, and gradual enhancement of programmatic, educational, analytical, and technical assistance functions.

### **Phase I: Organizational Stabilization and Foundational Capacity (2026–2027)**

#### **Purpose**

The first phase aims to establish WRL’s core governance, operational systems, and organizational identity, while simultaneously developing proof of concept for pilot programs, educational initiatives, and mission-aligned technical assistance. The focus is on building institutional credibility, analytical capabilities, and internal infrastructure to ensure long-term sustainability.

#### **Key Objectives**

During this phase, WRL will formalize governance structures and internal controls, create operational and knowledge management systems, launch a small number of pilot and demonstration programs, initiate technical assistance and advisory services on a limited scale, secure initial operating and programmatic funding, and develop baseline practices for evaluation, research synthesis, and documentation.

#### **Primary Activities**

##### **Governance and Organizational Systems**

Key actions include recruiting and seating a working board with diverse expertise, adopting core governance policies, financial procedures, and conflict-of-interest standards, clarifying roles between board governance and founder-led management, and establishing organizational decision-making and documentation protocols.

##### **Operational and Knowledge Infrastructure**

The organization will implement financial tracking, reporting, and compliance systems appropriate to its scale, develop structured documentation for program learning and institutional knowledge, establish digital platforms for planning, data tracking, and resource management,

and build analytical and research synthesis capacity to inform learning, policy interpretation, and resilience practices.

### **Program and Educational Development**

WRL intends to launch one or two pilot or demonstration programs aligned with strategic goals, develop educational materials tied to these pilots and community learning, and create evaluation methods suitable for small-scale pilot efforts.

### **Technical Assistance and Service Development**

The organization will provide limited advisory and planning support to aligned partners, develop initial frameworks for consulting and capacity-building services, and document lessons from early technical assistance engagements.

### **Partnership Development**

Efforts will include initiating exploratory partnerships and relationship-building with mission-aligned organizations and institutions and identifying opportunities for collaborative pilot development and shared learning.

### **Funding and Resource Development**

Resource development will focus on securing small to mid-sized grants and individual donor support, establishing basic donor and stakeholder engagement systems, and developing early earned-income opportunities that are consistent with WRL's mission.

### **Milestones**

By the end of Phase I, the organization will have a fully seated and regularly meeting board, foundational governance and financial systems in effective operation, at least one pilot or demonstration program completed, or underway, initial technical assistance or advisory engagements completed, a baseline evaluation and documentation framework established, and initial diversified funding secured.

### **Decision Gate**

Progression to Phase II is contingent upon the effective functioning of governance systems, the demonstration of program feasibility within the organization's capacity, and the maintenance of operational and financial stability.

## **Phase II: Program Validation and Strategic Capacity Expansion (2028–2029)**

### **Purpose**

The second phase is dedicated to refining and validating program models, expanding educational and technical assistance capacity, and strengthening financial sustainability through diversified and mission-aligned revenue streams. This period emphasizes WRL's development as an

educator, convener, research-informed practitioner, and provider of planning and capacity-building support.

## **Key Objectives**

WRL will focus on validating and selectively expanding successful pilot programs, strengthening partnerships and collaborative program delivery, broadening technical assistance and advisory services, increasing unrestricted and diversified funding, building organizational infrastructure and staffing where sustainable, and deepening evaluation, research synthesis, and knowledge dissemination.

## **Primary Activities**

### **Program Development**

The organization will refine program models based on lessons from Phase I, replicate or adapt successful programs in new contexts where possible, and expand educational offerings and community engagement activities.

### **Technical Assistance and Service Delivery**

Technical assistance and planning support services will be formalized, program design, resilience planning, and implementation guidance will be provided to partners, structured service delivery models and documentation standards will be developed and earned-income activities aligned with the mission and organizational capacity will be expanded.

### **Partnership and Collaboration**

WRL will formalize partnerships with nonprofits, public agencies, and institutions, develop models for collaborative program delivery, and strengthen regional and cross-sector relationships.

### **Financial Sustainability**

Efforts will focus on increasing individual donor engagement and community support, pursuing multi-year and general operating funding, expanding earned-income services in line with capacity, and strengthening financial forecasting and resource planning.

### **Organizational Capacity**

Staffing or contractor support will be assessed only when sustainable funding is available, and WRL will invest in strengthening internal systems that support program delivery and evaluation, as well as enhancing communications centered on learning, outcomes, and transparency.

## **Milestones**

By the end of Phase II, WRL will have two to three validated program models in operation, structured technical assistance services, strong partner relationships with clear collaboration

agreements, more stable and diversified revenue streams, and documented program outcomes suitable for use with funders, partners, and policy audiences.

### **Decision Gate**

Expansion beyond this phase will only occur after a board review confirms financial stability, organizational health, mission alignment, and readiness for sustained growth.

### **Phase III: Sustainability, Organizational Evaluation, and Strategic Readiness (2030)**

#### **Purpose**

The third phase focuses on consolidating organizational learning, evaluating readiness for long-term sustainability, and preparing WRL for its next strategic cycle. This period emphasizes institutional reflection, strengthening, and planning over expansion.

#### **Key Objectives**

Key objectives are to conduct a comprehensive organizational and programmatic evaluation, assess the sustainability of program and service models, evaluate governance and organizational structure, reaffirm mission alignment and strategic focus, and develop the next five-year strategic plan covering 2031–2035.

#### **Primary Activities**

Activities will focus on evaluating governance performance, financial health, and operational systems, assessing the impact and sustainability of technical assistance and program activities, synthesizing program lessons, research findings, and institutional knowledge, engaging the board, partners, and stakeholders in structured strategic reflection, identifying which activities to sustain, adapt, expand, or sunset, preparing documentation to support future funding and partnerships, and drafting and adopting the next strategic plan.

#### **Milestones**

Phase III will culminate in the completion of an organizational and programmatic evaluation, clear recommendations for long-term strategic direction, and board adoption of the 2031–2035 Strategic Plan.

#### **Cross-Cutting Implementation Principles**

Throughout all phases, WRL will prioritize organizational health alongside program impact, make data-informed decisions based on practical realities, remain flexible in response to changing climate, funding, and policy conditions, develop institutional knowledge through structured documentation and reflection, align program growth with capacity and financial stability, deliver technical assistance and services to advance mission and public benefit, treat evaluation and documentation as tools for learning and adaptation—not just accountability—and

maintain active professional engagement with the wider environmental and resilience community to support learning and analytical capacity.

## **Section 5: Risk Management and Organizational Resilience**

Wildfire Resilient Landscapes operate within a complex and rapidly changing environment shaped by climate volatility, funding uncertainty, policy shifts, and the realities of early-stage institutional development. Effective risk management is therefore essential not only to mission delivery but to long-term organizational sustainability.

WRL does not attempt to eliminate risk. Instead, the organization adopts a resilience-based approach grounded in awareness, mitigation, adaptive response, and continuous learning. Risk management is integrated into governance oversight, strategic planning, program design, financial stewardship, and daily operations to ensure that the organization remains capable of functioning under changing environmental, financial, regulatory, and organizational conditions.

### **5.1 Organizational Structure and Capacity Risk**

As a small and founder-led nonprofit, WRL faces structural risks associated with concentrated leadership roles, staffing limitations, and evolving administrative systems. Operational responsibility is currently concentrated within founder-led functions, creating potential vulnerability related to workload concentration and limited redundancy in institutional knowledge. As program and funding activity increases, the risk of expansion outpacing governance, infrastructure, or staffing capacity must be carefully managed.

To mitigate these risks, WRL is establishing a working board of directors with active oversight and shared governance responsibility. Organizational growth is intentionally paced according to secured funding and demonstrated capacity rather than projected opportunity. Documented procedures, knowledge management systems, and structured internal processes are being developed to reduce reliance on informal or founder-dependent systems. Regular board review of workload, scope, and sustainability supports disciplined decision making. Over time, the organization intends to transition toward more distributed operational responsibilities, supported by clear role definitions and succession awareness.

Leadership continuity and succession planning are treated as ongoing governance considerations. The board maintains awareness of leadership concentration risk and will periodically review contingency planning to ensure organizational stability in the event of leadership transition.

### **5.2 Financial and Funding Risk**

WRL operates within a highly competitive and politically sensitive funding environment, particularly within public and environmental sectors subject to budget fluctuation and policy change. Financial risk arises from potential dependence on limited funding sources, short-term or restricted grants, reimbursement-based cash flow structures, and compliance demands associated with grant administration.

The organization mitigates financial risk through revenue diversification across grants, individual donors, and mission-aligned earned income. Funding opportunities are evaluated not only for

mission alignment but also for administrative feasibility and long-term sustainability. Conservative budgeting practices and gradual reserve development support operational continuity. The board exercises active oversight of financial planning, fiscal controls, and reporting processes to ensure transparency and compliance with nonprofit accounting standards.

WRL remains attentive to legal and regulatory requirements affecting nonprofit governance, charitable compliance, and reporting obligations. The organization monitors changes in relevant laws and regulations and seeks appropriate professional guidance when necessary to maintain compliance and reduce exposure.

### **5.3 Programmatic Alignment and Mission Integrity Risk**

Programmatic risk emerges when activities drift from established strategic priorities or create obligations that exceed organizational capacity. External funding pressures, partnership opportunities, or community expectations may create incentives to expand prematurely or accept initiatives misaligned with long-term mission focus.

WRL mitigates this risk by using its strategic priorities as a decision-making framework for all new initiatives. Significant program commitments or expansions are subject to board awareness and review. Emphasis is placed on pilot-scale implementation, documentation, and validated learning prior to replication or expansion. The organization maintains the ability to adapt, pause, or sunset initiatives that no longer align with mission, capacity, or sustainability criteria.

This disciplined approach protects mission integrity while preserving flexibility for innovation and learning.

### **5.4 Technical Assistance and Professional Services Risk**

As WRL develops advisory, planning, and technical assistance activities, new operational and professional risks emerge. These include potential misalignment between client expectations and WRL's advisory role, liability exposure related to planning guidance, and resource strain if service demand exceeds organizational capacity.

To manage these risks, WRL clearly defines its advisory role as educational and planning-oriented rather than implementation-focused. Written scopes of work, service agreements, and role definitions are used where appropriate. Services are limited to areas consistent with organizational expertise and mission. The board remains informed about advisory activities and associated risk exposure, ensuring that service delivery supports rather than distorts nonprofit objectives.

### **5.5 Knowledge, Data, and Intellectual Asset Risk**

WRL's work relies heavily on research synthesis, documentation, digital resources, and accumulated institutional knowledge. Risk arises from potential loss or fragmentation of

knowledge, inconsistent documentation practices, data security vulnerabilities, or misinterpretation of publicly shared materials.

The organization addresses these risks through structured documentation systems, secure digital storage practices, and standardized knowledge management procedures. Information shared publicly is carefully framed to emphasize educational intent and responsible interpretation. Periodic review of data handling and documentation processes supports institutional continuity and intellectual integrity.

## **5.6 Partnership and Reputational Risk**

WRL's collaborative model introduces both opportunity and exposure. Partnerships may involve differing expectations, uneven resource contributions, or reputational risk associated with partner conduct or public messaging.

To mitigate these risks, WRL clearly articulates its role, scope, and limitations within each collaboration. Written agreements or memoranda of understanding are used when appropriate to define responsibilities and decision-making authority. Significant collaborations are brought to the attention of the board. Ongoing communication and periodic review help ensure alignment and shared accountability.

Reputation is treated as a strategic asset grounded in transparency, ethical conduct, and disciplined growth.

## **5.7 Related-Party and Conflict-of-Interest Risk**

As an organization operating within an ecosystem that may include founder-affiliated or board-affiliated entities, WRL acknowledges the potential for perceived or actual conflicts of interest. Ethical and fiduciary safeguards are therefore central to governance practice.

All board members and leadership complete annual conflict-of-interest disclosures. Any related-party transactions are subject to board review and documentation. Goods and services are provided at demonstrable fair market value, and vendor relationships remain non-exclusive. WRL does not function as a marketing, sales, or distribution arm for any for-profit entity. All decisions are evaluated through a fiduciary lens prioritizing mission integrity, transparency, and public trust.

## **5.8 External and Environmental Risk**

WRL operates within dynamic environmental and policy contexts shaped by climate change, wildfire events, regulatory variability, and evolving community conditions. External disruptions may affect program delivery, funding availability, or stakeholder engagement.

The organization mitigates external risk through flexible program design and delivery models that can adapt to changing conditions. Activities remain aligned with established science and regulatory guidance. Communications emphasize agency, stewardship, and practicality rather

than alarmism. Continuous monitoring of environmental, policy, and funding conditions informs adaptive planning and strategic recalibration.

### **5.9 Governance Oversight and Organizational Accountability**

The Board of Directors holds primary responsibility for risk oversight and organizational resilience. Risk management is integrated into board review of financial, operational, and strategic matters. The board monitors compliance with legal and ethical standards, supports leadership development and succession awareness, and maintains fiduciary responsibility for long-term sustainability.

Risk management is treated as an ongoing governance function embedded within strategic decision making rather than a periodic or reactive exercise.

### **5.10 Organizational Resilience Framework**

WRL defines organizational resilience as the capacity to sustain mission delivery while adapting responsibly to changing environmental, financial, regulatory, and institutional conditions.

Resilience is supported through adaptive planning, phased growth, diversified funding, operational flexibility, strong governance safeguards, structured knowledge management, disciplined partnership development, and continuous evaluation. The organization prioritizes durability over rapid expansion and institutional health alongside environmental impact.

Through these integrated practices, WRL seeks not merely to withstand uncertainty but to operate effectively within it while maintaining mission clarity, ethical integrity, and long-term viability.

## **Section 6: Evaluation, Learning, and Accountability**

Wildfire Resilient Landscapes treats evaluation as an essential function of responsible stewardship, institutional learning, and adaptive decision making. Evaluation is not used to generate inflated claims of impact or to satisfy compliance requirements alone. Instead, it supports understanding, improvement, and accountability within the complex and long-term conditions that shape wildfire resilience.

WRL recognizes that landscape change unfolds over extended time horizons and is influenced by many interacting social, ecological, and institutional factors. The organization therefore evaluates what it can directly observe, influence, and document, while acknowledging that broader resilience outcomes emerge through shared and cumulative action across many actors.

Evaluation is integrated into program design, organizational governance, and strategic planning. It informs how the organization learns, adapts, and maintains credibility with partners, funders, and the public.

### **6.1 Evaluation Philosophy**

WRL's evaluation approach is grounded in a learning-oriented and proportionate framework that reflects both mission scope and organizational capacity. Evaluation is designed to support decision making, program refinement, and strategic adaptation rather than retrospective justification of activities.

Measurement practices are scaled to organizational size, program complexity, and available resources. The organization recognizes that landscape resilience outcomes are shaped by environmental conditions, policy environments, and social factors beyond its direct control. Evaluation therefore focuses on observable contributions and documented influence rather than speculative attribution of long-term environmental change.

WRL approaches evaluation as a developmental process that supports early-stage program design, pilot testing, and institutional maturation. Findings are documented transparently, including successes, limitations, uncertainties, and lessons learned. The organization prioritizes credible and defensible indicators that can be reasonably observed rather than projecting impacts that cannot yet be substantiated.

### **6.2 Levels of Evaluation**

WRL evaluates its work across multiple levels of influence in order to distinguish between activities performed, immediate results, changes in practice, and broader environmental or community conditions.

At the process level, evaluation examines activities conducted and resources deployed. At the output level, evaluation focuses on immediate and observable results of those activities. At the practice level, evaluation considers changes in awareness, decision making, or behavior among

participants or partners. At the condition level, evaluation acknowledges broader environmental or community outcomes that emerge over longer time periods and through the combined influence of many actors.

WRL concentrates most evaluation effort on process, output, and practice levels, where organizational contribution can be directly observed and documented. The organization may document connections to broader conditions but does not claim sole responsibility for outcomes shaped by complex and shared systems.

### **6.3 Program and Pilot Evaluation**

Each WRL program, pilot initiative, or planning effort includes an evaluation approach appropriate to its scale and developmental stage. Evaluation examines participation, engagement, implementation experience, and evidence of practice change. It also documents barriers encountered, contextual influences, and adjustments made during implementation.

Pilot and planning-stage programs are evaluated primarily for feasibility, clarity of model, and practical insight rather than for large-scale environmental impact. Documentation captures what was attempted, what occurred, what changed, and what was learned. This information supports program refinement, replication, and institutional knowledge development.

### **6.4 Evaluation of Technical Assistance and Advisory Activities**

As WRL provides planning support, advisory services, and technical guidance, evaluation focuses on the quality and usefulness of these contributions rather than outcomes beyond the organization's scope of influence.

Assessment considers whether guidance is clear, relevant, and applicable to partner decision making. It also examines completion of planning deliverables, partner understanding of options, and lessons that can improve future advisory practice. WRL evaluates the effectiveness of its professional contribution without claiming responsibility for subsequent implementation decisions made by others.

### **6.5 Organizational Performance Monitoring**

In addition to program-level evaluation, WRL monitors indicators of organizational health and strategic alignment. These include financial stability, diversification of revenue, governance effectiveness, compliance with legal and reporting requirements, consistency between activities and strategic priorities, and the strength of documentation and knowledge management systems.

These indicators support responsible stewardship and institutional stability while avoiding disproportionate administrative burden.

### **6.6 Knowledge Creation and Documentation**

WRL recognizes knowledge generation as a core organizational output. Documentation supports institutional memory, program improvement, partner learning, and contribution to broader resilience practice.

The organization maintains structured records of program design, implementation experience, contextual factors, and lessons learned. This documentation supports replication, adaptation, and transparency while preserving organizational knowledge over time.

### **6.7 Organizational Learning and Adaptation**

Learning is treated as an ongoing operational function embedded in planning, governance, and program delivery. Evaluation findings are regularly reviewed by leadership and the board to inform decision making. Program models are adapted based on observed experience, emerging research, and evolving environmental conditions.

Both successful and unsuccessful approaches are documented and examined. Learning is understood as a practical requirement for responsible organizational development rather than an optional activity.

### **6.8 Accountability and Public Communication Integrity**

WRL is accountable to funders, partners, participants, and the public. Accountability is expressed through accurate reporting, transparent communication, and disciplined representation of organizational work.

Public communications reflect actual activities, documented contributions, and acknowledged limitations. The organization does not present plans as accomplishments, does not claim attribution for shared outcomes, and does not rely on projected benefits as evidence of current results. Credibility and accuracy are treated as essential components of public trust.

### **6.9 Evaluation of Partnerships and External Collaborations**

Because WRL's work is highly collaborative, the organization periodically reviews partnerships and external relationships to ensure continued alignment with mission, ethics, and operational capacity.

Collaborative activities are examined for clarity of roles, effectiveness of coordination, and consistency with strategic priorities. Findings inform decisions to continue, modify, or conclude partnership arrangements.

### **6.10 Governance Oversight of Evaluation and Accountability**

The Board of Directors provides oversight of evaluation practices and accountability systems. The board reviews organizational performance indicators, examines strategic progress, and ensures alignment between mission, programs, and resource use.

Evaluation findings inform board decisions regarding program continuation, adaptation, expansion, or sunset. Oversight of learning and accountability is treated as a governance responsibility as well as an operational function.

### **6.11 Evaluation Capacity and Developmental Scaling**

WRL acknowledges that evaluation capacity is shaped by organizational size, staffing, and funding. Evaluation practices are therefore designed to remain proportionate to available resources while maintaining meaningful insight.

As the organization matures, evaluation methods may become more sophisticated. Development occurs gradually to avoid administrative burden that interferes with mission delivery. The organization prioritizes meaningful understanding over excessive data accumulation.

### **6.12 Continuous Improvement Commitment**

WRL commits to ongoing refinement of its evaluation systems as part of institutional development. Indicators, documentation practices, reporting approaches, and learning processes are periodically reviewed to ensure continued relevance and usefulness.

Evaluation practices themselves are subject to reflection and improvement. Through this recursive process, WRL seeks to strengthen both organizational effectiveness and the credibility of its contribution to long-term landscape resilience.

## **Section 7: Financial Sustainability and Resource Strategy**

Wildfire Resilient Landscapes recognizes that financial sustainability is foundational to mission continuity, organizational credibility, and responsible stewardship of public trust. As an emerging nonprofit operating within a dynamic and often volatile funding environment, WRL approaches financial strategy with deliberate caution, long-term perspective, and disciplined alignment between resources and organizational capacity.

The organization's financial model is designed to support measured growth, operational resilience, and program integrity while avoiding structural dependency on any single funding source or revenue pathway. Financial strength is defined not as expansion for its own sake, but as the ability to operate reliably, adapt responsibly to changing conditions, and maintain mission integrity over time.

### **7.1 Financial Philosophy**

WRL's financial strategy is grounded in a set of guiding principles that shape all resource decisions. Revenue activities must support and reinforce organizational purpose rather than redirect it. Financial commitments must reflect demonstrated organizational capacity to deliver. Revenue will be distributed across multiple sources to reduce vulnerability to external fluctuation. Preference is given to funding that supports learning, planning, and adaptive development. Organizational growth is paced according to secured resources rather than anticipated funding. Financial decisions are documented, reviewed, and governed through established oversight processes. The organization maintains an intentionally asset-light structure that avoids financial obligations requiring heavy infrastructure or long-term maintenance commitments.

Financial sustainability is understood as resilience. It reflects the organization's ability to withstand funding volatility while maintaining core mission functions and institutional stability.

### **7.2 Revenue Model Framework**

WRL pursues a diversified mix of revenue streams designed to balance stability, flexibility, and mission alignment.

Grants and institutional funding represent a primary revenue pathway. These include support from public agencies, private foundations, and philanthropic organizations that fund environmental resilience, planning, education, research, or community adaptation. WRL prioritizes funding that supports program design, pilot development, learning, and early-stage implementation. Planning and capacity-building grants, pilot and demonstration funding, general operating support when available, and multi-year commitments are particularly valued. Funding that requires capital-intensive infrastructure or long-term maintenance obligations is approached cautiously.

Individual and community giving provides an additional source of flexible funding. Contributions from individuals and community supporters help sustain operational continuity, governance, and administrative stability. Giving may occur through small donor programs, campaign-based fundraising, community engagement activities, or digital platforms. Individual support strengthens organizational independence and adaptability.

Mission-aligned service revenue supports education, planning, and advisory functions consistent with WRL’s nonprofit purpose. These activities may include educational workshops, technical planning guidance, research summaries, landscape assessments, or advisory services for community and institutional partners. Fee-based services remain secondary to nonprofit program delivery and may not create organizational dependence or shift the organization’s primary focus away from public benefit activities.

Collaborative and pass-through funding may be administered in partnership with other organizations to support shared initiatives. WRL may participate as a program partner, fiscal collaborator, or technical contributor. All collaborative funding arrangements clearly define financial responsibility, reporting requirements, and organizational roles to ensure compliance and transparency.

### **7.3 Revenue Allocation by Organizational Function**

To maintain compliance, transparency, and structural clarity, WRL allocates revenue according to organizational function. Grant funding and charitable contributions primarily support nonprofit mission activities, including education, research, pilot programs, planning initiatives, and organizational capacity development. Mission-aligned service revenue supports advisory and technical assistance functions while contributing to general organizational sustainability. Collaborative funding supports specific initiatives with clearly defined financial and operational roles.

Revenue is managed in accordance with nonprofit governance and accounting requirements. Restricted funds are used solely for their designated purposes. Financial relationships between activities occur only when legally permissible and appropriately documented. This structure maintains clear separation between public benefit activities and fee-based services while allowing knowledge developed in one area to strengthen overall mission impact.

### **7.4 Target Revenue Distribution**

WRL seeks to maintain a balanced funding structure by 2030. Grants and institutional funding are expected to represent approximately forty to fifty percent of total revenue. Individual and community giving is expected to represent approximately twenty-five to thirty-five percent. Mission-aligned service revenue is expected to represent approximately fifteen to twenty-five percent. Collaborative or project-specific funding may vary according to partnership opportunities and program structure. These ranges are directional and may adjust in response to funding conditions or organizational maturity.

## **7.5 Planning Grants and Developmental Funding**

As an emerging organization, WRL places strategic emphasis on planning-stage funding. Planning resources support program design, feasibility analysis, partnership development, educational infrastructure, pilot preparation, and organizational capacity building. Planning work is treated as legitimate programmatic activity and as a necessary foundation for responsible implementation and long-term credibility.

## **7.6 Advisory and Consulting Capacity as Financial Stabilization**

WRL recognizes that advisory and planning services can contribute to financial stability while strengthening mission knowledge and field capacity. Advisory work supports community and institutional resilience planning, transfers practical knowledge, generates modest mission-aligned revenue, and strengthens technical credibility.

All advisory activities remain secondary to nonprofit mission delivery. Fee-based revenue may support sustainability but may not create structural dependence. Financial management of fee-based and grant-funded activities follows applicable nonprofit regulations to ensure appropriate use of restricted funds and compliance with accounting standards.

## **7.7 Expense Management and Cost Structure**

WRL maintains a deliberately lean operational model. Fixed infrastructure commitments are minimized. Staff expansion occurs only when sustained funding exists. Partnerships are used where possible in place of asset ownership. Long-term financial obligations are carefully evaluated before acceptance. Expenditures that require permanent operational expansion without secured funding and board review are avoided.

## **7.8 Financial Controls and Governance**

Financial oversight is a core governance responsibility. The Board of Directors reviews budgets, major financial commitments, and overall financial strategy. WRL maintains documented financial procedures, separation of duties where feasible, and compliance with nonprofit accounting standards. Financial risks and commitments are reviewed regularly. Financial management systems scale appropriately as organizational complexity increases.

## **7.9 Reserve Development and Financial Resilience**

When resources permit, WRL works toward establishing operating reserves. Reserves provide stability during funding gaps, support management of reimbursement delays, enable strategic planning, and reduce vulnerability to funding volatility. Reserve development occurs gradually and conservatively.

## **7.10 Funding Environment and External Constraints**

WRL operates within a shifting public and philanthropic funding landscape characterized by budget reductions, changing priorities, competitive grant environments, and administrative reporting demands. Financial strategy emphasizes adaptability, realistic expectations, and disciplined growth rather than reliance on continuous expansion of funding opportunities.

### **7.11 Ethical Funding and Mission Protection**

WRL declines funding that requires mission drift, creates unsustainable obligations, compromises scientific or educational integrity, or conflicts with environmental or public health values. Funding decisions are evaluated through both financial and ethical lenses to protect mission and public trust.

### **7.12 Board Oversight of Financial Strategy**

The Board of Directors holds responsibility for reviewing financial strategy, approving budgets and major commitments, monitoring revenue diversification, ensuring fiduciary compliance, and supporting fundraising strategy. Financial sustainability is treated as a shared governance responsibility.

### **7.13 Long-Term Financial Objective**

WRL's long-term financial objective is organizational durability. The organization seeks the capacity to operate continuously despite funding fluctuations, maintain mission integrity, support pilot learning and education, adapt to changing environmental and policy conditions, and build institutional capacity gradually and responsibly.

Financial strength is defined as resilience rather than scale.

## **Section 8: Governance and Leadership Development**

Wildfire Resilient Landscapes recognizes that strong governance and effective leadership are essential to organizational credibility, accountability, and long-term sustainability. As the organization transitions from founder-led startup operations toward a more structured institutional model, governance development is treated as a central strategic priority. Leadership structure, board development, and shared responsibility are intentionally designed to support mission continuity, ethical oversight, and organizational resilience during the 2026–2030 strategic period and beyond.

### **8.1 Governance Philosophy**

WRL’s governance framework is grounded in a commitment to mission stewardship, shared responsibility, and institutional accountability. Leadership exists to protect and advance organizational purpose rather than to concentrate on authority. Governance is understood as a collective function that distributes responsibility across individuals and roles. The Board of Directors provides independent oversight and strategic guidance while ensuring that organizational decisions remain consistent with nonprofit standards and public trust obligations.

Transparency and ethical conduct are foundational expectations. Decision making is documented, lawful, and subject to review. Governance structures are designed to evolve as organizational capacity grows, ensuring that leadership arrangements remain appropriate to scale and complexity. Continuity is treated as a governance responsibility, and leadership transitions are anticipated rather than treated as exceptional events.

Governance is regarded as an operational necessity that shapes how the organization functions on a daily basis rather than a symbolic or procedural requirement.

### **8.2 Founder-Led Organizational Phase**

WRL currently operates within a founder-led developmental stage typical of early nonprofit formation. During this period, executive leadership provides strategic direction, oversees program design and implementation, manages daily operations, develops partnerships and funding opportunities, and establishes foundational administrative and governance systems.

Founder leadership provides clarity, continuity, and rapid decision making during early organizational development. At the same time, WRL recognizes that concentration of authority and operational responsibility creates structural vulnerability. The organization is therefore intentionally transitioning toward distributed leadership and formal governance arrangements that strengthen institutional stability and reduce dependence on any single individual.

This transition is gradual and capacity-based, ensuring that governance structures develop in step with organizational growth.

### **8.3 Board of Directors Development**

A functioning and engaged Board of Directors is essential to WRL’s institutional maturity. During the early strategic period, the organization is focused on building a working board capable of providing active oversight, informed decision making, and strategic guidance.

Board development includes recruitment of individuals with complementary expertise relevant to nonprofit governance, financial oversight, environmental and land management knowledge, public policy, legal and regulatory awareness, community engagement, and organizational development. Recruitment prioritizes individuals willing to participate actively in governance responsibilities rather than serve in symbolic roles.

Board development also includes establishment of clear governance roles, adoption and implementation of core policies, creation of regular meeting and reporting structures, and development of shared understanding of organizational strategy and risk.

#### **8.4 Roles and Responsibilities**

The Board of Directors holds responsibility for strategic oversight, fiduciary supervision, approval of major organizational commitments, executive leadership support and evaluation, and maintenance of accountability to the public interest. The board monitors organizational risk, ensures compliance with legal and ethical standards, and guides long-term direction. The board does not manage daily operations but ensures that operations are conducted responsibly and in alignment with mission.

Executive leadership, led by the founder serving as Executive Director, is responsible for operational management, program implementation, supervision of staff or contractors, partnership coordination, and financial administration within board-approved parameters. Executive leadership provides regular reporting to the board and operates under authority delegated through governance structures.

This separation between oversight and management supports both accountability and operational effectiveness.

#### **8.5 Governance Infrastructure**

WRL maintains and develops core governance infrastructure necessary for lawful and effective organizational operation. This includes foundational legal documents, internal policies, financial management procedures, board role descriptions, documented decision-making processes, and formal records of meetings and actions.

Governance infrastructure is reviewed periodically and revised as organizational scale, complexity, and regulatory requirements evolve. Documentation supports transparency, institutional memory, and continuity across leadership transitions.

#### **8.6 Leadership Capacity Development**

Leadership development is treated as an ongoing organizational function rather than a one-time activity. The organization supports capacity building through board orientation, governance education, clarification of decision authority, and development of leadership skills appropriate to nonprofit oversight and strategic planning.

Structured documentation of institutional knowledge supports continuity and reduces vulnerability associated with personnel transitions. Leadership capacity development strengthens organizational stability and prepares the organization for increasing operational complexity.

### **8.7 Succession Planning**

Preparation for leadership transition is recognized as a standard governance responsibility. WRL develops succession readiness through documentation of key operational functions, identification of interim leadership procedures, preservation of institutional knowledge, and board awareness of contingency arrangements.

Succession planning is proportional to organizational scale but reflects a long-term commitment to continuity, stability, and mission protection regardless of personnel change.

### **8.8 Advisory Participation and External Expertise**

WRL may engage advisors, subject matter experts, and informal working groups to provide specialized knowledge that strengthens organizational capacity. Advisory participation may support technical guidance, program design, scientific review, partnership development, and strategic planning.

Advisory roles provide expertise but do not exercise governance authority. The Board of Directors retains full responsibility for oversight and decision making.

### **8.9 Governance Evolution Over the Strategic Period**

Governance structure is expected to develop progressively during the 2026–2030 strategic period. Early development focuses on board recruitment, policy adoption, and clarification of governance roles. As capacity increases, governance becomes more operationally engaged, with stronger oversight, structured committee participation, and deeper strategic involvement. Over time, governance systems stabilize to support leadership continuity, succession readiness, and sustained strategic planning.

Movement between stages is determined by demonstrated organizational capacity rather than predetermined timelines.

### **8.10 Ethical Standards and Fiduciary Responsibility**

WRL leadership is committed to acting in the best interests of the organization, avoiding conflicts of interest, maintaining independence from inappropriate external influence, protecting charitable assets, and ensuring compliance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

Ethical governance is understood as essential to maintaining public trust and organizational legitimacy.

### **8.11 Long-Term Leadership Objective**

WRL’s long-term leadership objective is institutional durability. Governance systems are designed to function independently of any single individual, ensuring continuity across leadership transitions. Oversight and management remain clearly separated. Board participation is informed and engaged. Organizational decision making remains stable, transparent, and mission focused.

Leadership strength is defined by structure, continuity, and shared responsibility rather than individual authority.

## **Section 9: Performance Indicators**

The performance indicators in this section operationalize the evaluation framework described in Section 7. Indicators are structured to reflect WRL’s multi-level approach to evaluation, including implementation activity, observable outputs, practice influence, and organizational capacity development. Measurement is designed to support learning, accountability, and strategic discipline while remaining proportionate to organizational scale and available resources.

Performance expectations are organized according to the phased implementation structure described in Section 5. Progression between phases is based on demonstrated readiness rather than predetermined timelines.

### **9.1 Phase I Performance Indicators**

Organizational Stabilization and Foundational Capacity, 2026 to 2027

During Phase I, indicators focus on establishing governance, financial systems, pilot activity, and foundational infrastructure.

Governance indicators include establishment of a functioning Board of Directors meeting minimum defined membership standards, regular board meetings with documented minutes, and adoption of core governance and conflict of interest policies.

Financial indicators include revenue diversification across at least two funding sources, approval and monitoring of an annual operating budget, and implementation of a functioning financial reporting system consistent with nonprofit standards.

Program indicators include launch or completion of at least one pilot program aligned with strategic priorities, development of educational materials supporting pilot implementation, and establishment of an evaluation framework appropriate to pilot scale.

Advisory and technical assistance indicators include completion of one to three advisory engagements and documentation of a defined service framework clarifying scope and role boundaries.

Infrastructure indicators include implementation of a knowledge management system and adoption of structured documentation procedures supporting institutional memory.

Partnership indicators include initiation of at least two exploratory partnerships consistent with mission and capacity.

Collectively, these indicators confirm that the organization has moved beyond conceptual formation into structured operational activity.

### **9.2 Phase II Performance Indicators**

Program Validation and Capacity Expansion, 2028 to 2029

During Phase II, indicators focus on validation of program models, expansion of advisory capacity, and strengthening of financial and institutional stability.

Program indicators include operation of two to three validated program models and availability of documented outcomes suitable for funders, partners, and stakeholders.

Technical assistance indicators include clearly defined and formalized service offerings and consistent advisory engagements occurring within documented scope.

Partnership indicators include establishment of formal collaboration agreements and evidence of multi-organization program activity.

Financial indicators include securing multi-year or general operating funding and measurable progress toward target revenue diversification ranges identified in Section 8.

Organizational capacity indicators include sustainable engagement of staff or contractors where funding supports such expansion, and maturation of communications, reporting, and documentation systems.

These indicators confirm that WRL has transitioned from pilot formation to structured program delivery with stable institutional foundations.

### **9.3 Phase III Performance Indicators**

Evaluation and Strategic Readiness, 2030

Phase III emphasizes institutional reflection, sustainability assessment, and preparation for the next strategic cycle.

Evaluation indicators include completion of a comprehensive organizational review and assessment of long-term program sustainability.

Governance indicators include a formal board-led strategic review and adoption of the subsequent five-year strategic plan.

Institutional stability indicators include articulation of a clear long-term operational model that reflects financial, programmatic, and governance readiness.

These indicators confirm organizational durability and readiness for continued operation beyond the current strategic period.

### **9.4 Phase Transition Criteria**

Transition between phases requires documented readiness and formal board approval.

Transition from Phase I to Phase II requires evidence of functioning board governance, a stable financial management system, at least one viable pilot program, documented learning and

evaluation practices, diversified funding sources, manageable operational workload, and advisory activity functioning within mission boundaries.

Transition from Phase II to Phase III requires demonstration of multiple validated programs, stable multi-source funding, a functioning partnership network, sustainable staffing or contractor structure where applicable, documented organizational learning, and a board-reviewed assessment of long-term viability.

Phase transitions are governance decisions informed by evidence rather than automatic calendar milestones.

## Section 10: Strategic Plan Adoption Statement

This Strategic Plan for Wildfire Resilient Landscapes covering the period January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2030, establishes the organization’s formal framework for mission advancement, institutional development, and program implementation.

The plan has been reviewed and adopted as the guiding document for organizational decision making, resource allocation, governance oversight, and program development during the stated planning period. It reflects the organization’s commitment to responsible growth, ethical stewardship, and long-term resilience.

Adoption of this plan affirms that strategic direction, performance monitoring, and organizational development will be conducted in alignment with the priorities, structures, and principles described herein.

The Board of Directors holds ultimate responsibility for oversight of plan implementation, monitoring organizational progress, and approval of any material revisions.

This plan is effective beginning January 1, 2026, and remains in effect through December 31, 2030, unless amended by formal board action.

Adopted on: January 1, 2026 \_\_\_\_\_

By authority of the Board of Directors of Wildfire Resilient Landscapes.

Board Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Executive Director: Deborah J. Hanson \_\_\_\_\_

## **Section 11: Implementation and Monitoring Structure**

Implementation of this strategic plan is an ongoing organizational function supported through coordinated leadership, governance oversight, and structured monitoring processes.

Executive leadership is responsible for day-to-day implementation of strategic priorities, development of programs and partnerships, and allocation of organizational resources in alignment with the plan. Leadership also maintains documentation of progress, challenges, and emerging conditions that may influence implementation.

The Board of Directors provides oversight of strategic progress and organizational performance. The board reviews performance indicators, financial condition, risk exposure, and program development to ensure continued alignment with mission and long-term sustainability.

Strategic progress is reviewed at regular intervals. Monitoring includes assessment of performance indicators, evaluation findings, governance development, and financial stability. Findings inform operational adjustments and strategic refinement.

Strategic monitoring is treated as an adaptive process. Implementation is expected to evolve in response to environmental conditions, organizational learning, and resource realities, provided that changes remain consistent with mission and governance oversight.

## **Section 12: Transparency and Public Reporting Commitment**

Wildfire Resilient Landscapes is committed to transparency as a foundation of public trust and institutional credibility. The organization communicates its activities, progress, and challenges in a manner that is accurate, responsible, and proportionate to organizational scale.

Public communication reflects documented work, observed outcomes, and acknowledged limitations. The organization does not present plans as accomplishments or claim attribution for outcomes beyond its scope of influence.

WRL provides information to stakeholders through appropriate reporting channels, which may include public updates, partner communications, and organizational disclosures consistent with nonprofit standards. Reporting practices are designed to support accountability while remaining feasible within available administrative capacity.

Transparency extends to governance practices, financial stewardship, and program learning. The organization seeks to maintain clarity regarding its role, activities, and development stage so that partners, funders, and the public understand both progress and constraints.

### **Section 13: Annual Operational Planning Process**

This strategic plan establishes long-term direction for the 2026–2030 period. Annual operational planning translates strategic priorities into specific activities, resource allocations, and implementation schedules for each year of the planning cycle.

Executive leadership prepares an annual operational work plan aligned with strategic priorities, phased development goals, and available resources. The work plan identifies program activities, partnership initiatives, administrative priorities, and performance expectations for the coming year.

The Board of Directors reviews annual operational plans to ensure alignment with strategic direction, financial capacity, and governance standards. Approval of the annual operating budget supports implementation of planned activities.

Annual planning incorporates evaluation findings, organizational learning, and changing external conditions. This process allows WRL to adapt implementation while maintaining long-term strategic consistency.

## **Section 14: Strategic Plan Review and Update Schedule**

This strategic plan is intended to guide organizational development over a multi-year period while remaining responsive to changing conditions. Periodic review ensures continued relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with mission.

Strategic progress is reviewed regularly through performance monitoring and governance oversight. In addition, the Board of Directors conducts structured strategic reviews at appropriate intervals to assess organizational trajectory, environmental change, and institutional capacity.

The plan may be amended by formal board action if significant changes in organizational conditions, funding environment, or strategic direction warrant adjustment.

During the final year of the planning period, the organization conducts a comprehensive strategic review to inform development of the subsequent strategic plan.

Strategic planning is treated as a continuous cycle of implementation, evaluation, reflection, and renewal.