

LLCT, RLF, and CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is the greatest environmental crisis of our time, impacting Lincoln's conservation lands as well as the rest of the world. Both the LLCT and the RLF aim to do what they can to respond in helpful ways, consistent with being Lincoln-focused organizations. While more specific plans will be developed in 2022, we expect this will include:

- Using acquisition and stewardship strategies aimed at mitigating climate change (such as by protecting woodlands and fields that fix and store carbon) or resiliency and adaptation (such as by promoting pollinator corridors and other efforts to protect biodiversity).
- Educating LLCT members and the broader public about climate change, including its effects and constructive actions they can take, ranging from how they manage their own land to how they can make their voices heard in appropriate policy-making forums.
- Reducing our own carbon footprint, including from the operations of the Mall, in part to set a good example and show what's possible.

The urgency of the climate challenge

Humans' carbon emissions have raised global temperatures by 1.1°C so far. Resulting climate change is already causing massive worldwide species extinction, deadly extreme weather events, and increasingly severe droughts, floods, and other disruptions to food supplies. As global temperatures rise to exceed pre-industrial levels by 1.5°C or more, the risk of more abrupt and drastic damage due to ecosystem "tipping points" will increase rapidly, with disruption to human food chains and social stability and acceleration of species loss worldwide.

To avoid that, scientists say that major reductions in outputs of greenhouse gases will be necessary by 2030, as well as reaching "net zero" well before 2050. The next decade therefore will be crucial, requiring economic changes in the U.S. on the scale of our WWII mobilization, as well as in the rest of the world.

Relevance to the LLCT and RLF missions

The LLCT and the RLF [mission statements](#) emphasize preserving Lincoln's natural areas, protecting Lincoln's rural character, and providing related education. Because climate change already is adversely affecting conservation values and will do so more in the future, it is appropriate for the LLCT and RLF to do what they can to both mitigate and react to such changes. That includes how the RLF prioritizes acquisitions and manages the Mall and how the LLCT manages conservation lands and uses its educational capabilities. In doing so, both organizations will take account of what other groups inside and outside of Lincoln are doing, seeking to complement rather than duplicate their efforts.