

Students for Stewardship

East Campus Stewardship Framework White Paper (Short Form)

HUNNICUTT Food Forest • Green Corridor Fork • Spring 2026 Workplan

Draft v1.1 | Prepared for the HUNNICUTT strike team and oversight partners

1) The Club, Our Purpose, and the Journey So Far

Students for Stewardship exists to make stewardship visible, practical, and repeatable. We are not here to run “projects” that vanish after a semester. We are here to build living systems that keep getting better because they are designed for care, built with partners, and woven into the university’s daily life.

Our work at HUNNICUTT is not starting from scratch. It is intentionally building on top of the stream restoration and monitoring work that has already been done on Hunnicutt Creek, including efforts led by Clemson water resources leaders like **Calvin Sawyer** and **Jeremy Pike**. That restoration work was not just cosmetic, it was tied to real performance standards, permitting, and long-term outcomes, with a clear emphasis on rebuilding riparian function and native vegetation. bae.ncsu.edu+1

Now our club’s role is to carry that restoration forward through campus in a way that restoration projects often struggle to sustain: reestablishing key native species, cultivating the different “types” of spaces the creek passes through, and using the Hunnicutt Food Forest as a propagation hub that supports both hydrology and ecology. The long-term goal is simple: help Clemson’s watershed recover function in a landscape that is already overburdened by development, by rebuilding the living infrastructure that makes water behave and ecosystems persist.

2) What This Paper Is For

This document does three jobs:

- 1) It sets a shared vision for the Hunnicutt Food Forest and its relationship to East Campus green corridors.
- 2) It defines non-negotiable design principles so the work stays legible and maintainable.
- 3) It converts the semester into a practical workplan, anchored to a public milestone: Cultivate Clemson (late April 2026).

It is intentionally short. Maps, inventories, and design drawings are expected to be inserted as the project matures.

3) Mission Statement (Draft for Ratification)

Students for Stewardship is a student-led coalition that builds ecological resilience through hands-on land care, community partnership, and place-based education. We steward overlooked landscapes as living classrooms, advancing Clemson University’s land-grant responsibility through practical, regenerative action.

4) The Mission at Hand (Spring 2026)

Our Spring 2026 mission is to move the Hunnicutt Food Forest from “promising” to “institutionally supportable.” That means it must present as intentional, safe, and cared for, even while it is still young.

We will do this by focusing on:

- A clear site story (why this place matters and how it connects).
- Visible cues to care (so the space is socially accepted and maintained).
- Repeatable planting modules (so planting does not become chaotic).
- Watershed stewardship features that are both functional and educational.
- A realistic maintenance rhythm that fits volunteer capacity and Facilities realities.

5) Why HFF Is Strategically Positioned

Hunnicutt is positioned to become a keystone stewardship site because it can connect ecological function, student learning, and public engagement in a single, walkable landscape. It is also close enough to existing campus assets (including major green spaces and visitor destinations) to serve as an extension of Clemson’s public-facing identity.



This is an opportunity to showcase what Clemson and the community can build together, not simply what Clemson can purchase.

6) The Two-Corridor Fork (Same Values, Different Design Rules)

Our corridor concept includes two routes that must be treated differently:

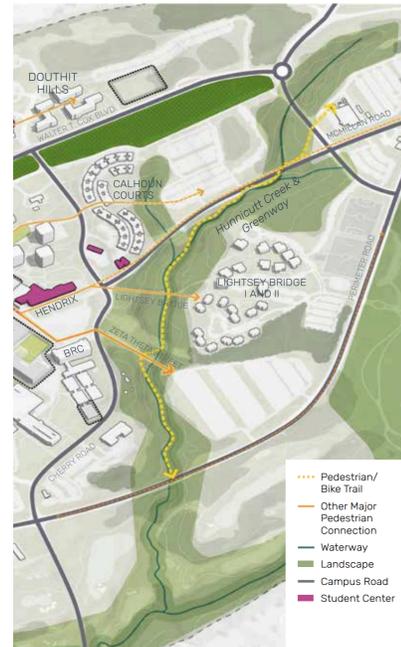
Corridor 1: Riparian Corridor

This corridor follows the HUNNICUTT system downstream through campus. Its design priorities are ecological infrastructure: water quality, infiltration, habitat continuity, shade, and riparian integrity.

Corridor 2: Working Green Commons Corridor

This corridor runs through the Pecan Grove / President's Park / Bowman Field area. Its primary constraint is functional use, including game day parking and circulation. The stewardship strategy here is design that upgrades shade, tree health, soil function, and aesthetics while keeping the space operational.

The project succeeds only if we respect these differences and tailor design, maintenance, and cues to care accordingly.



[PLACEHOLDER: Map B: Corridor Fork Diagram (two corridors, two typologies)]

Insert a fork diagram with short design-rule callouts for each corridor type (riparian vs working green commons).

7) North Star: Cues to Care

We will design explicitly for cues to care: visible signals that the landscape is intentionally managed. This is how biodiverse landscapes gain social acceptance and long-term maintenance support.

Cues to care we will standardize at HUNNICUTT:

- Defined edges and clean transitions (mowed margin, bed lines, path borders).
- Consistent mulch rings and repeated spacing in tree lines.
- Clear paths and managed desire lines.
- Minimal, durable signage that explains what is happening and why.
- A maintenance rhythm that prevents the site from ever looking forgotten.

8) Cultivate Clemson (Late April 2026): Our First Public Proof Point

We will host a Cultivate Clemson grand opening at HUNNICUTT in late April 2026. This event is the forcing function for site readiness.

By event day, the site does not need to be “finished,” but it must be:

- Legible: visitors can understand where to go and what they are seeing.
- Safe: no confusing hazards, clean access, obvious routes.
- Intentional: clear cues to care, consistent repetition, clean edges.
- Educational: a few well-placed explanations that turn features into teaching tools.

[PLACEHOLDER: Map C: Event Walk Route + Station Locations]

Insert a simple diagram showing the primary visitor loop and 4–6 station pins (welcome, tree-line demo, orchard zone, watershed stop, propagation pipeline, volunteer on-ramp).

9) What We Have Now (Baseline)

This section prevents the project from relying on memory. It will be converted into a live inventory table.

Current momentum includes:

- An active plant pipeline (greenhouse starts and community grow support).
- Approximately 25 volunteer partners ready to participate in workdays.
- Running water on site and a 1,000-gallon tank to support establishment watering.
- A shared intent to build repeatable planting patterns, not one-off plantings.

[PLACEHOLDER: Table 1: Live Plant Inventory (source, species, quantity, container size, readiness date, intended zone, steward)]

This table becomes the project’s source of truth. Keep it to one page in the printed version; maintain the full version in a spreadsheet.

10) HUNNICUTT Roadside Tree Line Concept (Repeatable Modules)

We want the dirt road corridor to read like an intentional walk-through landscape now, while staying compatible with future decisions. The best way to do that is to use repeatable planting modules.

Working concept:

- Plant along an estimated 1,000 linear feet (to be confirmed by GIS).
- Use a pleasing rhythm: overstory canopy presence every third or fourth station.
- Mix support species and edible species where appropriate.
- Pair each tree station with a small, repeatable “guild ring” of 3–5 perennial support plants to suppress weeds, build soil, and create immediate intention.

[PLACEHOLDER: Diagram A: Roadside Planting Module Templates (3–5 modules)]

Insert a simple diagram for each module: overstory, support layer, edible element (optional), guild ring plants, spacing notes. Keep it visual, not wordy.

11) Watershed Stewardship Integration

Watershed stewardship is not an add-on. It is one of the strongest ways to make the site educational and resilient.

We will identify and prioritize:

- Rain garden opportunities and small infiltration features.
- Educational placements where stormwater logic is visible.
- Design that reads clean and maintained (especially at messy ecological edges).

GIS needs to happen early, not after installation. We want shared maps that support delegation and prevent rework.

[PLACEHOLDER: Map D: Preliminary Stormwater Flow Paths + Candidate Rain Garden Sites]

Insert a simple flow-path map with 2–4 candidate features highlighted. Add one short caption per feature: “what it does” and “why here.”

12) Spring 2026 Workplan (Meat on the Bones)

This is the operational core. It converts the semester into discrete work packages and gives the team a shared cadence.

This list is intentionally direct. Each item should get an owner, a date window, and a definition of done.

Work Item	Definition of Done	Target Window
Green Team planning	Meeting cadence set. Roles assigned. Work packages owned. Shared calendar live.	January
Coordinate with Facilities (Tommy)	Corridor planting alignment: access, utilities, approvals, mulch/logistics, maintenance expectations.	Early January
Plant inventory lock	Single source-of-truth list: greenhouse starts + in-ground installs + promised plants + readiness dates.	January

Compost strategy + final turn	Cubic yards estimate confirmed. One more turn with optional alfalfa pellets. Placement plan by zone (trees, orchard, guild rings).	January–February
Permaculture site design pass	Sketch-level zoning + modules + priorities (roadside, orchard, riparian edges).	January–February
1,000-gallon tank upgrades	Intake filtration added. Off-gas and watering SOP written. Roles for watering assigned.	January
Up-potting + hardening-off pipeline	Up-pot queue tracked weekly. Hardening schedule defined. Transplant windows identified.	January–April
Road tree line pilot: wishlist + sourcing	3–5 module templates selected. Tree wishlist finalized. Sourcing/donations confirmed.	January–February
Road tree line pilot: install	Pilot segment installed, mulched, labeled. Protective guild ring installed where feasible.	February–March
Tree planting (additional woody)	Any remaining winter woody installs completed (orchard zone + key corridor nodes).	January–February
Purple Martin birdhouse build	Design + materials list complete. Build day scheduled. Install locations selected. Maintenance plan written.	January–February
Bench build	Location chosen. Design finalized. Built + installed.	January–March
Control burn planning (Red, Experimental Forest)	Burn location(s), purpose, timing window, permissions, safety plan, and post-burn planting plan defined.	January–February
Sod cutting plan (Corey)	Scope clarified. Method + locations selected. Disposal plan. Follow-up planting/mulch plan.	January–February
Annuals plan (incl. oregano + select medicinals)	Short list finalized. Propagation vs sourcing decided. Planting blocks defined (repeatable clusters).	March–April
Botanical Gardens / SCNPS sale coordination	Sale dates confirmed. Target species list defined. Pickup/transport plan set.	March–April
Fig propagation workshop	Date set. Curriculum + materials list ready. Event executed.	February–March

StoryMaps build	Stream restoration → today → forward plan. Draft published. Updated as inventory/maps finalize.	January–April
Update Green Corridor proposal	Old doc refreshed to match current framework, corridor fork typologies, and Spring workplan.	February–March
Campus improvement grant	Draft scope + partners + budget assembled. Submitted.	January
Contingency funding	Scope + budget assembled (trees, mulch, signage, irrigation fittings, materials). Submitted.	Early February
Cultivate Clemson readiness sprint	Mulch refresh, edges cleaned, path clarity, signage v1 installed, safety walkthrough complete.	Early–mid April
May/June annual cutting coordination	Cutting window set with University. Maintenance plan written (native encouragement, invasive suppression, protection of installs).	May–June
Bermuda pressure strategy	Plan with Corey to push back bermuda and protect corridor edges; ask Ryan about bermuda realities and workable controls.	May–June

13) Delegation Lanes (So This Does Not Live in One Person’s Head)

This project becomes real when responsibilities are cleanly handed off. The following lanes should be assigned early:

- Plant Inventory Lead
- Road Tree Modules Lead
- Orchard Zone Lead (top-of-hill)
- Watershed Stewardship Lead
- Signage and Education Lead
- Volunteer Operations Lead
- Funding Lead
- GIS and Mapping Lead

14) Funding Strategy and Requests (Framework)

We will pursue campus improvement funding, aligned grants, and in-kind donations. Funding should unlock materials and infrastructure that make volunteer work effective.

This section stays short in the white paper. The detailed budget should live in a spreadsheet.

[PLACEHOLDER: Figure A: Spending to Date (simple bar chart or cumulative line)]

Insert a clean graph and one sentence interpreting it. Avoid long narrative.

14.1 Contingency Funding Ticket Items (Draft)

- Trees for the HUNNICUTT roadside corridor (pilot stretch first, then expansion).

14.2 Annual Funding Ticket Items (Draft)

- Reference last year's request as the baseline; update quantities and add Cultivate Clemson readiness needs (mulch, signage materials, small infrastructure).

15) Closing

HUNNICUTT can become a signature example of Clemson's land-grant identity expressed on the ground: a landscape that teaches, protects, feeds, and invites participation.

This document is intentionally built to be worked on. The next step is to fill the placeholders with shared maps and a live inventory, assign owners to the workplan, and start installing the pieces that must look good by late April.