

NAMING OVERVIEW

The organization would be called the Thoreau Alliance primarily for fundraising and administration functions. The Thoreau Society and Thoreau Farm names will continue for other public outreach, messaging, and programs. The Thoreau Alliance umbrella brand would be the nonprofit organization that brings Thoreau’s legacy to life by supporting the back-end functions of the Thoreau Society & Thoreau Farm. The Thoreau Society will remain a worldwide community of scholars and enthusiasts focused on scholarship, and education. Thoreau Farm will serve as the home base of the community, offering a broad range of place-based programs designed to foster interest in and engagement with Thoreau’s writing and ideas.

WHY THOREAU ALLIANCE?

Several factors guided this choice. An effective name is concise, memorable, easy to say and spell. For us, it was essential to keep Thoreau at the heart, and to differentiate this entity from others related to Thoreau. After considering numerous options, The Thoreau Alliance emerged as the option that fit all of the above criteria, while also evoking the combined strength of partners standing shoulder to shoulder. The Thoreau Society and Thoreau Farm are allies. The name is necessarily pragmatic, not fanciful. It also works well for a supporting brand because it is subtle and will complement but not overshadow the other two names.

HOW WOULD IT WORK?

The individual organizations would keep their names, their messaging, and their programs. They would be supported by an umbrella brand known as The Thoreau Alliance. The Thoreau Alliance would serve as the outward-facing name primarily for fundraising and administration. It would stand for the trusted nonprofit that works reliably with funders, vendors, partners, and other stakeholders on behalf of the two supported brands.

<p>THE THOREAU SOCIETY (<i>our worldwide community</i>)</p> <p>An international community of scholars and enthusiasts stimulating interest in and fostering education about Thoreau’s life, work, legacy, and his place in his world and ours, challenging us all to live a deliberate, considered life.</p>	<p>THOREAU FARM (<i>our home base</i>)</p> <p>Offers a broad array of place-based programs, presenting Thoreau’s birthplace and the surrounding landscape as a source of inspiration for living deliberately, practicing simplicity, and exploring new ideas for positive change.</p>
<p>THE THOREAU ALLIANCE</p> <p>(<i>new umbrella name</i>)</p> <p>A nonprofit that brings Thoreau’s legacy to life—safeguarding and fostering a vibrant community that draws inspiration from his timeless ideas and values.</p>	

All existing programs and projects will keep their current names and purposes, with The Thoreau Society and Thoreau Farm continuing their respective offerings under their own names. For example, someone might say, “*I’m attending the Annual Gathering of The Thoreau Society this summer,*” highlighting the Society’s signature program; or, “*I’m spending the day in The Writer’s Retreat at Thoreau Farm,*” emphasizing the place-based experience at the Farm.

Programs and projects that will remain part of the Thoreau Society: *Thoreau Society Bulletin; The Concord Saunterer; Annual Gathering; The Henry David Thoreau Prize for Literary Excellence in Nature Writing; Thoreau Society Awards; Marjorie Harding Memorial Fellowship; and Thoreau Country Conservation Alliance Fellowship.*

Programs and projects that will continue to be offered by Thoreau Farm: *House tours, educational programs, The Thoreau Sauntering Society, The Write Connection at Thoreau Farm, The Writer’s Retreat at Thoreau Farm, What Would Henry Do? Book Series, and the Thoreau Farm Trail.*

## WHY AN UMBRELLA BRAND?

As stated in the Rationale for the Proposed Merger, “our goal is to build the infrastructure needed to meet our worthy ambitions.” Branding is a key component of any organization’s infrastructure because it helps tell our story to stakeholders, funders, and the public.

If we merge, we would want to tell a strong and authentic story about what this merged organization is: in this case, two mission-driven organizations that are combining forces on the back-end so they can do even more for the communities and missions they serve. The story our branding tells should support our shared efforts to:

- Make it easier for people of all backgrounds and interests to find us and discover what Thoreau means to them;
- Build an even more comprehensive set of resources for participants to pursue specific interests and discover new ones (e.g. Thoreauviana, scholarly inquiry, place-based learning, writing);
- Attract supporters and expand the network of people thinking about Thoreau to ensure a strong future.

It’s crucial that we shape our shared story in a way that honors our past but prepares for the future. The deep ties to our existing brands, Thoreau Society and Thoreau Farm, and the history they represent are important assets. The goal is to strengthen them. An effective way to do this is with what’s known as an *umbrella brand*—a strategy that allows distinct identities to flourish within a shared infrastructure that is reliable, effective, professional, and adaptable.

This approach is used by organizations such as the Smithsonian Institution, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Carnegie Institution for Science, as well as by many universities and publishing houses. In publishing, for instance, an umbrella brand might hold several imprints, each speaking to a different audience—one devoted to scholars, another to general readers, another to young minds—but all sharing the same standards of quality and vision.

It’s a model that respects diversity of voice while keeping a sense of strength and purpose. It allows many expressions to grow from one shared foundation. It’s also an approach that several of our members and partners have encouraged us to pursue.

A supporting umbrella brand:

- **Respects individuality:** entities keep their own identity and programs, delivering experiences designed for their community
- **Unites with purpose:** a shared base demonstrates commitment and creates stability
- **Amplifies impact:** the strength of the whole supports each part and vice versa
- **Promotes specialized opportunities:** centralized operations frees teams to focus on the experiences and relationships that matter most

## RESPECTFUL OF OUR PAST. READY FOR OUR FUTURE.

The Thoreau Alliance as our supporting umbrella brand would honor the rich history and distinct contributions of both organizations, preserving their names, missions, and programs, while providing a shared foundation for growth, sustainability, and lasting impact. By aligning operations and strengthening infrastructure, it allows every individual initiative to flourish, while advancing the broader mission of keeping Thoreau’s legacy alive and relevant.

In doing so, The Thoreau Alliance embodies both continuity and possibility: it safeguards the work already accomplished, nurtures what is meaningful today, and opens pathways for new ways to inspire, educate, and engage generations yet to come.