

Project Selection Criteria & Evaluation Process

PURPOSE:

This policy establishes the selection criteria and evaluation process for conservation projects.

POLICY:

Selection criteria are the Land Trust's written description of the characteristics or minimum standards that qualify conservation projects to be considered for protection. Criteria establish whether a project is eligible for the Land Trust's consideration, but do not guarantee that the Land Trust will take on the project. These criteria are used to screen projects offered to the Land Trust and target properties to pursue. In both cases, the criteria provide a critical tool for determining which transactions are appropriate and worthwhile for the Land Trust to undertake and which are not. The selection criteria allow landowners to understand the Land Trust's policies and priorities. To ensure that projects are selected based on the Land Trust's mission and priorities, WCLT will:

- 1. Establish a Project Selection Committee** comprised of the Executive Director and a minimum of two (2) board members appointed by the Board to oversee the project evaluation process. Board members should be selected for their knowledge and expertise in assessing conservation values.
- 2. Delegate to the Executive Director the authority to complete an initial screening process** on projects presented to the Land Trust for consideration. The Executive Director will document the initial screening, and present a recommendation to the Project Selection Committee, to proceed or not proceed with a full Project Evaluation in order to be considered by the Land Trust for selection.
- 3. Delegate to the Project Selection Committee the authority to complete the project evaluation process**, using the criteria and scoring system established in this policy (see *Evaluation Criteria*, *WCLT Scoring Criteria* and *Project Evaluation Summary*). The project evaluation process will be completed by an evaluation team consisting of the Executive Director and a minimum of two (2) board members selected by the Project Selection Committee. The intention is that the board members will be selected based upon their interest in working on the project long term and their willingness to participate in fundraising and outreach. All board members will be provided opportunities to participate in project evaluations. The Project Selection Committee will recommend to the Board as part of the project selection approval process, a project priority rating of: HIGH, MODERATE, LOW or NOT RECOMMENDED based on the project evaluation.

Approved: August 1, 2005

President, Board of Directors

Evaluation Criteria

EVALUATION SUMMARY		
CRITERIA	EVALUATION ELEMENTS	POSSIBLE POINTS
A. Project Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate the project in the county, site maps • Brief summary of the project (size, ownership, project type, goals, estimated cost, funding sources) 	Not scored
B. Priority Areas OR Community Lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project is located within one of the WCLT Priority Areas 	30 OR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project does not meet the Priority Areas criteria but has conservation value for the community 	15
C. Protection Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife habitat • Coastal features • Wetlands and streams • Working farmlands 	20
D. Primary Contributing Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquifer recharge • Beach access • Rare native species • Scenic vistas 	12
E. Secondary Contributing Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community open space • Historic sites • Recreational trails • Working forestlands 	8
F. Project Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant ecological value • Leverage • Threat • Stewardship • Geographical distribution • Multiple objectives • Support 	26
G. Public Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public access • Educational and/or scientific value 	4
Total Points Possible		100 Priority Areas 85 Community Lands

WCLT Scoring Criteria

A. Project Overview (not scored)

B. Priority Areas (30 Points)

(30 Points) Projects that are within one of the Priority Areas

Projects that do not fall within one of the Priority Areas evaluate as Community Lands.

Community Lands (up to 15 Points)

(15 Points) Full points are awarded to projects with a strong contingent of community members and officials who have identified the project as making a substantial contribution to the community.

(1 - 14 Points) Partial points are awarded to projects where a landowner(s) and/or a core group of community members have identified the project as making a contribution to the community.

(0 Points) No points are awarded to projects where there is minimal landowner and/or community member identification that the project makes a contribution to the community.

C. Protection Focus (20 Points)

(20 Points) Projects that protect *two or more focus areas*: wildlife habitat, coastal features, wetlands and streams, and working farmlands.

(15 Points) Projects that protect *one of the focus areas*: wildlife habitat, coastal features, wetlands and streams, and working farmlands.

D. Primary Contributing Factors (up to 12 Points)

(up to 3 Points Each) Points are awarded for each contributing factor: aquifer recharge, beach access, rare native species, and scenic vistas.

E. Secondary Contributing Factors (up to 8 Points)

(up to 2 Points Each) Points are awarded for each contributing factor: community open space, historic sites, recreational trails, and working forestlands.

F. Project Characteristics (up to 26 Points)

(up to 9 Points) Significant ecological values: Project protects large acreages and corridors linking protected areas that support healthy ecological systems.

(up to 5 Points) Leverage: Project can be achieved with less resource cost to WCLT because of appropriate partnerships.

(up to 3 Points) Threat: Project has conservation values that are highly threatened.

(up to 3 Points) Stewardship: Project has limited stewardship issues and/or adequate stewardship funds are provided.

(up to 2 Points) Geographical Distribution: Project adds to a geographic distribution of land conservation.

(up to 2 Points) Multiple Objectives: Project accomplishes multiple land protection priorities.

(up to 2 Points) Support: Project has strong community and member support.

G. Public Use (up to 4 Points)

(up to 2 Points) Project allows public access.

(up to 2 Points) Project provides an educational and/or research opportunity.

Proposed Project:

Evaluator: _____ **Date:** _____

PROJECT EVALUATION SUMMARY		
CRITERIA	EVALUATION ELEMENTS	POSSIBLE POINTS
A. Project Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate the project in the county, site maps • Brief summary of the project (size, ownership, project type, estimated cost, goals) 	Not scored
B. Priority Areas OR Community Lands	<input type="checkbox"/> Project is located within one of the WCLT Priority Areas (30 Points) <input type="checkbox"/> Project does not meet the Priority Areas criteria but has conservation value for the community (up to 15 Points)	
C. Protection Focus	2 or More = 20 Points 1 = 15 Points <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife habitat <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal features <input type="checkbox"/> Wetlands and streams <input type="checkbox"/> Working farmlands	
D. Primary Contributing Factors	Up to 3 Points Each <input type="checkbox"/> Aquifer recharge <input type="checkbox"/> Beach access <input type="checkbox"/> Rare native species <input type="checkbox"/> Scenic vistas	
E. Secondary Contributing Factors	Up to 2 Points Each <input type="checkbox"/> Community open space <input type="checkbox"/> Historic sites <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational trails <input type="checkbox"/> Working forestlands	
F. Project Characteristics	Up to 26 Total Points <input type="checkbox"/> Significant ecological value (up to 9 Points) <input type="checkbox"/> Leverage (up to 5 Points) <input type="checkbox"/> Threat (up to 3 Points) <input type="checkbox"/> Stewardship (up to 3 Points) <input type="checkbox"/> Geographical distribution (up to 2 Points) <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple objectives (up to 2 Points) <input type="checkbox"/> Support (up to 2 Points)	
G. Public Use	Up to 2 Points Each <input type="checkbox"/> Public access <input type="checkbox"/> Educational and/or scientific value	
Total Points		