

WWRP Evaluation Criterion #1 in the Critical Habitat, Natural Areas, and Urban Wildlife Habitat Categories
Adopted by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
April 27, 2016
Resolution 2016-15

CRITICAL HABITAT CATEGORY

1. Ecological and Biological Characteristics

Why is the site worthy of long-term conservation?¹

“Paint a picture” of your project for the evaluators – the what, where, and why. This is the “heart” of your presentation and evaluators will draw conclusions based on the information presented about the quality and function of the habitat and the demonstrated need to protect it for fish and wildlife.

The Bigger Picture

How is this project supported by a current plan (i.e., species management population plan, habitat conservation, local, conservation futures, watershed, statewide, agency, or conservation), or a coordinated region-wide prioritization effort? What is the status of the plan? Does this project assist in implementation of a local shoreline master program, updated according to Revised Code of Washington 90.58.080 or local comprehensive plans updated according to Revised Code of Washington 36.70A.130? What process was used to identify this project as a priority? What specific role does this project play in a broader watershed or landscape picture? Is it part of a phased project? Is it a stand-alone site or habitat? For Water Resource Inventory Areas 1-19, how is the project referenced in the *Action Agenda* developed by the Puget Sound Partnership? The *Action Agenda* can be found online at www.psp.wa.gov. Evaluators should ignore this question for projects outside Water Resource Inventory Areas 1-19.

What is the statewide significance of the project site? Does it meet priorities identified in a state plan? What elevates this site to a state significance level in addition to needs identified for the local community?

Uniqueness and Significance

Explain how the site is unique or significant on a global, regional, state, ecosystem, and/or watershed level. How unique is the site in relation to habitat quality, connectivity, diversity, and rarity? How is the site important in providing critical habitat or biological function for wildlife species or communities? How does this site compare to others of the same type?

¹ Revised Code of Washington 79A.15.060 (6)(a)(iii, v - vii, xi, xiv); (6)(b)(ii)

Fish and Wildlife Species or Communities

Which, if any, are the target species or communities²? (Target species may or may not be special status species.) Are the target species or communities geographically isolated to this particular site? Explain the condition of the population of target species. Which species have the potential and likelihood to use the site in the future and will reintroduction occur naturally or otherwise?

Quality of Habitat

Describe the ecological and biological quality of the habitat. What specific role does the habitat play in supporting the species or communities using the site? How is this habitat important in providing food, water, cover, connectivity, and resting areas? Are the size, quality, and other characteristics of the habitat adequate to support the target species or communities within the context of the project areas? Has the habitat or characteristics of the site been identified as limiting factors or critical pathways to the target species and communities?

▲ Maximum Points = 20

Revised April 2016

NATURAL AREAS CATEGORY

1. Ecological and Biological Characteristics

Why is the site worthy of long-term conservation?³

“Paint a picture” of your project for the evaluators – the what, where, and why. This is the “heart” of your presentation and evaluators will draw conclusions based on the information presented about the *quality and function of the plant community, habitat, or other unique geological or natural historical features, and the demonstrated need to protect it.*

The Bigger Picture

How is this project supported by a current plan (i.e., Natural Heritage Plan, habitat conservation, local, watershed, statewide, or species/community management or recovery plans), or a coordinated region-wide prioritization effort? What is the status of the plan?

² A target species or community is the project’s primary objective for protection and stands to gain the greatest benefit from the acquisition. For example, a project’s primary objective may be to acquire and protect high quality shrub-steppe. This is the “target community” but that community also provides important habitat for shrub-steppe-dependent species.

³Revised Code of Washington 79A.15.060 (6)(a)(iii, v - vii, xi); (6)(b)(ii)

Does this project assist in implementation of a local shoreline master program, updated according to Revised Code of Washington 90.58.080 or local comprehensive plans updated according to Revised Code of Washington 36.70A.130? What process was used to identify this project as a priority? What specific role does this project play in a broader watershed or landscape picture? Is it part of a phased project? Is it a stand-alone site or habitat?

For Water Resource Inventory Areas 1-19, how is the project referenced in the *Action Agenda* developed by the Puget Sound Partnership? The *Action Agenda* can be found online at www.psp.wa.gov. Evaluators should ignore this question for projects outside Water Resource Inventory Areas 1-19.

What is the statewide significance of the project site? Does it meet priorities identified in a state plan? What elevates this site to a state significance level in addition to needs identified for the local community?

Uniqueness and Significance

Explain how the site is unique or significant on a global, regional, state, ecosystem, and/or watershed level.

- How unique is the site in relation to habitat quality, connectivity, diversity, and rarity?
- How is the site important to the target species and/or communities? Are the target species and/or communities geographically isolated to this particular site?
- How does this site compare to others of the same type?

Species or Communities

What significant species and/or communities currently exist on, or use the site? Which, if any, are the target species and/or communities? (*"Target species or communities" may or may not be special status species.*)

- Describe the community type(s) and explain the relative condition of the population of target species and/or communities.
- Which species and/or communities have the potential and likelihood to use the site in the future and will reintroduction occur naturally or otherwise?

Quality of Habitat or Natural Features

Describe the ecological and biological quality of the site and how it supports the species or communities present.

- Describe how this site represents a native ecosystem, or, its rarity in relation to other types. Describe how this site has retained, to a significant degree, its natural character.
- Are the size, quality, and other site characteristics adequate to support the target species or communities within the context of the project area?

- Has the habitat or characteristics of the site been identified as limiting factors or critical pathways to the target species/communities?

▲ Maximum Points=20

Revised April 2016

URBAN WILDLIFE HABITAT

1. Ecological and Biological Characteristics

Why is the site worthy of long-term conservation?

“Paint a picture” of the project site for the evaluators – the what, where, and why. This is the heart of your presentation and evaluators will draw conclusions based on the information presented about the quality and function of the habitat and the demonstrated need to protect it for fish and wildlife.

The Bigger Picture

How is this project supported by a current plan (i.e., local, watershed, statewide, agency, habitat conservation, open space, or species management plans), or a coordinated region-wide prioritization effort? What is the status of the plan?

- Does this project assist in implementation of a local shoreline master program, updated according to Revised Code of Washington 90.58.080 or local comprehensive plans updated according to Revised Code of Washington 36.70A.130?
- What process was used to identify this project as a priority?
- What specific role does this project play in a broader watershed or landscape picture? Is it part of a phased project? Is it a stand-alone site or habitat?
- For Water Resource Inventory Areas 1-19, how is the project referenced in the *Action Agenda* developed by the Puget Sound Partnership? The *Action Agenda* can be found online at www.psp.wa.gov. Evaluators should ignore this question for projects outside Water Resource Inventory Areas 1-19.
- What is the statewide significance of the project site? Does it meet priorities identified in a state plan? What elevates this site to a state significance level in addition to needs identified for the local community?

Uniqueness or Significance of the Site

Explain how the site is unique or significant in the regional, ecosystem, watershed, or urban growth area.

- How unique is the site in relation to habitat quality, connectivity, diversity, and rarity?

- How is the site important in providing critical habitat or biological function for wildlife species or communities?
- How does this site compare to others of the same type?

Fish and Wildlife Species and or Communities

What significant species or communities use the site?

- Which, if any, are the target species or communities?⁴ Target species may or may not be special status species.
- Are the target species or communities geographically isolated to this particular site? Explain the condition of the population of target species.
- Which species have the potential and likelihood to use the site in the future and will reintroduction occur naturally or otherwise?

Quality of Habitat

Describe the ecological and biological quality of the habitat.

- What specific role does the habitat play in supporting the species or communities using the site?
- How is this habitat important in providing food, water, cover, connectivity, and resting areas?
- Are the size, quality, and other characteristics of the habitat adequate to support the target species or communities within the context of the project area?
- Has the habitat or characteristics of the site been identified as limiting factors or critical pathways to the target species/communities?

▲ Maximum Points=20

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⁴A target species or community is the project's primary objective for protection and stands to gain the greatest benefit from the acquisition. For example, a project's primary objective may be to acquire and protect high quality shrub-steppe. This is the "target community," but that community also provides important habitat for shrub-steppe-dependent species.