



## Intent

To conserve native plants, wildlife habitat, wetlands, and water bodies.

## Requirements

### Option 1. Sites without significant habitat or wetlands and water bodies

Locate the project on a site that does not have significant habitat, as defined in Option 2 of this credit, or land within 100 feet (30 meters) of such habitat, and fulfill the requirements of Options 1 or 2(a) under SLL Prerequisite 3, Wetland and Water Body Conservation.

### OR

### Option 2. Sites with significant habitat

Work with both the state's Natural Heritage Program and the state fish and wildlife agency, or local equivalent for projects outside the U.S., to delineate identified significant habitat on the site. Do not disturb significant habitat or portions of the site within an appropriate buffer around the habitat. The geographic extent of the habitat and buffer must be identified by a qualified biologist, a conservation organization, or the appropriate state, regional, or local agency. Protect significant habitat and its identified buffers from development in perpetuity by donating or selling the land, or a conservation easement on the land, to an accredited land trust, conservation organization, or relevant government agency (a deed covenant is not sufficient to meet this requirement).

Identify and commit to ongoing management activities, along with parties responsible for management and funding available, so that habitat is maintained in preproject condition or better for a minimum of three years after the project is built out. The requirement for identifying ongoing management activities may also be met by earning SLL Credit 9, Long-Term Conservation Management of Wetlands and Water Bodies.

Significant habitat for this credit includes the following:

- Habitat for species that are listed or are candidates for listing under state or federal endangered species acts, habitat for species of special concern in the state, and/or habitat for those species and/or ecological communities classified as GH, G1, G2, G3, and/or S1 and S2 species by NatureServe (local equivalent standards for threatened and endangered species may be used by projects outside the U.S. if the site area is not covered by NatureServe data).
- Locally or regionally significant habitat of any size, or patches of predominantly native vegetation at least 150 acres (60 hectares) (even if part of the area lies outside the project boundary).
- Habitat flagged for conservation under a regional or state conservation or green infrastructure plan.

### OR

### Option 3. Sites with wetlands and water bodies

Design the project to conserve 100% of all water bodies, wetlands, land within 100 feet (30 meters) of water bodies, and land within 50 feet (15 meters) of wetlands on the site. Using a qualified biologist, conduct an assessment, or compile existing assessments, showing the extent to which those water bodies and/or wetlands perform the following functions: (1) water quality maintenance, (2) wildlife habitat protection, and (3) hydrologic function maintenance, including flood protection. Assign appropriate buffers [not less than 100 feet (30 meters) for water bodies and 50 feet (15 meters) for wetlands] based on the functions provided, contiguous soils and slopes, and contiguous land uses. Do not disturb wetlands, water bodies, or their buffers, and protect them from development in perpetuity by donating or selling the land, or a conservation easement on the land, to an accredited land trust, conservation organization, or relevant government agency (a deed covenant is not sufficient to meet this requirement). Identify and commit to ongoing management activities, along with parties responsible for management and funding available, so that habitat is maintained in preproject condition or better for a minimum of three years after the project is built out. The requirement for identifying ongoing management activities may also be met by earning SLL Credit 9, Long-Term Conservation Management of Wetlands and Water Bodies. The project does not meet the requirements if it has negative effects on habitat for species identified in Option 2(a).

### For all projects

The following features are not considered wetlands, water bodies, or buffer land that must be protected:

- Previously developed land.
- Man-made water bodies (such as industrial mining pits, concrete-lined canals, or stormwater retention ponds) that lack natural edges and floors or native ecological communities in the water and along the edge
- Man-made linear wetlands that result from the interruption of natural drainages by existing rights-of-way.
- Wetlands that were created incidentally by human activity and have been rated "poor" for all measured wetland functions. Wetland quality assessment must be performed by a qualified biologist using a method that is accepted by local, state or regional permitting agencies.