

Site design for habitat or wetland and water body conservation

Possible 1 point

Intent

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

Requirements

Case 1. sites without significant habitat or wetlands and water bodies (1 point)

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

Case 2. sites with habitat or wetlands or water bodies(1 point)

Meet the requirements of Option 1 or Option 2.

Option 1. sites with significant habitat

Work with both the state's Natural Heritage Program and the state fish and wildlife agency (or local equivalent agency 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 nongovernmental conservation organization, or the appropriate state, regional, or local agency. Protect significant habitat and its identified buffers from development 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) for the purpose of long-term conservation.

Identify and commit to ongoing management activities, along with parties responsible for management and funding available, such 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 Long-Term Conservation Management of Habitat or Wetland and Water Bodies](#).

Significant habitat for this credit is as follows:

- *Endangered species acts.* Habitat for species that are listed or are candidates for listing under state or national endangered species acts, habitat for species of special concern in the state, and habitat for species or ecological communities classified as GH, G1, G2, G3, S1, or S2 by NatureServe (local equivalent standards for threatened and endangered species may be used in countries outside the U.S. that do not have access to NatureServe data);
- *Locally or regionally significant habitat.* 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); and
- *Habitat flagged for conservation.* Habitat flagged for conservation under a regional or state conservation or green infrastructure plan.

Option 2. sites with wetlands and water bodies (1 point)

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 or wetlands provide (1) water quality maintenance; (2) wildlife habitat; and (3) hydrologic function maintenance, including flood protection. Assign appropriate buffers, measuring 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 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) for the purpose of long-term conservation.

Identify and commit to ongoing management activities, along with parties responsible for management and funding available, such 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 Long-Term Conservation Management of Habitat or Wetland and Water Bodies](#). The project does not meet the requirements if it degrades habitat for species identified in endangered species acts or habitat flagged for conservation in Option 1.

For All Projects

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

1. previously developed land;
2. man-made water bodies (such as industrial mining pits, concrete-lined canals, or rainwater retention ponds) that lack natural edges and floors or native ecological communities in the water and along the edge;
3. man-made linear wetlands that result from the interruption of natural drainages by existing rights-of-way; and
4. wetlands that were created incidentally by human activity and have been rated "poor" for all measured wetland functions, as assessed by a qualified biologist using a method that is accepted by state or regional permitting agencies (or a local equivalent method for projects outside the U.S.).

