



Conservation Certification Appeal Procedures

Version 1.1 | March 2017

SUMMARY

All organizations applying for WHC Conservation Certification in 2017 are using this new standard for the first time. Perfect understanding of the entire standard should not be expected and organizations need to be supported. At the same time, WHC is adapting its systems and procedures as it learns.

As a result, the appeal process is designed to allow organizations to (1) clarify information in their application that was misinterpreted by Reviewers, and (2) provide information that was omitted from their original application. It is also designed to match WHC's existing resource capacity.

ELIGIBILITY

Programs that are not certified may appeal the application review within 30 days of the outcome letter being sent by WHC.

APPEAL PROCESS

The appeal process has three steps:

1. Assess outcome of review

Upon receiving the outcome notification from WHC, organizations will be notified if they are eligible to appeal.

The following resources can help organizations determine if they will appeal:

- 1) Outcome notification (email from WHC with results of review) which includes:
 - a. Program Summary Sheet
 - b. Project Scoring Sheets for each project in the program
- 2) Application on the WHC Conservation Certification website
- 3) Project Guidance documents, found [here](#), that describe some criteria for certification
- 4) "Tips page" on the WHC Conservation Certification website that details the requirements for certification

Certification is not granted when the Reviewer does not find sufficient information to give at least one project¹ in the program a class of “qualifying.” For a project to be given a class of qualifying, Reviewers must have sufficient information to answer “yes” to the following questions:

- 1) Is the project locally appropriate?
- 2) Does the project exceed regulatory requirements?
- 3) Does the project have a conservation or conservation education objective?
- 4) Does the project provide conservation or conservation education value?
- 5) Does the project have documented outcomes?

Details on the particular scoring for each question are specific to each project theme. Details on these requirements are found in the “tips page” of the WHC Conservation Certification website.

After determining the specific reason certification was not granted, organizations should decide if they want to appeal by clarifying their application and/or providing additional information.

2. Submit

Appeals are submitted by email to conservationcertification@wildlifehc.org. The applicant should make specific mention of the program, project and application question(s) that the appeal is addressing. For example, if two programs were not given qualifying status because no monitoring data was included, the organization should send monitoring data and provide the Reviewer question number that the additional information pertains to. If the Reviewer did not recognize an attachment, this should be noted in the email.

3. Conduct

The WHC Certification & Technology Department will manage the appeal process. The appeal information will be sent to the same Reviewer that conducted the review. Exceptions will be made if WHC determines that the Reviewer did not properly review the original application or the Reviewer is not available.

Based on results from the Reviewer, WHC will determine the outcome of the appeal and notify the organization.

The information contained in this document may modified at any time by WHC.

¹ Qualifying projects under the Green Infrastructure, Invasive Species—Coordinated Approaches, Land Conservation Agreements, Remediation and Species of Concern themes do not qualify a program for certification. See the “tips page” on the WHC Conservation Certification website for more information.