



Appeal Procedures

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SUMMARY

All organizations applying for Conservation Certification in 2016 are using WHC's new standard for the first time. Perfect understanding on 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 in their application. It is also designed to match WHC's existing resource capacity.

ELIGIBILITY

Program applications that do not receive certification may appeal the 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 letter 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 letter (e.g. email from WHC with results of review), which includes:
 - a. One program summary sheet
 - b. One or more project scoring sheets (one for each project in the program)
- 2) Their 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 was not granted because the Reviewer could not find sufficient information to give 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” on 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 organization 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 note this and including monitoring data. If a the review did not recognize an attachment, this should be noted in the email.

3. Conduct

The WHC Certification & Technology department will manage the appeal. 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 advice from the Reviewer, WHC will determine the result 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.