

# Guidelines and Procedures for NHCP-LTCF Communications

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The Natural Heritage Conservation Program (NHCP) is a public-private partnership designed to advance privately protected areas in some of the country's most cherished landscapes. Launched with a \$100 million investment from the Government of Canada, the program will be administered by the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), with contributions from partners Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) and the country's land trusts. Wildlife Habitat Canada (WHC) will provide grant administration services for the Land Trusts Conservation Fund (LTCF), through which approximately \$4 million per year over four years will be available to Canadian land trusts.

## Celebrating your successes

Congratulations on your successful funding application! Now let's celebrate. The NHCP and the LTCF are designed to elevate and support priority private conservation projects across the country. Acknowledgement of this support also provides a platform to promote the important work that your organization does in your region and in local communities.

Please read **Section 10** of your **NHCP/LTCF Funding Agreement**. It sets out some of the communications expectations and requirements of the Program.

Additional guidelines and procedures to support your communications activities can be found in the following few pages:

- [What are communications activities?](#)
- [Who does what?](#)
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- [Recognizing the NHCP](#)
- [Planning an Event](#)
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### APPENDICES

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- 3) [News Release Template](#)
- 4) [Property Recognition Signage Template](#)

**NOTE:** Templates and logos can also be found in the Communications TOOLKIT provided with award notification.

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## What are communications activities?

Communications activities are the various ways to celebrate the success of your project, announce funding, and to recognize the support of the NHCP. Activities fall into the following three general categories (click on the links for detailed information):

- ❖ [Events](#)
- ❖ [News Releases](#)
- ❖ [Property Recognition Signage](#)

## Who does what?

It takes a team effort to pull off effective communications while meeting the requirements found in the agreement. Constant collaboration among land trusts, WHC, NCC and ECCC is key. Here are the general roles and responsibilities among the players:

**Land Trusts:** Draft accurate and effective communications materials and host events to announce projects, and recognize supporters and sources of funding, including NHCP

**WHC:** Provides support to land trusts in the form of helpful advice and timely review of draft communications materials. They also work with NCC to ensure that communication materials are approved in a timely manner.

**NCC:** NCC works with staff from ECCC to ensure that communications opportunities are leveraged to build awareness of the Program and the important role that land trusts play in Canada's conservation movement. This work also ensures that communications materials contain accurate information and are distributed in a timely manner. NCC is the sole point of contact for ECCC.

## Getting Started:

There are several things you should consider when working on your communications products to ensure that they are effective, accurate and meet expectations.

### Planning in advance and the process

In order to properly prepare to communications materials, the [process](#) needs to start as early as possible.

Please let WHC know as soon as possible if you would like to proceed with an [event](#) or a [news release](#). [Property recognition signs](#) on fee-simple properties are assumed, but get your design files in for approval as soon as you can.

### Recognizing the NHCP:

Donor support, large and small, is critical to the support for any private conservation project so it is important to recognize your donors, including the Government of Canada. ECCC has established clear methods for organizations to consistently recognize its support:

- **Boilerplate:** This is a paragraph that appears in the 'About' section at the end of a news release or elsewhere in other written materials to promote the project and program.

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The following is the approved boilerplate in English and French. It should never be altered without permission.

*The Government of Canada's Natural Heritage Conservation Program (NHCP) is a unique public-private partnership to support new protected and conserved areas by securing private lands and private interests in lands. The program is managed by the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC). Federal funds invested in the program are matched with contributions raised by NCC and its partners, Ducks Unlimited Canada and the country's land trust community.*

*Le Programme de conservation du patrimoine naturel (PCPN) du Gouvernement du Canada est un partenariat public-privé unique destiné à appuyer la création de nouvelles aires protégées et conservées grâce à l'acquisition de terres privées ou de droits sur ces dernières. Le programme est administré par Conservation de la nature Canada (CNC). Les fonds investis par le gouvernement fédéral dans le programme sont bonifiés par des contributions de contrepartie amassées par CNC et ses partenaires, Canards Illimités Canada et la communauté des organismes de conservation du Canada.*

- **Logos:** The logo below must appear on all property recognition signage, ads and visual elements created for events - basically anywhere other partner logos appear.

**This project was undertaken with the financial support of:**  
**Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de:**



Environment and  
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et  
Changement climatique Canada

## Communications Activities

### a) Planning an Event

**Advanced notice required: 3 months**

Events typically but not necessarily involve land trust leadership, staff, donors, volunteers, VIPs including a representative from the Government of Canada, usually a Member of Parliament, and media.

If a land trust is planning on holding an event to announce and celebrate their project, advanced notice must be given to ECCC via WHC and NCC.

At the event, it is a nice gesture to acknowledge NHCP support verbally. The event usually coincides with a news release. To allow a reasonable amount of time for partners to assist in finalizing your communications materials, it is critical that you provide WHC with as much advanced notice as possible (minimum 3 months).

#### Planning Process:

- Typically, events involve invitations, a venue, guest speakers, and media opportunities in addition to a news release and background information.
- Please let WHC know that you are planning an event as soon as possible.
- Use the [event plan template](#) to help you organize your event. This will need to be submitted and approved by ECCC.

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- If the property is in a government held riding, inviting the MP may be appropriate. Please check with WHC.
- Please contact WHC before inviting representatives from any level of government.
- ECCC must approve the date of the event. Invitations should not be distributed until approval is received.

### **b) Preparing a News Release**

**Advanced notice required: 6 weeks**

A news release on its own is an effective way to promote the success of your project, your organization and the NHCP. An effective news release is built around a compelling narrative and contains accurate information about the property, associated species at risk and project partners. News releases need to be reviewed and approved by project partners, so it is important to start the process early (minimum 6 weeks in advance of release).

Often it is appropriate to announce a project with only a news release. If a land trust is planning to distribute a news release, they should let WHC know as soon as possible.

Land trusts are also encouraged to frame the success of their project around a compelling narrative (a story about people or the history of the property, etc). Stories about donated land are especially compelling and effective.

ECCC requires that news releases contain the following information:

- The general location of the property. Sometimes it is important not to signal the precise location of the property for privacy reasons.
- The size of the property in hectares followed by acres [e.g., 95 hectares (234 acres)]
- The species at risk associated with the property. Species mentions should include their SARA status (i.e., special concern, threatened, etc). Please refer to [ECCC's online database](#) to verify a species' status.
- Mentions of NHCP and other associated Government of Canada programs (i.e., EcoGift) including language used in the [NHCP news release template](#).

### **c) Designing Property Recognition Signage**

**Advanced notice required: 1 month**

Property signs make local residents and passers-by aware that the property is protected and promotes those who helped make it possible.

All fee-simple properties require an approved property recognition sign. Other property types do not require a sign, but one may be placed if partners agree.

The NHCP should be recognized and appropriate logos should appear on the sign. The size and design of all signs can vary. An [electronic template](#) is available for your use.

Considerations for Property Recognition Signage:

- The Government of Canada logo must appear prominently on the sign.
- A customizable sign template is available however land trusts may choose to use their own unique design. This will require approval from ECCC.

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## What needs to be translated?

Please note that wide scale news releases (i.e. national or provincial distribution) about projects secured under the NHCP-LTCF Program must be available in both English and French. In cases where communications documents are being prepared for local distribution only, unilingual materials may be acceptable. Land trusts are responsible for ensuring their materials are translated. Please see Section of your NHCP-LTCF Agreement with NCC.

## Promoting via social media

Land trusts are encouraged to promote their events/news releases on social media. ECCC may do the same. Amplifying ECCC's messages on your own platforms is strongly encouraged. Please consult WHC and NCC for current details about messaging and tagging.

## Final notes:

Before any communications materials are released:

1. You must receive express written approval from NCC and WHC for any media materials related to the NHCP and any references to NCC and ECCC;
2. You must receive a confirmed release date for communications materials relating to a NHCP- LTCF project, and adhere to that date; and,
3. News releases and signs will be produced in both official languages as per the translation guidelines above.

## Questions and WHC Contact

For any specific questions with regards to public acknowledgement and communications under the NHCP-LTCF Program, or to submit communications materials, please contact WHC directly:

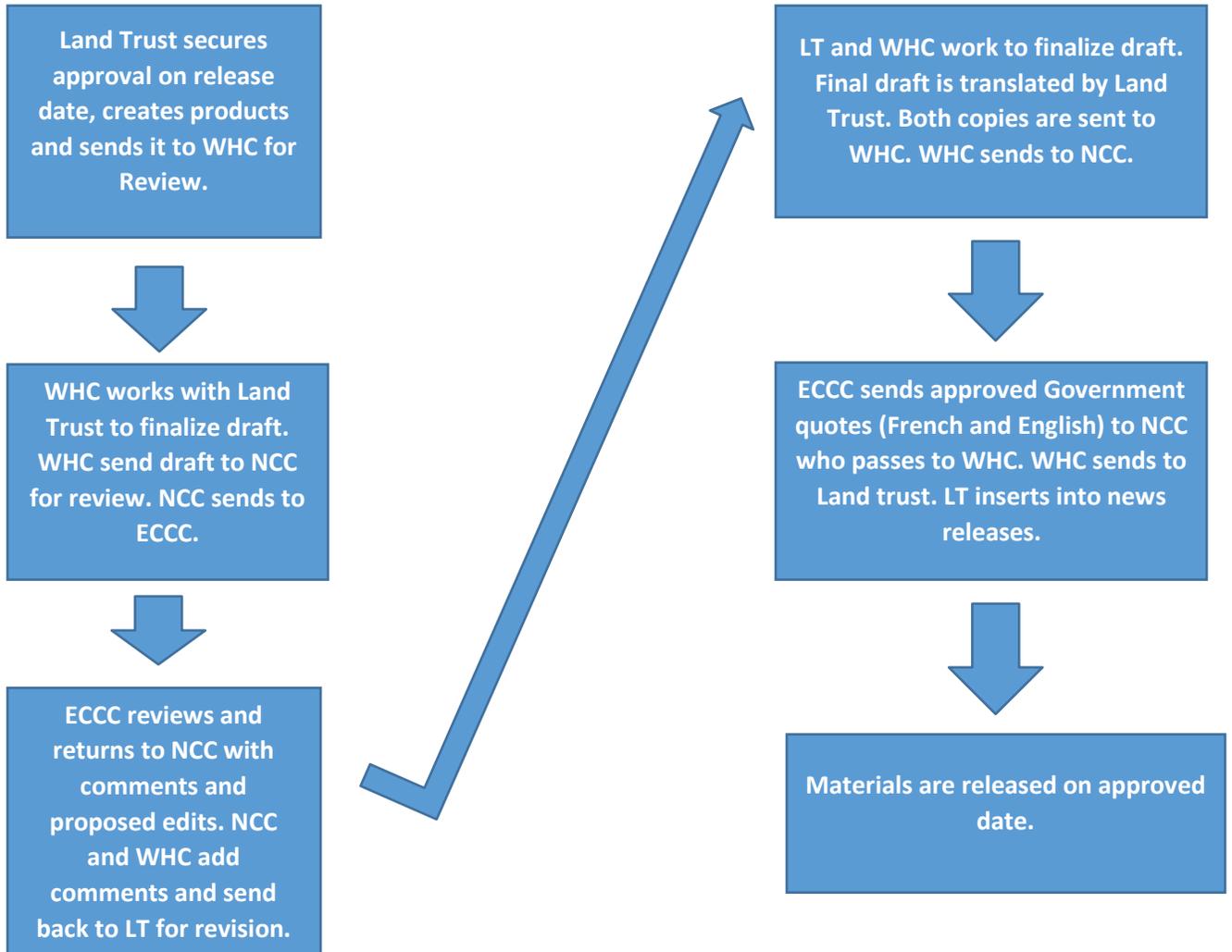
- ❖ Jessica Burns, Grant Administrator NHCP-LTCF Program, [jburns@whc.org](mailto:jburns@whc.org)

*For more information, please visit [www.whc.org/lctf](http://www.whc.org/lctf).*

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## APPENDICES

### 1) General approval process for communications products



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## 2) Event Plan Template

(Insert your logo here)

### LTCF - Natural Heritage Conservation Program Event Plan

1. PROJECT SUMMARY	
<b>Organization Name:</b>	
<b>Project name:</b>	
<b>Public name (if different from project name):</b>	
<b>Natural Area:</b>	
<b>Municipality (Province):</b> ( )	
<b>Federal riding:</b>	
<b>Size of project:</b> Hectares (Acres)	<b>Securement Type:</b>
<b>Key natural features (in point form):</b> •	<b>Species at risk observed:</b> •
2. PROJECT FUNDING	
<b>Total project budget:</b> \$	
<b>Federal funding under the Natural Heritage Conservation Program:</b> \$	
<b>Other federal programs (i.e. Ecogift, HSP):</b> •	
<b>Provincial funding (indicate Yes/No) :</b> <b>Provincial funding program:</b>	
<b>US Fish &amp; Wildlife Service NAWCA funding (indicate Yes/No):</b>	
<b>Other major donors (indicate name) :</b> •	
3. EVENT PROPOSAL	
<b>Proposed event date:</b>	<b>Date flexible (indicate Yes or No):</b>
<b>Event description (in point form)</b> •	<b>Expected event participants (name, affiliation):</b> •
VENUE 1	VENUE 2
<b>Venue name:</b>	<b>Venue name:</b>
<b>Civic address:</b>	<b>Civic address:</b>
<b>Municipality:</b>	<b>Municipality:</b>
<b>URL for venue:</b>	<b>URL for venue:</b>
<b>Venue features:</b> •	<b>Venue features:</b> •
<b>Capacity:</b> people	<b>Capacity:</b> people
4. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/ADDITIONAL NOTES	
•	

Prepared by:

Date:

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## 3) News Release Template

(Insert your logo)

For Immediate Release

**<TITLE>**

**<SUBTITLE>**

**MONTH DAY, YEAR, CITY, PROVINCE** – <lede>

<Body>

This project was made possible by the Government of Canada through the Natural Heritage Conservation Program, part of Canada's Nature Fund 

A portion of this project was donated to the (insert your org's name) under the Government of Canada's Ecological Gifts Program. This program provides enhanced tax incentives for individuals or corporations who donate ecologically significant land. 

### QUOTES:

<Quotes from NCC first>  
<then ECCC (if applicable)>  
<then other partners/donors>

### FACTS:

- <Interesting facts about your announcement>.

### ABOUT:

The Government of Canada's Natural Heritage Conservation Program (NHCP) is a unique public-private partnership to support new protected and conserved areas by securing private lands and private interests in lands. The program is managed by the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC). Federal funds invested in the program are matched with contributions raised by NCC and its partners, Ducks Unlimited Canada and the country's land trust community. 

To learn more about the Ecological Gifts Program, please visit <http://www.ec.gc.ca/pde-egp/> 

### LEARN MORE:

Visit: (insert your website)  
Follow us on Twitter: (insert link to your Twitter webpage)  
Become a fan on Facebook: (insert link to your Facebook webpage)

### VIDEO AND IMAGES:

<Insert links for downloadable images/videos if applicable>

### CONTACT:

(insert contact info)

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## 4) Property Recognition Signage Template

[ADD YOUR LOGO HERE]

<PROPERTY NAME>

<Project Name\_optional>

<Natural Area\_optional>

[Donated] [Conserved] [An investment] for the benefit of nature

Thank you to individuals and organizations [donors] who have contributed generously.

This project was undertaken with the financial support of:  
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de :



Environment and  
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et  
Changement climatique Canada



[Pedestrian access is permitted.] For [all other] access [group access] or information, please contact [your org].

[insert phone]

[insert website here]