Only priority projects determined through documented conservation planning process are eligible under the NHCP-LTCF. Projects must be in a **Key Conservation Area (KCA),** which means that the project falls under an existing Conservation Plan that identifies the land/project area as a priority for conservation.

**Key Conservation Areas** include areas identified under:

1. An **NCC Natural Area Conservation** **Plan** (NACP). Applicants who wish to adopt an NCC NACP should contact NCC to ensure their project falls within the boundaries of an NCC NACP;
2. DUC’s target landscapes as articulated by the habitat joint ventures of the [**North American Waterfowl Management Plan**](http://nawmp.wetlandnetwork.ca/nawmp-plan-documents/)**;**
3. **Priority Places and other Federal, Provincial or Territorial government plans**; or,
4. **Other science-based plans developed by land trusts**.

In cases where project land falls just outside of a KCA, but within close proximity, the Applicant must clearly identify the connection between the Conservation Plan and the project property. The onus is on the Applicant to defend why the project land qualifies as a high priority property in association with the identified Conservation Plan.

* A map that overlays the project property and the Conservation Plan area must be included with the application submission.

**Guidance for Conservation Planning Framework**

The following only applies to projects that **do not fall within a Key Conservation Area (KCA).**

If the project does not fall within a KCA, please call WHC before proceeding with an application.

In situations where a proposed project property does not fall within a KCA, the Applicant will be required to provide:

* A sufficient case for conservation, which defends how the project property:
	1. meets the Canada Target 1 criteria;
	2. links to conservation initiatives;
	3. identifies the presence of critical habitat for species at risk, etc.; and,

A sufficient rationale that demonstrates the prioritization of the property/project land from a conservation planning standpoint and the significance of the project.

Note: The Conservation Planning Framework assists the Applicant in describing priority areas for acquisition and long-term stewardship. The Conservation Planning Framework is a guidance tool for fulfilling the Conservation Plan requirement, in order to be eligible for the NHCP-LTCF program.

***Please complete the following template and upload it to your Application Form:***

**Conservation Planning Framework:**

|  |
| --- |
| **Case for Conservation** The strategic identification and protection of priority land is a cornerstone of effective biodiversity conservation. |
| 1. **How does the project land(s) meet the Canada Target 1 criteria?** (Describe)
 |
|  |
| 1. **Does the land meet nationally or provincially significant ecological criteria?**
 |
|  |
| 1. **Does the land protect habitat:**
* for **species at risk** (per Schedule 1 of the federal Species at Risk Act, COSEWIC-listed species or provincially listed species and ecosystems); or,
* **migratory birds**?
 |
|  |
| 1. **Does the land create or enhance connections or corridors between protected areas or conserved land?**
 |
|  |
| 1. **Does the land occur in an ecoregion with relatively high biodiversity and/or threat values?**
 |
|  |
| 1. **Does the land create, expand, connect or complete an existing public, private or Indigenous protected or conserved area?**
 |
|  |
| 1. **Does the land have restoration potential that will further the conservation goals of the land trust and/or ECCC?**
 |
|  |
| 1. **Is the land an Ecological Gift?**
 |
|  |
| 1. **Is the land an ECCC priority?**
 |
|  |
| 1. **Describe how the project includes important occurrences of one or more of the following nationally significant conservation features:**
	* globally rare species or habitats (based on ranking by [NatureServe Canada)](http://www.natureserve.org/natureserve-network/canada)
	* wetlands
	* coasts (marine and Great Lakes)
 |
|  |
| 1. **Why has the project land(s) been identified by the land trust as a high priority for conservation?**
 |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| Priority Land - Conservation Planning CriteriaThe following will be used to assess the strength of the Conservation Planning Framework adopted or used by the applicant. |
| 1. **Describe your land trust’s defined planning process for selecting land and conservation easement projects. How does your land trust identify conservation priorities?**
 |
|  |
| 1. **Summarize the land trust’s defined project selection criteria and describe how they are consistent with the organization’s mission.**
 |
|  |
| 1. **Explain how the project being proposed is consistent with your land trust’s project selection process/criteria.**
 |
|  |
| 1. **Attach a map that overlays the project land(s) within the land trust’s priority areas for conservation.**
 |
|  |