



LOCAL BIODIVERSITY IMPACT GRANT PILOT PROGRAM (LBIGP) – POWERED BY CASCADES - GUIDELINES (2026-2027)

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INTRODUCTION TO THE LOCAL BIODIVERSITY IMPACT GRANT PILOT PROGRAM (LBIGP)

The **Local Biodiversity Impact Grant Pilot Program (LBIGP)** powered by Cascades, supports organizations, municipalities, and Indigenous communities undertaking high-impact, place-based conservation projects in areas where Cascades has operational facilities. This program funds tangible actions for conservation that restore, protect, and enhance biodiversity while engaging local communities in action for nature.

Core focus:

- Wetlands, riparian corridors, forests, grasslands, and estuaries
- Species at risk and declining wildlife
- Water and nature-based solutions with biodiversity as the primary outcome

Program objectives:

- Restore Foundations of Biodiversity
- Support projects that enhance, restore or create habitats essential to native wildlife and biodiversity such as pollinators, insects, fungi and microbes
- Reduce Habitat Loss and Fragmentation
- Reconnect fragmented forests, wetlands, grasslands and or riparian corridors
- Reduce Environmental Pressures on Natural Areas
- Decrease litter, landfill waste, and material contamination in watersheds and wildlife habitats
- Build Community Engagement and Stewardship Capacity
- Mobilize volunteers, schools, and local groups in conservation actions
- Provide Measurable Environmental Outcomes
- Track quantifiable impacts such as habitat improved (hectares), waste collected and removed (kg/lbs), and participation metrics

WILDLIFE HABITAT CANADA CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Sarah Thomas
Title: Program Assistant,
Email: sthomas@whc.org

Jennifer Collard
Project Manager
Jcollard@whc.org

HOW TO APPLY

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that they have read, acknowledge, and understand the requirements of the LBIGP.

Application Forms **must be completed via the online platform only. Any submissions/required documents sent via email WILL NOT BE accepted.** In order to be considered, completed Application Forms and required documentation are to be submitted between **September 9th to October 9th, 2026.**

Each submitted application is considered a stand-alone application. Applicants submitting more than one application must ensure that each individual application form includes all of the required documentation requested. Please see section [Section B - Application and Award Procedures](#) for further details on the application process and how Application Forms will be reviewed.

To apply for funding under LBIGP, [please follow the link](#).

Note: If there is a fundamental change to the project at any time, Applicants must notify WHC immediately.

BEFORE PREPARING AN APPLICATION:

- 1) Read, understand and acknowledge the program guidelines.
- 2) Review and understand the reporting requirements of the program.
- 3) Review the Letter of Agreement (LOA) – all awardees under the LBIGP program must be willing to sign and adhere to the terms and conditions of the LOA.
- 4) Ensure your organization and project are eligible, according to the parameters set out in this document.

SECTION A – LBIGP ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

A-1: Program Deadlines

- a) ***Application Form Deadline:*** Application Forms will be accepted between September 9th, 2026 and October 9th, 2026 for projects taking place between **November 1st, 2026 and November 30th, 2027.**

Project Finalization Deadline: The deadline for finalizing WHC project deliverables and submitting all final documentation is November 15th, 2027. **Receipt of final deliverables/documents by WHC after this deadline may result in Applicants forfeiting payment.**

A-2: Applicant Eligibility

- a) **Eligible Recipients** of the Local Biodiversity Impact Grant Pilot Program (LBIGP) are indicated below.

- Registered Canadian charities or non-profits
- Indigenous nations, communities or groups
- Environmental nonprofits and conservation groups
- Municipalities and conservation authorities
- Academic institutions, schools, and youth organizations

b) **Ineligible Recipients** of the Grant Program include but are not limited to:

- International organizations or individuals;
- For-profit organizations;
- Provincial and territorial governments and their agencies;
- Federal level organizations or individuals: Government employees, departments, agencies, and crown corporations.

A-3: Project Eligibility

a) **Project Eligibility Overview**

Eligible Projects are to occur within a 200 km radius of Cascades offices, mills, or production facilities. Priority given to sites:

- Adjacent to or downstream of Cascades operations;
- Within watersheds, wetlands, or forest corridors affected by industrial or urban pressure

b) **Cascades Facilities Locations:**

Quebec

- Kingsley Falls, Victoriaville, Drummondville (Centre-du-Québec & Mauricie Region)
- Montréal, St-Brunode-Montarville, Berthierville, Granby, Vaudreuil-Dorion (Montréal & Greater Montréal Region)
- Lachute (Laurentians Region)

Ontario

- Kitchener, Guelph (Waterloo–Wellington Region)
- Mississauga, Vaughan (Greater Toronto Area Region)
- St. Mary's (Southwestern Ontario Region)

Manitoba

- Winnipeg (Southeastern Manitoba Region)

British Columbia

- Richmond (Southwestern British Columbia Region)

c) **Maximum LBIGP Funding Request per Project:**

We invite applications requesting grants **up to \$6,000.00**, for projects that will be completed within the timeframe of **November 1st, 2026 to November 30th, 2027**.

d) **Required Matching Funds for Each Project:**

LBIGP is a matching funds program, with a required match ratio of a **minimum of 1:1**. This means that for every \$1 of Program funds awarded, a minimum of \$1 in matching funds from other sources must also be contributed. This may include federal funds from the Government of Canada. Matching funds may include both cash and in-kind contributions.

In-kind match refers to the cash-equivalent funding in the form of a donation (donated land, products or donated services) for which no cash is exchanged but is essential to the project and that would have to be purchased on the open market, or through negotiation with the provider, if it were not provided.

e) **Cascades Recognition and Communications Requirements:**

Awardees **will undertake communications activities and outreach** that will highlight and promote achievements under the Program.

Over the course of the project agreement, **a minimum of 1 social media post recognizing Cascades and WHC is required, per project.**

Communications Activities and Requirements:

- **Digital Promotion / Social Media:** WHC may repost social media messages concerning LBIGP projects that were originally posted on the Awardee's social media platforms. The Awardee will reciprocate, as appropriate, for WHC and Cascades social media messages regarding the program.
- **Logo/Templates:** WHC shall provide Awardees with the necessary templates (if applicable) and/or electronic files (logos) and/or acknowledgement statements to be used.
- **WHC Approval of Published Communications:** The Awardee shall provide WHC with final copies of any document or material (excluding social media posts) utilizing the WHC or Cascades logo, prior to printing or distribution, for WHC/Cascades approval and/or acknowledgement statements.
- **Project Photos:** The Awardee will be required to provide at least two high-quality images of the Project, for possible use in WHC social media and other promotional materials. The Awardee will be required to provide authorization to WHC for the use of the image(s). *In cases of an anticipated confidentiality/privacy conflict with this requirement, please contact WHC.*
- **Project Overview:** The Awardee will be required to provide a short 3-4 sentence overview, within the Final Report, of the project's accomplishments throughout the grant year. This may be used for communications and promotional activities.

A-4: Expense Eligibility

Approved program funds must only be used for eligible expenses incurred in the 2026-2027 fiscal year **(November 1, 2026 to November 30, 2027)** in order to qualify for reimbursement under the program. LBIGP funds cannot be used to cover rebatable/refundable taxes.

a) **Eligible Expenses:**

Materials, equipment, and supplies
Maintenance or Installation Costs
Labour costs for habitat work, monitoring, research, education
Management & Professional Services
Project Management and Administrative Costs
Community outreach, events, and volunteer coordination
Communications and public engagement materials
Traditional Indigenous knowledge and consultation honoraria
Travel and fieldwork expenses essential to the project

b) **Ineligible Expenses:**

Lobbying or political advocacy
General operating expenses unrelated to project delivery
Major capital infrastructure unrelated to habitat stewardship
Activities within private residences or for-profit-only benefit

As per normal business practice, Awardees are expected to keep appropriate records, invoices and supporting documentation of all expenditures (including staff time) under LBIGP in the event a project audit is necessary. WHC reserves the right to conduct random financial audits of awarded projects.

A-5: Reporting Requirements:

By implementing specific reporting requirements for approved projects, WHC can collect the data necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of the grant program. This is done by comparing project results against WHC's performance indicators. WHC's grant application form and reporting templates have been designed to collect the project results and information that are required for evaluating the grant program. Awardees are expected to submit a final report and advise WHC immediately of any challenges or substantial changes, including updates on project progress, continued alignment with LBIGP objectives, overall accomplishments, and the significance of the biodiversity need addressed.

Reporting Deliverables: (see Chart 2 for more details)

- Activity Table
- Budget Table
- Project Photos
- Final Report Template

A-6: Additional Requirements and Expectations under LBIGP

a) Funding:

WHC reserves the right to award partial funding to eligible applicant organizations.

In the event that LBIGP funds are returned to the Program, the Letter of Agreement will be nullified and WHC will begin the process of re-allocating the returned funds to other eligible projects.

b) WHC Letter of Agreement for Funding:

Applicants must be prepared to sign a legal agreement (the “*LBIGP Letter of Agreement*”) with WHC.

Important Note: Applicants must review the *LBIGP – Letter of Agreement* template before submitting an Application Form, as the terms of the agreement as presented in the template are not open for negotiation, with the only exception being minor modification.

c) Financial Reporting:

Applicants must provide a completed final budget report **no later than November 15, 2027**. This final budget report must demonstrate the following:

- a minimum 1:1 match ratio;
- a list of all eligible expenditures by expense category; and,
- a breakdown of expenses applied to LBIGP funds vs. those covered by matching funds (cash vs. in-kind).

SECTION B – APPLICATION AND AWARD PROCEDURES

B-1: Application Form Requirements

a) **How many Application Forms can I submit?**

Applicants are only permitted to submit one project per Application Form but **may submit multiple Application Forms (projects)**. If planning to submit more than 3 applications, please contact Sarah Thomas at stthomas@whc.org to discuss prior to application.

b) **How do I submit the Application Form?**

Application Forms must be completed and submitted [online](#). Applicants will be prompted first to create a username and login password, and the Application Form itself can be saved at any point in time during the completion of the form. If an Applicant has applied to previous program years of any WHC Grant Program, the same username and password can be used to complete the Application Form.

c) **What documentation will be required as part of a complete Application Form?**

The list of documentation required in the Application Form is listed under [Chart 2: Checklist of Required Documentation for Application and Installments](#). If an Applicant fails to upload the correct, requested documentation in the acceptable format with their Application Form submission, the application may be deemed incomplete and disqualified from funding consideration.

d) **How do I know if my Application Form was successfully submitted online to WHC?**

Applicants will receive an automated email when the Application Form has been submitted successfully.

B-2: Evaluation of the Application Form

a) **How and when will my Application Form be reviewed?**

Grant applications submitted by the deadline will be reviewed by WHC Staff for eligibility requirements and then undergo an internal review process to evaluate the projects potential. Eligible applications will be evaluated on the relative strengths of the biodiversity and conservation criteria. If the Application Form does not meet eligibility requirements or convey competitive biodiversity/conservation value, WHC reserves the right to reject the project.

b) **Who will evaluate my Application Form?**

Applications are reviewed by WHC staff for eligibility and completeness. Once marked as complete, WHC staff review each application and discuss the potential of each project as well as its relevance to LBIGP metrics. WHC then presents applications recommended for funding to Cascades for final funding decisions.

B-3: Award/Rejection Letters

a) **When and how can I expect to receive an award/rejection letter?**

Funding decisions will be made, and applicants will be notified in November 2026. Award/rejection letters will be distributed via email.

Applicants with projects approved for funding will receive a funding agreement ("Letter of Agreement") for signature. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Letter of Agreement template in the

application stage, as no changes will be made to this document. Funding is subject to projects meeting the conditions and requirements set out in the Letter of Agreement.

B-4: Approved Projects Payment Schedule

a) **What documents are required before WHC releases the payment of funds?**

Payment will be processed for release to awardees via electronic transfer, following WHC's review and approval of required deliverables. See [Chart 2 - Checklist of Required Documentation for Application and Installments](#). **NOTE:** WHC requires at least 4 weeks to process and release payment installments.

Invoices must be made out to Wildlife Habitat Canada and include the following information:

Wildlife Habitat Canada
236-2039 Robertson Road
Ottawa ON
K2H 8R2
Attn: Sarah Thomas, Project Assistant

Chart 2 - Checklist of Required Documentation for Application and Installments

- If an Applicant fails to submit a complete Application Form or fails to upload the correct, requested documentation in an acceptable format with their Application Form submission, the application may be deemed incomplete and disqualified from funding consideration.
- If the Awardee fails to submit all required correct documentation by the Interim Reporting or Final Reporting deadlines, the Awardee may be required to forfeit funding and return any LBIGP funds to WHC, immediately.

Documentation to be submitted with Application Form; for Mid-Project Milestones; and/or installments.	Required with Application Form	Required at Award Notification	Required with Final Reporting
1) Complete Application Form	✓		
2) Project Budget <i>*Required only if approved funding amount is different than the original request and the application budget.</i>	✓	✓*	✓
3) Complete Activity Table	✓		✓
4) Signed Letter of Agreement and Invoice <i>* ASAP once received</i>		✓*	
5) Complete Final Report: • Complete Final Report Form • Final Project Budget <i>Including copies of all claimed project expenses (receipts are to be numbered for ease of review and reconciliation with the Final Budget Report.</i> • Final Project Activity Table			✓
6) At least one high quality image of the Project, *for possible use in WHC and/or Cascades social media and other promotional materials, with authorization to WHC for the use of the image(s). <i>*In cases of a confidentiality/privacy conflict with this requirement, please contact WHC.</i>			✓

GLOSSARY

Award/Rejection Letter: Refers to the letter sent by WHC to the Applicant, advising whether or not the Applicant's Application has been approved to receive funds under the LBIGP, or if it has been rejected. If the Applicant has been approved, the letter will inform the Applicant of the maximum amount of funds awarded, as well as the necessary documents required (next steps) in order to receive payment.

Project: For the full project definition under LBIGP, see section [A-3: Project Eligibility](#).

Volunteer: A volunteer is a person who works for an organization without being paid, a person who voluntarily offers themselves for a service or undertaking, or a person who performs a service willingly and without pay.

Participant: any person participating in an educational program, outreach event, or stewardship activities.

Participants could be landowners, volunteers, students, etc...

Stewardship: Encompasses a wide range of voluntary actions taken by people to care for the environment. Activities that promote or directly result in sustainable land use for the benefit of populations of priority species and their habitat. Can include the direct conservation of wild species and their habitat or improving quality of habitat through the mitigation of human impact (e.g., installing nest boxes, monitoring wildlife populations and protecting habitat from disturbances, community-based projects that restore riverbanks and prevent soil erosion, etc.).