

Conservation Planning Process Overview

Conservation planning is a conservation organization's due diligence to ensure that it expends its valuable resources wisely and accomplishes its mission.

Conservation Planning Approach

- Targets – What are we endeavoring to protect?
- Goals – How much of each target do we need to protect? Are we there yet?
- Selection Criteria – Which occurrences of our targets are the best ones to protect?
- Action Priorities – Which sites must we protect right now and which ones can wait?

Definitions

- Targets
 - What do we protect?
 - Identify target viability or quality key characteristic necessary for protection consideration (e.g. shoreline length, habitat size, agricultural land condition and degree of fragmentation, population size)
- Goals
 - How much/many of each viable target must we conserve to achieve our mission?
 - How do we stratify these goals (e.g. by county, river reach, or other factors)?
- Selection Criteria
 - Which occurrences (sites) of the conservation targets should we protect?
 - Site selection criteria based on presence and condition of targets and on site conditions (e.g. adjacency or linkages among protected areas or potential protected areas, access, multiple targets)
 - Scoring system to rank target sites for potential action

- Action Priorities
 - How do we set action priorities among the suite of potential projects that conserve viable targets and accomplish our goals?
 - What factors to consider in ordering priorities (e.g. target rarity and condition, threats, urgency, opportunity).
 - Scoring system

- Evaluate Existing Projects
 - Which targets are protected by existing projects?
 - How do existing projects score using the above criteria?

- Progress Toward Goals
 - Measure progress toward goals for conservation targets
 - Which targets have met their goals, which have not?

- Evaluate Proposed Projects
 - Which proposed projects meet the selection criteria?
 - How to use this framework to say yes or no to incoming opportunities.

- Threats
 - What threats are most impacting our conservation targets?
 - Any new perspectives to inform policy or stewardship?

- Information Gaps
 - For which targets and areas do we need more information?
 - How will we gather, evaluate, and utilize that information?

- Next Steps
 - Identify what has been agreed to, by whom, and when it will be completed.