

Site Assessment Template and Guidelines

Name of Property: *(insert property name here)*

The **site evaluation summary** below is a simple scoring system based on the total number of checks for each category as indicated on the accompanying assessment sheets. *As individual categories may not be of equivalent interest or concern, an overall value for a site should be determined by weighing individual components against the overall mandate for land acquisition.*

Site Evaluation Summary	
Category	# of checks
Natural features of primary significance	
Natural features of secondary significance	
Adverse environmental features (damage evident)	
Adverse environmental features (damage potential)	
Aesthetic features	
Historical features	
Administrative considerations	
Agricultural features of primary value	
Agricultural features of secondary value	

<p>Comments on site valuation summary:</p>
<p>Proposed best management/use of property:</p>

Date:

Observer:

Natural Features of Primary Significance		
#	<i>Note: listed characteristics are not necessarily in order of importance</i>	√
1	Provincially Significant Wetland – (Class 1, 2 or 3 wetland)	
2	Provincial or regionally significant “Area of Natural and Scientific Interest” (ANSI), or part thereof	
3	Occurrence of endangered, threatened or rare species <i>use your baseline inventory to assess</i>	
4	Presence of important fish or wildlife habitat, e.g., breeding, staging, nesting sites, hibernacula, spawning beds, regionally significant deer yard, etc.	
5	Provincially, or regionally significant bird or butterfly migration area	
6	Mouth of permanent creek or river; junction of aquatic habitats	
7	Important hydrological area – groundwater recharge areas, headwaters, aquifers, seeps or springs	
8	Presence of natural unaltered shoreline on significant water bodies (or parts of) rivers, streams, lakes	
9	High diversity of habitats (number of distinct forest/plant community types, highly varied land form)	
10	Large, contiguous area of habitat present (e.g., >50 hectare mature forest with minimal edge)	
11	Regionally or locally unique biotic community; e.g., mature forest, bog, alvar,	
12	High quality of habitat present (undisturbed, few or no introduced species, low level habitat disturbance, low edge)	
13	Important site of geological interest; e.g., syncline, outcrop, blend, nonconformity, fossils, etc.	
14	Other (please indicate)	
Total		

Explanatory comments or additional considerations:

Date:

Observer:

Natural Features of Secondary Significance		
#	<i>Note: listed characteristics are not necessarily in order of importance</i>	√
1	Non-Provincially Significant wetlands (must be ≥ 0.5 ha)	
2	Presence of rivers, streams, or lakes with minor-moderate levels of disturbance	
3	Presence of locally rare / uncommon / unusual species	
4	Potentially environmentally significant area (whether previously identified or not)	
5	Property adjacent to or part of a connecting linkage to another protected site of natural significance – e.g., may have the potential to create a 'public greenbelt' or wildlife corridor	
6	Significant woodlands (Ecogift category B6)	
7	Property has educational / research potential	
8	Areas used for long-term scientific study or baseline and benchmark monitoring of biodiversity (Ecogifts B10)	
9	Agricultural land (must complete Agricultural Features check sheets)	
10	Managed forest for wildlife	
11	Areas that have significant current or potential for enhanced ecological values through restoration, remediation, management or geographic proximity to other ecologically significant properties (Ecogifts B7)	
Total		

Explanatory comments or additional considerations:

Date:

Observer:

Adverse Environmental Features or Conditions			
Identify any public safety hazards in the comments section below this table			
#	Condition or Feature	Damage evident ✓	Damage potential ✓
1	Piping / vents for underground storage tanks		
2	Ditches, pits, ponds, lagoons, clarifiers, oil / water separators, surface impoundments, or sumps on the property		
3	Storage drums (see NCC or RWLT's for specifics)		
4	Wells/tanks (see NCC or RWLT's for specifics)		
5	Transformers (see NCC or RWLT's for specifics)		
6	Mining stakes on property		
7	Mineral/petroleum operations (see NCC or RWLT's for specifics)		
8	Evidence of dumping, or significant levels of trash and debris		
9	Stains or odours (unusual or around areas where chemicals are stored / used)		
10	Chemical pollutants on the surface of any water bodies (sheens, etc.)		
11	Dilapidated buildings (<i>i.e.</i> , threat of collapse)		
12	Trail or access road damage (e.g., rutting, erosion, excessive habitat fragmentation)		
13	Excessive algal growth along water's edge (e.g., possible nutrient loading from septic)		
14	Compacted or trampled soils in forest understory		
15	Significant shoreline or embankment erosion		
16	Presence of high numbers of invasive plant species (garlic mustard, buckthorn, swallowwort, etc.) (<i>provide details below</i>)		
17	High ratio of edge to core habitat (e.g., forest clearings present, narrow lot, etc.)		
18	Recent removal of prime timber		
19	Other (indicate)		
Total			

Explanatory comments or additional considerations:

Date

Observer

Aesthetic Features		
#	<i>Note: listed features are for guidance purposes only. Please add additional features of interest as needed.</i>	√
1	Site has documented aesthetic value to populace, and is regularly used for that purpose (e.g., roadside stop, hiking trail feature)	
2	Significant viewscape present (e.g., distinct outcrop, bluff, bay, sandy beach, rocky shoreline, etc.); but not necessarily visually accessible offsite	
3	Landscape provides seasonal appeal; e.g., wildflowers, fall leaf colours, etc.	
4	Remnant green space property near developed area (walking and cross-country skiing – low impact recreational use)	
5	Harmony of neighbouring uses; e.g., no stark contrasts, conflicts of use / appearance, no intrusive visual objects / noise; e.g. traffic, development, excessive or disturbing human uses	
6	Other (describe)	
Total		

Explanatory comments or additional considerations:

Date

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Historical Features		
#	Note: <i>listed characteristics are not necessarily in order of importance</i>	√
1	Historic site with naturally significant areas	
2	Archaeological site / ruin / artifacts	
3	Native heritage significance	
4	Century farm	
5	Other (describe)	
Total		

Explanatory comments or additional considerations:

Date

Observer

Administrative Considerations		
#	Note: <i>listed characteristics are not necessarily in order of importance</i>	√
1	Landowner wishes to donate property	
2	Land transaction costs would be minimal	
3	Property is offered with a gift of funds adequate to cover maintenance and / or stewardship costs	
4	No land taxes or rebate program applicable (e.g., Conservation Land Tax Reduction, Managed Forest Tax Reduction)	
5	Municipal zoning favourable for land protection at this site	
6	Land taxes reasonably low	
7	No immediate maintenance or restoration required	
8	Offer of "partnership" to acquire property; e.g., may be shared costs, or agreement to manage after acquisition, etc.	
9	Land at risk of being developed if not conserved	
10	Property has features underrepresented in local protected sites – value in establishing protected land in this area (contributes to sense of broad geographical distribution)	
11	Project likely stimulate public funding and support	
12	Landowner wishes to donate property for tax receipt, but property would not necessarily meet criteria; however, it is marketable and an agreement to put it up for sale can be arranged with proceeds to other acquisitions	
13	Other (describe)	
Total		

Explanatory comments or additional considerations:

Date

Observer

Agricultural Features of Primary Value (applicable only for land actively farmed)		
#	Note: <i>listed characteristics are not necessarily in order of importance</i>	√
1	Soil capability high: Canada Land Inventory (CLI) rating of 1, 2 or 3	
2	Agricultural use on > 80% of land base	
3	Size > 40 ha.	
4	Proximate lands compatibility: all or most proximate lands are agricultural	
5	Land and buildings have good lease potential	
6	Can demonstrate conservation tillage practices in excess of 5 years	
7	Has established crop rotation plans aimed at soil improvements	
8	Has established manure/pesticide management plan in excess of 5 years	
9	Has established forest management plan prepared by licensed arbourist	
10	Site has natural features such as soil or other conditions conducive to the production of speciality crops that are rare in the region	
11	Site contains quality example buildings of historical /architectural significance	
12	Existing buildings in high quality state of repair	
13	Site has significant drainage/irrigation improvements in good repair	
14	Environmental Farm Plan completed in last 5 years by current owner or Soil & Crop Stewardship Award received in last 5 years	
15	Site contains diverse land features such as wetlands, woodlots, streams, etc.	
16	Site conforms to all applicable plans, regulations and codes (<i>i.e.</i> , Agricultural Code of Practice)	
Total		

Explanatory comments or additional considerations:

Date

Observer

Agricultural Features of Secondary Value (applicable only for land actively farmed)		
#	Note: <i>listed characteristics are not necessarily in order of importance</i>	√
1	Soil capability moderate: Canadian Land Inventory rating of 4, 5, or 6	
2	Agricultural use on 50 – 80% of land base	
3	Size 10 - 40 ha.	
4	Proximate lands compatibility: proximate zoning such that conflicts are not anticipated	
5	Land or buildings (not both) have lease potential	
6	Has started conservation tillage within last 5 years	
7	Practices crop rotation based more on market factors	
8	No manure/pesticide management plan but good storage facilities, standard application practices	
9	No forest management plan but can demonstrate good management practices	
10	Speciality crops grown but requires significant capital investment	
11	Site contains buildings of historical/architectural significance requiring repair/renovation	
12	Buildings in good state of repair, limited upgrades required	
13	Site requires repairs/upgrades to existing drainage/irrigation system	
14	Environmental Farm Plan currently being developed	
15	Site has some/limited diversity in habitat types	
16	Conforms to applicable plans, regulations and codes with minor exceptions	
Total		

Explanatory comments or additional considerations: