

PROJECT DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST

Documentation for projects selected by the Commission is required as part of each application for first-time accreditation and renewal of accreditation. This checklist is required for each project selected, to help you organize your records and ensure that you provide all required documents for each type of project. The information is organized by practice per the 2004 *Land Trust Standards and Practices* with a cross-reference to the related element in the 2017 *Land Trust Standards and Practices*.

For your convenience we have included an “Other” opportunity in each section; use this field to:

- Cross-reference to location of required document, if already presented in the application.
- Provide brief responses to the required documentation (for longer explanations, please provide a separate statement).
- Briefly explain any documentation that cannot be provided as required.

For more information on how to compile and submit project documentation for first-time accreditation, [see our website](#); for renewal of accreditation, [see our website](#) and the [User Manual](#).

Project Name:

General Background Documents

- ☐ A statement with a brief description of the project, including the project name, size, type of transaction, date of acquisition, whether the land or easement was donated or purchased, the role of partners, if any, and any other information that will help the reviewer understand the project. *Alternatively, you can type that information here:*

- ☐ Deed (of fee title or conservation easement)
- ☐ Map or aerial photo of project area (if not included in documentation for 3F, 11B or 12C)
- ☐ If co-held with another entity, include any co-hold agreement, if available
- ☐ If a mitigation project, include any mitigation agreements, if available

Practice 3F. Board Approval of Transactions ^[Element 3D1]

For projects completed within the last 5 years (if no projects were completed by your land trust in past five years, you may be prompted by the Commission to provide this information, as available, on older projects)

- ☐ Evidence of the review of the project by the full board and/or by a committee (such as meeting minutes, internal memos, timeline of events, etc.)
- ☐ Material provided to the board (or other decision maker) before final approval of the project
- ☐ Minutes of the board meeting when the project was approved or other record of final decision
- ☐ Other:

Practices 5A. Fundraising, 11A. Funding Easement Stewardship and 12A. Funding Land Stewardship ^[Elements 5B2, 5B3 and 6A5]

For projects completed within the last 5 years (if no projects were completed by your land trust in past five years, you may be prompted by the Commission to provide this information, as available, on older projects)

- ☐ Letter or other written acknowledgement of easement or land gifts valued at more than \$250 (if donation or bargain sale)
- ☐ Copy of an actual solicitation for a contribution to the stewardship and/or defense fund
Note: include a copy of an actual solicitation, not a blank template
- ☐ Copy of the actual acknowledgement of the gift received as a result of the solicitation above along with an indication (on the acknowledgement or on a separate attachment) of which fund the contribution received via the solicitation was deposited into
Note: this fund should correspond to one of the funds listed on your organization's Schedule of Dedicated and Restricted Funds
- ☐ Other:

Practice 8B. Project Selection Criteria ^[Element 8B2]

For projects completed within the last 5 years (if no projects were completed by your land trust in past five years, you may be prompted by the Commission to provide this information, as available, on older projects)

- ☐ Evidence that your organization reviewed the project against its project selection criteria, ~~including that it evaluated the project against its capacity to perform any perpetual stewardship responsibilities~~ (such as completed criteria worksheets or checklists, site evaluation checklists, project planning sheets, meeting minutes, etc.)

- ☐ Other:

Practice 9H. Title Investigation and Subordination ^[Elements 9F1, 9F2 and 9F3]

- ☐ Evidence of title investigation (such as a title report, title insurance commitment or policy, etc.)
- ☐ Lien or mortgage subordinations or discharges, if any
- ☐ Mineral remoteness reports, if any
- ☐ Other documentation that shows how encumbrances that could impact the project were addressed, if any
- ☐ Other:

Practice 9J. Purchasing Land ^[Elements 9H1 and 9H2]

If fee property or conservation easement was purchased:

- ☐ Purchase and sale agreement (or other documentation of the purchase price)
- ☐ Qualified independent appraisal used to substantiate the purchase price

If purchased above the appraised value, also include:

- ☐ Evidence justifying the purchase price and documenting that there was no private inurement or impermissible private benefit (such as with trend data for market appreciation, range of value of similar purchases, market factors not covered in the appraisal, etc.)
- ☐ Other:

Practice 10B. Appraisals ^[Elements 10A1, 10C2, 10C3 and 10C4]

For projects completed within the last 5 years (if no projects were completed by your land trust in past five years, you may be prompted by the Commission to provide this information, as available, on older projects)

- ☐ Evidence that the landowner was notified of Internal Revenue Code appraisal requirements and that your organization would request a copy of the appraisal ~~and would not knowingly participate in the project if it had significant concerns about the tax deduction~~ (such as a dated letter provided to the landowner, general materials with an indication of the date they were provided to the landowner, etc.)

- ☐ Qualified independent appraisal used to substantiate the tax donation (or documentation that the appraisal was requested from the landowner near the time of signing the Form 8283)
- ☐ Signed Form 8283 and supplemental statement, if donor or bargain-seller claimed a tax deduction
- ☐ Other:

Items 11B through 11I required for conservation easement projects only

Practice 11A. Funding Easement Stewardship

~~For projects completed within the last 5 years (if no projects were completed by your land trust in past five years, you may be prompted by the Commission to provide this information, as available, on older projects)~~

- ☐ ~~Evidence that your organization calculated the long-term stewardship and enforcement costs of the easement (such as a stewardship fund calculation worksheet, a formula used by your organization, a recent proposal to a donor, etc.)~~

Practice 11B. Baseline Documentation Report ^[Elements 11B1 and 11B2]

- ☐ Complete, signed baseline documentation report
- ☐ *If baseline documentation report not completed at closing:* interim baseline documentation report completed at closing
- ☐ Other:

Practice 11C. Easement Monitoring ^[Element 11C2]

- ☐ Easement monitoring reports
 - For first-time applicants, include easement monitoring reports from the last three years (or since date acquired, if acquired within last three years)
 - For renewal applicants, include easement monitoring reports from the last five years (or since date acquired, if acquired since accreditation was last awarded)
- ☐ Other:

Practice 11E. Enforcement of Easements ^[Element 11E2]

For easements violated in the last 5 years and if complete documentation was not required/provided in the main application

- ☐ A detailed description of the violation addressing the following:
 - a) The nature of the violation
 - b) How the violation was discovered, documented and investigated and who was involved in each step
 - c) The role of the board in the resolution of the violation, if any
 - d) ~~Whether legal counsel was involved~~
 - e) How the violation was resolved
- ☐ Evidence of how your organization discovered, documented, reviewed and resolved the violation (such as minutes of board or committee meetings, internal memos, communications with the landowner(s), etc.)
- ☐ Other:

Practice 11I. Amendments ^[Element 11H1]

If the easement has been amended in the last 5 years and complete documentation was not required/provided in the main application

- ☐ Before- and after-version of the conservation easement deed (or a tracked-changes version)
- ☐ A description the amendment addressing the following:
 - a) Who requested the amendment and why
 - b) How the amendment resulted in a positive or not less than neutral conservation outcome and was consistent with your organization's mission
 - c) How your organization analyzed the potential for private inurement and/or private benefit as a result of granting the amendment and how it documented that there would be no private inurement and/or impermissible private benefit
 - d) Whether any funding partners were notified or involved in the amendment request, review or decision
 - e) Who was involved at major steps in the amendment process, including the role of the board and any legal counsel
- ☐ Materials provided to the board (or committee/person delegated to take action) in advance of its approval of the amendment
- ☐ Minutes of the board meeting when the amendment was approved or other record of final decision
- ☐ The documentation your organization used to determine that there was no private inurement or impermissible private benefit conferred by the amendment
- ☐ Other:

Items 12C and 12D required for fee-owned property projects only

Practice 12A. Funding Land Stewardship

For projects completed within the last 5 years (if no projects were completed by your land trust in past five years, you may be prompted by the Commission to provide this information, as available, on older projects)

- ☐ ~~Evidence that your organization calculated the immediate and long-term financial and management costs of the transaction (such as a land management fund calculation worksheet, a formula used by your organization and how the formula was derived, a recent proposal presented to a donor, etc.)~~

Practice 12C. Land Management ^[Element 12B1]

- ☐ Management plan *If the project closed less than 12 months ago and the management plan is not yet completed*, provide the general written statement that was prepared by closing about the management goals and/or near-term management needs for the property
- ☐ Other:

Practice 12D. Monitoring Land Trust Properties ^[Elements 12C2 and 12C3]

- ☐ Fee property inspection reports
 - ☐ For first-time applicants, include one representative monitoring/inspection report from the current or previous calendar year
 - ☐ For renewal applicants, include one representative monitoring/inspection from the last five years (or since date acquired, if acquired since accreditation was last awarded)
- ☐ Evidence of how your organization resolved significant management issues, if any identified in a monitoring/inspection report(s) referenced above
- ☐ Other: