

UPPER PENINSULA LAND CONSERVANCY

8B Project Selection Criteria

Board Approved June 10, 2014

It is the policy of the Upper Peninsula Land Conservancy to consider every Conservation Easement or Conservation Preserve project using the following criteria. However, a project may be permitted even though it does not reflect the following criteria. When this unusual circumstance occurs, there will be thorough documentation for its acceptance, including the criteria and reasons used.

Prerequisites for Selection

- Clear title of ownership of the subject property
- Written statement of intent signed by ALL landowners (identified in a title report) to convey to UPLC a conservation easement or title to the land
- Secured funding for the project, including stewardship costs, or **at minimum**, a board approved written plan to secure the funding

Selection Criteria

- I. The **minimum qualifications** necessary for considering properties for conservation easements or conservation preserves are as follows:
 - A. The subject property must be located in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.
 - B. The project is consistent with the mission of UPLC (Policy 1A).
 - C. UPLC has the ability to monitor, enforce, and defend the easement.
 - D. The project fulfills one or more of the following Conservation Purposes, as defined by IRC 170(h):
 - Adjoins a UPLC protected property.
 - Adjoins a property protected by another land trust or related organization.
 - Within or adjacent to Federal, State, or local park, forest, or preserve.
 - Contains land valuable for watershed protection, a wetland, or other body of water.
 - Contains important habitat for fish, plants, or wildlife, especially habitat for state or federally listed rare, threatened, or endangered species.
 - Is part of a wildlife migratory corridor.
 - Contains sites offering scenic vistas, or lies within a scenic corridor associated with that vista, particularly those with public access.
 - Contains a state or federally registered historic structure, place, or archeological site; or is adjacent to this registered site.

- Is a farmland or forest classified as having “prime”, “unique”, or “regionally important” soils under criteria established by the United States Department of Agriculture.

II. Additional **recommended** qualifications are as follows:

A. Non-riparian projects should fulfill one or more of the following:

- Be at least forty (40) acres
- Involve significant values such as blocking-in existing Conservation Easements or Conservation Preserves and/or state, federal or other public lands
- Contain significant natural, cultural, or historical features.

B. Riparian projects should fulfill one or more of the following:

- Be at least ten (10) acres, with substantial (500+ feet) undeveloped water frontage
- Involve significant values such as blocking-in existing Conservation Easements or Conservation Preserves and/or state, federal or other public lands
- Contains significant natural, cultural, or historical features.

Note: “blocking in” means to gain conservation protection for previously unprotected in-holding properties or properties abutting already protected areas.

Bases for refusal

A project may be denied consideration for protection by the Upper Peninsula Land Conservancy if it:

- Does not meet the Prerequisites or Selection Criteria defined above.
- Is surrounded by or adjoins property whose existing or foreseeable future development would irreparably compromise or diminish its conservation purposes or public benefits.
- Is owned by a party who insists on provisions that would significantly diminish the property’s conservation purpose.
- Is too difficult to monitor, enforce, or defend.
- Has ethical, financial, legal, or liability issues that could adversely affect UPLC.
- Has hazardous material contamination.

If a project is rejected by the board, UPLC will send a written explanation to all landowners with documentation for its rejection, including the criteria and reasons used.

All of the above notwithstanding, the Upper Peninsula Land Conservancy’s Board of Directors retains complete discretion over accepting or rejecting projects, and will review each nomination on a case by case basis.