

## STANDARD 8

# Evaluating and Selecting Conservation Projects

Land trusts carefully evaluate and select their conservation projects.

### PRACTICES

#### A. Strategic Conservation Planning

1. Identify specific conservation priorities consistent with the land trust's mission and goals

#### B. Project Selection Criteria and Public Benefit

1. Develop and implement a written process to select land and conservation easement projects
- 2. Develop and apply written project-selection criteria that are consistent with the land trust's conservation priorities
3. Document the public benefit of every land and conservation easement project

#### C. Project Evaluation

- 1. Visually inspect properties before buying or accepting donations of conservation land or conservation easements to determine and document whether:
  - a. There are important conservation values on the property
  - b. The project meets the land trust's project-selection criteria
2. Evaluate potential threats to the conservation values on the property and structure the project to best protect those conservation values
3. Evaluate any current or potential risks associated with the project, including to the land trust's reputation or to the land trust community, and modify or decline the project if the risks outweigh the benefits

#### **D. Project Planning**

1. Individually plan all land and conservation easement projects so that:
  - a. The land trust identifies the best available conservation strategy for the property
  - b. The property's important conservation values are protected
  - c. The project furthers the land trust's mission and goals
2. Assess the stewardship implications of each project and the land trust's capacity to meet those obligations

#### **E. Partnership Documentation**

1. When engaging in a partnership on a joint acquisition or long-term stewardship project or when co-holding conservation easements, create written agreements to clarify:
  - a. The goals of the project
  - b. The roles and responsibilities of each party
  - c. Legal and financial arrangements
  - d. Communications to the public and between parties