

Prioritization Criteria

This document describes the five criteria that the advisory committee will use to score the parcels that are eligible for the Trust Land Transfer (TLT) program¹. DNR will sum and average the scores for each parcel. The higher the score, the higher the priority.

Advisory committee members will award 0 to 5 points for each criterion. Most criteria also have a multiplier. The purpose of the multiplier is to give some criteria more weight than others.

The following table lists the **total maximum score** possible for each criterion. Criteria are listed in **alphabetical order**.

Criteria	Maximum score	Multiplier	Total maximum score
One: Community Involvement and Support	5	2	10
Two: Ecological Values	5	3	15
Three: Economic Values	5	N/A	5
Four: Public Benefits	5	3	15
Five: Tribal Support	5	3	15

Advisory committee members will score the parcels based on the information in the application package, letters of support, the applicant’s presentation to the advisory committee, and the tribal outreach summary that DNR will provide to the committee. Committee members will score each parcel on its own merits, rather than score the parcels against each other.

Following is a description of each criterion and how it is scored.

Criterion One: Community Involvement and Support

This criterion gauges the level of community involvement and support for the proposed transfer. This criterion does not address tribal support, which is scored separately as Criterion Five.

Applicants must address the following in their application:

- Whether the local community has been provided an opportunity to learn about the proposed transfer and share their thoughts, and the efforts that have been made to engage with them.
- The level of involvement and support from the community, including local citizens, local organizations, local elected officials, interest groups, volunteers, public agencies, and others.
- Any known opposition to the transfer, any efforts to mitigate or address this opposition, and why the transfer should move forward despite any community opposition.
- Any outreach efforts specifically to overburdened communitiesⁱⁱ, underserved populationsⁱⁱⁱ, or vulnerable populations^{iv}, and feedback received from these groups.

Applicants are encouraged to provide letters of support for the transfer from local citizens, local organizations, local elected officials, interest groups, volunteers, public agencies, or others. These letters will help the advisory committee score the parcels for this criterion.

The table below shows how this criterion will be scored.

Point Range: 0-5; Multiplier: 2	
0 points	No local communities identified or impacted; or no evidence of community involvement and support; or community opposition to this proposed transfer
1-2 points	Minimal community involvement and support
3-4 points	Moderate community involvement and support
5 points	Exceptional community involvement and support

Criterion Two: Ecological Values

Ecological values are the water, minerals, biota, and other factors that make up natural ecosystems and support native life forms. Examples of high ecological values include but are not limited to the following:

- Habitat for fish and wildlife species, including federal or state endangered, threatened, or sensitive species; and/or wide-ranging migratory species, especially winter range for these species.
- Opportunities to create larger blocks of high-quality habitat.
- Federal or state endangered, threatened, or sensitive plant species.
- Forests that meet the definition of old growth in DNR's *Policy for Sustainable Forests*^v.

- Other ecological traits that make this parcel significant on a global, regional, state, ecosystem, or watershed level.

Applicants must provide the following information in their applications:

- The specific ecological values of the proposed transfer, including the ecological and biological quality of wildlife habitat and the habitat’s role in supporting these species, and the presence and extent of endangered, threatened, or sensitive plant communities on the parcel.
- The proximity of this parcel to other conserved areas (public, private, or tribal), and whether this transfer create larger blocks of habitat.
- The stewardship or management practices of the receiving agency to perpetuate the ecological values of the parcel. For example, whether the agency have the ability to manage, monitor, and protect these values once the parcel is transferred, and how the parcel would fit within the agency’s long-term management plans.

The table below shows how this criterion will be scored.

Point Range: 0-5; Multiplier: 3	
0 points	No ecological values described.
1-2 points	The parcel has only minor ecological values and the receiving agency has some capacity to maintain or enhance those values.
3-4 points	The parcel has moderate ecological values and the receiving agency has capacity to maintain or enhance those values.
5 points	The parcel has significant ecological values and the receiving agency has capacity to maintain or enhance those values.

Criterion Three: Economic Values

For this criteria, applicants describe the potential positive or negative economic impact of the proposed transfer on local economic industries and the extent of those impacts. Examples of economic industries include but are not limited to the following:

- Local recreation
- Local tourism
- Forest products
- Non-forest products
- Local public services

- Shellfish
- Agriculture

This criterion does not address the impacts to local industries of ceasing DNR’s trust management activities on the parcel, now or in the future. Examples of these activities include timber harvest or leases for agriculture, grazing, or other uses. If a parcel is being nominated for this program, chances are that few, if any, of these activities are occurring on the parcel now, and the potential for these activities occurring in the future is low. DNR assesses this potential in detail when it conducts the “best interests of the trusts” analysis.

Instead, this criterion addresses the potential economic implications (positive or negative) of the parcel becoming a park, open space, nature preserve, or similar designation. For example, will the transfer:

- Attract more visitors to the area, who will purchase gas, lodging, food, and other items from local businesses?
- Provide additional protection of water resources, which in turn will protect a local fish or shellfish industry?
- Affect agriculture, timber harvest, grazing, or other revenue-generating activities currently occurring on adjacent or nearby private properties?
- Affect future development plans in the local area?
- Affect the delivery of public services? For example, would the transfer affect existing or future water pipelines, communications towers, electrical transmission lines, or other infrastructure?

Applicants will be asked to address the following in their applications:

- The positive economic values of the transfer.
- The negative economic values of the transfer, and any potential strategies for mitigating those impacts.

The table below shows how this criterion will be scored.

Point Range: 0-5; Multiplier: None	
0 points	No economic impacts, no information on economic impacts provided, or negative economic impacts without potential mitigation strategies.
1-2 points	Minor positive economic impacts or negative economic impacts with viable mitigation strategies, or competing positive and negative impacts of two or more industries or the local economy.
3-4 points	Moderate positive economic impacts to one or more economic industries or the local economy.
5 points	Exceptional positive economic impacts to one or more economic industries or the local economy.

Criterion Four: Public Benefits

A public benefit is something that has a positive effect on the general public or one or more groups of people. The benefits can either exist now, and continue after the transfer occurs, or exist in the future as a result of the transfer. Examples of high public benefits include but are not limited to the following:

- Park, open space, nature preserve, or similar designation
- Opportunities for resource-based recreation that are scarce or unavailable in the local area, including for an overburdened community, underserved population, or vulnerable population.
- ADA-accessible recreation opportunities
- Distinctive scenic or aesthetic features
- Documented archeological, non-tribal cultural, or historically significant sites (Indicate if these features are present but do not describe them or indicate where they are located on the parcel)
- Scientific research opportunities
- Outdoor education opportunities

Applicants describe the following in their application:

- The current public benefits provided by the parcel, including any existing recreational use.
- The public benefits that would result from the transfer. For example, transferring the parcel could expand existing public recreational access to the parcel, or provide new public access.
- The communities that would be served by the parcel, including any overburdened community, underserved population, or vulnerable population that might receive direct public benefits from this transfer.
- How the proximity of the proposed transfer to these communities may increase the benefits described.
- Any publicly reviewed or adopted plans that support the need for the public benefits identified.

The table below shows how this criterion will be scored.

Point Range: 0-5; Multiplier: 3	
0 points	No public benefits provided.
1-2 points	The parcel has minimal public benefits now, and/or the transfer would provide a minor increase in public benefits.
3-4 points	The parcel has moderate public benefits now, and/or the transfer would provide a moderate increase in public benefits.
5 points	The parcel has exceptional public benefits now, and/or the transfer would provide an exceptional increase in public benefits.

Criterion Five: Tribal Support

This criterion gauges the level of tribal support or opposition to the proposed transfer. DNR and the receiving agency will conduct outreach to affected tribes as part of the eligibility determination. After this outreach is complete, DNR will summarize the following:

- The efforts made to contact the tribes regarding the proposed transfer, including which tribes were contacted.
- Whether the tribes supported or opposed the proposed transfer and why. Examples of support could include endorsements, letters of support, or involvement in the development of the proposal.

The following table shows how this criterion will be scored.

Point Range: 0-5; Multiplier: 3	
0 points	One or more contacted tribes opposed this proposal.
1-4 points	Tribes were non-responsive and/or responded with a mix of neutral and supportive comments towards this proposal. NOTE: The advisory committee will award 3 points if contact was made and no tribes responded.
5 points	Tribes that responded were strongly supportive of this proposal.

ⁱ **Restrictions:** Some deed restrictions will be placed upon the parcel when it is transferred. Restrictions may include mineral reservations ([RCW 79.11.210](#)), ability to purchase road access ([RCW 79.36.370](#)), specific easement reservations to protect remaining state trust lands, and/or restrictions on future, permitted uses of the property for the grantee (receiving agency) and their successors (in the event the parcel is conveyed to a new owner, or the receiving agency changes their name). Use restrictions will be based on the specific legislation that authorizes and funds the transfer. DNR also may consider a DNR proprietary use and management restriction on the parcel associated with DNR's [State Trust Lands Habitat Conservation Plan](#) (HCP). DNR will consult with the intended TLT recipient on any proposed, proprietary HCP encumbrance language prior to the transfer.

ⁱⁱ **Overburdened community:** A geographic area where vulnerable populations face combined, multiple environmental harms and health impacts, and includes, but is not limited to, highly impacted communities as defined in [RCW 19.405.020](#) (ESSSB 5141 Sec. 2 (11)). "Highly impacted community" means a community designated by the department of health based on cumulative impact analyses in [RCW 19.405.140](#) or a community located in census tracts that are fully or partially on "Indian country" as defined in 18 U.S.C. Sec. 1151.

ⁱⁱⁱ **Underserved populations:** Populations who face barriers in accessing victim services, and includes populations underserved because of geographic location or religion, underserved racial or ethnic populations, populations underserved because of special needs (such as language barriers, disabilities, alienage status, or age) and any other

population determined to be underserved by the Attorney General or the Secretary of Health and Human Services, as appropriate (34 USC § 12291(a)(39)).

^{iv} **Vulnerable populations:** Population groups that are more likely to be at higher risk for poor health outcomes in response to environmental harms ([ESSSB 5141 Sec. 2 \(14\)](#)). "Vulnerable populations" includes, but is not limited to: (i) Racial or ethnic minorities; 11 (ii) Low-income populations; 12 13 (iii) Populations disproportionately impacted by environmental harms; and 14 15 (iv) Populations of workers experiencing environmental harms.

^v **Old growth** is defined in the [Policy for Sustainable Forests](#) as forest stands of at least five acres in the most structurally complex stage of stand development, sometimes referred to as the fully functional stage of stand development, with a natural origin date prior to 1850, generally considered the start of European settlement in the Pacific Northwest. Examples of structural complexity include multiple canopy layers, snags, gaps in the forest canopy, and fallen trees on the forest floor.