Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk 2025-2026

Applicant Guide

Canada

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Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk: 2025-2026 Applicant Guide

Overview

The [Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk](#) (HSP), administered by Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), provides funding for terrestrial habitat stewardship projects that directly contribute to the recovery objectives and population goals of terrestrial species at risk. The program invites applications from Canadians committed to protecting these vulnerable species.

Applications submitted to the HSP must meet the program's [eligibility criteria](#) and will be evaluated based on their alignment with its [funding priorities](#). The [How to apply](#) page provides general information on the HSP application process. This guide provides step-by-step instructions for submitting an application through ECCC's Grants and Contributions Enterprise Management System (GCEMS).

For questions about the information in this guide, program priorities, or funding options from ECCC's Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), please contact your [regional HSP coordinator](#). They can assist with enquiries related to funding amounts, outcome reporting, species data sharing, and project permits. For more information about the terrestrial HSP program, you can also email the HSP national inbox at PIH-HSP@ec.gc.ca.

How to apply

Step 1: Confirm your project's eligibility
Review the [eligibility criteria](#) on the HSP web site, including recipient, species, location, and minimum eligible matching contributions. Ensure that your project meets these criteria and that all proposed activities and expenses are eligible and relevant to the recovery of the target species.

HSP projects are administered regionally[1]. If your project spans multiple regions, you must identify a primary region based on where most activities will occur. In such cases, we strongly recommend discussing your project with the [HSP Coordinator](#) of the primary region early in the application process.

If you are a current recipient of HSP multi-year funding, you may apply for additional funding to undertake new or expanded activities within the original scope and objectives of your project, through an amendment to your existing contribution agreement. Contact your [regional HSP coordinator](#) for more details.

Step 2: Strengthen your project
Contact your regional coordinator early in the application process to obtain an Expression of Interest form. This allows them to gather useful information and provide better feedback on your project.

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[1] CWS regions are: Atlantic (Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick), Quebec, Ontario, Prairie (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta), Pacific (British Columbia), and Northern (Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut).

If you plan to submit more than one project for HSP funding, consider consolidating multiple small applications on the same target species or area into a single, larger application that outlines the different activities. Multi-year project applications are encouraged as they address long-term conservation outcome and, once approved, provide funding assurance from year to year, provided you meet all terms, conditions, and obligations in the contribution agreement.

When planning your project's budget, consider the need for Official Languages and other languages requirements, as well as potential environmental effects under the Impact Assessment Act. Your regional HSP coordinator can assist with these requirements.

Step 3: Prepare your application

Login to GCEMS using your GCKey to access the application. If you don't have a GCKey, create one by following the onscreen prompts. After completing the two-factor authentication, you will enter the Single Window Information Manager (SWIM). Scroll down to find the GCEMS link.

On the GCEMS homepage, read the important information and explore the menu items. For any questions or technical issues related to SWIM and GCEMS, contact technical support at sgesc-gcems@ec.gc.ca

Click on "View funding opportunities" in the menu. Find "Habitat Stewardship Program – 2025-2026" and click the book icon in the Action(s) column to view the call for applications.

Important: In the "Publications and Resources" section of the HSP 2025-2026 "View funding opportunity information" page, download the Work Plan and Expected Results document (Microsoft Word file). You will need to complete this form outside of GCEMS and upload it with your application.

Click "Apply" at the bottom of the HSP 2025-2026 funding opportunity information to access the application.

SWIM automatically logs out users, including funding applicants in GCEMS, after 15 minutes of inactivity, so save your draft frequently. Use the "Save" button at the bottom of every section to save your entire application. To continue later, find your saved draft under the "My projects" menu.

Step 4: Submit your application

Your application must be submitted in GCEMS before the deadline: **2:00 p.m. Eastern time on October 30, 2024**. After submission, you will receive an email confirmation from GCEMS. If you do not receive this confirmation, contact sgesc-gcems@ec.gc.ca and copy your regional coordinator.

Applications with errors cannot be submitted. If you encounter issues with GCEMS, contact the GCEMS technical support team and your regional HSP coordinator. **We strongly recommend starting your application process early to address any potential issues in GCEMS before the deadline.**

Guide to completing an online application

The following information will help you complete an online HSP project application. Please note that this applicant guide is not a technical guide for navigating GCEMS. Rather, it provides guidance on the application questions. For any questions regarding navigating GCEMS, please contact sgesc-gcems@ec.gc.ca.

The 2025-2026 HSP application form in GCEMS has seven sections, from "Tombstone data" to "Certification", described below. The "Projects permissions" section is not part of the application but is where applicants control access to the application within their organization.

Six of the seven application sections are common to all ECCC applications in GCEMS. The third section ("Module 3") is where each funding opportunity can edit questions for their own purpose. The HSP-specific questions are in the section called "Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk – 2025-2026."

All mandatory questions (identified with a red asterisk) in the seven sections must be completed adequately for the application to be submitted.

Tombstone data

This section is a summary of organizational and contact information. Greyed out information auto-populates from your SWIM profile. You must complete all the mandatory fields:

- Email and phone number; Official Language for communications; contact information for the principal applicant representative (the individual representing the project / responsible and knowledgeable about the project and application);
- Select your organization type, provide an organization identification number (e.g., Charitable Number, Non-Profit Organization Registration Number or First Nations Band Number), and provide a brief description of your organization (including mandate);
- Identify previous funding received from ECCC and/or other Canadian federal government departments/agencies;
- Identify major transformations your organization has had recently, and any funds owed to the Government of Canada, if applicable.

Project summary

Project title

A short, descriptive title to identify your project. This title will be used in all communications related to the application. Therefore, it must describe the work undertaken, the project purpose, the project location if possible, and be easily understood by an external audience. Do not use acronyms and do not refer to the year or phase of a project (e.g., Year 1 of 2) as multi-year applications are accepted. Example: Encouraging Landowners' Participation in Conserving Habitat for Burrowing Owl in Southern Alberta.

Start date and end date

Indicate the project start and end dates. Please note that for funding starting in 2025, proposed activities in the application should not start before April 1, 2025. Specify the end date of your project, taking into consideration that HSP support may extend over more than one year to a maximum of five years. The latest possible project end date of the 2025-2026 application is therefore March 30, 2030. Funding requests can be for up to five years at a time, to a maximum project length of 10 years in total.

Project location(s)

Provide the location of your project, including mandatory latitude and longitude coordinates. If your project spans multiple activity sites or has a regional scope, mention this in the Project Description field and provide the coordinates for your organization's head office or primary location in this section. Additional location details will be requested in the "Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk – 2025-2026" section.

Project goals / objectives

Clearly define the goal(s) and objective(s) of your project and explain how it will benefit the target species. Describe specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic performance indicators that can be evaluated within the project's timeframe.

Project description

This is a brief (suggested maximum 250 words) synopsis of your project including the activities to be accomplished using HSP funding on the target species and habitat as outlined in the rest of your application. It must contain sufficient information to "stand alone" during the review and approval phases. Be sure to spell out acronyms. Consider the following items in developing your project description:

- Type of project: Identify the funding program and whether it is a single or multi-year project.

- Overall project purpose: Outline the project goal(s) and objective(s) (one to two sentences).

- Location of project: Identify the province(s) and main geographic area where the work is taking place.

- Species: Name each target species and its status: listed on schedule 1 of SARA or assessed by COSEWIC as special concern, threatened or endangered. Include whether it is a regional priority species.

- Threats: Describe the main threat(s) faced by the species that the project will address. Be clear.

- Main activities: List only the proposed HSP-funded activities to address the recovery need/threat and mention whether they are regional priority actions. Do not repeat the detailed activities provided in the work plan, but rather provide an explanation of how the activities will achieve the project objective(s) and the needed species at risk recovery actions. These should be listed as measurable deliverables (e.g., number of hectares to be secured or restored, and how). Do not use global terms like "enhancement activities will be undertaken" without describing what they will be. Mention whether the activities are regional priorities.

- Project timing: Provide a timeline for when the activities need to be carried out to achieve the project objective(s).

- Anticipated project benefits/outcomes: Describe how the project will contribute to the recovery of the target species and how it will address HSP priorities.

- Performance evaluation: Describe how you will measure and report the impact of each project activity on the recovery of the target species and their habitats. Include baseline data to evaluate the post-project status and specify the indicators that will be used to assess the project's success.

- Referencing past projects: Only mention past projects if you are building on previous results. Even if this project is similar to past efforts, avoid duplicating the previous description. Instead, clearly outline the unique value of this project and how it specifically contributes to addressing the species recovery needs.

Satisfactory example of a project description:
This single-year Habitat Stewardship Program project will focus on targeted outreach and education to assist in the conservation and recovery of species at risk and their habitats in Saskatchewan. The

project will take place between May and October 2019 within the Milk River Watershed (South of Divide). Six Species at Risk Act-listed species will be targeted, including Greater Sage-grouse and Burrowing Owl (both endangered and Prairie Region priority species) and Loggerhead Shrike (threatened). Project activities will include a prairie-wide workshop where stakeholders will discuss the benefits and incentives of conserving natural landscapes and best agricultural management practices and outreach events to increase awareness of the importance of native prairie stewardship. The project will deliver on results by implementing an educational program where students are educated by farmers about stewardship and species at risk. The project will contribute to the recovery strategy actions of each target species by engaging the community and raising awareness of the species and their threats, including wetland habitat degradation through conversion to agricultural use or invasive species, and increasing the network of stakeholders concerned with prairie conservation. Project performance will be evaluated with measurable direct (for example, number of people engaged) and indirect (for example, survey of changes made by farmers to promote native landscapes) outcomes.

Unsatisfactory example of a project description:
This project will address the threat of the SARA-listed Greater Sage-grouse and other SAR present in the area. It will be conducted within the Milk River Watershed. Outreach activities will be carried out such as holding workshops and delivering classroom education sessions. These activities will enhance and protect the habitat of the Greater Sage-grouse.

Project team experience
Describe any relevant qualifications and experience of your project team members that speak to their ability to carry out the project. Make clear connections between the knowledge and experience of team members related to your project objectives.

Financial capacity
Describe your organization's financial capacity to manage this project. This may include detailing other sources of funding in the budget section, such as letters of support from partnering organizations. Additionally, provide a brief summary of past successful projects to demonstrate your organization's experience in managing a project budget of similar scale.

Project management capacity
Describe your organization's experience in managing and delivering projects. Provide details on the duties and responsibilities of the position(s) identified in the budget. Include who will work on the project (e.g., project coordinator, volunteers, consultants, technical experts, etc.) and their roles. This section is an opportunity to demonstrate your organization's experience and ability to carry out the proposed project.

External expertise
Describe if contracts will be awarded within and for what reasons.

Capital assets
Describe if you plan to purchase capital assets with the requested HSP funds. Capital assets are single, tangible assets (with a useful life of more than one year) that cost more than $10,000 (e.g., a snowmobile).

Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk 2025-2026
Project type, primary region and regional priorities
Identify if you are applying for a new project or for additional 'top-up' funds for an HSP project that will be underway in 2025-2026. If you are requesting additional funds for an existing approved project,

please provide the project number (starting with GCXE) for which a top-up is requested. Please identify the region[2] where the activities will take place.

Target species and critical or important habitat
List all the species at risk that will be directly impacted or targeted by project activities. To be eligible for HSP funding, target species must be listed on schedule 1 of SARA (except extirpated) or assessed as endangered, threatened or special concern by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC).

For each species, explain how your project will benefit the species' critical habitat or any other important habitats.

Benefiting species
List up to 20 species within the scope of the project that are not directly targeted by the project activities but are likely to benefit from this stewardship project. Provide an explanation of how these species will benefit from the project.

Land type
HSP funds projects on the eligible land types below. Please indicate which land type(s) apply to your project and describe the habitat(s) on which the project will be undertaken and provide the associated information. Please select one of the four options:

- Option 1 - Private land

- Option 2 - Provincial Crown land

- Option 3 - lands under the administration and control of the Commissioner of Yukon, the Northwest Territories or Nunavut

- Option 4 - Indigenous land

Ecosystem-based Recovery Initiatives
If your project focuses on ecosystem-based recovery, please explain how your activities will support this approach. Make sure to justify how the project will benefit the surrounding habitat or environment. If applicable, provide the name of the lead organization of the ecosystem-based recovery initiative, a contact person, and any letters of support. These letters can be attached in the "Other supporting information" section of your application.

Collaboration among multiple partners
Does your project involve collaboration with multiple partners, either in carrying out project activities or providing financial or in-kind support? If yes, please explain each partner's role in your project.

Addressing climate change
Indicate whether your project will reduce the effects of climate change on the target species, and if it will, explain how. You may select more than one option. If your project will impact the target species in different ways than proposed, be sure to describe them.

Work plan and expected results

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[2] CWS regions are: Atlantic (Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick), Quebec, Ontario, Prairie (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta), Pacific (British Columbia), and Northern (Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut).

These sections of the application are available in a Microsoft Word file, which you can obtain from your regional HSP coordinator or find in the "View funding opportunities" menu of GCEMS, in the information for the "Habitat Stewardship Program – 2025-2026" funding opportunity. The completed file must be uploaded in the "Other supporting documents" section of your application. Please confirm that this has been done as a reminder.

The following activity categories are eligible for HSP funding. You must select from the following activity categories in your application. The examples listed below each activity category are eligible options to consider. Activities that do not fall under these categories are subject to further review. Please consult with a regional HSP coordinator to discuss potential project activities other than those listed below.

- **Habitat Protection and Securement**: Through acquisition (purchase or donation) or other securement means; protecting target species habitat by enabling the acquisition of properties or establishing conservation easements, covenants, servitudes, leases, or other types of agreements with property owners.
    - Legally binding measures:
        - Securement of land by acquiring title (fee simple)
        - Securement of land by an easement, covenant or servitude
        - Securement of land through a lease
    - Non-legally binding measures:
        - Protection of land through a written conservation agreement

- **Habitat Improvement**: Enhancing or restoring habitat of target species; changing land management or land use practices to benefit target species and improve habitat quality.
    - Restoration, enhancement and/or management of target species habitat
    - Vegetation planting or removal of exotics/invasive species in the habitat of, in the immediate area of, and for the direct benefit of a target species
    - Residence creation (e.g., hibernacula, bird boxes, turtle nesting sites)
    - Implementation of beneficial management practices or land use guidelines

- **Species and Habitat Threat Abatement**: Direct intervention for target species under immediate threat from human activity, or proactive/preventative activities.
    - Prevention of damage to target species habitats (e.g., educational signage, fences for the exclusion of habitat disturbances)
    - Protection and rescue of individuals[3]/prevention of harm to target species (e.g., enabling migration around roadways)

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[3] Some rescue activities may only be approved if carried out by qualified professionals or established networks. Discuss your project with your regional HSP coordinator if you wish to include rescue activities in your application.

- o Application of modified or new technology to prevent accidental harm (e.g., using modified harvesting methods to reduce incidental take of target species)

- **Conservation Planning**: Developing conservation strategies, land use guidelines/best practices, and planning the implementation of stewardship programs

  - o Development of target species conservation strategies to improve habitat and reduce threats

  - o Planning of stewardship programs, including target audience engagement strategies

  - o Compilation and dissemination of resource/land use guidelines and beneficial management practices

- **Surveys, Inventories and Monitoring**: Activities such as identifying potential sites for habitat restoration or assessing the presence of a target species and its habitat to target, design and carry out a current (or future) stewardship project.

These activities will only be funded if they are part of a larger stewardship project that is clearly defined in the application and that will be implemented within the next two years. You will be required to demonstrate how monitoring and data collection activities will lead to on-the-ground recovery action as part of your application.

  - o Identifying potential sites for habitat restoration; could include mapping and analysis (needed to support target species stewardship activities)

  - o Assessing the presence or abundance of target species through surveying or monitoring

  - o Creation or maintenance of inventories or databases for habitat and species data

  - o Documentation of Indigenous Knowledge

- **Outreach and Education**: Providing information to appropriate target audiences on specific actions to be taken to protect target species; raising awareness about target species conservation needs; educating resource users about alternative methods that minimize impacts on target species and their habitat; promoting stewardship at the community level to improve attitudes and change behaviour.

These activities should lead to direct target species recovery action; general outreach or non-targeted activities are not eligible. Any proposed outreach or awareness-building activities will need to be framed as a necessary component of a larger project plan unless they are sufficiently targeted and well supported to stand alone. Project applications will need to describe in detail how each outreach activity will lead to action in implementing on-the-ground species recovery and include a plan for measuring the implementation, either within the time frame of the project, or within a defined period afterward.

  - o Development of targeted outreach materials emphasizing the importance of target species and the benefits of the action to be undertaken

  - o Training of individuals/community members in stewardship practices related to target species

  - o Informing and engaging community members/target audiences (e.g., land managers, resources users) about their potential contributions towards target species recovery

- o   Engaging landowners directly in future habitat protection activities

- **Project evaluation**: Assessing the social and biological results and effectiveness of stewardship activities.

  - o   Conduct project or program results assessment(s)

Important:

- Activities must be closely linked to prescribed recovery actions in recovery strategies, action plans or management plans when available for SARA-listed species or in wildlife/conservation plans for COSEWIC designated species at risk not listed on schedule 1 of SARA.

- Scientific research activities, captive breeding, captive rearing, extirpated species reintroductions, the development of recovery strategies or action plans (including the identification of critical habitat, as required under SARA) are not eligible for HSP funding. However, HSP-funded activities can contribute to the content of recovery documents, such as through the collection of species data that can be used to inform on habitat needs, threat mitigation measures, etc.

Permits
Add all permits that would be required if your project were to be funded.

Project budget
This section presents your project's financial details.

Add contributor
This is where you include all sources of project funding, including your requested amounts to HSP. You must provide information on all project funders and select which Contributor type they are.

You must include and clearly identify your HSP funding request, with Environment and Climate Change Canada as the Contributor type. Note that HSP does not provide in-kind services, and therefore should not be listed as an in-kind contributor.

Applicants must obtain contributions of non-federal support (cash and/or in-kind) to obtain HSP funds. Provincial agencies, non-governmental organizations, private landowners, the private sector, and the applicant are all eligible sources of matching funds. Please consider the following regarding matching contributions:

- Examples of in-kind resources: equipment loads, donations of building materials and volunteer labour. For the latter, please calculate all volunteer time at fair market value.

- In-kind costs should be costed only for the portion used in the project. For specifics on eligibility of, and limitations on, in-kind resources, please contact your regional HSP coordinator.

- Federal funds (e.g., EcoAction Community Funding Program, Indigenous Partnerships for Species at Risk, federal funds administered by third-party non-governmental organizations) are not eligible as match for HSP funding.

- Recipients can only receive funding from one federal funding program for each proposed activity. Applicants should review information from other ECCC funding programs to determine which program is the best fit for their project.

- All proposed contributions must be listed in the application, whether they are eligible to count towards the minimum match ratio or not.

- If ECCC provides funding in other ways than your HSP funding request, or in-kind support, please make sure that they are clearly named, to distinguish these other ECCC contributions from your requested HSP amounts.

- If you indicate ECCC in-kind participation (e.g., professional advice, laboratory analysis, etc.), please provide letters of support to confirm participation, preferably including the value of the contribution.

- Preference will be given to projects with higher matching contributions compared to the minimum, and to projects with higher cash-matching contributions in relation to in-kind contributions.

- If your project is approved for funding, all contributions will need to be identified in the Contribution Agreement signed with ECCC. If you are not sure where the funding will come from precisely at the time of application, you can include "Anticipated funding from other project funders."

- Funding approval is not contingent on confirmation of all matching funds up front. Approved projects will have their match monitored each year. If the total project match is below the minimum by the end of the project, the final HSP funding may be reduced accordingly.

Please note that you will receive error messages when you start entering contributors, because you have not yet identified in the expenditure table how their contributions will be used. If you still have errors once all contributions and expenditures are entered, you will need to balance your budget, or for multi-year projects, each annual budget, to be able to submit your application.

Add expenditure
List all project costs, broken down by expenditure categories, and include a brief description of each cost along with the associated activity. For example, salary and wages for the project manager, printing costs for brochures and communication materials, etc. Be sure to provide enough detail to clearly explain how you arrived at each dollar value.

For all expenses, only those deemed to be a reasonable share for completing the project shall be considered eligible. Eligible expenses may include reasonable and properly itemized costs for:

- **Salaries and wages**

  o Salaries, wages and benefits (directly associated with the project activities)

- **Management and professional service expenditures (such as communications, Official Languages translation, accounting)**

  o Costs associated with services required to support a project. Other examples include insurance (related to the project), legal (other than litigation) costs, and other professional fees (other than travel).

- **Contractors**

  o Costs associated with consultants and contractors engaged to undertake project activities (subject to regional limits).

- **Travel**

    o Travel expenses that are directly related to carrying out the project activities, including mileage and accommodation. Rates that HSP will support will not exceed the [National Joint Council Travel Directive](#).

- **Material and supplies expenditures**

    o Office supplies and materials

    o Field/laboratory equipment and field supplies

    o Includes equipment purchase costs under $10,000.

- **Purchase of capital assets**

    o Purchase of a single, tangible asset (with a useful life of more than one year) using more than $10,000 of ECCC funds (subject to approval in advance)

- **Equipment rentals**

    o Lease, rental and/or repair of equipment used to undertake or support the project activities (subject to regional limits)

- **Costs associated with eligible land securement initiatives and projects such as land costs, legal charges, appraisals, surveys, baseline, documentation, transfer tax**

    o Costs associated with land acquisition or other means of land securement (leases, easements, covenants or servitudes)

    o May include appraisal fees, surveys, baseline documentation, legal costs, etc.

- **Printing, production, and distribution expenditures**

    o Printing costs, websites, supplies, etc.

- **Vehicle rental and operation expenditures**

    o Vehicle here is a motorized device used chiefly for transporting people.

- **Lease of office space**

- **Overhead**

    o Administrative costs (salaries and benefits of support staff, office utilities, etc.) directly attributable to carrying out of the project, up to a maximum of 10% of the HSP contribution. Overhead costs are not included as part of the other eligible expenditures categories.

- **Expenditures for preparing an independent financial report**

    o Projects receiving over $100,000 per year may be required to submit an independently verified financial report at the end of the project.

- **Other expenditures**

- Meeting and training fees (e.g., materials and hall rental), registration fees for courses, conferences, workshops or seminars.

- **Further disbursement of ECCC funding to final recipients**

  - Organizations wishing to coordinate work for a specific species or threat, or within a certain geographic area may wish to consider a further disbursement project. A further disbursement project is one where a recipient distributes funds to third parties by means of their own competitive contribution-type program and agreements. Please contact a [regional HSP coordinator](#) for further details.

- **The purchase of eligible carbon offset credits for events, conferences, and travel**

  - The purchase of eligible carbon offset credits from a vendor which has received third party verification and adheres to internationally agreed standards including: Gold Standard, VER+, VERRA (formerly VCS, Verified Carbon Standard), B.C. Offset System.

- **Monetary Honoraria offered to Indigenous Elders and/or Knowledge Keepers related to specific participation activities**

  - May include but not be limited to translation and interpretative costs, leading a traditional opening/closing ceremony and/or prayer, the sharing of traditional knowledge and protocols, (including spiritual advice to individuals), and demonstrating traditional art and other practices.

- **Costs associated with an Indigenous participation or ceremony**

- **Hospitality expenditures**

  - Reimbursed in accordance with the [Treasury Board Secretariat's Directive on Hospitality, Conference, and Event Expenditures](#). These can include costs related to Indigenous ceremonial offerings to be utilized or consumed during meetings or ceremonies such as traditional medicines, cultural foods, tea and sacred plants.

Please note:

- GST/HST/QST/PST is an eligible project expenditure, therefore HSP may reimburse recipients for taxes paid while undertaking the activities of the agreement that are not reimbursable by Canada Revenue Agency or by the provinces and territories. HSP funding includes the reimbursement for GST/HST/QST/PST. For example, if HSP's contribution is $50,000, this $50,000 includes HSP's reimbursement for all eligible expenditures including GST/HST/QST/PST. ECCC will **not** reimburse the recipient $50,000 plus GST/HST/QST/PST; the $50,000 is all-inclusive.

- The use of universal day rates is **not** accepted. Costs must be broken down by expense category for the contribution agreement to be considered legally binding after signing. When costs are broken down into their respective categories, various clauses are triggered in the contribution agreement.

- Land securement costs and purchase of capital assets are **not** eligible expenses for for-profit recipients.

- The creation of promotional material, such as hats or mugs, is **not** eligible.

- Costs, other than those identified herein, are **not** eligible unless specifically approved in writing by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change or their delegate at the time of project approval and are necessary for the successful completion of the project.

Other supporting information

This is the section where you must upload your completed work plan and expected results file to finalize the HSP 2025-2026 section of your application. The "Upload" button will appear below the page once you have selected a file and entered a description.

We recommend including the following supporting information:

- Dated and signed letters from other funding sources confirming cash and in-kind contributions. These letters should include the dollar value ($) of the cash/in-kind contribution being provided. If not provided in the application, they may be required later if your application is approved for funding.

- Dated and signed letters showing that you have engaged with individuals, organizations or communities who may be directly or indirectly impacted by your project (e.g., Indigenous groups and organizations).

- Dated and signed letters from landowners where restoration activities are occurring on private property, stating that your group has permission to undertake activities on their property and whether the landowner is providing any cash/in-kind support.

- Letters of support endorsing/supporting the project; these letters are different from partner letters confirming their contribution.

- Any information essential to understanding your project, such as maps of the project area or sites.

- Any additional information that will enhance your application (pictures, sketches, etc.).

- If applicable, copies of permits or approvals, species lists, etc.

Note: Any information submitted after the deadline will **not** be considered in the application evaluation process.

Official languages

The Official Languages Act (Part VII) requires that the Government of Canada promote both official languages (French and English) and enhance the vitality of Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs) across Canada.

We recognize that projects or organizations funded by ECCC through a funding program may:

- have an impact on OLMCs, or

- provide potential opportunities to promote the use of both English and French, or

- make it possible to promote Canada's bilingual nature.

The questions in this section are asked to assess the official language requirements that may apply to the project. You may need to consider official language requirements if your project is delivered in a

geographic area with OLMCs or includes any public events, signage, promotional materials or other communications. For example, you may be required to:

- offer materials produced with project funds (websites, brochures, kits, handouts, newsletters, reports, etc.) in both official languages.

- have directional and educational signs produced in both official languages.

- offer workshop facilitation in both official languages.

Cost directly related to official language translation required under the Official Languages Act for a project is an eligible cost under the program. Translation costs for other languages (e.g., Inuktitut) may be eligible. Please discuss any potential official language requirements and opportunities with your regional HSP coordinator.

Certification

You must certify that the information stated in the application is complete and accurate and that you agree with the statements presented in this section. Once your application is free from errors, and you have filled both fields and checked both boxes in this section, save your application for the "Submit" button to appear at the bottom of the page. Be sure to submit your application before the deadline: 2:00 p.m. Eastern time on October 30, 2024.

Note: if you have difficulties with GCEMS, the GCEMS technical support staff are quick to respond and provide assistance when you contact at sgesc-gcems@ec.gc.ca. Please contact your regional HSP coordinator and the GCEMS team if you have difficulties with your application. An accessible application format is available from the regional HSP coordinators for those who require it.

After submitting your application

Acknowledgement of receipt

An acknowledgment of receipt is automatically generated by GCEMS. If you did not receive an acknowledgment of receipt, you should contact GCEMS at sgesc-gcems@ec.gc.ca to confirm that your application was received. Please copy your regional HSP coordinator on the email.

Review

After the call for application closes, HSP regional teams verify the eligibility of each application. Following this screening, every eligible project is examined by a team of technical reviewers, which may include experts from ECCC, other federal government departments, or provincial departments (as applicable) to evaluate your application's scientific and technical merit. Each region's recommended applications are then brought forward for departmental review and funding decisions.

All applicants will receive a written notice of funding decision. If your application is approved in principle, you will be contacted to negotiate a funding agreement that outlines the terms and conditions of the funding. Federal Members of Parliament and/or their team will be advised about the approval in principle of a project and be provided with the following information: applicant name, project title, project description, project location, funding amounts, communication activities, and contact information. They may contact you to congratulate you before you receive the official decision.

For accepted applications

Once departmental approval in principle has been confirmed, all applicants – successful or unsuccessful – will be notified in writing. If your project application is approved in principle, you will be contacted to negotiate a contribution agreement, which outlines the terms and conditions of funding.

Negotiations
Funding is contingent upon the successful negotiation of a contribution agreement between the applicant and ECCC. Since negotiations are a shared responsibility, both parties will aim to complete negotiations within sixty working days. Once the agreement is signed, your status will change from applicant to recipient.

Cash flow statement
Once approval in principle of the project has been received, applicants will be required to submit additional information, including, but not limited to, a detailed cash flow statement of all sources of revenue (including all in-kind contributions) and expenditures that are part of the approved project. A quarterly breakdown of ECCC's contribution will also be required for the year, and if the project is multi-year, will be required at the beginning of every new year.

Intellectual property rights
Please note that any intellectual property rights created by you as recipient in association with your obligations and responsibilities under a contribution agreement shall vest in and remain your property. We shall have no rights to this intellectual property for any purpose without your express written permission.

Public acknowledgement
Recipients are responsible for providing HSP with final copies of any document or material utilizing the ECCC identifier, wordmark or acknowledgement statements prior to printing or distribution, for approval of the use of these logos or acknowledgement statements. You will need to consult your regional HSP coordinator prior to making any communications products such as publications, public information releases, advertising, promotional announcements, activities, speeches, lectures, interviews, ceremonies, and websites. All such communication products originating from the project must acknowledge ECCC's contribution as will be described in appendix E of the contribution agreement.

Reporting obligations
The contribution agreement will specify project reporting deadlines. Report templates will be provided for recipients to provide regular progress reports, annual reports (for multi-year projects) as well as a final report upon the completion of the project. These reports will describe project revenue, expenses, accomplishments and detailed descriptions/quantifications of project outputs and outcomes.

Please note that different projects may have different reporting requirements. Your regional HSP coordinator will advise you on your project's specific reporting requirements.

Survey date sharing
You will need to provide species occurrence or habitat data collected in the context of your project to the respective provincial or territorial wildlife data repository centre, or to ECCC, as relevant to the project. You will be asked to confirm the submission of these data in your project's annual or final report(s).

Contact us

For general ECCC or Canadian Wildlife Service enquiries, please contact 1-800-668-6767 or ec.enviroinfo.ec@ec.gc.ca.

If you have any further questions, please contact the national HSP secretariat at PIH-HSP@ec.gc.ca, or contact your regional HSP coordinators. Please note that regional HSP coordinators are available to answer questions during regular business hours, local time.

Regional HSP coordinators

Atlantic region (Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick)
Email: SCF-Atl.PIH-CWS-Atl.HSP@ec.gc.ca

Quebec region
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