

**MASSWILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT GRANT  
PROGRAM (MASSWILDLIFE HABITAT GRANT)  
FY2027 RANKING CRITERIA WORKSHEET**

PROJECT TITLE:

Private Landowner       Land Trust/NGO       Municipal

	CRITERIA	RANK
1	Project site protection status (maximum 10 points)	
2	Project map (maximum 5 points)	
3	Project budget (maximum 10 points)	
4	Net benefit of habitat enhancement activities to Natural Communities and/or Species of Greatest Conservation Need as listed in the State Wildlife Action Plan (maximum 25 points)	
5	Net benefit of habitat enhancement activities to species listed under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (5 points)	
6	Net benefit of habitat enhancement activities to resilience of the habitat to climate change and overall climate adaptation (maximum 15 points)	
7	Landscape context (maximum 15 points)	
8	Project Methodology (maximum 15 points)	
9	Project feasibility (maximum 20 points)	
10	Recreational activities open to the public (maximum 10 points)	
11	Environmental Justice (maximum 10 points)	
	<b>Total (maximum 140)</b>	

# MassWildlife Habitat Grant RANKING CRITERIA

(TOTAL 140)

(Points may be weighted by proportionally, at the discretion of the Ranking Committee, if different parcels, or portions of parcels, within the proposed project have different characteristics)

- 1) MassWildlife Habitat Grant Management Area's protection status:
  - Property is protected by a Conservation Restriction or Easement, is owned in fee by a non-profit organization whose primary mission is the conservation of land (or an entity under equivalent protection as determined by MassWildlife staff), or is municipal land under the care and control of the municipality's conservation commission or town forest = **10 points**
  - Property is under an Agricultural Protection Restriction = **7 points**
  - Property is enrolled in Chapter 61/61A or 61B or any other temporary protection = **5 points**
  - The property has no protection = **ineligible for program**
  
- 2) Application maps are detailed, showing the location of the parcel and identifying MassWildlife Habitat Grant Treatment Units (areas of the parcel(s) that the proposed habitat management will occur) that correspond to the Treatment Units described in the application. Maps are provided at the appropriate scale for the Treatment Units and show the context of the site within the landscape. Shapefiles supplied when possible. **Scale: 0-5 points.**
  - Excellent: Maps have detailed locus and clearly outline MassWildlife Habitat Grant Treatment Units; included maps are appropriately scaled, have detailed legends, and clearly delineate *both* the Treatment Units and the entire parcel. Management access routes into Treatment Units are shown, and the location of the property within the town(s) is clearly and accurately shown. Shapefiles supplied. = **5 points**
  - Insufficient: Unable to determine the location of the project and/or location of Treatment Units as they are described in the application. = **0 points**
  
- 3) The proposed project budget is detailed, itemized, reasonable for the services provided; quotes provided for sub-contracted work; shows the cost and explanation of the work needed to achieve project goals. **Scale: 0-10 points.**
  - Detailed and itemized; quotes are included for sub-contracted work, costs are reasonable for proposed work, and all budget items are for activities allowable under this grant. If NRCS rates are used, sufficient detail of the treatment unit habitat type(s) are provided, the work that is to be done is clearly specified, and the correct NRCS rate is selected. = **10 points**
  - Insufficient budget information, proposed budget is unreasonable for the scope and scale of the proposed work, or proposed budget is primarily comprised of activities that are not allowable under this grant program. = **0 points** (Earning 0 points on this criterion may result in the rejection of the entire application as MassWildlife reserves the right to reject all proposals, or portions of proposals, that it determines do not provide the best value overall to achieve the goals of the program.)

- 4) Net benefit to Natural Communities and/or Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), as listed in the [State Wildlife Action Plan \(SWAP\)](#), from the proposed habitat enhancement project. The grantee must provide an accurate list of SWAP species that will benefit from the proposed habitat enhancement activity, and the species must benefit from the habitat type resulting from the proposed. **Scale 0-25 points:**
- Habitat enhancement activities provide a high degree of net benefit to SGCN and/or Natural Communities, and applicant adequately described the direct connection between the habitat enhancement being conducted and the benefit to the identified SGCN and/or Natural Communities. The scale of the proposed project management is at a size that is appropriate for the species being managed for. = **25 points**
  - Habitat enhancement activities provide no net benefit to SGCN and/or Natural Communities, grantee fails to provide an accurate list of SGCN and/or Natural Communities that will benefit from the proposed habitat enhancement activity, applicant does not adequately describe the direct connection between the habitat enhancement being conducted and the identified SGCN and/or Natural Communities, or the identified species do not occur in the area, does not rely on the habitat type being enhanced, or the scale of the proposed habitat management is not at the scale needed for the species and/or community. = **0 points**
- 5) Net benefit of habitat enhancement activities to species listed as Endangered, Threatened, or Special Concern under the [Massachusetts Endangered Species Act \(MESA; in 321 CMR 10.90\)](#) at time of ranking species. Scale 0-5 points:
- Habitat enhancement activities provide a high degree of net benefit to species that are MESA-listed, and applicant adequately described the direct connection between the habitat enhancement being conducted and the benefit to the identified MESA-listed species. The scale of the proposed project management is at a size that is appropriate for the species being managed for. = **5 points**
  - Habitat enhancement activities provide no net benefit to MESA-listed species. = **0 points**
- 6) Net benefit of habitat enhancement activities to resilience of the habitat to climate change and overall climate adaptation. **Scale 0-15 points:**
- The project addresses at least one [ResilientMass](#) priority impacts and the habitat enhancement contributes highly to climate resilience based on the vulnerability of the habitat types to climate change and the anticipated benefits of the management actions. = **15 points**
  - The project does not address any ResilientMass priority impacts and has no contribution to climate resilience. = **0 points**
- 7) Geographic and ecological landscape context of the proposed habitat project. The proposed project is complimentary to the surrounding landscape and within a region that is a high priority for conservation, restoration, and management efforts. **Scale 0-15 points:**
- Project is highly complementary to the surrounding landscape and in an area that is a high priority for the proposed conservation and habitat management activities. = **15 points**

- Project is not complementary to the local landscape and is not in an area that is a priority for conservation and habitat management activities = **0 points**
- 8) Management approach and techniques are appropriate for the site and outcome goals. **Scale 0-15:**
- Proposed management methods have scientific backing, are suitable for the proposed application timeline and site conditions, and have proven success or efficacy. = **15 points**
  - Proposed methods are not appropriate or suitable for the site or have low proven efficacy rates. = **0 points**
- 9) Management objectives and activities outlined in the descriptions of the Treatment Units are likely to be achieved. **Scale 0-20 points:**
- Proposed management objectives and tasks are likely to be achieved within the proposed project period and will meet stated habitat goals. = **20 points**
  - Proposed management objectives and tasks are unlikely to be achieved within the proposed project period. = **0 points**
- 10) The proposed project is on land that is open to the public for the following recreational activities (the landowner must provide a detailed description of access and any restrictions). Failure to provide this information may result in no points for this criterion. **Scale 0-10 points:**
- Land is open to recreation, including all hunting, fishing, and trapping, without any landowner or municipality restrictions. = **10 points**
  - Land is open to a combination of hunting, fishing, and trapping with some restrictions (e.g. permission, fee charges, or membership required for access to the property; seasonal limitations; number of hunters limited; or restrictions on certain types of game species or use of hunting implements). = **7 points**
  - Land is only open to non-consumptive wildlife associated recreational activities and closed to hunting, fishing, and trapping. = **5 points**
  - Land is not open to the public. = **0 points**

**NOTE:** If hunting is allowed on the parcel, the applicant's public access score will be modified based on the percentage of parcel where hunting is legally allowed:

- Subtraction of 5% of awarded points for loss of 5-20% of parcel size available for hunting due to legally mandated setbacks under state statute M.G.L. c. 131, § 58
  - Subtraction of 15% of awarded points for loss of 21-40% of parcel size available for hunting due to legally mandated setbacks under state statute M.G.L. c. 131, § 58
  - Subtraction of 25% or awarded points for loss of 41%+ of parcel size available for hunting due to legally mandated setbacks under state statute M.G.L. c. 131, § 58
- 11) The project benefits an Environmental Justice (EJ) community as defined and mapped on the [Environmental Justice web page](#). **Scale 0-10 points:**

- Treatment Units are within or partially within a half a mile (0.5 mi) of a mapped Environmental Justice community. = **10 points**
- Treatment Units are within or partially within one mile (1.0 mi) of a mapped Environmental Justice community or directly reachable by public transportation, which makes it accessible to residents of an Environmental Justice community. = **7 points**
- Treatment Units are not within one mile of a mapped Environmental Justice community but, through programs, events, or other initiatives, strategies implemented on the site provides access to nature for residents of an Environmental Justice community and/or otherwise benefits residents of an Environmental Justice community (describe). = **5 points**
- Treatment Units are not within an Environmental Justice community and do not provide access or benefits to those communities. = **0 points**