

CLC Property Selection Criteria (approved)

The following criteria are intended to guide rather than limit the actions of the CLC. The Board retains discretion over acquisition or disposition of land and conservation easements, and will evaluate each project and proposal on its own merits after careful investigation of the property, its resources, and its public benefits. Lands experiencing traditional forms of use, including ranching, may meet all of the criteria listed in the Goals and Purposes Checklist and one or more of the criteria in the Public Benefit Checklist.

I. GOALS AND PURPOSES CHECKLIST

To qualify for selection the property should meet all of these criteria.

1. The property is located within the boundaries outlined in the CLC Mission Statement: the upper San Simon Valley and surrounding mountains.
2. Conservation of the property will protect biological, geological, archeological, or historic resources of high value, protect scenic open space, or provide other public benefits.
3. The property is of sufficient size, importance, or uniqueness that its conserved resources are likely to remain intact.
4. Protection of the property will enhance the goals and mission of the conservancy and encourage good stewardship of land and water resources.
5. The CLC, the landowner, or other parties have identified a financial mechanism or plan that is adequate to cover costs of acquisition and stewardship, and in particular to ensure proper long-term management of the land to be acquired or adequate monitoring and enforcement of the proposed conservation easement.

II. PUBLIC BENEFIT CHECKLIST

To qualify for selection the property must meet one or more of these criteria, with projects meeting multiple criteria having a higher priority.

1. The property has high conservation value and faces an existing or foreseeable threat of development or degradation.
2. It provides a linkage between existing protected lands or lands with the potential of future protection.
3. It buffers riparian habitat or wetlands, important wildlife habitat, or other sensitive areas.
4. It provides a buffer to or is close or contiguous to an existing conservation easement, preserve, other protected land, or public land.
5. It supports a high diversity of plant and animal species or any species of particular interest or concern.
6. It contains significant and relatively undisturbed or unique habitat, watershed, or natural features (especially if permanent, intermittent, or seasonal surface or near surface water is present).
7. It contains features with high scientific, archeological, historic, scenic, or educational value.
8. It protects scenic views from public roads or recreation areas.
9. It may provide the opportunity for well-managed public or institutional access for educational, scientific, or limited recreational activities but only when those activities are possible without compromising the goals of the CLC, landowner or donor.

III. FEASIBILITY CHECKLIST

A property may meet the selection criteria favoring a land protection proposal but still may not be accepted if one or more of the following considerations apply.

1. The property is small or isolated.
2. Adjacent properties are being, or are likely to be, developed in a manner that would significantly diminish the conservation value of the property in question.

3. There is reason to believe that the land/easement would be unusually difficult to manage/enforce; for example, due to multiple or fractured ownership, problematic access, significant presence of difficult invasive species, frequent incidence of destructive trespassing, landowner or other restrictions, need of significant habitat restoration, problematic or undesirable infrastructure (roads, buildings, etc.), potential conflicts regarding subsurface mineral rights, or unacceptable liability risk.
4. The property is found to be irreparably contaminated or cost-prohibitive to restore.
5. The landowner insists on provisions in a conservation easement that the CLC believes would significantly diminish the property's primary conservation value, its public benefit, or the ability to enforce the easement.
6. The property cannot be acquired by the CLC with reasonable cost and effort in relation to the property's conservation value.
7. The landowner and/or other project supporters are unwilling or unable to make an adequate donation towards a stewardship fund to sustain restoration, taxes, liability protection, long-term monitoring and management, and in the case of conservation easements enforcement of the easement.
8. It is unlikely that sufficient private or public funding can be raised by the CLC and/or project partners to develop, manage, and complete the project in the timeframe proposed for the acquisition.
9. The CLC determines that ethical problems may occur if it becomes involved in the project.